

**Torjer A. Olsen** and **Hilde Sollid** (Eds.)

# INDIGENISING EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Perspectives on Policies  
and Practices From Sápmi  
and Beyond



Scandinavian University Press

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# Giittossárdni

This book is the result of the research project Indigenous Education and Citizenship (ICE). The first ideas for the project saw the light of day in Paris in 2014. At that point and in a continental European context, seeing Indigenous education and citizenship together seemed like a bold idea. Europe has been central in colonisation worldwide, depriving Indigenous people of basic human rights and the right to self-determination. At the same time, it felt like a highly important project, in a time and place where the globalisation of education and overarching educational ideas point to large-scale testing and standardisation of learning trajectories. As we see it, these tendencies represent policies and ideologies that do not necessarily see or support Indigenous peoples' educational values in and rights to education for and about Indigenous peoples. The project and this book are therefore contributions to critical dialogues in educational research, and contribute towards centring Indigenous perspectives in education and citizenship.

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Ollu giitu – Tusen takk!  
September 2022, Tromsø/Romssa  
*Hilde and Torjer*





# Introducing Indigenising education and citizenship

Torjer A. Olsen and Hilde Sollid

This book is about Indigenous education and citizenship. Our centre of attention is the politics of Indigenous education, and the way conditions are set and met for it to be put into practice. We emphasise the processual aspects of both education and citizenship. We investigate how having both Indigenous *and* non-Indigenous citizens in nation state education systems is reflected in policy, pedagogy, and practice, and to consider the implications for future forms of education and citizenship. The book has a Sámi and northern starting point. Sápmi refers to the traditional area of the Sámi people, an area that is spread across four nation states: Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The articles are mainly about Sápmi in the Nordic countries, and there is only brief reference to the Russian side of Sápmi. When we hereafter refer to Sápmi, we refer to Sápmi in the Nordic countries unless specified. Also, we mainly use the North Sámi name in this introductory chapter, a choice that reflects where the authors of this chapter come from. We return to the Sámi and northern starting point below.

We aim to look beyond the contextual boundary of Sápmi to understand more about Indigenous education and citizenship. We are aware of the differences and difficulties of moving from one context to another. Indigenous rights recognition and decolonisation processes have differently experienced histories across all the countries described by authors in this book. However, to see the different experiences together and the use of Indigenous perspectives is not only about differences. The book contributes to knowledge about Indigenous education as a field of research, policy, and practice around the world. To reach this goal, we examine the conceptual, political, and pedagogical issues relating to Indigenous citizenship and education in four different contexts, namely Sápmi, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Namibia.

Together, the book's contributors have different relationships with Indigenous communities, from insiders to outsiders. Also, we come from different research disciplines, from Indigenous studies, education, and social anthropology to sociolinguistics, political science, and philosophy. Potentially, the different research

positions and interdisciplinarity represent pitfalls, but we see this as a strength. This enables our explorations of Indigenous education to highlight some of the many possible dialogues and relevant viewpoints of Indigenous education as a field of research and as a policy field. Together, our research highlights continua and diversity rather than dichotomies and unity. We look for how local practices relate to national and international demands and perspectives, and for different ways of performing citizenship. Our methods are also diverse: we observe, we study texts like curricula, textbooks, and education policy documents, we talk with local actors in interviews and through questionnaires. Together we seek to see the connections between the local, the national and the international, and between educational policy and practice.

What we have learned from the different case studies and contexts that we have worked in is that there are many ways to Indigenise education and to envision Indigenous citizenship through education. A theme that runs through the book is the challenges of articulating and implementing Indigenous education that is situated in collective and national guidelines and regulations and simultaneously framed by more local needs to value difference and diversity within the collective.

This introductory chapter both presents the overarching themes of the book and a thematic basis for the following articles. The overarching themes include our reflections on key concepts like education, Indigenous education, citizenship, as well as different perspectives on and concepts for diversity, colonisation, and Indigenisation. The different chapters of the book all relate to and expand on these matters based on a range of cases and situations. The articles are referred to throughout this introduction, and we also include a presentation of each contribution at the end of this introduction.

## **PREMISES, PERSPECTIVES, AND TENSIONS**

To open the conversation in the book, we start by highlighting three important premises. First, the Sámi situation is part of a bigger picture of a wider international context. The similarities when it comes to the situation for Indigenous peoples worldwide are many – despite the different geographical and political contexts. This is important as a way of creating and showing the rationale for international research collaboration and comparisons.

Secondly, educational systems provide arenas for diverging ideologies and policies regarding Indigenous peoples. Education can be a state's space for colonisation, assimilation, and marginalisation. Education can also be a state's opportunity to come to terms with their own colonised pasts and practices. Further, education

can also be an opportunity for Indigenous people to engage in (re)claiming, transmitting, and articulating their own cultures and languages. Thus, both colonisation, decolonisation, and Indigenisation are part of the picture.

Thirdly, education is connected to citizenship. On the one hand, an education system builds on a nation state's ideas of citizenship, and on the other, education becomes practice in communities with more local expectations to a citizen's identities, knowledges, values, and actions. This makes Indigenous peoples' rights to education as well as 'Indigenous people' as educational topic complex. Historically, through colonisation and assimilation, Indigenous peoples have been marginalised, made invisible, wiped out, assimilated – colonised – through educational systems. This historical background clearly complicates contemporary educational systems' articulation of Indigenous peoples' rights and Indigenous peoples as topic. An important (and even potentially toxic) tension here concerns the idea and ideal of education creating community and togetherness. Which community and sense of togetherness is created and articulated through education? Do Indigenous peoples have a place in this?

For us, these three premises have enabled – and made it necessary for – us to do this project beyond our local context and situation of the Sámi people. Despite similarities related to colonialism, there are of course different ways of putting education and citizenship into action, and different ways of experiencing this in different parts of the Indigenous world. Thus, the situation in Australia, as discussed by Diane Smith and by William Fogarty and Hilde Sollid (this volume), that in Aotearoa New Zealand, as examined by Sharon Harvey and by Melinda Webber and Selena Waru-Benson, and the circumstances in Namibia, as presented by Velina Ninkova, are both interesting and communicative in themselves as well as providing a comparative dimension to the different parts of Sápmi. Similarly, the different texts about education in Sámi settings do also show diversity and belong to different levels of the nexus of education. Else Grete Broderstad and Pigga Keskitalo, in their respective articles, give the historical background and draw connections between Sámi aspirations and state policies. Annamari Vitikainen and Kjersti Fjørtoft undertake philosophical and conceptual analyses of the Norwegian national curriculum and its articulation of citizenship, democracy, and Indigenous rights. Sollid analyses Sámi language subjects in the Sámi curriculum in Norway. Torjer A. Olsen, Kristin Evju, and Åse Mette Johansen and Elin F. Markusson investigate different levels of the implementation and articulation of Sámi education as raised in policy and brought to life in pedagogy, educational institutions, and classrooms. Hanna Outakoski and Kristina Belančić both take the situation in Sweden as a starting point; they explore educational practices and their reception.



A fundamental difference between the four contexts is the kind of colonisation and thus the colonial history that people struggle with today. External colonialism means the expropriation and extraction of different parts and resources of Indigenous worlds to build the wealth and privilege of the colonisers. Internal colonialism is of course related to this, but means the management or take-over of people, land, and resources from within the borders of, for instance, a nation state (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 4–5). The colonisation of the Sámi people are primarily examples of internal colonialism, whereas the Americas, Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia are examples of external colonialism, or what has been referred to as ‘settler colonialism’. Namibia and the southern African contexts represent a combination of both (Saugestad, 2001).

In all our contexts, education carries a colonial legacy of asymmetrical relations and deficits. In this legacy lies tensions and dilemmas that educational systems in the respective states and areas we study attempt to resolve and/or face, with varying luck, it must be said. In some cases, the attempts have the best aims, but fail to involve or take the perspective of the Indigenous people. Harvey’s contribution in this volume is a relevant example, as she analyses a case of language policy borrowing from a European context to Aotearoa New Zealand. The dilemma, then, is a tendency that colonial educational ideas function as benchmarks in processes of decolonisation (see also Rassool, Canvin, Heugh, & Mansoor, 2007). As benchmarks, the colonial ideas are recursively reproduced in new contexts, thus they keep shaping and framing the goals and desires for future generations. Yet another tension concerns the curriculum, which has the power to define which students are seen as citizens and which are outsiders of the school community. As Smith (this volume) and Sollid (this volume) show, this tension becomes highly visible when analysing nation states’ ideas of citizenship over longer timescales.

Still, there is a move and tendency towards the recognition of Indigenous peoples and their rights – albeit probably more on the rights and policy level than on the implementation level. One of the dilemmas we see from the different contributions in the book is a (too) wide gap between overarching national policies and what is possible and/or desirable in Indigenous communities (see also Ninkova, in her analysis of language policies in Namibia). At the same time, a school has, through its practices and pedagogy, the power to translate state policy into meaningful activities in a local community. In this implementation space, the local process can potentially transgress the national curriculum to include or exclude students or communities beyond the intentions of the curriculum. As Outakoski shows, there are possibilities for redefining the theoretical basis (theories of language and writing in Outakoski’s paper) for pedagogical practices to include Indigenous perspectives.

In a broad perspective, what Indigenous communities see as distinctive elements that form the basis for ethnicity and belonging to a collective varies. Due to colonisation, the basis for belonging is disrupted, for instance through occupation of land and recourses, forced relocations, and removal of cultural knowledges and practices. Today, in the process of revitalisation and reclamation, these elements become the centre of attention in Indigenous politics, and in Indigenous education. Because of colonisation, the extent to which individuals can base their identity and belonging on the same elements differs, which in turn might become a source of tension. One example from the Norwegian context is Sámi languages. In his study of foundations of Sámi identity, Berg-Nordlie (2021) finds that for some, language is a necessary marker of ethnicity, while for others it is not. In an educational context then, it might pose a dilemma of how an overarching national education system can adapt to the local and individual needs and desires. Sollid focuses on this dilemma in her analysis of Sámi language curricula in Norway.

At the heart of education and on all its different layers, there are always people – individuals and groups, teachers, students and families – who act and make choices, who are acted upon, and who relate to each other in a variety of ways. This book is about how people, in all these contexts, shape and reshape education systems.

## **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP: DIVERSITY AND INTERFACE**

A crucial distinction in the field of Indigenous education is the difference between Indigenous education as education for and of Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous education as education about Indigenous peoples to all. In either case, this distinction can be talked of either as a dichotomy or as a continuum. The same goes for the distinction between who is Indigenous and who is not Indigenous. We argue that the continuum better describes reality than does the dichotomy in both cases.

### The politics of education and Indigeneity

Neither Indigenous research, Indigenous methodologies nor Indigenous education can be seen as existing independently from politics. They are inherently political fields, as shown in the chapters by Broderstad, Ninkova, Harvey, Sollid, Belančić, Smith, Evju, and Olsen. The entrance of Indigenous scholars into the world of research happened parallel to and connected to the growing movement of Indigenous politics (Virtanen, Olsen, & Keskitalo, 2021). Broderstad (this volume)

shows how the situation for Sámi rights is directly related to education. Ninkova, Harvey, Sollid, and Belančić, from four different contexts, demonstrate how the situation of Indigenous languages in schools grows out of political struggle and discourse.

The same can be said about Indigenous research in general. The movement or establishment of Indigenous methodologies comes with the criticism of existing research as colonial and with the claim of the autonomy of the Indigenous scholar as a necessary reaction. Hence, even the identity of the scholar is potentially a topic for political discussion. Who has the power and the resources to define and do research? The field of Indigenous education is, with a certain amount of variation, developed and articulated through the encounter between Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and educators working more or less closely with Indigenous communities (see also Battiste, 2013; Bishop, 2008; Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013). The authors of this book come from different places in the cultural interface, from non-Indigenous to Indigenous, and various places in-between.

The concept of Indigenous education can be used to cover a broad range of educational needs, from the education of members of mainstream society about Indigenous affairs and issues to the education of members of Indigenous communities. The initial distinction between education for and of Indigenous peoples on the one side and education about Indigenous peoples on the other is primarily descriptive. It relates what the situation is in many countries, regions, and communities with the presence of Indigenous peoples. For instance, in Norway, the national curriculum has, since 1997, two distinct, but equally recognised, parts – one for Sámi schools and one for Norwegian or majority schools. Together, the curricula describe the learning outcomes for Sámi students (in the Sámi curriculum) and what all students should learn about the Sámi (in the Norwegian curriculum). Within the Norwegian context, the curriculum is explicitly rights based. The implications of this, as stated in the core curriculum, are directed towards three groups in the school system: Sámi students in Sámi schools, Sámi students regardless of which schools they attend, and all students in the school system. The first have the right to have their education in their Sámi language. The second have the right to have Sámi language education. And the school is obliged to provide the third with knowledge of Sámi history, language, society and rights, and Indigenous perspectives when teaching about democracy. This is a rather formal, but still quite pragmatic approach. It is the result of political and mandatory consultations between the Sámi parliament and the Norwegian government. Thus, the politics of education and Indigeneity are made explicit on this level. On the community and school level, the politics are there, but often more implicit.

## Decolonisation and Indigenisation

The concepts of decolonisation and Indigenisation have been covered and written about in a series of scholarly works (e.g., Battiste, 2013; Nakata, 2007; Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The concepts describe two different strategies and sets of ideas to handle the colonial past, but which have many tangents. Decolonisation has an emphasis on the critical and deconstructive dimension, exploring the continuous colonial impact on Indigenous communities. Indigenisation focuses more on the making and remaking of Indigenous spaces, methods, and voices. Of course, the relationship between the two is more complex. In an educational context, there is a general agreement that both are needed. Decolonisation provides critical deconstruction of how educational systems have been and continue to be based on colonial structures. Indigenisation brings diverse attempts to build, claim, and articulate places, structures, and arrangements that are based on local and Indigenous practices and traditions.

In the early stages of the discourse on decolonisation, the difference between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous was key. The emphasis on the difference between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous led to the necessary articulation of what distinguishes the two. This relates to Linda Tuhiwai Smith's reflections on strategic essentialism, where the markers that set the Indigenous community apart were highlighted and presented as defining. Smith (2012, p. 74) argues that such essentialism has been an important strategy within Indigenous politics. In the fight for Indigenous rights and sovereignty, the differences between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous have been more important than have the similarities.

In recent years, the claims for nuances and internal diversity have also reached the surface. Still, in a Sámi educational context, as most probably in other Indigenous contexts as well, there is a dilemma or tension related to such matters. Is highlighting Sámi diversity rather an expression of division? In a Sámi educational context, this is seen through the articulation of the Sámi school in the first Sámi curriculum in 1997. This was based on a rather narrow part of Sápmi and the Sámi communities. In addition, the writings of Sámi pedagogue Asta Mitkija Balto about Sámi child-rearing and pedagogy, which also was based on a similarly narrow part of the Sámi community, formed the basis of an overarching Sámi pedagogy (Gjerpe, 2017). As necessary as it was more than 20 years ago, our work in this book suggests the need to Indigenise education through an approach that opens for diversity. This does not nullify or downplay the work of the early educators, but opens the space for diversity and local approaches to Sámi education.

## Continua within the continuum: The cultural interface

The building, enactment, and articulation of Indigenous education has an explicitly decolonising point of departure, wherein the critique of mainstream education is key. Indigenous education as a field has traditionally had a dichotomous approach, where the distinction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous education has been important. In fact, the field of Indigenous studies itself carries and is built on a distinction or a dichotomy. If framed as an essentialist dichotomy, however, it rests on the assumption that both sides – the West and the Indigenous – are homogenous. Such a claim is patently false, and a political one. We argue that diversity and an understanding of diversity are key to the analysis of Indigenous education. Our main point of departure for making this argument is that in many Indigenous contexts, the boundaries can be blurry between who is Indigenous and who is not (e.g., Nakata, 2007; Sarivaara & Keskitalo, 2016). Also, as many Indigenous children attend mainstream schools (Bishop, 2008; Gjerpe, 2018), a pure distinction between education for Indigenous peoples and education about Indigenous peoples and issues is over-simplified.

In an earlier work (Sollid & Olsen, 2019) we suggested a two-stage model for the understanding of Indigenous education. A simple two-sided model is built on the distinction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and on the education connected to each. In Sámi contexts, especially on the legal and curricular side, this describes the situation. For instance, there is a mainstream curriculum and a Sámi curriculum in Norway. In the former, the Sámi content is an example of education about Indigenous peoples for all citizens. In the latter, the curriculum expresses education for and of the Sámi. We did see the need, however, to expand the model to include a more nuanced and dynamic understanding of Indigenous communities and education. In the states and situations that the scholars of this book are working, the Indigenous communities are closely connected to mainstream society. Indigenous education, as such, is also more complex and less dichotomous.

Following this, we argue that both ends of the original continuum seem to carry a continuum of their own, and at the same time they are related. Indigenous education, we argue, happens along continua within the continuum. Firstly, Indigenous education as education for Indigenous people will, in practice, vary from Indigenous schools using Indigenous curricula, languages, and pedagogies on the one hand, to Indigenous students attending an Indigenous education within the frames of non-Indigenous schools. Secondly, education about Indigenous peoples and issues will, in practice, vary from a decolonised and/or Indigenised mainstream school using decolonised and/or indigenised curricula and pedagogies, on the one hand, to schools that in different ways are colonised, on the other (Sollid & Olsen, 2019). Referring to our model, the movement from one side of the

continuum to the other can be understood as a movement from decolonisation to Indigenisation.

Seeing Indigenous education as constituted by continua within continuum is inspired by Nakata's (2007) idea of the cultural interface. As a concept, cultural interface is coined to describe the complex situation both of Indigenous individuals and of Indigenous communities. Cultural interface proposes an alternative to dichotomies, and describes a space of relations that an individual person (and community) lives by and with. This space has numerous subject positions available, is multi-layered and multi-dimensional, and shapes how you speak of yourself and of others. Notions of continuity and discontinuity may provide good ways for understanding Indigenous people's relationships both to other groups of people and to the past. Thus, cultural interface, and the idea of numerous subject positions, seems a constructive alternative to simplistic dichotomies, also when speaking of Indigenous education.

As such, it is a way of describing how Indigenous education, in practice, can have a lot of subtle variations and articulations, and that different educational systems can be located on different parts of the continuum(s). The Norwegian educational system seems in itself to host different parts of the continuum(s). The schools used to be a key arena for colonisation and assimilation through its curriculum, pedagogy, and practice. In the decades following, the schools have developed through an era of decolonisation and recognition of Sámi students in a mainstream school, to being defined as Sámi schools following a Sámi curriculum. At the same time, there is an institutional slowness at work at a systemic level – as there is in any educational reform – slowing down local efforts of decolonisation and Indigenisation.

## The concept of citizenship

With schools as arenas for nation state policy, education policy becomes citizenship policy. What is taught in school is a way of communicating who is included and excluded in the community of citizens, and whose knowledge and values are relevant. In general terms, citizenship is related (but not restricted) to democratic values where members of a community can exchange ideas and act together to shape their future. One of the core values of democracies is the possibility of real influence on society through participation in economic, social, and political aspects of the community. As such, citizenship presupposes the individuals' sense of belonging to a larger collective, where people want to and are allowed to engage. In this sense citizenship as a verb – to citizen – points to doings and practices that are based on a set of shared values. This way, citizenship in an educational context

is ideas about knowledge and values that a society see as important for future generations. Diane Smith (this volume) argues in her chapter that citizenship can be understood not only as a legal entitlement of individuals to rights and affiliation common to all citizens of a polity, but also as fundamentally entailing cultural and social entitlements and obligations, which may be differentiated from collective rights.

Also, citizenship is about different available subject positions (see also the articles by Fjørtoft, Smith, Sollid, and Vitikainen, this volume). A person can be an insider (citizen), an outsider who can become insider, an insider becoming an outsider, or even an outcast who despite attempts to become a citizen is kept outside or silenced (Isin & Nielsen, 2008, p. 6). For the individual, thus, citizenship is a social contract in flux that, at a formal level, is expressed through formalised rights and responsibilities that a person has – for instance, the right to Sámi-medium education (citizenship as status). At the level of practice, citizenship is about stability in what people do to uphold citizenship (citizenship as practice). Citizenship as practice shows that a way of doing something has become established norms that frame future actions. This way, citizenship is a mode of conduct that is acquired through ‘routines, rituals, customs, norms and habits of the everyday’ (Isin, 2008, p. 17). Education thus plays a major role in developing modes of conduct in the relationships between the individuals and the community.

In the process of decolonisation and Indigenising education, a final perspective on citizenship is present in social and political processes in a time of change. In a context of marginalisation, citizenship can be expressed and negotiated through acts that create or recreate social belonging and relations. These acts of citizenship potentially pave the way for new ways of doing citizenship, and they can supplement or reject the current citizenship frames (Isin, 2008, 2009), for instance as what happens when Indigenous movements start to question colonial education. Acts of citizenship are connected to participation and can be interpreted as taking a stance (Jaffe, 2009) on previous practices and habitual social actions. Taking a stance shows agency and potentially points to a range of possible citizen positions, not only either-or. This connects acts of citizenship to cultural interfaces (Nakata, 2007), which describes a similar space for relations that an individual person (and community) lives by and negotiates with.

Citizenship is thus both about the individual member’s engagement with communities and also something that is achieved interactionally between participants and something that can be ratified, ignored, modified, or contested. Education plays an important role in developing citizens for the future – on the basis of the governments’ ideas of citizenship.

While throughout colonialism the colonisers took the right to make decisions over Indigenous people, today there are processes to redefine this unequal distribution of power. In doing so there is also a process of redefining citizenship in Indigenous communities through performative acts. As Smith (this volume) describes, the term ‘jurisdiction’ is defined in its common-sense meaning as ‘the right, power, or authority to administer the law by hearing and determining controversies’; ‘the extent or range of judicial or other authority’; and the ‘territory over which authority is exercised’. In education, this is first and foremost a question of having (or taking) the authority to describe the value basis of Indigenous education, and to decide what counts as relevant knowledge. Jurisdiction is thus closely related to the process of decolonisation and Indigenisation.

Moreover, we see that in Indigenous contexts, Indigenous polities take a specific form, which leads to a specific form of citizen and an identifiable collective citizenship. Within the Australian Indigenous domain (Smith, this volume) there is a cultural preference, on the one hand, for autonomy, that is marked by a tendency towards localism and the value accorded to small kin-based congeries of people attached to core geographic heartlands. Here the Indigenous citizens belong to their own local clan group or extended family and know their own ‘country’ – though today they are more than likely not to be residing in their traditional country. In this context, Indigenous modes of education and socialisation are place-based and local (see Fogarty & Sollid, this volume). But this societal momentum towards ‘atomism’ and autonomy is balanced, on the other hand, by an equally compelling strain towards ‘collectivism’, connectedness, and interdependence. This brings small-scale groups together into sometimes lasting, sometimes short-term collectives for particular purposes. At these aggregating levels, Indigenous people are citizens of a meshed network of polities and can activate claims to rights and responsibilities according to circumstance and need. In the Sámi context, we find similar nested citizenships, from family and the local community to the Sámi nation. One could also add both an overarching nation state and even international level of Indigenous networks. This is, for instance, evident in on a curricular level, where nested citizenship within local and global communities is expressed. This nestedness is a relevant perspective for the Norwegian core curriculum, where Sámi citizenship is linked to Norwegian citizenship, a relationship that Vitikainen (this volume) analyses through an idea of shared fate.

## Curricula in Indigenous education

A curriculum is a document that governs the activity of a school or a school system, and it is a statement about what is the imagined shared knowledge across a



nation or a federal state. There is a connection to citizenship in this. A curriculum expresses what it takes to be or become a citizen. Whether or not this includes people from Indigenous communities seems to vary from state to state. As such, curricula and accompanying policy documents are powerful texts. Statements – or lack of statements – on Indigenous issues in national curricula can be seen as expressions of state policy on Indigenous issues: expressions of the state wanting to constitute truth regimes (Ball, 1994). This may point to a critical perspective on representation and position. A critical question can be raised concerning the possibility for Indigenous people to speak and be heard (Buras & Apple, 2006).

Format and power vary from country to country and context to context. This goes both for how a curriculum is made, what it looks like, how it is introduced, how much juridical power it has, and how it is used. Further, the level of the curriculum authority varies. In Australia as a federal state, the different states make curricula for the state's schools. In Norway, Sweden, Finland, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Namibia, the curriculum is a matter for the nation state and government (see chapters by Olsen, Sollid, Harvey, and Ninkova, this volume). We also see that Indigenous communities are gaining more jurisdiction over Indigenous issues in curriculum processes.

We base this book on an understanding of curriculum that acknowledges this kind of document as the total array of efforts of a nation to develop programs for education (see also Goodlad, 1979, p. 44). As will be evident from the chapters in this book, the complexity and layers of content in a curriculum are captured by Goodlad, Klein, and Tye's (1979) conceptualisation of curriculum through five perspectives: ideal, formal, perceived, operational, and experienced. For example, the Norwegian curriculum has a strong standing and legal status, as it is an amendment to the Education Act. This makes the curriculum a legal document. The curriculum governs the nationwide system of public schools, and to illustrate the reach of the document even further it is important to note that almost all Norwegian children attend public schools. With the curriculum counted as part of national law, as a precept to the law on education, it is clearly an authoritative document, and a public expression of the official state policy. Nonetheless, there is not necessarily coherence between policy and practice. The implementation gap prevails as a global phenomenon (see chapters by Smith, Ninkova, Olsen, and Harvey), and points to possible tensions concerning the expectations towards what Indigenous students and communities can achieve through education. This clearly has practical and financial dimensions as well as ideological and pedagogical dimensions. Olsen (this volume) shows how educational leaders struggle to find the resources (human, financial, teaching) to fully implement the goals and demands of the Sámi curriculum.

It is not only the nation's total array of efforts that are relevant here, but also the Indigenous people's contributions. A curriculum can potentially be the total array of efforts by Indigenous peoples to insert their understandings, knowledge systems, and content into programs for education. In other words, it is not necessarily simply top-down from the state and its efforts, but potentially also bottom-up. When it comes to Indigenous participation in the making of curricula, as well as the curricular representation of Indigenous peoples and communities, a similar kind of diversity is found. This mirrors the varying levels of recognition of Indigenous peoples and rights in the different states at hand.

The different perspectives on curriculum communicate well with the concept of scale, that is, the perspectives are a way to describe and see the relationships between the layers of the curriculum. It is important not to see each of the layers as independent from the others. On the contrary, we argue for a need to investigate the encounters and intersections of the perspectives. As policy documents with an ideological content, analysis of curricula includes paying attention to intertwined discourses about academic content and political and ideological values. As such, they illustrate what the nation state imagines as shared knowledge and values, and hence what is the ideal curriculum to keep a sense of belonging and coherence across the nation or federal state, including the space for Indigenous people.

## **A NORTHERN STARTING POINT: INDIGENISING EDUCATION IN SÁPMI?**

As is evident from our introduction so far, our point of departure for discussing Indigenous education and citizenship is the educational context of the Indigenous Sámi people in the northernmost part of Europe. We have already shared some perspectives, and here we provide a more coherent overview of the processes and the shift from colonising to Indigenising education in Sápmi. The Sámi today live in Sápmi, a continuous territory in four different nation states: Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. When the borders between the four nation states became more fixed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Sámi people's formal status as citizens were linked to these four states (see also Lantto, 2010). From the 1950s onwards, the border-transcending identification as a Sámi collective has become more prominent, but the nation state citizenship remains (see also Berg-Nordlie, 2017, for an analysis of pan-Sámi politics). All this suggests that although there is a sense of unity among the Sámi, the four nation states provide different political and ideological frames for the processes of decolonising and Indigenising education.

For legal reasons, there are no official statistics on the exact number of Sámi. Nevertheless, an estimate indicates that there are approximately 100 000 Sámi in

the four states, with the majority living in Norway. A recent report (Melhus & Broderstad, 2020) suggests that almost 40 percent of the population in the northernmost counties of Norway have Sámi or Kven heritage. This would increase the number of Sámi at least on the Norwegian side. Any number must, however, be interpreted with caution as there so far is no consensus about how to count – or about what it takes to identify or to be identified – as Sámi.

In Sápmi, colonisation is about political, economic, cultural, and linguistic oppression and about building and maintaining social hierarchies. Colonisation is here a process that works on many levels describing how a coloniser, the nation state and its agents, such as the church and its missionaries, takes over and/or has an impact on others' land and resources, political power, culture, identity, language, and mind. From the beginning, schools were inherently involved in this process, and as such must be seen as an important colonising agent, first and foremost with an assimilatory goal. For example, when Sámi land was taken, the colonial educational system supported state positions by telling stories where the land was presented as 'ours' (the state's and majority's) not 'yours' (the Indigenous community's). A colonial archive of knowledge where Sámi knowledge systems were excluded was thus constructed and communicated to the following generations. Schools, as part of a colonial system, justified colonisation by providing stories, 'knowledge' and frameworks where the majority owned land and held the power to define terms of ownership, facts, and practices. In consequence, colonial schools were agents of assimilation, which means working towards the marginalisation of Sámi languages and cultures with juridical instruments like education acts, instructions, and curricula. Colonisation was part of the entire nexus of education, from national and foreign policy, via local and regional regulations, to specific classrooms. In the classrooms, the most concrete work of colonisation was the way some teachers shamed Sámi children for speaking Sámi languages. As Sara Ahmed has shown (2004), emotions too are cultural and political. As such, colonisation implies weakening and challenging the emotional and cosmological connections of Sámi people to their land, culture, and community.

From the 1850s, Norway started an official assimilation policy aimed at the minorities. The Sámi, together with the Kven/Norwegian Finns (see below), were at the receiving end of this Norwegianisation policy that had schools as a key arena (Andresen, Evjen, & Ryymin, 2021). Through the means of educational legislation, all students were given the same goals, and there was hardly any space for adapting the content or pedagogy on the basis of the students' cultural or linguistic backgrounds. In Sweden, the government issued two different educational pathways for the Sámi. Firstly, most Sámi faced assimilatory efforts, in many ways similar to what we find in Norway. Secondly, the reindeer herding Sámi were facing a policy

of segregation through the nomad school. The lower expectations of Sámi students' school achievements is noticeable (Huss, 1999). In this process, and through educational oppression, many Sámi learned to feel ashamed about their own culture and language. By the end of the official assimilation policy, the Sámi communities were deeply changed. Along the Norwegian coast, many Sámi became or appeared to be Norwegian. However, the Sámi did not disappear completely. In some areas, the language and the culture endured despite such pressures, and contemporaneously Sámi are characterised by a continuity of linguistic and cultural practices.

In the Nordic countries, the period after World War II was both a time for silence and continued marginalisation, and a time for decolonisation through political activism and revitalisation and reclamation of language and culture (Andresen et al., 2021; Broderstad, this volume; Sollid, this volume). With the emergence of local Sámi organisations, Nordic and later also pan-Sámi cooperation and international orientation, we see an important ethnopolitical mobilisation from the 1950s and onwards. The major political achievements for Sámi in the Nordic countries came during the 1970s and 1990s. In this situation, the areas where Sámi language and practices had survived became a source for inspiration and mobilisation, for instance in the process of decolonising schools and curricula. Broderstad (this volume) sees the implication of this development for the education policy. Today, Norway, Sweden, and Finland have – to varying degrees – acknowledged their active role in the oppression and assimilation of the Sámi communities, and have – to varying degrees – recognised the Sámi as an Indigenous people.

Important in the process of Indigenising education is that the Sámi have, both on a political and a cultural level, embraced and integrated the matter of being Indigenous into their own culture and language, a process that is also about identity (Lane & Makihara, 2017). A telling progress on these matters is the ratification of international conventions and charters. In this picture, the ILO convention on the rights of tribal and Indigenous peoples and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities are important documents at the international level which have influence on the national level. Here, among other aspects, the right to self-determination, land rights, the duty to consult Indigenous communities, and education are mentioned as areas that bind the states in their relationship with their Indigenous communities. In Norway, the political and juridical recognition of the Sámi as an Indigenous people is today explicitly expressed in the national curriculum (see Fjørtoft and Vitikainen, this volume). The question nevertheless becomes how to address both the unity between Sámi across the four nation states in Sápmi, and at the same time address the diversity that characterises Sápmi.

This diversity is shown in the three officially recognised Sámi languages in Norway and the names of the Sámi nation. *Sápmi* is the name of the Sámi nation in North Sámi. North Sámi is the language with the highest number of speakers. *Sábme* is the Lule Sámi name, and *Saepmie* is the South Sámi name. Both Lule and South Sámi languages were severely affected by assimilation to the extent that there are now only a few hundred speakers of each language. In addition, Skolt Sámi, Pite Sámi, and Ume Sámi have historical links to Norway, and today there are initiatives to reclaim these languages. Norwegian is the most common language spoken in the different Sámi communities. Sámi diversity is also prevalent when it comes to places, ways of living, culture, and gender. Reindeer herding is an important culture and industry in Sápmi. At the same time, despite its high ranking within Sámi community, fewer than ten percent of the Sámi are connected to reindeer herding. Along the coast, Sámi have traditionally made a livelihood based on a combination of fishing, agriculture, gathering, and trading. This diversity is acknowledged through Norway's system of administrative areas of Sámi languages. Today, there are 13 municipalities where Sámi is on equal footing with Norwegian. The first municipalities to become part of this administrative area were six municipalities in the North Sámi area, including Gáivuotna-Kåfjord-Kaivuono, where Evju (this volume) is undertaking her research. Later, municipalities in Lule Sámi and South Sámi areas have also entered the area. These 13 municipalities all take on a responsibility to strengthen Sámi language and culture. Within this area, schools follow the Sámi curriculum.

Today, following the recent centuries of urbanisation, industrialisation, and modernisation, Sámi communities have changed. There is an ongoing urbanisation, increasingly making cities and towns important Sámi places (Berg-Nordlie, Dankertsen, & Winsvold, 2022; Pedersen & Nyseth, 2015). To add another layer, Norway is a diverse country, with the Indigenous Sámi as but one part of a diversity that also includes both five national minorities and transnational migrants. Two of the national minorities traditionally partly reside in the same area as the Sámi, namely the Kven/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns. The distinction between the juridical status – Indigenous people and national minority – indicates that this diversity is also the foundation of differentiation in politics and jurisdictions.

Indigenising education in one of the Sámi contexts is a process filled with and defined by a series of dilemmas and paradoxes. If we follow Tuck & Yang (2012) and their demand that decolonisation is not a metaphor but something that needs to be concrete, this could mean that all schools as well as the education system need to be torn down. Indigenising education, in this sense, would mean the rebuilding of schools – from top to bottom – on basis of Sámi priorities and practices. In practice, we know and realise that this will not happen. Indigenising

schools and education needs to be a process that takes place within the existing system. The internal decolonisation needs to be followed (or accompanied?) by internal Indigenisation.

## PRESENTATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

What unites the papers in this book is that they all build on insights from nation states and contexts where one or more Indigenous people are recognised. As such, the different education systems are framed by a political willingness to accept ethnic, linguistic, and cultural pluralism. As we have emphasised in this introductory chapter, there is, however, not *one* solution for how to Indigenise education, where the needs and dreams of Indigenous people are accommodated both in terms of national education policies and in terms of local practices. Nor is there one shared point of view within the Indigenous group. Rather, what constitutes acceptable political goals and educational solutions differ from context to context and across timescales. The reader is thus encouraged to take each contribution as an expression of the different ways of decolonising and Indigenising education. Each contribution stands on its own feet and can thus be read independently from the rest of the chapters. We nevertheless encourage the reader to start from the beginning and see the different contributions together.

Three of the papers provide a historical overview of education and citizenship. Pigga Keskitalo presents a historical overview of Sámi education through different time periods as well as some of the ongoing legal and curricular processes. Else-Grete Broderstad writes about the place of education and language in the 20<sup>th</sup> century processes concerning Sámi rights. She includes both the Sámi political movements and the growing state recognition. Diane Smith carefully traces the changes in how Indigenous citizenship is governed in Australia.

Four other papers go into the matter of curriculum and policy. Kjersti Fjørtoft and Annamari Vitikainen both go into the core curriculum of the Norwegian school from a perspective of political philosophy and the conceptual discussion of citizenship and democracy. Hilde Sollid discusses the curricula for the subjects of Sámi as a first language and Sámi as a second language respectively, articulating and implying two different ideas of citizenship. Sharon Harvey writes on the challenge of transferring a concept of language policy from one context to another and relates this to the multilingual situation in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Four chapters study the implementation of policies. Åse Mette Johansen & Elin Furu Markusson analyse textbooks for the school subject Norwegian. They explore how Sámi multilingual citizenship is presented in four textbooks in junior high school. Torjer A. Olsen uses research conversations with educational leaders as

a way of understanding the situation for Sámi schools and kindergartens. Hanna Outakoski investigates the appropriateness of an influential Anglophone model for writing instruction in an Indigenous Sámi context. Velina Ninkova writes about the implementation gaps of mother-tongue education for the Omaheke Jul'hoansi in Namibia.

Lastly, there are four chapters which examine issues related to local practices and dilemmas. Kristin Evju writes about school practices in the municipality of Gaivuotna-Kåfjord-Kaivuono in Norway. Kristina Belančić focuses on the language beliefs and practices of Sámi pupils in Sweden, analysing them as implicit language policy. Melinda Webber and Selena Waru-Benson go into the role of cultural connectedness and ethnic-group belonging in Aotearoa New Zealand, looking into the social and emotional well-being of diverse students. William Fogarty and Hilde Sollid connect citizenship and education, relating land, place, and country to educational practices.

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# 1. Timelines and strategies in Sami education

Pigga Keskitalo

**Abstract** In this chapter, the timelines and strategies of Sami education, during the different periods of history and contemporary practices in various Sami contexts, is presented. The text will start from the 1600s, then covers the period of nationalism with the rise of folk education in the 1850s, and finally presents the beginning of the present school system in the different states where the Sami live. Finally, I will present ongoing legal and curricula processes and practices, and I will then discuss prospects.

**Keywords** Sami education | Sami education history | educational self-determination | social justice | equity

## INTRODUCTION

Formal education among Indigenous peoples worldwide has had diverse practices and varies in length. Among the Sami<sup>1</sup> people, we can look at this through the missionary period (1600s–1869), nationalism (1870–1960), the establishment of Sami rights in education (1970–1990) and enhancing self-determination in education (2000–onwards). Different kinds of measures can be seen throughout this extensive time scale.

Before the missionary period, the church had already started to affect the northern regions in early Middle Ages, so we can discuss the long and complex process affected by the church. At this point, the first monasteries were established in a Sami sphere of influence and there were missionaries active in Sami regions (Ojala, 2009).<sup>2</sup> Formal European education involving the

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1 The spellings Saami and Sámi are also used. I choose to use the form ‘Sami’ to cover diversity in languages and their spellings in Sami languages.

2 Sami education history is presented ex. in Kylli (2012) and Minde (2005). More about Sami history can be read, e.g., in Aikio’s (2012) article ‘An essay on Saami ethnolinguistic prehistory’.

Sami had already emerged in the 1600s, when the church began to educate the young Sami men to spread Christianity among the Sami people (Storm, 2009). The goal of the church was both to teach religious doctrines and to encourage the people to be obedient to the church laws (Halila, 1949; Rahikainen, 2010).

Later, from the 1850s onwards, the national schools were established, and the form of education changed as it was focused on the wider population as a result of the education laws at that time. First, folk education was conducted as ambulatory schools where teachers arrived in villages and taught in one of the village houses (Hellström, 2008). Later, for example in Finland in 1921, when the compulsory education act came into force, the ambulatory school form was slowly discontinued (Syväoja, 2004). Many children attended boarding schools when participating in compulsory education (Rasmus, 2008).

It was only in the 1970s with more inclusive thinking, when the Sami's own interests were starting to be considered, that the primary school system was established. Studying Sami languages as a subject became a possibility in the core Sami areas from the 1960s onwards. Later, from 1990 onwards, Sami rights started to emerge, and Indigenous educational sovereignty began to develop. Sami education has been conducted under different rulers and throughout different periods. As these have varied and changed, states and borders have changed as well. Considering this, it is obvious that it is a complex and diverse whole. If we look at Sami education on a large scale, that is different kinds of educational measures in varied time periods, we can see that education which involved the Sami people resulted in a certain form of citizenship. According to Sollid and Olsen (2019), education in Indigenous contexts powerfully affects the sense of belonging and diverse ways of producing citizenship. Prevailing ideas about citizenship and the nation state have changed over time and the ethnic movement legitimated the exchange of demographic citizenship (Yashar, 2005). The education of the Indigenous peoples can be seen as a long project of citizenship.

This chapter undertakes critical decolonial research (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Sarivaara, 2020). I aim to explain what kinds of colonising strategies and impacts there have been in different eras. Through this, I hope to describe what citizenship means in the larger scale of the history of Sami education, and how the Indigenous right to self-determination presents itself today. Here, Sami historical educational research means those institutionalised practices conducted towards the Sami people during different eras. Sami education should be understood in two ways. In the first two periods, missionary and nationalism, the goal of education was not to take care of Indigenous peoples' own needs, but rather assimilate

them into a unified society under the control of kings and governors. Currently, the establishment of revitalisation and equal premises to conduct education are timely measures in Sami education.

Because of an increase in knowledge and an awareness of Indigenous rights, the Indigenous peoples' own needs have increased, at least in Nordic countries with the core Sami population when we study current practices, and more and more resources are to be found. Still, challenges remain. This chapter seeks to contribute to the discourse about what we have to learn from our past, what our next steps are and what is expected from Indigenous education, especially in the Sami education context, now and in the future, on the basis of history and the results that history has produced. Casting a critical eye also towards the future, the aim is to support educational policies, framing it in a diverse and complex but also timely perspective, when thinking about Sami education goals and tasks in different contexts and scholarly debates.

The reality is that the Sami people live in four countries, so it is imperative to discuss this on an ongoing basis, not only politically but also academically, and this has effects in general on what is needed in research on Sami education. The context is diverse and complicated, having different effects, and there is a need to understand and give a comprehensive picture of these situations. In this chapter, the outlines of four countries are provided and more specific attention is given to the current practices and challenges produced by the history of education. I choose to analyse the historical focal points in Sami education and the impact this has on the requirements of daily practices today.

The church's missionary period (1600–1850), national states' nationalism (1850–1960) and a rising Sami rights and Indigenous self-government period (1970–) have all had various goals. This particular historical review provides knowledge about the measures that were undertaken in the different phases. Paradoxically, the field of pan-Sami education history and current practices is very broad. This will be tackled by choosing to highlight the general outline of Sami educational history.

I seek to explain the context from the perspective of Sami education which creates particular circumstances for children as well as setting out the premise of Sami rights. An understanding of the tradition of how citizenship rights have developed over the decades and centuries, and the balance achieved between rights and obligations in each country with the Sami people, is vital for understanding the wide-ranging consequences for Indigenous societies, communities and individuals (see also Kerr, 1999). At the same time, we realise that educational measures and approaches towards Indigenous people and Sami do not

hold equal institutional power in terms of their own starting points and linguistic and cultural needs and rights (see Stein et al., 2021). Indigenous education aims to improve the educational provision for Indigenous child learners and increase their school achievement. It is done by analysing and describing the current situation, and making suggestions to improve it. Another aspect is to ensure that mainstream education gains knowledge about Indigenous issues in general (Keskitalo & Olsen, 2021).

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SAMI EDUCATION

Educational practices and measures among the Sami have changed throughout history. Lund (2014) identified four key periods for Nordic policies towards the Sami: the period of the missionaries (1600s–1800s), nationalism (1850–1970), the period of Sami as an auxiliary language (1970–1990), and the period of acceptance (1990 onwards). The Sami's own political awareness already began at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, and accelerated in 1950 (Lehtola, 2005). Finally, from the end of 1980 onwards, the real progression of Sami rights started when the Sami parliaments were established in Norway, Sweden and Finland<sup>3</sup> (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011; see also Olsen, 2019).

The missionaries in the 1600s began educational measures towards the Sami; their aim was to civilise them with the help of Christianity. The most effective way was to use the Sami language. Many Sami men were sent to Uppsala in Sweden to be trained to work among the Sami as teachers and clergymen, and later, women were also recruited to do a similar job (Lindmark, 2019). The history of Christianity in the Sami regions is long, as the first monasteries were established in the 1100s nearby the Kola Peninsula in Russia and Trondheim in Norway. Before the 1600s, the territorial areas of the states were defined; in this case, in Sweden, Denmark-Norway and Russia, opportunities for royal governance were established. Power, economics, safety and security reasons explained the interest towards the regions where the Sami lived (Greaves, 2016). The first period can be called the 'period of missionaries in the early modern period' 1600–1850 (Lund, 2014), with the aim of teaching reading, literacy skills and Christian religion to the people (Lindmark, 2019). Thus, the Sami's own thinking system had been actively defeated. The state decided through the church to diminish the

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3 The Sami Parliaments were established in Finland in 1995, Norway in 1989 and Sweden in 1993 (Stepień, Petrétei, & Koivurova, 2015).

Indigenous Sami religion and turn all Sami pagans into Christians. In the 1600s, many Sami drums were destroyed because of their assumed connection with shamanism and the dead (Pulkkinen, 2011). This was also a time of witch hunting (Kylli, 2013). Serious doubts about the content and validity of the Sami culture had been sown during the Enlightenment. At the same time, the first Sami writing system was created by the church clergymen to educate the Sami through the Sami language (Capdeville, 2014).

From the 1800s onwards, the nationalist project, conducted by the states in the regions where the Sami lived, began in different forms. Nationalism continued to marginalise the Indigenous Sami cultures and languages, and the institutional schools and boarding schools were important instruments for instilling nation states' languages and cultures (Minde, 2005). For example, in Norway, the official, written and state-funded Norwegianisation policy aimed to assimilate the Sami and Kven people from the 1850s onwards so that the Sami would change their culture and language to the mainstream Norwegian (Jernsletten, 1993). With different measures in Norway, this project lasted until the 1960s–1970s. Little by little, the Sami's own interests in their development increased from the 1900s onwards as a means of resisting assimilation policies (Oksanen, 2020).

The Alta Dam conflict in Norway stopped the strong efforts of the Norwegianisation policies in 1980. Afterwards, new waves of Sami consciousness arose as Sami rights slowly developed, which also affected the educational field (Lehtola, 2005). In Sweden, the nationalism period from the mid-1850s to the 1970s can be referred to as a period of segregation. The Sami reindeer herders came under a 'Lapp should be Lapp' policy, where education was provided to children in a separate form in their traditional reindeer villages, while other Sami were educated in Swedish in state municipal schools. This resulted in Sami-language loss for those Sami who were not identified as reindeer herders (Winsa, 1999). In Russia, the progression seems to be like other countries with Sami people, but from 1940 until 1980, Stalin and his successors denied the usage and teaching of Sami (and other) languages at schools, meaning they were only permitted to use Russian. The Soviet authorities also sent 18 Sami-speaking teachers to forced labour camps (Kotljarchuk, 2019). In Finland, there was no written assimilation policy, but the assimilation was compelled by the Fennomania ideology, which emphasised Finnish culture and a sense of Finnishness, first in Swedish in the 1800s and later highlighting Finnish. Finland became independent in 1917. At this point, minorities were not given any special attention, so they also lacked the support for their languages, cultures and identities (Keskitalo et al., 2016). The effects may have become assimilationist still, so there was probably not a

conscious policy for ethnic groups other than speaking Swedish and Finnish in Finland.

## REVIEW OF THE PREMISES OF CONTEMPORARY SAMI EDUCATION

The 16th-century Enlightenment and 19th-century nationalism periods worked as tools for the exercise of power and harmonisation in civilisation projects for nation building, where education was a key instrument. In that sense, education and training policies, practices and the underlying pedagogical solutions were influenced by social ideas and prevailing ideological flows. Particularly among the Sami in the 1800s and 1900s, ethnicity and ethnic governance led to school policy practices that were both exceptional when compared to the people who represented the country's dominant linguistic group(s), and were also common elsewhere in the world among Indigenous peoples (Keskitalo et al., 2016). This means that Indigenous people worldwide including the Sami were under certain educational measures, with the aim to unify them into the mainstream image of one nation.

Education historically has also had an impact on the Sami languages. Due to unification measures, some Sami languages are no longer or hardly in use. Today, there are nine different Sami languages, but not all of them have a separate writing system. The Sami languages are spoken in Scandinavia from mid-Norway and Sweden, spreading through the northern regions to Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula. These languages are South Sami, Lule Sami, Pite Sami, Ume Sami, North Sami, Skolt Sami, Inari Sami, Ter Sami, and Kildin Sami. There are approximately 100,000 Indigenous Sami people in the four countries depending on criteria which vary by country. About 30% speak some of the Sami languages (Salminen, 2015). Increasingly, Sami people have migrated to towns outside the core Sami regions which have created new challenges for education (Keskitalo, 2019).

Education of the Sami has been assimilative, especially during the nationalist period. The effect of these policies and practices means that, as a result, a significant number of Sami people are unable to speak their own language. Language revitalisation is necessary so that children are able to learn their Sami language and reclaim their heritage (Äärelä, 2016; Pasanen, 2018). It is crucial that language revitalisation is carried out with language planning, the support of society and wider cooperation (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013). Sami languages are currently being promoted in a situation where, for a long time, different policies that led to assimilation have occurred, and the pressure of continuing language loss is still happening (Rasmussen, 2013).

## Finland facing new challenges in Sami education to meet the needs of suburban areas

In Finland today, the Constitution of Finland<sup>4</sup> recognises the Sami as an Indigenous people (Niemivuo, 2010), meaning that the Sami can develop their language and culture. This includes expressions of Sami Indigenous knowledge, traditional livelihoods and all other wide-ranging ways in which the Sami people choose to articulate their culture (Hyvärinen, 2010). This right is maintained specifically through the Sami Parliament Act.<sup>5</sup> The Sami Language Act, meaning North, Inari and Skolt Sami languages, safeguards the right of the Sami to use their own language when accessing public services, and imposes an obligation on the public authorities to implement and promote the linguistic rights of the Sami in the Sami homeland municipalities (Utsjoki, Inari, Enontekiö and northern Sodankylä), and with those authorities outside it as specified in the act.<sup>6</sup> However, according to a study on the implementation of the Sami Language Act, the authorities still have very few Sami speakers, and the use of the language is low (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2012).

Currently, the Sami language is taught based on the Basic Education Act in the Sami homeland area which consists of four municipalities – Utsjoki, Inari, Enontekiö and Sodankylä – and in this area it is also possible to study in Sami-speaking classes (Arola, 2020). According to the Basic Education Act, Sami-speaking pupils living in the Sami homeland should mainly be educated in the Sami language.<sup>7</sup> In practice, the act is implemented differently in these municipalities (Aikio-Puoskari, 2013). Outside this area, a special, additional education in Sami-language learning is provided for two hours per week, which now serves as an example of a Sami language distance education project (Saamen kielten etäyhteyksiä hyödyntävän opetuksen pilottihanke, 2020). In some municipalities, like Helsinki, Oulu, and Rovaniemi, face-to-face teaching is available. However, it is a bit worrying that 75% of Sami children currently live outside the core Sami areas, and of these approximately 2,000 children, only 10% attend the Sami-language teaching (Helander, Keskitalo, and Turunen 2022; Saamelaiskäräjät, 2021a). The Education Act needs to be revised to meet learners' current needs (Aikio-Puoskari,

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4 The status of the Sami Indigenous people was secured in the Finnish Constitution in 1995, and in the subsequently revised Constitution of 1999 (The Constitution of Finland 1995: 121.4; 11.6.1999/731).

5 Laki saamelaiskäräjistä 974/1995 [Sámi Parliament Act].

6 Saamen kielilaki 1086/2003 [Sámi Language Act].

7 Perusopetuslaki 21.8.1998/628 [Basic Education Act].



2016). The existing challenge is the accessibility of Sami-language teaching. Also, there are not enough resources – learning materials and teachers (Arola, 2020).

There are about 1,700 registered speakers of North Sami in Finland out of a little over 10,000 Sami. As a result of the low status of the language and the fact that most people are bilingual, they may not officially identify themselves as Sami speakers or they may not even speak Sami. Registered speakers and the existence of the speakers is not the same issue. There are around 500 Inari Sami speakers, around 350 Skolt Sami speakers, and fewer than an estimated 2,000 North Sami speakers in Finland. North Sami, as the so-called lingua franca of Sami languages, is spoken in three countries, while Inari Sami is spoken only in Finland (Salminen, 2015).

Sami language early childhood education is organised widely in Finland based on the Act on Early Childhood Education and Care.<sup>8</sup> Also, language nests exist in Finland and are unique in countries with Sami people; they aim to revitalise Sami languages among pre-school children under school-aged groups (Äärelä, 2016).

According to Pasanen (2018), in Inari, very few children learned the language before the founding of the first Inari Sami language nest (an immersion-based approach) in 1997, when the number of child speakers was down to five or so. Since then, however, the programme, which now runs two language nests, has proved remarkably successful, and a substantial portion of Inari Sami youth are now growing up as functional bilinguals who may use the native language not only with elderly relatives or language nest tutors, but also among themselves (Pasanen, 2018; Salminen, 2015).

In addition to the language situation, migration from traditional areas has been recognised as a language loss threat to the number of language speakers (Romaine, 2007). While most of the elderly Sami people live in the Sami core areas, most children live outside these core areas (Keskitalo, 2019; Ruotsala-Kangasniemi & Lehtola, 2016). In Finland, about 65% of Sami live outside the Sami homeland. Based on statistics, the Sami population has more than doubled since 1970, but the number of people who have declared Sami as their mother tongue has decreased for all three Sami languages (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2012). The language shift reflects the support minority languages have gained in different periods and the language attitudes as well. Regardless of whether the language shift was due to forced or voluntary processes, the results have an intricate societal, psychological and economic impact (Hyltenstam, Stroud, and Svonni, 1999).

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8 Varhaiskasvatustilaki 540/2018 [Act on Early Childhood Education and Care].

## Norway with equal premises to conduct Sami education

In Norway, the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) passed the Sami Act in 1987. Norway is the only country with a Sami population that has ratified the ILO 169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention in 1989,<sup>9</sup> relating to Indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries<sup>10</sup> (Ravna, 2015). According to Semb (2012), Norway wanted to ratify the ILO 169 to demonstrate their policy change towards the Sami following the lengthy Norwegianisation policies and the Alta conflict from 1979–1981, to globally prove themselves as a leading supporter of human rights. Also, the Sami organisations and Sami Parliament in Norway urged the country to approve ILO 169<sup>11</sup> (Semb, 2012).

The Norwegian Constitution declares, ‘[I]t is the responsibility of the authorities of the state to create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life.’<sup>12</sup> In Norway, the Sami languages (North, Lule and South Sami) enjoy the status of an official national language (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2002). All pupils have the right to study the Sami language, regardless of where they live. Further, according to the Basic Education and Upper Secondary Education Act,<sup>13</sup> pupils who live in the Sami language administrative area<sup>14</sup> have the right to study the Sami language and participate in Sami-language-speaking classes (*Kommunal- og distriktsdepartementet*, 2020). The form of the latter varies, as some of the municipalities prioritise cultural inclusivity, so that bilingual classes are established which enable everyone to learn Sami. There are also Norwegian Sami-language schools (Keskitalo, 2010). Based on the Basic Education Act, those pupils who do not live in Sami language administrative districts should be ethnically noted as Sami based on the Sami Act’s definition of

9 ILO 169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989).

10 Indigenous, Sami people in Norway secured their rights in 1988 Constitutions of Norway (Grunnlovens paragraf 110a).

11 In turn, the Swedish government noted that land rights were too unclear in terms of the Swedish legislation, which made it complicated to accept the ILO 169. Similar reasons are also why Finland has not ratified ILO 169 (Semb, 2012).

12 Article 110 A of the Norwegian Constitution. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Norway LOV-1814-05-17.

13 Lov om grunnskolen og den vidaregåande opplæringa (opplæringslova) LOV-1998-07-17-61.

14 The Sami language administrative area consists of the following municipalities: Guovdageainnu suohkan/Kautokeino, Kárásjoga gielda/Karasjok, Deanu gielda/Tana, Unjárgga gielda/Nesseby, Porsáנגgu gielda/Porsanger, Gáivuona suohkan/Kåfjord, Dielddanuori suohkan/Tjeldsund and Loabága suohkan/Lavangen in Troms og Finnmark county; Hábmerra suohkan/Hamarøy and Aarborten tjjelte/Hattfjeldal in Nordland; Snåasen tjjelte/Snåsa, Raarvihken Tjjelte/Røyrvik and Røros in Trøndelag (*Kommunal- og distriktsdepartementet*, 2020).

Sami; as such, they should be eligible to be added to the Sami electoral roll and so meet the requirements of the definition.<sup>15</sup>

In Norway, the number of North Sami speakers varies from 10,000 to 25,000 depending on the criteria used (Marjomaa, 2012; Salminen, 2015; Sammallahti, 1998). Lule Sami speakers live in Norway and Sweden, and have an estimated number of 1,500 speakers. Ume Sami and South Sami are spoken in Sweden and Norway, but there are only 20 speakers and an estimated 500 speakers, respectively. Skolt Sami is non-existent at the moment in Norway but was formerly spoken there as well (Salminen, 2015; Sammallahti, 1998).

### Sweden waiting to widen Sami language tuition practice that meets requirements

In 1977, the Swedish Parliament recognised the Sami as an Indigenous people.<sup>16</sup> In Sweden, the Sami, as an Indigenous people, have been accepted as a nation according to the Swedish Constitution since 2011;<sup>17</sup> Section 2 of Chapter 1 provides for the general ethnic, linguistic and religious rights of minorities to promote, preserve, and develop Sami cultural and social life. Sweden has thus recognised that the Sami are both a people, an Indigenous people and a national minority. A people theoretically have a greater right to self-determination than a minority, and a people have a stronger position than an Indigenous people. An Indigenous people have cultural rights, but not the same right to self-determination as a people (Sametinget, 2020, 2022).

The Sami language has the status of an official minority language in Sweden, and there is a special administrative area of Sami languages with multiple municipalities as part of that.<sup>18</sup> In Sweden, the separate Sami school system for 1–6 graders is transforming the knowledge and the value assigned to the common traditional heritage for the next generations through education (Sameskolstyrelsen, 2020). The Education Act supports Sami language teaching in Sami administrative areas with minority language law support. Integrated Sami language education is conducted in Sami schools. There are also regulations in support of distance education in Sami.<sup>19</sup>

15 Lov om grunnskolen og den vidaregåande opplæringa (opplæringslova) LOV-1998-07-17-61 [Act on primary and secondary education].

16 Riksdagen i Sverige prop 1976/77: 80, bet 1976/77: KrU43.

17 Prop. 2009/10:80, ändring av RF 1:2 6 st; riksdagsbeslut 2010-10-24.

18 Lag om nationella minoriteter och minoritetsspråk (2009:724) [Act of minorities and minority languages].

19 Skollag (2010:800) [Act of School].

According to Salminen (2015), there are 15,000 to 20,000 Sami people in Sweden, and approximately 9,000 speak some of the Sami languages, which are North, South, Pite, Ume, Lule, and North Sami. The latter is spoken by 5–6,000 people in Sweden. Thirty people speak the Pite Sami in Jokkmokk, parts of Gällivare and other adjacent counties in the Norrbotten Province in Sweden and in the Tysfjord region in the northern Nordland county in Norway. A small number of children learn the Lule Sami language Norway (see previous section for Norwegian statistics) and Sweden, and while a downward trend seemed highly alarming a few years ago, the use of Lule Sami has recently increased to some extent (Salminen, 2015; Sammallahti, 1998). In 2000, Sami was recognised as an official minority language in Sweden (Swedish Institute, 2021).

In the Russian Federation, two hours of language instruction are required per week

At the level of the Russian Federation, there are several laws and regulations concerning the Sami in the Kola Peninsula, such as a provision in the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993, Article 69) guaranteeing the rights of Indigenous peoples in accordance with the international agreements ratified by Russia, and the provision guaranteeing the rights of certain small groups of Indigenous peoples in the Federation (1999). In 2000, in the small northern part of the Russian Federation, the list of officially recognised Indigenous peoples was expanded from 32 to 45 peoples (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011).

In the Russian Federation, the Sami are protected in Article 69 of the Constitution, and they are guaranteed the Rights of Indigenous Numerically-small Peoples of the Russian Federation (Ravna, 2015, p. 65). The situation there has been, for a longer period, challenging in educational matters. Currently, only a couple of hours of Sami language instruction are conducted in the Lovozero village for the early years of primary school as an extracurricular activity. No education act-based support is given for Sami language tuition, but rather it is based on the state support for the Indigenous small-numbered peoples among the other regional and federal legislation (Zmyvalova & Outakoski, 2019).

In Russia, in the Kola Peninsula, there are three Sami languages. Most speakers are Kildin Sami speakers. Today there are perhaps 650–700 speakers, among which there are probably no children; while there are some younger speakers, most are middle-aged or older. Akkala Sami, spoken in the village of Babino, is nearly extinct, as no speaker is known to be living. The same goes for Ter Sami, which only has a couple of speakers left. There are approximately 20 elderly

speakers of Skolt Sami in the Kola Peninsula in Russia (Salminen, 2015; Scheller, 2013).

## **CURRENT TENDENCIES WITH SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES**

Norway provides wide access to Sami tuition, regardless of background, in the core Sami areas, which are defined as Sami language administrative areas, consisting of 12 municipalities. Outside of this, a Sami pupil is defined through family bonds. In Finland, this right is bound to the pupil's language competency in the Sami homeland, and, outside of this, the state expects the pupil to be Sami-speaking (Saamelaiskäräjät, 2021b). Sweden has widened its education through a minority language act, but practical implementation does not appear to be functioning, despite the wide possibilities (Hammine, 2016). Ongoing challenges remain in Russia (Zmyvalova, 2020).

Nevertheless, despite advances in the recognition of the Sami languages and resultant educational provisions, the languages remain at risk of further loss. This potential loss can be attributed to a range of factors. In Finland, for example, Sami education is currently connected to the Sami homeland. But approximately 75% of Sami pupils reside outside that core region, only 10% of which study the Sami language. This poses an obvious threat to the future of the Sami language (Helander et al., 2022; Ruotsala-Kangasniemi & Lehtola, 2016; Saamelaiskäräjät, 2021b). Another common challenge is the lack of teachers and resources (Arola, 2020), as skewed language attitudes are reported to affect the revitalisation and usage of Sami languages (Belančić, Lindgren, Outakoski, Westum, & Sullivan, 2017).

Currently, there are different practices in Sami education in different states. Norway ratified ILO 169 in 1989, and has actively increased Sami education from kindergarten to adult education and universities. For example, in 1997, Norway implemented a Sami school and curriculum system which are parallel to that of the national school system. In the Sami language administrative district, Norway conducts inclusive education systems, as every pupil in the region is meant to be able to attend a Sami school. There are different measures on how municipalities run Sami schools. Some of the schools are Sami-speaking, with a bilingual emphasis, while others are conducted in Norwegian with Sami as a second or third language. In 2010, Norway started its own Sami teacher education which was expanded to the master level in 2017.

In Finland, there are no separate Sami schools or curriculum, but the national curriculum can be applied locally at municipality schools where, in the Sami

homeland, there are Sami and Finnish-language classrooms. In some of the municipalities, language revitalisation is emphasised so that there are language classes for those who have limited competency in the Sami language. Those who live outside the Sami homeland follow extracurricular teaching mainly via online teaching, provided by the Sami language distance teaching project.

In Sweden, the Sami school system has been in place since 1981, with their own curriculum in six municipalities. Outside the Sami schools, the Swedish system of mother-tongue instruction, which applies to Sami among other languages, regularly only provides one hour per week of instruction.

Russia's limited Sami-language teaching results in a negative model of language teaching (see Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010). The situation is demanding and disturbs language maintenance. On the other hand, it assists in language revival. Measures towards Sami languages call for urgent measures in Russia.

Long periods of assimilation, conducted in different forms, in different states, with Sami people have resulted in a similar need to revitalise the Sami languages. It has been organised and understood very differently. Access to education is a problem in most situations.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have examined education offered to the Sami from an educational history perspective and the education practices today to see education as a citizenship project. As described in the chapter, there had been various tendencies and measures conducted towards the Sami people over long periods since the 1600s. After the missionary period, the Enlightenment, and state nationalism from 1850–1960, there has been an obvious shift from 1980–1990 onwards, as the previous policies were based on othering and assimilating. Attitudes toward the Sami changed, and the true recovery of the Sami languages was possible through the transmission practices of Sami education. These kinds of recovery practices are needed in language and cultural education with active measures in a situation where minoritised languages and Indigenous languages try to recover and build a brighter future for children, adults, families, and society members.

The Sami people as equal actors seems to be realised very differently in different countries. The Sami in the Nordic countries have been under aims of unifying people through education measures for a long time, until 1970. Currently, the policies in the Nordic countries and the Russian Federation vary as do Sami people. While Norway conducts inclusive policies, Russia continues with negative educational programmes towards the Sami and Indigenous people.

According to Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar (2010), such a negative educational programme is when teaching occurs less than two hours per week in the minoritised language. Norwegian claims about Indigenous politics can be based on the Sami languages sharing an equal official position in Norway, and Indigenous rights based on the Norwegian Constitution are fulfilled in education quite well. For example, their own curriculum covers through independent early childhood, primary school, upper secondary, and university programmes with their own frames and laws. In Sweden, Sami shares a minority language position but has challenges in overcoming the practical issues like the Swedish government implementing its own survey and determining the need for an action plan (Lainio, 2017).

The reforms of the law and the curriculum have constantly improved conditions for Sami education, such as how education providers need to offer Sami-language teaching in their field of work. It was after this that the educational laws began lending permanent support for Sami-language teaching and teaching in the Sami language. There are hundreds of children and young people who have had the opportunity to be taught in primary school in the Sami language, in Sami-language subject studies or as second language facilities (Aikio-Puoskari, 2009). This gives a very different starting point and positive signs for the situation of the Sami language in society.

Still, the Sami languages remain severely endangered. Studies have shown that the language shift is still occurring (Rasmussen, 2013) as parents do not choose to speak Sami to their children who then do not master Sami, or they choose other programmes rather than Sami for their children to study. Sami education and teaching is also not available for all families due to distances between the home and school. Also, sociolinguistic and practical and demographic challenges exist as many Sami people today live outside the core areas. This creates new demands for the education system to take care of the future of Indigenous people. There is also ongoing demand to impart knowledge of Sami issues to mainstream education at different levels and preservice teacher education programmes. The citizenship project concerning the Sami has a more nuanced and deeper meaning, and is closely connected to the human rights development globally.

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## 2. Sámi education between law and politics – The Sámi-Norwegian context

Else Grete Broderstad

**Abstract** Applied as an analytical framework, four phases of rights' recognition shed light on the path the Sámi in Norway have taken to increase autonomy and influence policies in the shared spaces of Norwegian politics. Relational self-determination serves as a theoretical entrance and captures the complex interdependence between policies and indigenous rights, concretized to the right to Sámi language education. However, despite a Sámi-educational-rights-based development, Sámi pupils and their families face challenges in terms of Sámi language learning.

**Keywords** Office of the Auditor General | relational self-determination | rights' recognition | Sámi language education | Sámi Parliament

### INTRODUCTION

Education policies mirror and promote core values of justice and human rights a society wants to uphold, with the school as one of the most important societal institutions. In a Sámi context, school matters became a main issue both for the first Sámi organizational efforts in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and after World War II, when Sámi organizational efforts gained momentum (Lund, 2003, p. 40). Here I aim to provide a brief overview of the changes in Sámi education policies, by drawing a line from the post-war changes to the contemporary policy on Sámi education, including the current revision of the Education Act on primary education (NOU 2019: 23). While there are common features between the Nordic countries of rights and possibilities of Sámi pupils to learn Sámi language, there are great differences between these countries in terms of resources and accessibility, forms of education and guidelines for education policy (Aikio-Puoskari, 2009, p 225). I concentrate on the right to Sámi language education in Norway.

While my point of departure is the post-war thaw of Norwegian politics towards the Sámi, the history of Sámi opposition to state-sponsored assimilation and appeals to the Norwegian authorities to secure the Sámi languages and culture stretches far back in time. It is not without reason that the Norwegian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigates the Norwegianization of the indigenous Sámi and the national minorities – the Kven, Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns – has emphasized the role of education and schooling in their inquiry of the more than 100 years official state assimilation policy (Norwegian TRC, 2020). An obtained language shift to Norwegian became a measure of the failure or success of this policy (Minde, 2003, p. 122). National efforts of inserting transitional districts, salary increases if successful in showing a language shift, and the changed regulations preventing Sámi from becoming teachers, severely impacted local Sámi communities (Bjørklund, 1985; Lund, 2003; Jensen, 2005). However, this heavy-handed state policy faced local and national Sámi resistance by Sámi pioneers and teachers who mobilized against the cultural hegemony of the majority society (Bjørklund, 1985; Jernsletten, 1986, 1990; Jensen, 2005; Zakariassen, 2011). Formally, the policy adopted in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century ended in the late 1950s (Minde, 2005, p. 6). Still, the cultural and socio-cultural consequences continued to manifest themselves (Eidheim, 1969). These consequences assert themselves even today and necessitate a distinction between a comprehension of the Norwegianization policy versus the Norwegianization process (Sámi Church Council, 2017).

The initial post-war change of policy signaled a new approach by the authorities towards Sámi educational issues (Andresen, 2016). It is within the educational sector that institution building targeting Sámi concerns started, for instance, with the Sámi gymnasium classes in Kárášjohka in 1969 and the Council of Sámi Education established in Guovdageaidnu in 1975. As time went by, the Sámi pushed the perception of rights into the public political consciousness by appealing to international law and human rights standards. A general Sámi institutionalization process from the mid-1980s onwards was crested with the establishment of the Sámi Parliament in 1989.

The prerequisite for the development over the last three decades is the autonomous role of the Sámi Parliament, as an independent voice with the ability to shape, create and integrate its own policies into the political system as a whole. Sámi concerns and issues at all levels of the educational pathway are gaining ground and becoming a significant part of concerns, for example, in national curricula and textbook work (see also Olsen, Sollid, & Johansen, 2017). Within the limited fields of curricular work, the Sámi Parliament acts as a political premise supplier, a consultation partner and an administrative authority. As a democratic tool for Sámi

self-determination (Sámi Parliament, 2020a, p. 13), the Sámi Parliament interacts at the national level with the national parliament as the legislator, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Directorate of Education and Training, at the regional level with the County Governor and the County Municipalities, and at the local level with the municipalities as school owners.

However, despite strengthened rights within the field of Sámi education, Sámi pupils and their families experience a range of challenges. The Office of the Auditor General (2019, p. 8) has revealed substantial shortcomings in information about Sámi language education, a lack of teaching materials, shortcomings in the organization and accomplishment of Sámi language distance education, scarcity of number of teachers and many and small scattered measures. Also, according to the public expert committee assessing legislation, measures and schemes on the Sámi languages in Norway, the right of Sámi pupils to education in and on Sámi in primary education is not fulfilled (NOU 2016: 18, p. 22; Sámi Parliament, 2020b, p. 1). The report proposes legislative amendments to enhance Sámi language rights.

Here I distinguish between political and legal rights. Political rights are those the Sámi Parliament executes on behalf of the Sámi in Norway in their efforts to self-determine, increase autonomy, and influence the field of education policy in shared spaces of Norwegian politics. Legal rights are concretized to the individual right to Sámi language education (see also Chapter 6 of the Education Act on Sámi language education and § 3-8 of the Sámi Act). Or as elucidated in NOU 2016: 18 (Chapter 5), the language rights of the Sámi supported by international law, are both of a collective and individual nature.

The concept of relational self-determination serves as a theoretical entrance and captures the complexity of navigating in a compound political landscape of interdependences between policies, interests, and the rights of the Sámi as an Indigenous people in relation to the majority population. Phases of rights development – what I have described as four stages of progress: the ‘negative,’ the ‘positive,’ the procedural and the legal institutional aspects of a rights-based development (see also Broderstad, 2014) – is applied as an analytical framework to explain the path the Sámi in Norway have taken to increase their ability to self-determine, increase autonomy and influence the field of education policy in the shared spaces of Norwegian politics.

The general Sámi political and rights development depends heavily on international legal developments (Falch & Selle, 2018, pp. 23, 201), and highlights the interdependence and the built-in tension between democracy and law, between representative government and juridification understood as *inter alia* law’s expansion and differentiation, that is how ‘law comes to regulate an increasing number



of different activities' (Blichner & Molander, 2008, pp. 38–39). With this backdrop I aim to address the question of how the phases of rights' recognition can shed light on the interaction between law and politics and the continuous challenges of the fulfilment of rights.

Gaining such an insight not only improves our understanding of rights' recognition understood as institutionalization and juridification, in particular within the educational sector, it is also relevant in the broader discussions on Indigenous peoples – state relationships, decentralizing the implementation of rights at regional and local levels, and how these relationships play out in different contexts and sectors.

This work is based on a qualitative textual analysis of secondary data from scholarly work, and the empirical material discussed are policy and legislative documents on education. Central are case documents – both the governmental and those of the Sámi Parliament – on the revision of the Education Act addressing the role and influence of the Sámi Parliament and Sámi pupils' right to Sámi language education, as well as the investigation of the Office of the Auditor General. In line with the current Education Act of 1998, § 6–1, Sámi language is understood as North Sámi, Lule Sámi and South Sámi. The distinction between first and second Sámi language education will be made relevant if the distinction appears in relation to the selected aspects of policies and legislation.

The second part accounts for the concept of relational self-determination and presents the analytical framework of the phases of Sámi rights recognition in Norway. Part three provides a brief overview of post-war changes, drawing a line to the contemporary policy on Sámi language education. Based on the distinction between rights understood as political participation and legal protection in light of the four stages of progress, part four is a review of the Sámi language rights discussion, including the revision of the Education Act, before my conclusion.

## **A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO SELF-DETERMINATION; A PROCEDURAL APPROACH TO SÁMI RIGHTS' RECOGNITION**

I have elsewhere argued for a comprehension of self-determination as relational (Broderstad, 2008, 2014). I maintain the applicability of this concept in relation to the policy field of education because the relations in question 'require a complex framework for assignment of authority, and the aspirations of autonomy involve defining relationships with states' (Kingsbury, 2001, p. 225). Self-determination as relational resonates with the arguments of Borrows (2000) for an understanding of Aboriginal citizenship (in the Canadian context), which includes a perspective of Aboriginal self-determination, and the need to include Aboriginal perspectives

in non-indigenous actions and ideas about governing and citizenship. This perspective, stressing the necessity of extending indigenous perspectives and participation in non-indigenous affairs, manifests itself in relation to the many efforts taken from the Sámi side to include Sámi perspectives in national education policies, legislation and in concrete curricula. As pointed out by Kingsbury (2001) despite enormous variations with regard to aspirations of autonomy regimes, all such regimes presuppose extensive relations between the autonomous institutions and other government institutions of the state and between indigenous peoples and other peoples within or outside the autonomous area. Josefsen (2014) refers to this as a breaking-in approach. Underlining the autonomy of the Sámi Parliament, Sámi concerns are, through policy making, simultaneously incorporated into legislation and decision-making. As will be demonstrated, the modern history of education policies targeting Sámi languages is a history of Sámi rights perspectives gradually being integrated into complex governance relations.

The Sámi rights development has been characterized by the Norwegian Power and Democracy Project (NOU 2003: 19) as an increased juridification, implying a clash of interests between popular elected assemblies of majority rule and a system of law and rights managed by judicial institutions. Broderstad, Oskal and Weigård (2011), however, argue that while juridification in the field of Sámi politics has increased following international law obligations, the scope of the possibility of established political participation further develops democracy as a governing system. As citizens of the state and as indigenous citizens, the Sámi have reshaped connections and relationships. This is due to the salient role of and through the political rights of participation as the core of citizenship, that other rights are identified and recognized. But as Vitikainen (2020) reminds us, these relationships are asymmetric and the shared spaces of interactions can be characterized by unequal relations of power: ‘the history of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations is a history of domination and power that continues to distort the ways in which relations between the two groups are presently constructed’ (p. 8).

Acknowledging that cooperation between Indigenous peoples and the majority society often does not happen on equal terms makes a relational approach to self-determination as the point of departure even more topical. The legal and political rights of the policy field of Sámi education can be studied as an evolution through stages of progress: the ‘negative,’ the ‘positive,’ the procedural and the legal institutional aspects of rights and political participation (see also Broderstad, 2014), where the latter emphasizes aspects of rights implementation and legal institutionalization. This distinction between the stages, which I apply as an analytical tool, is inspired by the Sámi Rights Committee’s (NOU 2007: 13B,

p. 824) division between international law requirements as protection against discrimination (the negative aspect of rights, Square 1, Table 2.1), implementation of positive measures (the positive aspect of rights, Square 3) and a procedural aspect securing active participation in the decision-making impacting Indigenous peoples (Square 4). Adding to these, through the lens of a fourth stage of legal institutionalization and further juridification (see Blichner and Molander, 2008) (Square 7 and 8), the accomplishments of additional normative standards and legal rights are expected to happen.

While active participation in the first place did not imply recognition of the Sámi as a collective on its own (Square 2), later engagement and consultations have empowered the Indigenous Sámi's involvement and conditions inter alia compliance with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (hereafter ILO 169). However, while the governance of Sámi affairs including education has developed through normative overriding principles and values found in national and international law as well as formal legislative and institutional participatory arrangements (Square 4 and 6), pupils, parents and teachers are still facing an implementation gap where the challenges reported by parents resemble those experienced decades ago. While the normative foundation and institutionalized arrangements of Sámi language education and individual rights to Sámi pupils are endorsed, problem-solving practices of how these rights are realized and implemented remain challenging, which also concerns the role of the Sámi Parliament (Square 8). The development of political and judicial rights of Sámi education policies via the lenses of the above-mentioned analytical phases can be illuminated in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1:** A procedural approach to rights' recognition

	'Negative' understanding	'Positive' understanding	Procedural emphasis	Legal institutional emphasis
Legal rights	1 Protection against discrimination	3 New interpretation of international law	5 Revised legislation	7 Enhanced legal institutionalization, juridification
Political rights	2 Participation as individual citizens	4 Incipient Sámi institutionalization	6 Strengthened Indigenous participation	8 Strengthened autonomy

Going from the first to the fourth stage implies a built-in comprehension of the progress of legal and political rights. Whether this is the case in the field of education is an empirical question, which I will return to. But first, a brief empirical overview of education policies is provided.

## ELEMENTS OF SÁMI EDUCATION POLICIES: FROM POST-WAR CHANGE TO THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ART

### Initial change

The prominent view on the Sámi in the interwar period was that the Sámi were of less value compared to Norwegians, and that Sámi culture was doomed in the meeting with other cultures (Andresen, 2016, p. 406; Minde, 2005). Both views constituted reasons for the official assimilation policy; however, these views were challenged after World War II. The post-war period is also the era of the building of the welfare state. In the period 1945–1961, the Labour Party was continuously in power, aiming for economic growth and increased employment. After the war, the state took on the responsibility of peoples' welfare in the sectors of health, social issues and education. It became a public responsibility to control societal processes which create inequality (Lorentzen, 1998, p. 247). But as pointed out by historian Henry Minde (2005), in general, Sámi culture became associated with poverty and incompatible with development and good standards of living.

Andresen (2016, p. 406) shows how two reports framed the new debate on Sámi political issues. One was the work of the 1948 Coordinating Committee for the School System, which altered the whole education policy. A deputy secretary in the Ministry for Church and Education ensured that Sámi school issues became a part of the committee's work, emphasizing the Sámi language position. The recommendations of the committee did not address minority rights, but the committee stated that the Sámi had lived in the country since ancient times with a rightful claim to education for their children following the same principles that apply to other Norwegian citizens (Andersen, 2016, pp. 415, 418; Lund, 2003, pp. 31–32). Nevertheless, local municipal boards of education in Finnmark received the proposals of the committee with scepticism and rejection, and the resistance was especially strong in Kárašjohka (Jensen, 2005, pp. 187, 188; Lund, 2003, p. 32). The same can be said about the well-known 1959 report of the Sámi Committee, which argued the need for a new policy, and discussed how to secure Sámi culture in Norwegian society (Andresen, 2016; Jensen, 2005, pp. 193–194). The Labour Party in Finnmark and a narrow majority in the school and municipal boards in Kárašjohka harshly criticized the proposals (Jensen, 2005, pp. 191–193; Stordahl, 1996). The Sámi committee report pointed out that the Sámi had lived in the county since ancient times, a foundational fact for rights. In the debate in the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament), the members of parliament argued for respect for these age-old rights. While scholarly work has discussed why the national parliament in 1963 did not adhere to the proposals of these committees, Andresen (2016) shows that during

the debate, the Storting was full of remorse for the earlier policy of assimilation, but the consensus only affected the policies of language and culture.

As Lund (2003, p. 36) points out, the Primary School Act of 1959 introduced the principle of using Sámi as language of instruction, but it was not until 1967 that initial education in and on Sámi became a subject in the schools in Kárašjohka and Guovdageaidnu. Two Sámi schools were established in the South Sámi area, the first one in Aarborte/Hattfjelldal in 1951, and in the other in Snåase/Snåsa in 1968 (NOU 2016: 18, p. 63). During the 1960s the Sámi situation was absent in curricula and a vigorous school centralization policy with the closure of small schools forced Sámi pupils to attend Norwegian-dominated municipal centres was implemented (Lund, 2003, pp. 34–35).

### Elements of the education policies from the 1970s to the late 1980s

However, the initial change continued. While the Sámi were still regarded as a Sámi-speaking part of the Norwegian population, they also constituted a cultural and linguistic minority, as pointed out in a 1980 public sub-report on the Sámi in primary school. Sámi languages were regarded as a condition for equivalent education, based on the principle of equality in education. The report mainly focused on the so-called core Sámi areas in inner Finnmark, and the long-term Sámi language situation was regarded as endangered (NOU 1980: 59, as cited in Lajord 2017, pp. 35, 37). In tandem with the Sámi Rights Committee's (SRC) report published in 1984 (NOU 1984: 18), the Sámi Cultural Committee (SCC) followed with their report on Sámi culture and education in 1985 (NOU 1985: 14). Based on the latter mandate of promoting Sámi culture and strengthening the use of the Sámi language, they viewed it as necessary to award the Sámi language and culture the status as important broad educational elements in education.

With the Primary School Act of 1969, parents could, if their children had Sámi as an everyday spoken language, claim Sámi language education. In 1976 this was changed to 'Children in Sámi districts shall be given instruction in Sámi when the parents claim this' (Lund, 2003, p. 36). From 1985 onwards, the schools in Sámi districts became more obliged to use Sámi as a language of instruction, due to an amendment to the Education Act, which stated that children in Sámi districts shall receive instruction in and on Sámi language at the lower primary levels (NOU 2019: 23, p. 77). With the establishment of the Council of Sámi Education in 1975, an expert body for the government was put in place, but with limited authority (Lund, 2003, p. 40). The council was responsible for publishing textbooks in Sámi, first in North Sámi, later also in Lule and South Sámi. Lund (2003, p. 41) points out that the progress for Sámi education in relation to the 1987 national curriculum

happened due to the role of the council. This curriculum, which stated that Sámi ethnic identity related to social and cultural conditions, formed an important condition for learning. The Sámi themselves could influence educational reforms. The Sámi were now regarded as a population with their own societal life (Lund, 2003, p. 60). Also, Lajord (2017, pp. 60–62) accounts for the role of the council, among others, in debates in the early 1990s on the interpretation of § 40 of the Education Act on Sámi language education as a right in certain areas, versus an individual nationwide right.

The 1990 amendment of the Sámi Act with the language provisions established that Sámi and Norwegian languages are equal. The groundwork accomplished through, among others, the work of the SRC and SCC had resulted in a Sámi rights development, described by Oskal (2003, p. 323) in the following way: it became difficult to reject the arguments on normative grounds, they received attention among those in the Norwegian political public that were universally oriented. What happened gained national and international attention, a national and international public served as a third part, and the burden of reason was put on the public authorities. This is also the backdrop of the 1990 Norwegian ratification of ILO 169. Norway became the first country to ratify the convention, the most explicit commitment to Indigenous rights with a prominent impact on Sámi rights and politics in Norway. The debate surrounding ILO 169 has mainly pertained to land rights, and less to language rights. Still, the general obligations following the convention may have influenced Sámi language legislation in the early 1990s (Todal, 2002, p. 69).

## New era, remaining challenges

The new policy towards the Sámi asserted itself at the beginning of the 1990s due to new framework conditions (Todal, 2002, p. 10). When the government in 1990, based on the work of the Sámi Cultural Committee, presented their bill on the revisions of the Sámi Act, the Education Act for primary school and the Act of the Courts, they founded their proposal on the fundamental view that Sámi and Norwegian languages are and should be equal (Ministry of Church Affairs and Culture, 1990, p. 2). It is also worth mentioning the all-embracing support for statutory language regulations in the hearing process of the cultural committee (Ministry of Church Affairs and Culture, 1990, pp. 12, 13). A Sámi language administrative area (SLAA) of six municipalities was established. At the time of writing, there are currently thirteen municipalities included: eight in the County of Troms and Finnmark (North Sámi), two in Nordland (Lule and South Sámi) and three in Trøndelag (South Sámi). The public expert committee assessing legislation, measures and schemes on the Sámi languages has suggested

dividing the SLAA into Sámi language preservation and Sámi language vitalization municipalities. The first category applies to municipalities where Sámi language is commonly used in most sectors of society, while the second category refers to municipalities in need of vitalization efforts to promote the use of the language (NOU 2016: 18).

Within the administrative area, formal requirements follow from among others the Education Act. All pupils within this area have the right to instruction in and on Sámi languages. Outside this area, only Sámi pupils have the right to instruction in Sámi, but both Sámi and non-Sámi, amounting to a minimum of 10 pupils in a municipality, have the right to primary education in and on Sámi, as long as a minimum of six pupils remain in the group. Sámi pupils in Norway have a right to Sámi language education wherever they live (Opplæringsloven/The Education Act 1998, §6-2; NOU 2019: 23, p. 410). Schools in 92 municipalities (out of 426 in 2018) offered Sámi language education in the school year 2017/2018. Twelve of these also offered education on Sámi languages (Office of the Auditor General, 2019, p. 7). In the 2018/2019 school year, the total number of pupils in primary and secondary school with Sámi language teaching (including first and second language) was 2875. In 2020/2021 the total number in primary and lower secondary education (level 1–10) with Sámi languages was 2522 (Vangnes, 2021, p. 2). The County Governor is responsible for the inspection of the municipalities and county municipalities following the Education Act, including the right to receive instruction in and on Sámi languages. In addition, the County Governor has an important advisory function on Sámi affairs towards the municipalities (NOU 2016: 18, pp. 190, 193).

In his doctoral work, Todal (2002) investigated the vitalization of Sámi languages in Norway during the 1990s by discussing the turn of the Sámi language shift, where language shift is understood as the change of everyday language from Sámi to Norwegian. Todal (2002, p. 68) discussed the connection between efforts on the macro level and the actual language development on the micro level. One insight is that the schools in the 1990s did not manage to work out models of vitalizing language education for Sámi as a second language (Todal, 2002, pp. 215–216), which in 1987 was introduced at primary schools (NOU 2016: 18, p. 115).

In 1993 the Sámi Parliament took over the task of appointing members to the Council of Sámi Education, and in 1998 the parliament gained authority from the Education Act over regulating curricula. The national curricula of 1997 were for the first time given formal status as a legal directive (Gjerpe, 2017). In the preparatory work to the 1997 curricula, the principle of a unitary school system with the same national subject matter was the prevailing one, a view criticized by the Sámi Parliament and the Council of Sámi Education in 1994. The Sámi Parliament

pointed out that if Norway were to comply with ILO 169, this conditioned separate Sámi curricula with authority assigned to the Sámi Parliament to determine them (Lund, 2003, pp. 81–82). The result became a parallel Sámi curriculum which applies to the Sámi language administrative area (Gjerpe, 2017; Johansen, 2017, p. 64). The Sámi Parliament has authority over instruction on Sámi language education in primary and secondary schools. In other subjects, such as history and social studies, the Sámi Parliament can draft curricula, which will be decided on by the ministry (Falch & Selle, 2018, p. 115).

The next national reform took place in 2006 with the Knowledge Promotion Reform (Kunnskapsløftet) comprising governance, structure and content, and included a parallel LK06 and LK06S for the Sámi language administrative area. With this reform, competence aims for pupils' achievements were introduced, including many Sámi competence aims (Johansen, 2017, p. 64). The Knowledge Promotion Reform has been evaluated by Solstad et al. (2009, 2010), with the aim of assessing whether the reform contributes to the ideal of more equality between Sámi and Norwegian primary education. It was not until the curriculum of 1987 that the concept of equality and equal rights applicable to Norwegian schools was included in the authorities' policy documents (Solstad et al., 2009, p. 143). The first part of the evaluation of the Reform assessed how the local school authorities and other actors prepared for the implementation of LK06S (Solstad et al., 2009, p. 41), and points to problems with the implementation and differences in opinion between the Sámi Parliament and the Directorate of Education and Training regarding the relationship between the curricula (Solstad et al., 2009, pp. 53, 147). The second report (Solstad et al., 2010) evaluated the teachers', parents', and pupils' experiences with LK06S; the authors emphasize the contextual conditions of the implementation of the curriculum.

Solstad et al. (2010, pp. 97–103) distinguish between environmental and contributory conditions, the first referring to language stimulation efforts in the public space and the pupils' local environment. No matter which group of Sámi in question, language and environmental support outside the school to realize a Sámi curriculum is significantly weaker than in similar Norwegian curricula contexts (Solstad et al., 2010, p. 96). Contributory conditions concern the organization of Sámi language teaching (separate language classes, time allocation, parallel teaching, distance teaching), the situation with teachers (lack of teachers, workload, lack of substitutes) and the situation with teaching materials (especially for South Sámi, but also for Sámi as a second language). A common feature is the scarcity of teachers, which impacts on the organization of teaching. Furthermore, the lack of teaching material contributes to an increased workload for the teachers (Solstad et al., 2010, p. 103).



These challenges are addressed in the ongoing work on the new Education Act (NOU 2019: 23). The Sámi Parliament (2021a) refers to the performance audit on education in Sámi, whose report reveals substantial shortcomings in Sámi languages education. The investigation was carried out based on indications that the educational provisions in and on Sámi were inadequate and unequal (Office of the Auditor General, 2019, pp. 7, 8). The goal was to assess the educational provision to Sámi pupils of Sámi languages. The main findings were shortages related to information about Sámi language education, shortcomings like lack of teaching materials, the organization and accomplishment of Sámi language distance education implying inequalities in the educational provision, a continued scarcity in the number of teachers and many and small scattered measures. Vangsnes (2021) has reviewed pupil numbers in primary school, and his research reveals a drop out where every fifth Sámi first-language, every third Sámi second-language and two of three Sámi third-language pupils quit Sámi language education before they finish primary school. Vangsnes (2021, p. 21) calls for more goal-oriented investigations of the causes.

## **THE POLICY FIELD OF SÁMI EDUCATION THROUGH THE LENSES OF STAGES OF RIGHTS RECOGNITION**

In this section I provide a review of how the Sámi language rights discussion has evolved through the analytical phases of rights recognition. What has been sketched out above is a development towards a rights-based education. Simultaneously, as shown by, among others, Todal (2002), Solstad et al. (2010), the Office of the Auditor General (2019) and Vangsnes (2021), there are substantial shortcomings relating to the implementation and the realization of Sámi language education.

### **Sámi-speaking Norwegians with age-old rights**

As we have seen, the normative foundation of policies towards the Sámi in the first post-war period is characterized by the need to recognize the Sámi as equal members of the state, but not recognition as a rights-bearing collective. However, as Andresen (2016, 2017) points out, a certain historical awareness asserted itself. Sámi political organizational work, in particular the Nordic Sámi Council (today's Sámi Council) and scholarly and public committee work contributed to this insight. Andresen (2016) points out that even if there were 'no formal protection of Indigenous peoples at that time, nor was there any international minority law protection, [thus] the statement must be read as an expression of what the committee viewed as right and fair' (p. 418). The awareness of the Sámi being ancient

in the country, with roots far back in time to past centuries, when authorities referred to the Sámi as the original population with age-old rights (see also Niemi, 1997; Hansen & Olsen, 2014; Pedersen, 2008), gave grounds for the initial changes.

The establishment of the Norwegian Sámi Council in 1963, as an advisory body for the authorities, became the first sign of an institutional change. While the language shifts from Sámi to Norwegian in many areas continued, education became, due to the welfare state arrangements like state study loans, accessible to more people including the Sámi. As pointed out by Nymo (2005), for Sámi youth, education became a strategy in the meeting with the Norwegian society. The Sámi were more strongly integrated as individuals than is the case with many other Indigenous peoples, who experienced a system of differential treatment (Stordahl, 1994; Smith, this volume). The Norwegian Sámi Council and the Council of Sámi Education were predecessors of what was to come. The Council of Sámi Education belonged to the first round of state funded Sámi institution building.<sup>1</sup>

But the principal view of the Sámi as holders of collective rights, by virtue of being a people on its own, did not assert itself in national policies. In terms of the reading of international law at that time, Article 27<sup>2</sup> of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) from 1966 depicted rights as ‘passive’ or ‘negative’ rights preventing discrimination. When Norway ratified the ICCPR in 1976, their relationship to the Sámi was not raised at all (Minde, 2003, p. 88). As we know, this changed during and after the Alta conflict in the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>3</sup> The subsequent comprehensive institutionalization as a means to realize collective, political rights became the landmark of the next era.

## A people whose rights are protected by international law

The initial legislation on the use of the Sámi language as a teaching language in the late 1960s and early 1970s was first and foremost a means to improve Norwegian language skills (Lund, 2003, p. 36). Still, the Sámi were, in public reports, referred

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1 Also in this round were the Sámi Gymnasium classes, Kárašjohka, 1967, the Sámi Museum, Kárašjohka (1972), Nordic Sámi Institute, Guovdageaidnu (1973), and Sámi Radio, Kárašjohka, 1976.

2 Article 27 runs as follows: “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own religion, or to use their own language.”

3 During the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, a conflict culminated over the building of the hydro-electric power station on the Alta River in Finnmark, the northernmost county in Norway. Demonstrations, civil disobedience, and hunger strikes resulted in a national and international spotlight on Norway’s dealings with its Indigenous people. This became the turning point, the start of a new Sámi political development.

to as a cultural and linguistic minority, and Sámi languages regarded as a condition for equivalent education based on the principle of equality in education. It was mainly areas in inner Finnmark which were focused on.

The aforementioned work of Sámi Rights and the Sámi Cultural Committees established in 1980 in the wake of the Alta conflict started the processes of Sámi institutionalization, which made headway in the late 1980s. The Sámi Rights Committee argued for a new reading of minority rights and state responsibility based on Article 27. International law, as a barrier on what states can do towards the Sámi, and the state's duty to actively contribute towards developing Sámi culture and embracing the material aspects of a minority culture, was emphasized. The committee based their proposal for a constitutional provision on the responsibility of the state to secure Sámi language, culture and society life on this interpretation of Article 27 (NOU 1984: 18, pp. 438, 441). This reading was followed by the Norwegian Parliament (see NOU 2007: 13, A, pp. 205, 211). Maintaining that the significance of language as one of the most important aspects of a culture, the work of the Cultural Committee (NOU 1985: 14) laid the foundation for the Sámi language provisions of the Sámi Act and the revisions of the Education Act. According to the committee, 'the Sámi themselves must be entrusted to lay down guidelines and long-term objectives for their own future' (NOU 1985: 14, p. 198). This acknowledgement paved the way for new Sámi institution building with the Sámi Parliament as the foremost expression of the collective political rights of the Sámi people of Norway.

### New legislation: Compliance with international law

The inclusion of Sámi language provisions in the Sámi Act in 1990 implied a new era for Sámi languages with an overriding Sámi status planning, where status planning means to affect the use of a language at different societal domains (Todal, 2015, p. 203).

Following domestic legislation, every Sámi child wherever they live in Norway has the legal right to Sámi language education. Not only were the individual legal rights to Sámi language education strengthened, but the institutionalization of the collective, political rights of the Sámi first and foremost through the Sámi Parliament implied a new era of public attention, state responsibility and governance. The Norwegian ratification of ILO 169 formally recognized the collective rights of the Sámi as an Indigenous people. Part six of ILO 169 contains the education articles addressing issues of state responsibility to develop and implement: education programmes and services in cooperation with the people concerned; a progressive transfer of responsibility for the conduct of these programmes; the

rights of Indigenous peoples to establish their own educational institutions; the right to be taught to read and write in their own Indigenous language; and educational measures among all sections of the national community.

In 1993 Norway endorsed the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages of 1992, which entered into force in 1998. Every third year, the state reports on the situation for their minority languages.<sup>4</sup> The incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into the Human Rights Act in 2003, has also strengthened the individual right of Sámi children to, among other things, receive Sámi language education (Sámi Parliament, 2012, p. 12). Article 30 of the Convention which parallels Article 27 of ICCPR reads as follows:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language. (Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 30)

With its incorporation into domestic law, the convention has precedence over internal legislation, and the right of the Sámi child is strengthened irrespective of location within or outside the SLAA or whether they attend a Sámi or mainstream school.

The collective rights of the Sámi as an Indigenous people and their right to self-determination and to establish and control their own education institutions are furthermore anchored in the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The introduction of the Sámi curricula reflects the ambitions of the Sámi Parliament to self-govern, and illustrates the continuous efforts of the Sámi Parliament to manifest itself as a Sámi authority within the field of education. Still, while progress can be identified as indicated in the procedural approach to rights' recognition, challenges pertaining to the fulfilment of individual and collective Sámi language rights assert themselves.

### Do strengthened consultation rights close the implementation gap?

The field of Sámi language rights and policy reveals the salient role of interaction between law and politics, and is characterized by complex governance relations. The state has committed itself to the protection of Sámi language rights, and,

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4 In Norway these are defined as North Sámi, South Sámi, Lule Sámi, Kven, Romani and Rom.

through the system of the Sámi Parliament, the Sámi as a collective is enabled to participate in the implementation and realization of these rights. Concrete outcomes and results, or lack thereof, reveal challenges in the implementation of Sámi language rights. These rights are those of Sámi children – their contemporaneous right to Sámi language education connected to their daily life.

The obstacles pointed out by Solstad et al. (2010) and raised by the Office of the Auditor General (2019) obstruct Sámi children from enjoying their individual rights to Sámi language education. These challenges relate to environmental (e.g. access to Sámi language environments) and contributory conditions (e.g. information about Sámi language education, lack of teaching materials, scarcity of teachers). Rasmussen and Nolan (2011, pp. 51–52) also mention the lack of sufficient support from local community and schools as obstacles for raising children as Sámi-speaking. The Sámi Parliament's March plenary 2021 (Sámi Parliament, 2021a, p. 7) raises several of the issues pertaining to individual and collective language rights like access to strong models of Sámi language education, including access to language-speaking environments in the case of distance education, extensively used in the South Sámi areas (Solstad et al., 2010). Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the need for statistical data on Sámi language education, it is important to note this need in order to inform evidence-based policy-making and provide an adequate empirical basis for monitoring the enjoyment of these rights (Norwegian National Human Rights Institution, 2020).

The principal view of the Sámi Parliament is that the right to education in and on Sámi must be an individual right, not limited by geography or the number of pupils desiring education. In their supplementary report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Sámi Parliament is dissatisfied that

the rights of the Sámi children are still not always respected. This may be due to national statutory provisions that do not appear to be in compliance with international conventions, or to the practices of government authorities that derogate from national and international law. (Sámi Parliament, 2017, p. 5)

Addressed as a critique of the Education Act, the parliament states: 'The right to a Sámi school is not an individual right for the pupils, but is limited, based on geography and the number of pupils who want such an offer' (Sámi Parliament, 2017, p. 13). The Committee on the Rights of the Child follows up and recommends that the state party 'Enforce the right of all Sámi children of school age to Sámi-language education and ensure that the new Education Act significantly strengthens their rights, regardless of their residency status' (UN, 2018, p. 11). The individual right to education in and on Sámi also underscores the role and

responsibility of the municipalities as school owners. Thus, in an effort to better display this responsibility, the Sámi Parliament argues that instruction in and on Sámi should be integrated in the entire Education Act, not separated in a single chapter. The law's expansion becomes a necessary means to secure equal rights on an individual basis.

The rights' development sketched out here illustrates the scope for the possibility of political participation and for the further development of democracy as a system of government (see also Broderstad et al., 2011, p. 310). The political right of consultation gained strength and implied a significant change as the Sámi Parliament in 2005, through the consultation procedures, achieved a new formal position towards the state. Political participation in decision-making processes were formalized (Falch and Selle, 2018, p. 119), and implied extensive cooperation between the Sámi Parliament and the Norwegian authorities (Meld. St. 31 (2018–2019); Sámi Parliament, 2019). In their 2020 annual report, the Sámi Parliament lists 10 completed consultation agreements with the directorate and Ministry of Knowledge (Sámi Parliament, 2021b). In 2021 the right to consultation became statutory, also obligating municipalities and county municipalities to consult, for example, in matters of education and schooling (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2021).

Thus, the complexity of educational governance does not fade. On the contrary, the current extensive cooperation with other authorities including municipalities, educational institutions and civil society actors calls for continuous endeavours towards fulfilling Sámi children's rights to language education and an enhanced autonomy through the Sámi Parliament.

## CONCLUSION

By applying the four analytical phases of rights recognition as an analytical tool, I illuminate state commitments to the protection of Sámi language rights and also state policies supporting Sámi language development. Through the system of the Sámi Parliament, the Sámi as a collective are enabled to participate in the implementation and realization of these rights.

Today, policies and structures within the field of education contribute to the promotion of Sámi culture:

Throughout our history, dramatic changes within the school system have taken place, the school has changed from being a tool for the missionaries, to later becoming a tool of assimilation to today as an arena of Sámi language development and promotion of culture. (Sámi Parliament, 2012, p. 6)

Simultaneously there are continuous challenges of fulfilling these rights, as the reported shortcomings reveal. Much remains to be done at the stage of legal institutionalization.

Comprehending these challenges, the implications of the Norwegianization policy and continuous unequal power relations cannot be underestimated. Faced with these realities, and in order to secure the rights of Sámi children to Sámi language education, a continued focus on individual and collective rights is called for. Domestic and international law protect Sámi languages. The rights in question are the result of comprehensive societal processes of deliberation. These are democratically legitimized rights (Broderstad et al., 2011, p. 305). But the fulfilment of these obligations is far from definite.

The field of education and Sámi language policy presuppose extensive relations between the Sámi Parliament as an autonomous institution and other government institutions of the state. While cooperation and interconnectedness can be characterized by unequal power relations, the processes have resulted in common learning and, most importantly, continuous efforts to improve the situation of Sámi language education. In general terms, the Sámi Parliament has extended political influence into complex governance relations, which the field of education clearly illustrates.

While the phases of rights recognition contain a built-in comprehension of progress of legal and political rights, concrete realities reveal setbacks and continuous challenges. Acknowledging that there are unequal terms of cooperation between the Indigenous Sámi and the majority society calls for further juridification and political autonomy for the Sámi Parliament.

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# 3. Governing Indigenous citizenship in Australia: From objects and partial subjects to coexisting sovereign citizens?

Diane Smith

**Abstract** The chapter explores how Indigenous citizenship has been shaped and reshaped within a volatile intercultural field, since British settler colonisation of Australia. The Australian nation-state has governed Indigenous peoples as ‘incapable citizens’, ‘subject citizens’ and ‘partial citizens’. Within their own culturally-based groups, Indigenous people give citizenship an expanded relational content; of ‘belonging’ to kin and ‘Country’. A model of co-existing sovereign citizenships is proposed.

**Keywords** Indigenous citizenship | relational citizenship | co-existing sovereign citizenship | Indigenous education

## INTRODUCTION

The question of what constitutes the rights, form and exercise of Indigenous peoples’ citizenship in the modern nation states in which they reside is not a new one; but neither has it been adequately resolved. Indeed, in recent years the global displacement of people as refugees, in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the current emergence of what could be called ‘pandemic neo-nationalisms’, have intersected to create increasing uncertainty and contestability in the boundaries of citizenship. Today, many countries appear to be undergoing a turbulent moment of increasingly liquid citizenship (Bauman, 2000; Calzada, 2021) where individuals are simultaneously experiencing and claiming differing rights and forms of belonging (Altamirano-Jimenez, 2010; Beiner, 1995; Davies et al., 2018; Kymlicka, 1995; Murphy & Harty, 2003).

In the international context of settler-colonial nations, the question of who is a citizen is even more vexed, being heavily embedded in violent histories of the dispossession and dispersal of Indigenous peoples from their traditional lands. The result for many has been a disenfranchisement from the place-based citizenships of their own collective groups, replaced by forms of mendicant citizenship under the control of the settler-colonial nation state. Australia is a case in point. This chapter explores two very different modes of citizenship and their intersections within Australia: namely, the citizenships of Indigenous peoples within their own diverse First Nations; and the citizenship that has been defined for them within the Australian nation state. In this way, the chapter considers what it means to be an Indigenous citizen in Australia today. To whose 'nation' does an Indigenous person belong? What kinds of rights, identities and responsibilities are entailed? And, central to the purposes of this chapter, who gets to make the authoritative decisions on these important matters – that is, who governs the content and exercise of Indigenous citizenship?

In considering these questions over time, it is clear that Indigenous Australians have been categorised by the Australian nation state in many, often contradictory, ways. At the beginning of British colonisation they were positioned as excluded objects – as a citizen *nullius* or 'citizen minus' (Mercer, 2003). Then they were constructed as 'deficit subjects' needing to be trained and made capable of becoming civilised citizens (Peterson & Sanders, 1998), and 'normalised citizens' enjoying only those rights and obligations due to all Australian citizens (Iverson, Patton, & Sanders, 2000; Rowse, 2000). State-gifted membership in the Australian citizenry required Indigenous people to renounce citizenship of their own Indigenous polities and identities.

Indigenous Australians in turn have deployed their own understandings and expressions of how to be an Indigenous citizen of their own traditional nations, at the same time as strategically demanding the rights of Australian citizens. In this way, they have asserted themselves to be 'citizens plus' (Cairns, 2000) and 'sovereign citizens' (Moreton-Robinson, 2007), based on the unique rights arising from their original relationship as the First Nations of lands and waters. This positioning causes considerable legal and political anxiety for Australian governments, because it foregrounds the fiction of colonial sovereignty and hence the fragility of its governance of citizenship. The implications of these positionings and tensions are examined in terms of their implications for Indigenous citizenship today in Australia. Several turning points that have recently occurred in Australia are briefly considered as they have renewed attention to what Indigenous citizenship – as a mode of belonging and doing – means. Specifically, Indigenous people and their representative organisations are reclaiming modes of citizenship that suit

their cultural affiliations, reflect their newly secured legal rights, and give voice to political aspirations.

Accordingly, this paper explores the ways in which Indigenous citizenship has been shaped and reshaped within an ‘intercultural field’ (Nakata, 2002) since the British colonisation of Australia, focusing on the more recent reassertions of the self-determined citizenships being enacted by Indigenous Australians. To do so, multiple standpoints are explored. In the first section, the paper describes the culturally-constructed characteristics of citizenship as belonging that operate within the diversity of Indigenous polities or ‘First Nations’. The second part examines the measures of settler-colonial governments historically carried out by in order to govern the conditions and conduct of Indigenous citizenship, via its various institutional tools and diverse agents. Here the paper identifies a debilitating recursive pattern of inclusion/exclusion created by the state, arising out of its own profound distrust of Indigenous institutions and capabilities. In this context, the paper then discusses the persistent historical advocacy by Indigenous peoples to assert their own views of citizenship and reclaim a different mode of citizenship within the Australian nation.

During the various historical manifestations of their citizenship, the Australian education system – in its accessibility and pedagogy – is revealed as a battlefield where the boundaries and content of citizenship are contested. Examples given in the paper highlight that Indigenous Australians’ struggles about citizenship have directly engaged with education as both a place-based cultural expression of their own mode of citizenship, and as a political and pedagogic right at national and state government levels. The paper concludes that *Indigenous* citizenship remains contested ground in Australia, not only in respect to who gets to ‘be’ a citizen and of which nation, but also how the content of citizenship is governed by the nation state. But the paper also argues that Indigenous advocacy, promulgated in the political and educational arena, has historically challenged the norms of Western citizenship. Today, this is giving rise to innovative possibilities for co-existing, nested citizenships within the Australian State.

## INDIGENOUS CITIZENSHIPS

To understand contemporary Indigenous demands for particular forms of citizenship, it is necessary to understand the culturally-based ways of acting as citizens within their own societies. The practice of acting as an Indigenous nation arguably predates the formation of the more recent Westphalian system and its modern ‘nation-states’. Prior to British colonisation, Indigenous nations were sovereign entities, organised as place-based connubia of kin with a

collective identity and agency, so giving shape to a form of collective networked self-governance. This sense of nation recognises the conditions not only of political solidarity but also of collective 'grouphood' where individuals share a common language, culture, descent and history. It expresses the idea of a group or society with deep affiliations to, and collective ownership of, a specific territory of land and waters. In other words, the Indigenous nation was and is embedded as a form of relational sociality, as much as it is a political formation (Smith, 2021). This culturally infused notion of the nation as a relational polity forms the bedrock of Indigenous conceptualisation of citizenship – likewise being a relational mode of rights and responsibilities expressed within a place-based collective (see additional characteristics discussed by Sollid & Fogarty, this volume; see also Murray & Evans, 2021; Rigney et al., 2021).

Within Indigenous societies in Australia, there is a strongly valued cultural preference, on the one hand, for autonomy marked by a tendency towards localism and a high value placed on small kin-based groups of people attached to core geographic locations, usually referred to as 'own Country'. Here the Indigenous citizen 'belongs' to their own local clan group or extended family, and that belonging entails particular rights, mutual interests and kin-based responsibilities that are squarely linked to particular territories or 'Country'. In this context, Indigenous modes of learning and decision-making are specifically place-based and kin-based.

A consequence of the ever-expanding connectedness of Indigenous kin networks in Australia is that the momentum towards societal atomism and autonomy is balanced by an equally compelling strain towards relatedness, collectivism and interdependence (Martin, 1993; Sutton, 1995). This enables the small-scaled polities to opportunistically come together – for shorter and longer periods – along lines of spiritual, territorial and kin connections, to form larger-scale collectivities and alliances that are able to mobilise wider cultural geographies and their resources (see Smith, 1995; Sullivan, 1995; Sutton, 1995). At these aggregating levels, Indigenous people are also citizens of a wider meshed network of polities. Conversely, the dynamics of kin-meshed networks can also lead to political and social aggregations contracting or fracturing. This societal dynamic gives rise to a complex developmental cycle of expansion, disintegration and reformation that is observable at all levels of Indigenous social and political organisation, from the domestic units of extended families and linked households, through to clans and larger nation groups, and in their representative organisations.

While individuals are able to operate as autonomous actors or citizens, the relational pathways of their kin networks insert a strong balancing counterweight of interconnectedness and interdependence. Each person has numerous

short-distance ('close up') relational pathways, which create the meshedness of Indigenous networks, enabling them to live and work closely together, with a higher expectation of being able to coordinate activity, have an immediate say in group life, maintain social order and have their needs met by each other. This has the effect of reproducing a 'measure of self-similarity' in the social heartland of a network over time and space (Fuchs, 2001, p. 157). It creates a strongly bonded sense of personhood and grouphood – a shared identity and each person's place in it, producing a form of citizenship that is very much 'in place', as Stephan Fuchs would say (2001, p. 156).

In other words, Indigenous kin networks generate social and political dimensions of core-periphery, close-distant relationships, which in turn give rise to associated rights, interests, loyalties and mutual responsibilities for individuals to each other. This also means that people can (and do) claim to be citizen members of more than one polity. This is because people can jump kin linkages, activate or renounce others, until a preferred social destination or repositioning is reached – sometimes across multiple layers of their linked networks. This helps explain the oft-noted plurality of 'selves', including of citizen membership, within Indigenous Australian societies, that gives rise to assertions of having a primary membership in one heartland polity, at the same time as asserting the 'right' to exercise other situational modes of citizen membership in related group networks. This can be evidenced, for instance, in claiming rights to have a say, exercise responsibilities to 'look after' places, or get access to particular resources in another group's Country. In effect, Indigenous Australians are social experts in exercising multiple modes of citizenships within and across their own networked polities.

Indigenous citizen members enact their rights and mutual obligations in ways that arguably resonate with the ancient Greek Athenian ideal of a full active participation in the process of governing. Where 'citizens as collective rulers' exercise the political prerogatives of power over the local polity, while at the same time also being the group of individuals who are the subject of that collective rule. In many ways, Indigenous people within their own local groups and First Nations could be said to be more deeply enfranchised and have a more active direct voice than do those in contemporary Western democracies, because they are directly involved in the daily work of governing their own polities. This deep traditional enfranchisement and voice is the product of sophisticated modes of relational autonomy and circuitries of governing subsidiarity that are embedded within tightly meshed kin networks and ancient cultural geographies (Smith, 2007).

Such networked polities constitute what Indigenous anthropologist Professor Marcia Langton refers to as 'ancient jurisdictions'; that is, juridical, knowledge-holding social spaces in which Indigenous laws, practices and behaviours may also

survive (Langton, 1994; see also Reynolds, 1996, pp. 208–215; Reynolds, 1998). ‘Jurisdiction’ in this Indigenous context can be defined by its common-sense meaning as ‘the right, power, or authority to administer the law by hearing and determining controversies’; ‘the extent or range of judicial or other authority’; and the ‘territory over which authority is exercised’ (Smith, 2002, p. 3). Where jurisdictions and distinct polities continue to exist with affiliations to territorial bases, so too do citizens as members of collective Indigenous nations.

The practice of Aboriginal governance at the time of British colonisation and today is indistinguishable from the practices of land ownership that are informed by networked polities and culturally-based jurisdictions. Collective self-governance is an ‘extremely localised one, elaborated across regions, but exercised by individuals with authority’ (Langton, 2002, p. 1). It constitutes a pattern of decentred diverse nations where autonomy is practiced as an ‘interdependent’ process, in relation to each other (Havemann, 1999, p. 472; Nedelsky, 1989; Young, 2000, pp. 238, 253). Citizens of such networked polities are oriented to sharing multiple affiliations across tightly meshed social groups which have their own overlapping cultural geographies. It produces what could be called relational citizenship. This is distinct from the highly ‘autonomous self’ of Western individualistic modes of citizenship. In contrast, the Indigenous ‘relational self’ as citizen is not an isolate, but directly constituted by their interaction with known others and mutual undertaking of their interdependent responsibilities.

The concept of the Indigenous ‘relational self’ means Indigenous nations and citizenship can accommodate interdependent layers: a ‘pooling of sovereignties’ (Hawkes, 2001, p. 154) producing overlapping fields of citizenship in which individuals can actively participate. This systemic characteristic also means assertions of citizenship can be situationally contested and negotiated. Given the subtlety and radical difference of such Indigenous polities and their relational citizenries, it is perhaps not surprising that British colonists (and still today) have been unable to see, let alone understand, the nature and implications of such modes of Indigenous citizenship.

Membership of such place-based relational polities was one of the first foundations of Indigenous citizenship to suffer under the onslaught of British settler colonisation of Australia. Nevertheless, successes in land rights, native title and cultural resurgence mean it continues to inform assertions of there being a particular kind of *Indigenous* citizenship within the wider Australian nation state. Culturally-based relational citizenship appears to be a common quality underlying membership in many Indigenous societies internationally: for example, amongst Sami in Norway and other First Nations in the USA, New Zealand and Canada. However, the occurrence of settler colonisation or not makes a telling difference



in the extent to which Indigenous peoples feel themselves to be an integral part of the wider nation state in which they reside.

## GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL OF INDIGENOUS SUBJECT CITIZENS

From the beginning of settler occupation, Indigenous groups were denied recognition as polities having their own citizen members who collectively exercised self-governance. Under the political institutions of Australian federalism established from 1900 onwards, governmental power was formally distributed across nation, state, territory and local government jurisdictions. Such was the federalist patchwork of settler-created jurisdictions operating in Australia, that in 1959 the then Commonwealth Attorney-General Garfield Barwick made reference to there being 'nine different 'citizenships' in Australia' (Barwick cited in Chesterman & Galligan, 1997). The ongoing consequence for Indigenous Australians has been the imposition of Western systems of governance, participation and voice, which have deeply constrained the ways they were able to 'be' a citizen. Often that meant being excluded and marginalised from wider Australian citizenship rights, at the same time as being severed from their citizenship of their traditional lands.

The institutional tools (policies, legislation, legal cases, regulations, programs) of federal and state governments to govern Indigenous citizenship created regimes that actively denied or tightly controlled the conditions of Indigenous people's access to many mainstream citizenship rights, entitlements and responsibilities. Such tools were diligently deployed by a vast armada of administrators and officials in the guise of 'Protectors', 'Welfare Officers', 'Directors of Aboriginal Affairs', 'Commissioners of Native Welfare', 'Aboriginal Welfare Boards' and 'Settlement Managers' who in turn were able to call upon the punitive forces of the police and the reforming zeal of church missionaries to control the citizenship rights and conduct of Indigenous people. In the earliest phase of colonial settlement, people were controlled as 'objects' (i.e., not even human) – a view that became widely accepted and influenced the extent to which they were even considered capable of being citizens:

Australia is the present home and refuge of creatures, often crude and quaint, that have elsewhere passed away and given place to higher forms. This applies equally to the Aboriginal as to the platypus and kangaroo. (Spencer, 1927, p. vii)

Later they were to be categorised by governments as subject citizens, or more accurately as indentured citizens, to provide a heavily regulated labour force, but

never enjoying full citizenship rights. This exclusionary legislative and policy edifice of government was built around a mathematically complex system for classifying people's indigeneity (via 'race', 'blood' or 'caste' designations), with different and partial citizenship rights and responsibilities assigned to different categories. An expanding government bureaucracy was tasked with interpreting and enforcing these categories.

Significantly, the word 'citizenship' was not used in the Australian Constitution of 1901. Indeed, the founding 'fathers' of the Australian Constitution explicitly rejected the use of the term 'citizenship' for *all* the Australian population, favouring instead the designation for all Australians as being British 'subjects'. The *Commonwealth Franchise Bill 1902* explicitly excluded 'aboriginal natives of Australia' from citizenship and the new Commonwealth franchise. As a consequence, Australian state governments were subsequently able to systematically legislate to discriminate with impunity against Indigenous people.

The passage of the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* created for the first time the legal status of 'Australian citizen' for all Australians. Under this legislation, Australians were both Australian citizens and British subjects, which remained the case until 1984 when Australians were legally no longer British subjects. For Indigenous people, the 1948 Act had little practical impact upon what was by then a labyrinth of other legislation and bureaucratic practices that more often actively excluded them from the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship within the Australian nation state. In 1959, the Australian Attorney-General Garfield Barwick was asked to clarify exactly what 'citizenship' meant when applied to Indigenous Australians. He responded that while Aboriginal people were Australian citizens under the *Nationality and Citizenship Act*, like all citizens they

are subject to many disabilities ['that which they may not do within Australia'] by reason of the general law. ... Further, those rights and disabilities are not necessarily the same throughout Australia. ... The word 'citizenship' in Western Australia does not refer to the same quality or attribute as does the Nationality and Citizenship Act, and any limitations to their rights as citizens came from laws passed by state legislatures. (Barwick, 1959)

Barwick's explanation was in fact a politically dexterous allusion to the fact that there were multiple citizenships operating within Australian federalism, and that the lowest on the ladder of citizenship rights were Indigenous people owing to the 'disabilities' legislatively imposed on them across every state.

Government conferral of what could be called 'conditional citizenship' upon Indigenous people was tied to legislated requirements that they renounce their

own ways of being citizen members of their own First Nations. For example, in the early 1940s various state governments passed legislation to introduce Exemption Certificates, which exempted certain Indigenous people from the restrictive legislative controls applied to all others. Famously referred to as 'dog tags', the written certificate allowed a person to enter a town, to vote, and send their children to the local school. But exemptions could be withdrawn at any time by authorities for a myriad of reasons linked to failing to observe behavioural prerequisites that were regarded as norms of white Australian citizenship. Another common reason for government withdrawal of a person's exemption was their continued association with other Indigenous people. Exemptions were seen by governments to be key tools in their assimilation and integration policies. Upon gaining this form of citizenship, a person was officially 'deemed to be no longer a native or aborigine' and was legally bound to give up their cultural activities and contacts to family and community. The legislation's aim and effect was to sever individuals from the collective. It was an effective way to undermine the foundations of people's relational citizenship, and it remained in force until 1969.

Even with exemptions, assimilation and integration policies, the full suite of Australian citizenship rights and benefits did not follow; indeed, there were significant citizenship 'disabilities'. Many ordinary components of citizenship such as access to social welfare payments and mainstream education, freedom of movement, employment in certain industry sectors, choice in marriage and family life continued to be denied to 'exempted' citizens. The rights that did apply continued to be applied erratically across different state jurisdictions and at the local levels. The effect was to create Indigenous people as subject citizens permanently on probation. This positioning was characterised by Chesterman and Galligan (1997) as 'occupying an empty shell of citizenship' (p. 3); or perhaps more accurately, a shell in which some Indigenous people were selectively recognised as partial citizens with rights to partial participation and voice, while others were excluded.

## **EDUCATION AS A GOVERNMENTAL TOOL FOR CITIZENSHIP**

Education has often stood at centre stage of the historically contested ground of citizenship in Australia, both as a tool to deny citizenship by governments, and as an aspirational claim by Indigenous peoples for the right to equal treatment. In the hands of the Australian nation state, Western education became an instrument of assimilatory eugenics and later integration policies. The overarching motivation being to ensure Indigenous people became 'good citizens' of Australia.

One of many governmental tools used to achieve this across the country was by the forced dispersal of families from their traditional Countries and relocation onto newly established reserves, and the forced removal of children from families and their placement into so-called 'training institutions'. The first such colonial school for students – The Parramatta and Black Town Native Institute – was established in Sydney, New South Wales in 1814 by Governor Lachlan Macquarie. It was 'attended' by Indigenous children who had been forcibly removed from their parents, 'to effect the civilisation of the Aborigines' and 'render their habits more domesticated and industrious' (Brook & Kohen, 1991; Norman, 2015).

A hundred years later, the same social evolutionist paradigm for an assimilated citizenship remained in force, with J. W. Bleakley the Queensland State Government's 'Chief Protector of Aborigines' writing in the 1920s that it would be 'a great stride in citizenship for one generation if young Aborigines could be trained to appreciate settled life, develop the desire for self-dependence, and learn something of the spirit of social service'. He proposed that all so-called 'half castes' under 16 years of age who are 'not being satisfactorily educated be placed in aboriginal industrial homes, and that education be made compulsory for all half-castes up to the age of sixteen'. Bleakley reinforced that those Aborigines 'with a preponderance of white blood be sent to European institutions at an early age' (as cited in Chesterman & Galligan, 1997, p. 145).

In such ways, British-based education became a powerful primary tool for people's enforced assimilation into Western norms of what it was to be a 'good' citizen. The benefits conferred by citizenship education were primarily manual training for the purpose of people's mandatory work as domestics or labourers for white employees, often for no pay, or with meagre payments controlled by government officials. In effect, such people were unilaterally transferred from the status of non-citizens to what has aptly been called 'market citizenship' (Altamirano-Jimenez, 2010). When later reflecting on the impacts of settler-colonial education on Indigenous Peoples in Australia, C. D. Rowley (1972) concluded that

Traditionally, emphasis has been on control and tuition as the prelude to eventual full citizenship. Thus while the goal of 'assimilation' expressed the best intentions, the special laws introduced to bring it about through tuition and control inevitably set the 'native' apart in a special category of wardship. (p. 20)

As wards of the Australian State, any Indigenous child could be taken away from their families for training to become 'good' subject citizens. But they could also quickly be excluded from schools under government legislation and policies, or given a sub-standard form of education judged to be appropriate for them (Fletcher,

1989). For instance, the early colonial policy known as ‘Exclusion on Demand’ (Beresford, 2012; Reynolds, 1998) meant that when a white parent objected to Indigenous children being present in the classroom of a local school, teachers were permitted to expel the Indigenous student immediately. Such exclusions and partial citizenship were commonplace across all jurisdictions in Australia and continued for many decades, albeit in different guises. As a consequence, the Australian education system remains an unsettling space where Indigenous norms and approaches to place-based citizenship and their preference for relational modes of learning are hotly contested.

### INDIGENOUS ADVOCACY: RECLAIMING CITIZENSHIPS

In parallel to every government strategy to control, partially include or exclude Indigenous people from citizenships in the nation state, there was persistent Indigenous advocacy and resistance. This was done through petitions and letters, public demonstrations, lodging court cases, and establishing representative organisations to fight not only for full and equal access to the benefits of Anglo-Australian citizenship, but also to maintain First Nation culturally-based ways of *being* citizens within their own land ownership and kin-based groups. A small survey of this advocacy demonstrates the continuing force of this twin motivation, and once again the delivery and accessibility of education became a hotspot. While the section below focuses on the dual citizenship aspirations raised by Indigenous advocacy, the chapter by Sollid & Fogarty (this volume) examines the differing content and pedagogy of Indigenous and Western forms of education in Australia.

Fletcher (1989, pp. 116–119) reports an early action well over a hundred years ago in 1915, when Indigenous parents took legal action against the school for their children’s exclusion from Bellata Public in northern New South Wales. Mr Quinn (the father of the excluded student) made a case based on his understanding of his rights and responsibilities as an Australian citizen, writing to the government,

For the past year my child has been deprived of education and the only reason is that she is the offspring of coloured parents. I am a taxpayer and an elector, so therefore I am assisting to carry the burden of education for the children of NSW. . . . I am perfectly justified in asking that the same facilities of education will be extended to my child. (Letter to the Minister of Education, 6 March 1916, Bellata School files [5/14854] SRNSW, as cited in Fletcher, 1989b, pp. 116–117)

The NSW Government Education Board successfully defended its policy of exclusion of Indigenous children from schools if a non-Indigenous parent complained.

A decade later in the 1920s, another Indigenous parent sought, as a last resort, to engage the King of England in his fight to gain access for his children to the local public school. His letter argued that

The Quadroon and half-caste people of Batemans Bay have been writing to different places namely the Minister for Education, the Child Welfare Department, the Aborigines Protection Board, and also our members of parliament but we cannot get fair play. Even the reserve where the coloured race were bred and born, the white race are trying to have them turned off on to another piece of land. It is unfair and I hope you will see that fair play be given; let them stay on the land that was granted to them, also compel the children to be sent to the Public School at Bateman's Bay. (Ms J Duren to King George V, 14 June 1926, as cited in Fletcher, 1989b, p. 125)

It is also clear from the substantial historical literature that Indigenous people generally did not equate their getting access to Australian citizenship and education as meaning they should or would give up their collective Indigenous identities and own ways of learning. They claimed the right to both. Evelyn Crawford (1993, pp. 26, 101) a Baarkinji woman who became a teacher's aide and then TAFE Regional Coordinator explained the nuances of this standpoint, based on her own childhood 'education':

The white man's school was only a part of our life, and not the most important part. We had the white feller school all day, then in the afternoon we'd have to learn all our Aboriginal training. Our teachers were our grandparents and our oldest aunty. ... But the most special teachers were uncles – our Mum's brothers. ... I could say that our lessons on the sandhills at Yantabulla were our primary schooling, and so our time at Mootawingee was our Aboriginal 'College'.

A positive change came in the 1930s when, in response to restrictive legislation, the worsening conditions on Indigenous reserves and several damming reports, Indigenous groups established a number of political organisations to act on their behalf. These included the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association and the Aborigines Progressive Association in New South Wales, the Native Union in Western Australia and the Australian Aborigines' League in Victoria (see Attwood & Markus, 1999; Maynard, 2007). The concerns of such organisations included the continuing forced removal of children from families, the ongoing dispossession of

their lands, the denial of their full citizenship rights, and the exclusion of children from the education system.

A major turning point was the 'Aboriginal Day of Mourning' first held on Australia Day 1938 by the Aborigines Progressive Association (APA) in Sydney. Organised to protest the national celebrations being conducted for the sesqui-centenary of British settlement of New South Wales, speakers at the APA Conference called for 'full citizenship rights' and passed a resolution demanding that

We, representing the Aborigines of Australia ... on the 26th day of January, 1938, this being the 150th Anniversary of the white man's seizure of our country, hereby make protest against the callous treatment of our people by the white men during the past 150 years, and we appeal to the Australian Nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, and we ask for a new policy which will raise our people to full citizen status and equality within the community. (Horner & Langton, 1987, pp. 29–35)

The powerful statement 'Aborigines Claim Citizen Rights' was made on the Day of Mourning and discussed, with photographs, in major daily newspapers across the country. An Aboriginal deputation met with Prime Minister Lyons a week later to submit a plan for recognising people's citizen rights (Bandler, 1983, pp. 54–59). The political momentum from these initiatives eventually led to the national 1967 Referendum, regarded by many First Nations as a turning point in their fight for rights. However, it is important to note that the Indigenous historical demands for equal citizenship rights were not motivated by the underlying notion of there being a common 'shared fate' in Australia. In particular, with major successes in securing legislated native title and land rights from the 1970s to the 1990s, there have been growing calls for a distinctly *Indigenous* mode of citizenship linked to self-governance over their own lands and collective polities, where Indigenous citizens have different rights as members of their own First Nations, as well as the same rights as other Australians.

Indigenous nations are thus challenging the Australian state as being the sole conferring source of citizenship, challenging the very content of what citizenship could look like in Australia. However, First Nations in Australia have not secured jurisdictional recognition as self-determining governments over their own communities (as has occurred in different ways in Norway, the USA and Canada). So again, their ability to be and act as Indigenous citizens and also as citizens of Australia remains contested and unresolved. The most recent context of emerging treaty negotiations and native title settlement agreements in Australia may afford a political space in which Indigenous citizenship could be legally differentiated,

and conceptually reshaped to comprise multiple modes of co-existing citizenship across different government jurisdictions.

Several recent political and legal events are serving to reinforce the potential realisation of Indigenous notions of collective belonging to land and each other as being the basis of a differentiated citizenship. Perhaps most important amongst these is 'The Uluru Statement from the Heart'. The outcome of 12 First Nations Regional Dialogues held during 2016 culminated in a National Constitutional Convention at Uluru in May 2017. There, Indigenous people from across the country worked to form a consensus position on the constitutional recognition they desired (later to be referred to as a constitutionally entrenched Indigenous 'Voice' to Parliament), culminating in the 'Uluru Statement':

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago. ... This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown. (<https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement>)

The statement speaks to an inclusive, but differentiated understanding of Indigenous citizenship – where people are simultaneously citizens of the Australian nation, and citizens of their own nations. This poses the possibility of a 'citizen plus' (Cairns, 2000) mode of Indigenous citizenship based on political participation, legal rights, cultural belonging and voice, where First Nations' relationship with the Australian nation state is mediated through the mechanism of an Indigenous sovereign citizenry.

This broader more inclusive understanding of Indigenous citizenship has arguably been further supported in a recent decision of the High Court of Australia in *Love, Thoms v Commonwealth (Love)* in 2020. In this case, the High Court acknowledged the increasing incidence of Indigenous people being born in another country, yet having a parent who is an Indigenous Australian. Their birth overseas means they are legally required to hold a visa to enter Australia in accordance with the *Migration Act 1958 (Cth)*. But this means they are also liable to deportation and exclusion from Australia if they breach visa conditions. As occurred to



the defendants in *Love*, such Indigenous people can be deemed by the Australian Government to be an ‘unlawful, alien, non-citizen’. In its landmark decision, the Court recognised that Indigenous people ‘belong’ to Australia and so cannot be deported, even if they are not Australian citizens under statute.

The vexed matter of what it is to be a citizen of Australia was vigorously engaged by the Court, which held by a 4:3 majority that Indigenous Australians are not aliens and are therefore not subject to the exclusionary powers under Section 51 sub-section (xix) of the Constitution. The decision is, in effect, a legal recognition that Aboriginal people ‘belong to Australia’ in a way that is different to other Australians (*Love v Commonwealth of Australia*, per Edelman, J. [2020] HCA 3, at 398). The practical import is that Indigenous people hold a unique place in the fabric of the Australian nation because they were and are the First Nations and custodians of our land. The Court held this to be the fundamental premise from which the decision in *Mabo [No 2] v Queensland* proceeded – recognising a ‘deeper truth’ that they are the First Peoples of Australia, and that the connection between them and the land and waters that now make up the territory of Australia was not severed or extinguished by European settlement (per Edelman, J. [2020] HCA 3, at 398). The implication of this decision is that Indigenous people cannot be removed or excluded from the country of their ancestors, their culture and their identity. This substantially supports the notion of there being a different citizenship status capable of being applied to Indigenous people – one that is rooted in a distinct Indigenous sovereignty within the Australian nation state.

## CONCLUSION: CO-EXISTING SOVEREIGN CITIZENSHIPS

This chapter proposes that citizenship should be understood not only as a legal or political entitlement of individuals to rights and affiliation common to all citizens of a polity, but also as fundamentally entailing culturally-based entitlements and obligations, which may be differentiated from commonly held rights. Indigenous people’s self-identification as members of their own polities, with rights of self-governance and collective identities, requires solutions that positively enable the exercise of Indigenous-specific citizenship rights and allegiances to Indigenous polities, *at the same time* as holding and exercising those common to all citizens of Australia (see also Kymlicka, 1995; Young, 1989). These solutions should recognise and facilitate the co-existence within the nation state of sovereign citizenships.

The Australian Indigenous conceptualisation of the individual as being *a priori* a ‘relational self’ is a fundamentally different construction of citizenship to that within many Western Anglo-traditions. It proposes a model of Indigenous citizenship as being relational, networked and place-based, operating as an ordered form

of social and political relationship, affiliation and loyalty within particular groups, and their local cultural geographies. This lens of ‘citizenship-as-relationality’ enables us to see Indigenous polities as providing valued collective spaces for Indigenous citizen members to experiment and reassert Indigenous modalities of participation and voice. It follows then that the form and content of education, and who has the decision-making authority over designing educational and learning content, is itself a sovereign citizenship issue (Akama, Evans, Keen, McMillan, & West, 2017; Holm, Pearson, & Chavis, 2003). These politics of Indigenous citizenship challenge the norms of citizenship in neo-liberal Australia.

Indigenous advocacy provokes an unsettling view of the narrow Westphalian concept of ‘citizen’ and ‘citizenship’ in Australia, and creates a space for resurgence in their practices of being citizens within the wider nation state. The political struggles of Indigenous Australians have given rise to more expansive, fluid and sovereign modes of citizenship whose cultural and social lived experience transcends the nation state’s Western narrow constructions of the individual citizen. The concept of ‘co-existing sovereign citizenships’ is a model that can account for and recognise the multiplicities of new Indigenous sovereignties that are emerging in Australia – especially in the context of land rights, native title and new treaty negotiations. Such co-existing sovereignties have implications in turn for the content and delivery of civics education for all Australians.

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# 4. Equality of opportunity and democratic equality in the case of Indigenous citizenship

Kjersti Fjørtoft

**Abstract** Norwegian schools are supposed to provide their students with the knowledge and values needed to act as equal democratic citizens. This chapter discusses whether ‘democratic equality’, which is a relational concept, is better suited to promote equal citizenship than ‘equality of opportunity’, which is primarily a principle of distribution. The main question is how equality and citizenship should be conceptualized order to educate for equal citizenship and provide equal citizenship for Indigenous people.

**Keywords** Indigenous citizenship | democratic equality | equality of opportunity | shared fate

## INTRODUCTION

Within egalitarian liberal theories, there has been an ongoing debate on whether equality of opportunity or adequacy should be the yardstick for just education. The argument for opportunity equality is that education should aim to provide all children with equal opportunities to take advantage of education. Children’s prospects for educational achievement should not be affected by morally irrelevant factors such as ethnicity, gender or class background. Most defenders of the principle of opportunity equality claim that legal protection against discrimination is simply not sufficient in order to realize fair and real equality. The defenders claim that distribution of educational resources should reduce the impact of the cultural, social and economic differences that may affect a student’s educational achievements. This means that resources in many cases should be distributed unevenly. This line of thought has influenced Norwegian education policies for decades and has also been used to justify mainstreaming of education. Traditionally, Norwegian education policy is strongly based on social democratic ideas of social justice, which

include a strong state-driven redistribution (Aasen, 2007). A core national curriculum was first introduced in order to mainstream education, based on the belief that socioeconomic effects of diversity are best reduced by a unified education that assimilates children into a shared national identity (Aasen, 2007; Gjerpe, 2018). In Norway as well as in other welfare states, the belief has been that mainstreaming would give children better access to higher education and employment in the mainstream labour market. For Indigenous people in general, and the Sámi people in particular, such policies resulted in a loss of identity and language competence, as well as marginalization and alienation from both their own culture and the culture of the majority (Banks, 2001, p. 6).

The argument for adequacy is that justice is not primarily a matter of redistribution, but to make sure that everyone has enough to participate as equal citizens in the society (Brighthouse & Swift, 2009, p. 117). Equality is thus a matter of living in a society in which citizens are related as equal. One of the most prominent advocates of the adequacy approach, Elizabeth Anderson, suggests that equality in education should be considered as a matter of democratic equality. The idea ‘democratic equality’ refers to an ‘ideal of social relation, in which people from all walks of life enjoy equal dignity, interact with one another on terms of equality and respect, and are not vulnerable to oppression by others’ (Anderson, 2007, p. 615). The question for this chapter is whether the principle of ‘democratic equality’ can accommodate equal citizenship for Indigenous people and if this approach can stimulate education for equal citizenship.

Historically, citizenship education has been used to justify assimilation policies, with the result that Indigenous people and minorities all over the world have lost their identity and language competence.<sup>1</sup> The pre-World War II Norwegian policy was to assimilate all Sami to be culturally Norwegian, which undermined the Sámi language, culture and identity (Selle & Strømsnes, 2010, p. 68). In the national curricula today, Sámi culture, language and traditions are included as a part of Norwegian heritage. This is due to long processes of struggles for recognition and revitalization of the Sámi language, culture and traditions. As many a scholar has pointed out, Indigenous citizenship is dual or multiple (Vitikainen, 2021). Not only on the level of identity, but also at an institutional level. Norway has recognized the Sámi as Indigenous through national and international legislation and conventions, which have implications for the educational system (Olsen & Andreassen, 2018). In Norway, there are two sets of curricula, one for the national educational system and one for the Sámi administrative areas (Olsen & Andreassen, 2018, p. 2).

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1 See the introduction for more information on Norwegian assimilation policies, and Diane Smith's discussion of the Australian case in Chapter 3.

Citizenship education should therefore have multiple functions. It should ensure Indigenous citizens' rights to develop their own identity, language and institutions. It should promote the common values and shared political principles necessary to participate as equals in the common national society, and ensure the Indigenous citizen access to equal participation on both levels.

According to Anderson, the proper egalitarian aim for education should be that everyone has enough human capital to function as equal in civil society (Anderson, 2007, p. 618). She claims that one of the most severe hindrances for democratic equality is segregation, which contributes to maintaining and transmitting group-based prejudices and stereotypes. She suggests integration as the best remedy against segregation and stereotypes. Students should be educated together in order to develop cross-cultural competence, and the ability to serve the interests of all citizens from all 'walks of life' (Anderson, 2007). In my view, one of the advantages of the democratic equality approach is that it requires that we focus on structural injustices that are embedded in cultural codes and hegemonic cultural discourses.

Integration is important in order to enable citizens with the capacity to participate as equals, but integration would probably not lead to equal standing without institutional changes. Integration, without taking into account questions of how structural and historical injustice is reflected in the very structure of the social and institutional society, is likely to undermine democratic equality rather than promoting it. Citizenship education therefore needs to take historical injustice and the political dimension of how Indigenous people are connected to their language and territory into account.

In most democratic societies, the basic structure and its main institutions are developed in terms of the language and cultural codes of the privileged majority. Institutions are not culturally neutral but are constituted by language and values that have been to the advantage of already privileged groups. To ask people from historically oppressed groups to join established institutions, without awareness of how these institutions are constituted, implies asking them to manage the kind of 'cultural capital' that has been used to oppress them. Anderson's approach is developed in order to counteract the effect of historical injustice. This is something that Anderson is fully aware of, but in order to work against current inequality, rooted in past injustice, her model needs to include separate education as a tool for integration.

There are reasons to believe that integration does not necessarily lead to democratic equality for Indigenous people. Firstly, the concept of democratic equality is based on a 'standard' liberal democratic concept of citizenship, where citizenship is defined in terms of values constitutional for liberal democracies. The standard liberal view is that citizenship does not rely on shared national or cultural



values in a deep sense, but presumes that citizens are morally bound and loyal to certain political principles. John Rawls' idea of citizenship conforms to the standard view. The citizens in Rawls' theory share a moral commitment to common democratic political values and the virtue of reciprocity, which implies that political arguments should proceed within the framework of values acceptable to all (Rawls, 1993).

Inspired by Melissa Williams' concept of citizenship as 'shared fate', I am arguing that equal citizenship for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people challenges conceptions of citizenship that presuppose that the citizens share identity, or require loyalty to certain constitutional principles. The idea of citizenship as shared fate is developed in response to the fact that we exist in social relationships, share political institutions and are dependent on each other, whether we have chosen it or not (Williams, 2007, p. 229). The shared fate approach is thus adapted to a situation where people have multiple identities and loyalties. In my opinion, the shared fate approach is beneficial with regard to citizenship education, because social standing is taken into account. This means that education for citizenship and training for democracy would allow for contested conceptions of the content and extent of public reason, as well as different interpretations of what are considered to be national symbols, narratives and values (Ben-Porath, 2001, p. 383; Williams, 2007, p. 233). I am arguing that if integration should work as a means to democratic equality, citizenship education should be based on a more 'transformative' conception of citizenship than the standard liberal conceptions.

This chapter has two parts. In the first part, I will give an account of how citizenship is accounted for in the national core curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). I will also give a rough review of the main features of the equality of opportunity approach, and present how 'democratic equality' is defended as a better approach. Part II is a discussion of whether democratic equality can accommodate equal citizenship for Indigenous people. In this part, I discuss integration through the lens of the standard liberal approach and through the lens of shared fate. I argue that education for equal citizenship should rely on a more transformative conception of citizenship than the standard liberal conception. The chapter ends with some reflections on how equality of opportunity and democratic equality are intertwined.

Discussion of how to define equality in the contexts of education is not new. Discussions of equality of opportunity versus democratic equality in education usually deal with questions of how to balance between equality of opportunity and parental rights, if private education is unjust, or if natural talents deserve to be rewarded (Anderson, 2007; Satz, 2007). Discussions of multicultural education in liberal societies most often deal with questions of how to balance the need for

unity and stability with respect for diversity, and what to do when minorities' perspectives conflict with basic liberal values (Macedo, 2000). Such standard discussion is not the focus in this chapter. My discussion is restricted to how established concepts of educational justice and equality can accommodate and promote education for equal citizenship for Indigenous people.

## **PART I: EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY VERSUS DEMOCRATIC EQUALITY**

Public schools have always been an important tool for creating good citizens. Historically, education for good citizenship and nation building is deeply intermingled. Education has been used as a vehicle for promoting and strengthening national values, as well as creating loyal citizens (Aasen, 2007, p. 28). Public schools have been the site of cultural integration, with the aim of creating loyalty to cultural values, national history and narratives, and national symbols. Promoting loyalty, in order to develop and maintain stability, has been used to justify assimilation policies all over the world. For Indigenous people, these assimilation processes have resulted in loss of identity and first language competence, and alienation from their own culture as well as the culture of the majority (Banks, 2001, p. 6).

From 1850 to 1947, the official Norwegian policy was that the Sámi should be Norwegian, but in practice, the assimilation process has lasted for decades (Gjerpe, 2018, pp. 6–7). By ratifying the International Labor Organization (ILO) convention, Norway has recognized the Sámi people as Indigenous. ILO 169 states that Indigenous and tribal people have the right to develop their language and identity and decide for themselves how to do it. Article 27 states that education programs shall be developed in cooperation with them, to address their specific needs and to incorporate their histories, knowledge and technologies, their value systems and their further social and cultural aspirations. The government should recognize Indigenous peoples' right to establish their own educational institutions within the framework of common standards, decided by competent authorities. Article 28 states that children of Indigenous people have the right to be taught to read and write in their own language (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989, no. 169). In order to meet the requirements set by the ILO convention, Norway has a parallel set of curricula, one for mainstream Norwegian education and one for Sámi education. The two curricula are the same when it comes to core values and interdisciplinary topics, but the Sámi curricula emphasize topics concerning the Sámi language, culture and history (Olsen & Andreassen, 2018, p. 2). In the national core curriculum, Sámi cultural heritage is defined as a part

of the Norwegian heritage, and students should gain insight into the Sámi people's history, culture and societal life.

The national core curriculum describes knowledge and skills associated with democracy and citizenship within the framework of a pluralistic liberal democratic society. The students should, however, learn about 'the values and traditions that contribute to uniting people in our country' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 7). These values are not defined in terms of national culture or identity, but referred to as the values embedded in the Christian and humanistic traditions that have been important in the development of democracy. With this, the core curriculum tries to balance the need for unity and respect for (and value of) differences, by claiming that all students should be given the opportunity to explore their own cultural and language identity within a 'common reference framework'. Common references are considered important, in order to 'create solidarity and connect each individual's identity to the greater community and to a historical context' (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 7).

The core curriculum emphasizes values such as 'human dignity', that requires that everyone should be treated as morally equal, regardless of what makes them different, and 'identity and cultural diversity', that states that all students should be given equal opportunity 'to preserve and develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 7).

Citizenship is usually understood in terms of rights and responsibilities, identity and sense of belonging, and participation. The core curriculum includes all dimensions, but stresses the importance of democratic participation:

By working with democracy and citizenship topics, the pupils shall develop an understanding of the relationship between individual rights and obligations. Individuals have the right to participate in political activities, while society is dependent on citizens exercising their rights to participate in politics and influence developments in the civil society. The school shall stimulate the pupils to become active citizens, and give them the competence to participate in developing democracy in Norway. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 16)

Skills that are associated with effective political participation are: 'the ability to understand problems that arise when recognizing dilemmas regarding the opinion of the majority and the rights of minorities', 'critical thinking', and 'the ability to deal with conflicts of opinion and respect disagreement' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 8).

Education policies in Norway, as well as in most Western liberal societies, have moved from citizenship education based on unity, to a citizenship education that

is intended to accommodate difference (Olsen & Andreassen, 2018). Norwegian education policy is deeply rooted in the Nordic welfare state model in which redistribution is emphasized as a way to reduce socioeconomic inequalities and to promote social inclusion (Aasen, 2007, p. 129). The Nordic social democratic model after World War II was characterized by the confidence that the state should play an active role in planning and controlling the development of the society. Most of the schools were public institutions. The main idea has been that all children should have an equal chance to obtain a certain level of education, regardless of factors such as geographic location, ethnicity and socioeconomic background, and that education should provide equal opportunities for participation. One of the instruments that was introduced to achieve this aim was to mainstream education by developing a national curriculum in which the minimum of all subjects is defined (Aasen, 2007, p. 130). Mainstreaming of education was justified in the belief that equal citizenship presupposes unity and solidarity across class divisions and differences, and between urban and rural areas. This line of thought can be traced back to T. M. Marshall's influential idea that equal citizenship requires that all members of the society are entitled to civil, political and social rights. He strongly believed that the welfare state is the only form of democracy that can provide equal citizenship, and that social rights would enable the economically marginalized and the working class to make use of their civil and political rights, and to participate in the public sphere of the society (Kymlicka & Normann, 1994, p. 369). For the Sámi people, mainstreaming of education resulted in continued assimilation, which lasted for decades after the official assimilation policy was terminated. The principle of equality of opportunity in the current core curriculum is formulated as such: 'The pupils come to school with different experiences, prior knowledge, attitudes and needs. School must give all pupils equal opportunities to learn and develop, regardless of their background and aptitudes' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 19). Today, the principle of equality of educational opportunity is interpreted and applied in accordance with the fact that Sámi traditions are a part of the Norwegian history and heritage, as well as with the aims of protecting and respecting differences, and the student's right to develop his or her identity in an inclusionary environment.

### Equality of opportunity: The luck egalitarian approach

In this section, I will explain how the principle of equality of opportunity is defined and justified as a concept for educational justice. Egalitarian theories, based on the concept of equality of opportunity, are in some way or another related to John Rawls' principle 'justice as fairness'. The principle guarantees an equal scheme of

basic liberties for all, and requires not only a formal equality of opportunity, but also a fair equality of opportunity, and restricts inequalities that do not benefit the least advantaged in the society (Rawls, 2001, pp. 41–42).<sup>2</sup> The principle ‘fair equality of opportunity’ claims all citizens should have equal opportunities regardless of factors such as race, gender, ethnicity or socioeconomic background and that redistribution should aim at eliminating the effect factors such as social class, gender and ethnicity may have on people’s future prospects (Rawls, 2001). The principle of fair equality of opportunity is a principle for distributive justice. The society should organize the distribution of goods in such a way that people with equal talent and effort have equal opportunities in the competitions for positions, power and offices. This requires distributive procedures aimed at reducing the impact of factors that may affect people’s life prospects, but for which they are not responsible.

Adapted to education, the principle of equality of opportunity is most often used to justify a meritocratic principle of opportunity equality, that states that the student’s prospect for educational achievement should not be influenced by her social or cultural background, but by her efforts, interests and talents (Calvert, 2014, p. 72). Since children are entering the school with different knowledge and needs, equality of educational opportunity requires an unequal distribution of resources and goods. Time, money, special assistance and teaching facilities should be distributed in order to reduce the effect of socioeconomic and cultural differences in a way that gives all children equal opportunities to take advantage of education (Aasen, 2007, p. 130).

The principle of educational opportunity is often placed within the family of ‘luck egalitarian’ positions. The term ‘luck egalitarianism’ is a broad term, covering a lot of egalitarian theories. What I am presenting here is just a sketch of the main features of the approach. The main idea is that with inequalities that are the result of chance, no choice is unjust (Quong, 2006, p. 53). People should not be at a disadvantage because of circumstances for which they are not responsible, for instance, socioeconomic and cultural background or illness (Anderson, 1999, p. 288). Adapted to educational policy, it implies that no child should be at an advantage or disadvantage due to socioeconomic background, gender, culture or ethnicity. In society this is a matter of luck, and should not affect your future prospects (Calvert, 2014, p. 74).

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2 Rawls suggests that thinking about justice requires that we imagine ourselves as members of an ‘original position’ in which we choose principles for justice behind a ‘veil of ignorance’ that hides all information about personal identity and social situation (Rawls, 1999).

As a principle for justice of education, the principle of equality of opportunity provides a unifying reason why many well-known and identified barriers to equal education, such as class, gender and cultural background, are unjust (Calvert, 2014, p. 79). However, luck egalitarian approaches have been criticized for too narrowly focusing on the distribution of dividable material goods, and for neglecting inequalities rooted in structural and cultural patterns in society (Anderson, 1999; Fraser, 2003). Here it is worth noticing that Will Kymlicka (1995) applies luck egalitarianism to argue for special rights for cultural minorities who have been subject to assimilation and colonization. His argument proceeds as follows: every person has a right to exercise their freedom. Membership in a safe societal culture is a precondition for individuals to exercise their autonomy, or freedom. Societal culture is defined as ‘institutions covering both public and private life, a common language which has historically developed over time in given territories’ (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 81). Indigenous people have, to a significant extent, lost their land, language and institutions. Consequently, Indigenous people do not have equal access to a societal culture, and with this, they do not have an equal opportunity to exercise their autonomy (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 81). These inequalities are not a result of choices made by individuals, and are therefore unjust (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2011, p. 179). Indigenous people can therefore legitimately claim special rights aimed toward protecting their rights to practice their culture and language. This will, for example, justify the right to be educated in one’s own language.

## **PART II: DEMOCRATIC EQUALITY – A RELATIONAL CONCEPT OF EQUALITY**

The question is now if luck egalitarian approaches are sufficient to counteract the epistemic and structural dimensions of injustice, for instance of injustice and bias embedded in so-called value-free knowledge categories can contribute to the marginalization of Indigenous experiences as legitimate sources of knowledge.

Anderson argues that a ‘luck egalitarian’ approach is based on a misconception of egalitarian justice. She proposes democratic equality, which is a relational principle, as an alternative to equality of opportunity. She claims that justice is not a matter of what one person has compared to another, but a matter of what all persons need in order to realize themselves as equal citizens (Anderson, 1999, p. 313). She reminds us that the aim of egalitarianism is to end oppression, which implies ending oppression based on hierarchies in which some persons are seen as superior to others in virtue of factors such as class, gender or ethnicity. Oppression is defined in line with Iris M. Young’s famous and well-known identification of the faces of oppression: marginalization, status hierarchy, domination, explanation

and cultural imperialism (Anderson, 1999, p. 312). The positive aim of egalitarianism is then a society in which individuals are not subjected to any of these kinds of oppression, and stand in a relationship of equality to one another, in the major institutions of the society (Anderson, 2007, p. 620).

Democratic equality is based on the values of equal moral respect and autonomy. However, democracy is not a necessary condition for equal moral respect. The democratic element is specified by reference to the conditions of how to relate to one another as equal citizens. Democratic equality is described as a relationship where one person accepts the obligation to justify his or her actions by principles acceptable to others. This is a relationship where mutual consultation, reciprocity and recognition are taken for granted (Anderson, 1999, p. 313). Democracy is defined as collective self-determination, by means of open discussion in accordance with rules acceptable to all (Anderson, 1999). The principle of democratic equality also has a distributive aspect. Schemes for distribution should aim at adequacy, which refer to the level where everyone has access to the means necessary to realize their freedom and participate as equals in society. Adapted to education, adequacy means that every child should receive the knowledge and skills they need to function as equal citizens, this should also include language competences.

### Integration and democratic equality

Anderson identifies two major hindrances for democratic equality: segregation and group-based stereotypes. She argues from within the context of the USA, a society characterized by a high degree of group segregation and vast inequalities along dimensions such as race and class (Anderson, 2007, p. 601). The adequacy approach draws on two insights from Rawls' theory of justice. The first is that human knowledge and talents should be conceived of as public goods. The second is that they should be distributed to the benefit of everyone (Anderson, 2007, p. 621; Howe, 2015). Segregation has a huge impact on how resources, such as economic and cultural capital, transmit and impede knowledge to be distributed to everyone's benefit. Anderson claims that education should aim at creating an 'elite', capable of serving the interests of all members of society, and in particular the interests of the least advantaged. The 'elite occupy positions of responsibility and leadership in society: managers, consultants, professionals, politicians, policy makers' (Anderson, 2007, p. 596). In most democratic societies, the 'elite' is composed of people recruited from the group of the most advantaged in society. The 'advantaged' is defined as 'those who systematically enjoy relatively superior access to resources, social esteem, power, and influence (including elite status) in

virtue of their socially ascribed group identities' (Anderson, 2007, p. 598). This is the educated middle class, who live in separate neighbourhoods, work in places dominated by people from their own group, and are in possession of the same cultural capital as themselves. In other words, social inequality is reproduced along divisions of race and class (Anderson, 2007; Anderson, 2012). Stereotypes work when we make judgements on people based on prejudices about the identity of people who belong to certain groups. These prejudices reflect historical patterns of oppression and ideological rationalizations of inequality, and affect current relations between groups (Anderson, 2007, p. 605). Stereotypes also reinforce social segregation and cause discrimination towards disadvantaged groups, especially when they seek access to elite positions (Anderson, 2007, p. 605). The privileged will thus become more privileged while the disadvantages for the less privileged will increase (Anderson, 2007, pp. 601–602).

Anderson's main point is that an 'elite' drawn from a single sector suffers various cognitive deficits that make it unable to serve the interests of people from 'different walks of life' (Anderson, 2007, p. 607). To be able to serve the interests of all people requires that the members of the elite are able to communicate with others across different groups, and to think from the perspective of others (Anderson, 2007, p. 596). This is what Anderson defines as 'responsiveness', which requires four kinds of knowledge: 'awareness of the interests of others', 'disposition to serve those interests', 'technical knowledge of how to advance those interests', and 'competence in respectful interaction with people from all sectors' (Anderson, 2007, p. 596). Academic knowledge will only allow you to interpret and evaluate social situations from a neutral third-person perspective. What the elite need is knowledge of how structural injustice works based on personal experience and real communication across different sectors. According to Anderson, educational institutions value diversity, but without recognizing that this requires an expansion of the concept of knowledge itself (Anderson, 2007, p. 613).

Anderson claims that integration is the proper remedy against oppression caused by stereotypes and group-based prejudices. Integration implies that students from economic and racially segregated groups should be educated together. If every student is educated above the threshold of democratic equality, and educated together across race and class divisions, elite positions will be held by people from all sectors of society. The threshold is defined by making everyone ready for a four-year college degree. The claim is that integrated education, where different groups and social classes are educated together in stereotype-reducing settings, will foster inter-group communication and cooperation in terms of equality (Anderson, 2007, p. 616). Integrated education is not only a means for people to participate as equals in the public sphere of society, and be a part of the elite, but is



also necessary for democracy to work and develop. A society in which some people have privileged access to elite positions that give political power and control is not consistent with democracy.

### Indigenous citizenship and the standard liberal approach<sup>3</sup>

Education for equal citizenship in the case of Indigenous citizenship is to some extent discussed within the science of education, especially by Indigenous scholars. The question of how to find a balance between diversity and unity is central within liberal egalitarian discussions of education, but questions concerning Indigenous citizenship are mostly overlooked. In spite of differences with regard to what equality consists of, most liberal theories share the assumption that democracy presumes that citizens share some common democratic values (Kymlicka, 1997, p. 20). These are values that have also been used to justify policies leading to the suppression and marginalization of Indigenous people. The question now is if the ideal of democratic equality is responsive to the ideal that education should promote equal citizenship for Indigenous people.

The advantage with the democratic equality approach is that it emphasizes structural dimensions of injustice, for instance how historical injustice, scientific racism, stereotypes and prejudices have created asymmetrical social and political power relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This implies that citizenship education should have a transformative component aimed at making the political dimension of Indigenous citizenship visible.

Anderson also suggests that integration is the means of working against stereotypes and prejudices that have a direct effect of discrimination against particular groups. I question this approach from two perspectives, first from the perspective of how democratic citizenship is conceptualized in traditional political liberal thought, and second from the perspective of what integration is supposed to do.

Anderson does not offer an accurate definition of either citizenship or democratic equality. Since the approach is primarily developed as an alternative to distributive luck egalitarianism, not as a theory of democracy or citizenship, this critique is not substantial. However, in my reading, the democratic equality approach reflects standard liberal notions of citizenship, where citizenship is defined in terms of democratic participation within the framework of accepted common rules for public reason. The citizens in Anderson's theory are regarded as

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3 See also Vitikainen's discussion of the liberal conception of citizenship in Chapter 5 of this volume.

equal when they 'accept the obligation to justify their actions by principles acceptable to the other' (Anderson, 1999, p. 313). This is in line with John Rawls' political liberalism. According to Rawls, people exercise their citizenship when they are justifying their claims to another with political values that are understandable and shareable for all co-citizens in their capacity to be free and equal (Rawls, 1993, p. 20). His concept of citizenship is developed to find a balance between the need for unity and the respect for differences. Citizens in plural democratic societies have the right to develop their own identity and conception of the good in accordance with their cultural, moral or religious beliefs, but they also need to accept some rules for how to act and argue as citizens. Rawls' theory is based on a relatively sharp distinction between the political and the non-political spheres of the society (Rawls, 1993). Citizenship is defined in virtue of the individual's membership in the political sphere, which consists of basic institutions that affect the lives of all members of society. The non-political sphere consists of cultural values, their view of what a good life consists of, religion, and moral beliefs. Citizens in Rawls' theory would understand that when they are arguing and acting as political citizens, they are supposed to justify their behaviour with reasons acceptable to others in their capacity as free and equal citizens.

According to Rawls (1999), education for democratic citizenship should include information on their constitutional and civic rights, and should prepare them to be 'fully' cooperating members of society. Public education should focus on the children's role as future citizens, and provide knowledge that allows them to understand public culture and to participate in its institutions (Rawls, 1999, p. 120). In Rawls' theory, the acceptance of common rules is not simply pragmatic. The citizens in Rawls' theory are morally attached to basic democratic values. The standard approach to liberal education in multicultural and plural societies is that education should promote shared values in a minimal sense, and loyalty to values that are constitutional for democracy. This is also emphasized in the Norwegian core curriculum, which states that the students are to be given the opportunity to develop their own cultural and language identity within a 'common reference framework' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Anderson argues in line with Rawls, and most liberal egalitarian theories of citizenship education and educational justice, and emphasizes that the student should be able to maintain their cultural identity and attachment to their cultural communities, as well as participate in shared democratic processes.

The standard liberal view is that cultural barriers need to be broken down by teaching the virtue of public reasonableness, and children must learn to distance themselves from views that are taken for granted, and learn to see what kind of reasons are acceptable from the perspectives of people from other backgrounds

(Kymlicka, 1997, p. 15). As Kymlicka notes, while the aim of citizenship education in the past was to promote unreflective patriotism and strong national identity, educational theorists and policy makers today reject this model in favour of 'one that promotes a more active and reflective form of citizenship' (Kymlicka, 1997, p. 16). With this, political liberals avoid the language of shared identity in a strong sense, but they still emphasize the importance of shared political and moral beliefs, and a commitment to shared democratic constitutional principles such as tolerance, reciprocity and respect for individual rights (Williams, 2007).

I am aware that the democratic equality approach, due to the focus on structural injustice manifested in stereotypes and everyday interaction, does not rely on the same distinction between political and non-political identity as Rawls does. My discussion is, however, restricted to how citizenship is usually conceptualized within the liberal egalitarian tradition.

Critics of the liberal conception of citizenship, such as Iris M. Young (1997), defend differentiated citizenship because the identity people are supposed to share is defined and implemented by groups with power. Groups with power tend to equate their own interests with public interests (Bank, 2008, p. 4). This is precisely what Anderson aims to change, by expanding the elite and the area of knowledge people who hold elite positions need to possess. Democratic equality requires absence of oppressive relationships, and effective access to the resources, skills, knowledge and space needed to interact as equals with other people (Anderson, 2004). Democratic equality for Indigenous people requires a concept of citizenship that is more transformative than the traditional liberal one, and citizenship education that has a more dual and multiple function.

### Democratic equality and shared fate

As Annamari Vitikainen notes, from an Indigenous perspective, traditional Western liberal concepts of citizenship are problematic for a number of reasons. Indigenous people have not always been included in the state that wants to include them, and Indigenous peoples' own conception of citizenship or membership is often different from the liberal Western one (Vitikainen, 2021, p. 2). Democratic equality in the case of Indigenous citizenship should answer the challenging question of how historical injustice and feelings of alienation affect the way citizenship should be conceptualized (Woons, 2014, p. 193).

Melissa Williams suggests 'citizenship as shared fate' as an alternative to traditional liberal conceptions. She argues that even though liberals such as Rawls avoid talking about shared identity in a strong sense, they still emphasize the importance of shared moral beliefs and commitment to fundamental democratic values.

Shared fate is a forward-looking, pragmatic approach, developed in response to the fact that members of pluralistic societies do not necessarily share identity or loyalty to only one state or community, but that we still exist in social relations that depend on others and share political institutions (Vitikainen, 2021). As Williams notes, we are bound together because historical circumstances have thrown us together. We depend on each other whether we have chosen to or not, because what we do within these relations and institutional settings affects the lives of others (Williams, 2007, p. 229).

The shared fate approach and the democratic equality approach share the aim of promoting citizenship as a status marked by the absence of oppressive relationships. Williams agrees with democratic liberals that ‘an important function of education in democratic societies is to equip individuals with the capacities for meaningful and effective citizenship’ (Williams, 2007, p. 235). As with the democratic equality approach, citizenship education should aim toward developing peoples’ ‘enlarged thought’, which implies listening to voices, even when they are absent, and imagining how things look from the perspectives of others (Williams, 2007, pp. 231–232).

The question now is whether integration is the key to developing enlarged thought and sense of equality? From the perspective of Indigenous citizenship, the term integration does not necessarily come with positive connotations. Anderson is right in her claim that members of already privileged groups have better access to elite positions in democratic societies, and that those positions should be held by members from all sectors. However, historical structural injustice is not only rooted in group-based stereotypes, it is not only a matter of identity, but it is also manifested in the very structure of the institutions the democratic elite is supposed to work within.

Institutions are not culturally neutral, but are constituted by language and values that have been to the advantage of already privileged groups. In most democratic societies, the basic structure and its main institutions is for the privileged majority in the society. To ask people from historically oppressed groups to join established institutions, without awareness of how these institutions are constituted, may imply asking them to manage a stock of cultural capital that has been used to oppress them. As Martin Nakata notes, education that is designed to accommodate diversity and Indigenous perspectives occurs within the conceptualized framework that fits with Western ways of understanding terms such as ‘difference’ and ‘membership’ (Nakata, 2002). He also claims that when Indigenous perspectives are introduced in the classrooms, it is based on a duality between scientific knowledge and traditional knowledge. This not only obscures the complexity and intersection of the fields, but it also continues to present Indigenous

people as the Other by reusing the same categories that had been used to oppress them (Nakata, 2002, p. 28). Similar worries are expressed by Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel (2002), who argue that the very discourse on Indigenous rights and political agency is infused by state-imposed conceptions that were historically used to control them.

Integration, without taking note of how historical injustice is reflected in the very structure of the basic institutions, is not sufficient to educate for democratic equality for Indigenous people. Citizenship that doesn't take into account the fact that Indigenous people are connected to their own 'people', territory and language is likely to undermine democratic equality rather than promote it.

Citizenship as shared fate aims to be responsive to the fact that members of the modern plural have dual and multiple citizenship. As noted by Annamari Vitikainen (2021), it is also responsive to the situation that relations are often power laden, and that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people may have different and conflicting views of history and national narratives. Williams' approach is based on the claim that the inability to define citizenship in shared values, loyalty and identity implies that Indigenous people can use multiple political channels, not only shared political institutions, but also separate political institutions (Woons, 2014, p. 197). Given the fact that people have suffered from different kinds of historical injustice, they do not need to interpret the relations and institutions they are sharing in the same way. Democratic participation should take social standing into account, and allow for contested conceptions of national history and national symbols, as well as the content and extent of 'public reason' (Ben-Porath, 2013, p. 383; Williams, 2007, p. 233).

### Shared fate and education for democratic equality

The shared fate approach can be utilized in order to develop an account of education for democratic equality that considers how historical injustice still affects current power relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. According to Williams (2007), education for citizenship stresses three dimensions of human agency: the capacity for enlarged thought; the imaginative capacity to see oneself as bound up with others through relations of interdependence as well as through shared history and institutions; and the capacity to reshape practices and institutions that shape one's environment through direct participation (p. 237). Integration is important to ensure equality, and encourages the capacity for enlarged thinking, but according to Williams (2007), students should first be taught the history and tradition of their local community. Williams (2007) suggests an approach to education that would lead to different curricula for different

regions, but she emphasizes that ‘local diversity is ultimately to enable students to see themselves as having political agency in the broader community’ (p. 241). I think Williams is right in assuming that local diversity will improve the political agency of marginalized groups, and it will also make them more able to use their own perspective, in order to change the institutional frameworks that are used to oppress them. The Norwegian parallel curriculum system can be seen as an instrument that aims to strengthen the ability to use one’s agency, to reframe and reconstruct codes of political institutions.

## **CONCLUSION: EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC EQUALITY AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

As introduced in first part of this chapter, one of the central debates within liberal egalitarian theories of education is the question of whether justice should be understood in terms of equality of adequacy. This is not simply a theoretical and abstract debate of how to understand equality and justice. As many scholars have noted, there is a movement, both in theory and policy, toward adequacy as an ideal for educational justice (Anderson, 2007; Satz, 2007). Advocates of the adequacy approach have tried to make the state responsible, to ensure that all students are educated to a threshold that enables them to function as equals in the society without being subject to oppression and exclusion (Anderson, 2007). The value of democracy is strongly emphasized in the Norwegian core curriculum. In this chapter, the debate on how to understand equality is brought into dialogue with the debate on how liberal education should accommodate for differences within the framework of shared democratic values. In this debate, the question of Indigenous citizenship and dual citizenship has received relatively little attention. The equality of opportunity approach has been criticized for being blind to differences, and for focusing too narrowly on the distribution of socioeconomic differences (Anderson, 1999; Fraser, 2003; Young, 1997). Due to how this approach has been used to justify assimilation and mainstreaming, this is also, to some extent, correct. However, as pointed out in the first part of the chapter, by focusing on involuntary unfavourable conditions, the equality of opportunity approach can also be used to argue for cultural justice. It is also important to note that democratic equality in fact requires a redistribution aimed at reducing gaps in welfare. Democratic equality, as Anderson describes, it is not compatible with substantial material inequalities (Gheaus, 2016).

The Norwegian core curriculum states that the school must give all pupils equal opportunities to learn and develop, regardless of their background and aptitudes’

(Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 19). From the perspective of equality of opportunity, this implies that the state should distribute resources in order to reduce the impact that different cultural socioeconomic backgrounds often have on students' educational achievements. In a Norwegian context it can, for instance, justify the right for Sámi students to be taught in their own language. From a relational adequacy approach, this requires teaching practices and policies that promote solidarity and equality, and that give students the opportunity to express and develop different levels and dimensions of their citizenship.

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# 5. Conceptualizing Indigenous citizenship: The Norwegian core curriculum and citizenship as shared fate

Annamari Vitikainen

**Abstract** This chapter provides a political theoretical analysis of the new Norwegian core curriculum (2017) in the light of different conceptualizations of citizenship as applied to Indigenous and modern state contexts. It shows how the core curriculum incorporates elements from both ‘equal’ and ‘differentiated’ citizenship, and how its statements on identity and cultural diversity are also supportive of a notion of ‘citizenship as shared fate’. The chapter discusses some of the benefits of understanding citizenship as shared fate in non-ideal circumstances, yet cautions against a too straight-forward application of this notion for contemporary Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations.

**Keywords** citizenship | shared fate | Indigenous Sami | core curriculum | Norway

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The new Norwegian core curriculum states the following:

Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway’s cultural heritage. Our shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 7).

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1 Previous versions of this chapter were presented at the Indigenous Citizenship and Education (ICE) workshops, and the Pluralism, Democracy and Justice (PDJ) research group at UiT Tromsø. I thank the participants of these occasions for very helpful discussion and suggestions. Special thanks also to the editors of this volume, Torjer Olsen and Hilde Sollid, the anonymous reviewers, as well as to Kjersti Fjørtoft for several rounds of written comments and helpful discussion throughout the development of this chapter.

This chapter discusses some of the background assumptions of this claim from the perspective of political theory, and of different conceptualizations of citizenship as applied to Indigenous and modern state contexts. In particular, it looks at the statements of *Identity and cultural diversity* (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, Section 1.2) in the core curriculum and analyzes the extent to which these statements can be seen as supporting different views of citizenship, including equal, differentiated, and shared citizenship. The theoretical starting point of this chapter is thus within political theory, as opposed to curriculum analysis.<sup>2</sup> The chapter utilizes the tools of political theory in order to analyze, as well as evaluate, some of the background assumptions in the core curriculum, and by doing so, also provides further insights into the ways in which the core curriculum can be seen as contributing to the development of the more general understandings of citizenship – and the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations – in the Norwegian context. While the core curriculum never explicitly subscribes to any one (or more) notion of citizenship, it is clear that the different theoretical models, discussed in this chapter, underpin many of the statements and normative aspirations found in it. Besides being responsive to the common notions of ‘equal’ and ‘differentiated’ citizenship, this chapter argues that, as it stands, the new Norwegian core curriculum can also be seen as partially supportive of a notion of ‘citizenship as shared fate’. This notion recognizes both the differences in the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples’ identities and views of history, while aiming to cater for a common understanding of interdependency and cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the non-ideal circumstances of contemporary societies.

The chapter proceeds as follows: In Section I, I outline some of the key elements of the explicit statements of identity and cultural diversity in the new Norwegian core curriculum, and the ways in which these elements can be seen to cater for the development of common citizenship among the Indigenous and non-Indigenous Norwegian population. In Section II, I situate these statements within the broader framework of citizenship theory and assess the extent to which the core curriculum is seen to utilize different understandings of citizenship in terms of equal, differentiated, and shared citizenship. In Section III, I further analyze some

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2 For an overview on the different aspects of curriculum analysis, see Olsen and Sollid, this volume. For an analysis on how the values and principles of the core curriculum are applied locally in the education practices in Sapmi, see Evju, this volume. Another political theoretical analysis of the core curriculum is given by Fjørtoft, this volume. Contrary to the present chapter’s focus on the notions of citizenship, Fjørtoft’s contribution focuses more on the notion of equality, and the ways in which equality of opportunity operates as one of the preconditions for educational justice.

of the benefits of understanding citizenship in terms of shared fate, before providing a political theoretical analysis of the core curriculum as supportive of this view in Section IV. I conclude, in Section V, with some cautionary remarks against a too simplified and idealized notion of citizenship as shared fate in the Norwegian educational context.

## **I THE NEW NORWEGIAN CORE CURRICULUM: VALUES AND PRINCIPLES FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

The new Norwegian core curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017) defines the basic value framework for all primary and secondary education in Norway. This value framework is to apply both to the Norwegian mainstream educational institutions and to the ‘Sami school’. The core curriculum defines Sami school as the education and training which follows a parallel and equal Sami curriculum. The Sami curriculum applies in the municipalities that are part of the administrative area for Sami languages,<sup>3</sup> as well as to those pupils who have a right to be taught in one of the Sami languages in the rest of Norway (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 4 – from here on, I refer to the core curriculum by page numbers (p.) or sections (e.g., 1.2.) only).

The core values of education and training, according to the core curriculum, are based on the objectives clause of the Norwegian Education Act (Ministry of Education and Research, 2007). This objectives clause expresses values that are set to unite the Norwegian society, operate as the foundation of democracy, and help us<sup>4</sup> to live, learn and work together in a complex world with an uncertain future. The core values, according to the core curriculum, are based on Christian and humanist heritage and traditions. They are also expressed in different religions and worldviews and are rooted in human rights (p. 6).

In addition to including these core values – explicitly based on Christian and humanist heritage and traditions – the core curriculum describes additional requirements for the Sami school. These include ensuring that the pupils receive education and training based on Sami values and the Sami languages, culture and

3 From 1 July 2020, the administrative areas for Sami languages include 13 municipalities: Troms and Finnmark (8), Nordland (2), and Trøndelag (3).

4 It is notable that the core curriculum utilizes the rhetoric of ‘us’ when defining the core values of primary and secondary education. While I do not intend to analyze the deeper role and meaning of such rhetoric in the document, it seems clear that the usage of ‘us’ is, on its part, aiming to further strengthen the uniting role of education in Norwegian society.

societal life, as well as having a focus on material and immaterial cultural heritage, such as traditional knowledge, *duodji/duodje/duedtie*<sup>5</sup> and the importance of familial relations (p. 6). I will return to an analysis of such differentiated, yet supposedly equal, value bases from the perspective of Indigenous citizenship in the next section. For the rest of this section, I wish to focus on some of the explicit statements on identity and cultural diversity (1.2., pp. 7–8) in the core curriculum, insofar as they are seen to cater for the unity and common sense of belonging within the pluralistic Norwegian society.

As explicitly stated in the core curriculum, '[s]chool shall give pupils historical and cultural insight that will give them a good foundation in their lives and help each pupil to preserve and develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment' (p. 7). Importantly, the core curriculum recognizes diversity of identities, both individual and collective, in Norwegian society, and aims to cater both for the pupils' diverse identities, as well as their common sense of belonging in the broader Norwegian society. Notably, there is no mention of a 'common Norwegian identity' in the curriculum, but the shaping of each pupil's identity is supported by the encountering of diversity within 'common reference frameworks' (p. 7) constituted by this diversity. The core curriculum recognizes the equal standing of both Norwegian (*bokmål* and *nynorsk*) and Sami (South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami) languages. It also explicitly recognizes the contributions of five national minorities (Jews, Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Forest Finns, Roma, and Romani people/Tater) to the Norwegian cultural heritage and the importance of teaching and training to impart knowledge about these groups (p. 8). The Sami cultural heritage is, however, given a special status in the curriculum, being explicitly described *as part of Norway's cultural heritage*, and as something *all* students (Sami and non-Sami alike) should gain insights into:

The pupils shall learn about the values and traditions which contribute to uniting people in our country. Christian and humanist heritage and traditions are an important part of Norway's collective cultural heritage and have played a vital role in the development of our democracy. Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway's cultural heritage. Our shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations. (p. 7)

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5 *Duodji* (North Sami) / *duodje* (Lule Sami) / *duedtie* (South Sami) refers to traditional Sami handicraft made with traditional materials and techniques (Store Norske Leksikon, 2018).

Further still:

Through the teaching and training the pupils shall gain insight into the indigenous Sami people's history, culture, societal life and rights. The pupils shall learn about diversity and variation in Sami culture and societal life (p. 8).

These statements, among others, create a picture of Norway that is not only rich in diversity, but where the histories and traditions of both non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples are taught to all Norwegians, and where both these histories and traditions are viewed as being part of the cultural heritage of Norway.

## II THE CORE CURRICULUM AND CITIZENSHIP THEORY

While the core curriculum emphasizes the need for common citizenship education, it does not explicitly state which idea – or ideal – of citizenship it subscribes to. One of the interdisciplinary topics described in the curriculum is *democracy and citizenship* (2.5.2.), that aims to provide pupils with knowledge about the basic tenets of democracy and to prepare them for participation in democratic processes (p. 16). The school is to stimulate the pupils to become active citizens, although it is less clear what this citizenship, apart from some procedural aspects of citizen participation, entails. In order to see what kind of notion of citizenship the core curriculum can be seen to support, it may thus be worth looking into some contemporary theories of citizenship, and aim to place the statements of the core curriculum within this literature.

In contemporary political theory, citizenship is often viewed as incorporating three elements: legal, psychological, and participatory (Leydet, 2017). The legal element of citizenship is understood in terms of formal legal status and equal political rights.<sup>6</sup> In the core curriculum, this legal, status conferring element of citizenship is taken as given. The core curriculum does not aim to differentiate between the citizenship status, or citizenship rights, of the pupils, even if it is clear that some pupils in the Norwegian education system (for example, the children of recent immigrants, guest workers, etc.) do not hold the legal status, or citizenship

6 It may be worth keeping in mind that the elements of citizenship status and citizenship rights may also sometimes come apart (see, e.g., Joppke, 2007). The understanding of citizenship status, in the case of Indigenous peoples, has often also not followed an understanding of equal citizenship, as notions of 'Citizens plus' (Cairns, 2000) or 'Citizens minus' (Mercer, 2003) aptly demonstrate. For an analysis on the developments in the understandings of Sami citizenship in the Norwegian context, see Semb, 2012.

rights, of a Norwegian citizen. The participatory elements of citizenship often overlap with the legal elements (e.g., in order to cast a vote, one must also have a right to vote), but the participatory elements of citizenship go beyond the legal sphere. This is also recognized by the core curriculum:

Participating in society means respecting and endorsing fundamental democratic values, such as mutual respect, tolerance, individual freedom of faith and speech, and free elections.

[...]

A democratic society is based on the idea that all citizens have equal rights and opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes. (p. 10)

Citizen participation is thus not simply a matter of casting a vote in elections, but of having *effectively equal opportunities* (see also Fjørtoft's chapter in this book) to participate in decision-making processes under circumstances underscored by values such as mutual respect and tolerance. Importantly, while the formal legal citizenship may thus be viewed as distinctively equal (that is, uniform), the guaranteeing of equal opportunities to citizen participation may also require differentiated treatment or differentiated rights in order to be effectively, albeit not necessarily formally, equal. For example, in order to have effectively equal access to education, people with special needs may need special assistance, or in order to have adequate knowledge of one's cultural background, school curricula may need to be substantively modified. The notion of *differentiated citizenship* has acquired prominence, especially in many multicultural approaches to citizenship that aim to account for cultural diversity within any particular society (see, e.g., Carens, 2000; Kymlicka 1995; Patten, 2014; Vitikainen, 2015).

Acknowledging the diversity and plurality of the ways in which citizenship may be manifested, this notion of equal, yet differentiated citizenship can be seen to operate in the background of the core curriculum in at least two senses.

Firstly, following the Education Act, and its commitment to make it possible for the Sami to protect and develop the Sami languages, culture and societal life, the Sami curriculum is described as a parallel and equal curriculum to the mainstream Norwegian curriculum (p. 4). The endorsement of a parallel, yet equal curriculum for the Sami school reflects the overall need for the Indigenous peoples to have access to their *own* cultural context, along the same lines as the Norwegian majority population. As Will Kymlicka's (1989, 1995) influential account has pointed out, different states and state institutions (including schools and other educational institutions, public offices, courts, governmental media companies; the rules of society in general) have historically been formed and operate in accordance with

the dominant cultural norms and values in society. This, however, creates a systematic disadvantage to those from non-dominant cultural backgrounds, such as, in our present case, the Indigenous Sami. While the so-called cultural majority (the non-Sami Norwegians) have effortless access to their own cultural context (the school curricula, media, legal frameworks, official languages, etc. are all in line with the dominant culture), the members of non-dominant cultural groups, including Indigenous peoples, have no easy access to their own cultural context. The endorsement of parallel, yet equal Sami curriculum for the Sami school is a partial attempt<sup>7</sup> to rectify this situation, as it aims to enable the Sami pupils to have access to their own cultural context, along the same lines as the non-Sami Norwegian majority.

Secondly, the systematic disadvantage, created by the cultural embeddedness of public institutions, is manifested, not only in the unequal access to one's own cultural context, but also in the ways in which the non-dominant groups need to negotiate their own cultural commitments within the cultural frameworks of the majority. The Indigenous Sami living outside Sami territories (including Sami pupils attending the mainstream Norwegian schools) would need to use a substantive amount of time and effort to negotiate their own cultural commitments, norms and languages in a system designed for the non-Sami Norwegian majority, unless certain accommodations, such as differentiated rights, were implemented. The Sami pupils who reside outside the municipalities that are part of the administrative area of Sami languages already have a right to be taught in one of the Sami languages, and the schools, while not following the Sami curriculum in general, must provide access to these rights. Furthermore, the core curriculum acknowledges the ideal of democratic processes and effective equality of opportunity to citizen participation to be inherently dependent on the protection of the non-dominant groups in society:

Protecting the minority is an important principle in a democratic state governed by law and in a democratic society. A democratic state also protects indigenous peoples and minorities. The indigenous people perspective is part of the pupils' education in democracy. All the participants in the school environment must

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7 I say partial attempt, as the upholding of parallel Sami curriculum may not, on its own, do much to rectify the systemic power imbalances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Other methods to such effect may include, e.g., various types of differentiated rights, including rights of self-determination (exercised by, e.g., Sami parliaments), special representation rights (e.g., in Finnmark), exemption rights (e.g., in the usage of snow mobiles for reindeer herding purposes), etc. For a historical overview of the development of Sami rights in Norway and the Nordics, see, e.g., Broderstad, 2014; Lantto, 2010; Oskal, 2001.



develop awareness of minority and majority perspectives and ensure that there is room for collaboration, dialogue and disagreement. (p. 10)

While the core curriculum does not thus endorse any particular set of accommodations or differentiated rights for Indigenous peoples, it does commit itself to the inclusion of minority and Indigenous perspectives for all pupils, and views this as a central part of the pupils' education in democracy. This, on its behalf, caters for the pupils' development into responsible citizens (p. 11), and opens the door for understanding citizenship in terms of equal, yet differentiated citizenship, where the protection of Indigenous peoples, their cultures and languages may well require differentiated rights, including Indigenous political institutions (e.g., Sami parliaments), and protected access to education in Sami languages.

Whereas the references to citizen participation in the core curriculum may thus be seen to support a notion of equal, yet differentiated citizenship for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the curriculum also contains various references to the psychological aspects of citizenship: what it means to be a citizen and how one understands ones' belonging to the common citizenry of the state. Within the political theoretical literature on citizenship, these psychological aspects of citizenship have often been understood in terms of common citizenship identity. Following Benedict Anderson's (1983) ground-breaking work, citizenship has come to be understood in terms of shared citizen identity: a shared sense of belonging that ties the members – citizens – of the state together. According to many nationalist (e.g., Miller, 1995, 2000), communitarian (e.g., Sandel, 1982; Walzer, 1983), and republican (e.g., Pettit, 1997) understandings, citizenship entails commitment to certain common norms and values, such as, for example, shared sense of history or religion that binds the citizens together. In circumstances of cultural pluralism, such 'thick' understandings of shared citizen identity have, however, become difficult to sustain. In order to accommodate diversity among citizenry, many liberal and multicultural approaches have adopted a strategy of weakening the traditional understandings of citizenship as shared identity, from the sharing of 'thick' substantive cultural norms and values, to the sharing of 'thin' political values, such as the values of democratic procedure, toleration, and diversity.<sup>8</sup>

The new Norwegian core curriculum clearly incorporates such commitments to shared thin political values. The core curriculum talks of the need to educate and enhance the shared democratic values of mutual respect and tolerance, and

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8 Perhaps one of the most influential accounts of such 'thin' political conceptions can be found in the work of John Rawls (1996). I will come back to a critique of such liberal political conceptions in the light of shared fate theories in Section III.

emphasizes the pupils' need to learn and understand each other's differences as well as our need to live together with different perspectives, attitudes and ways of life (p. 7). Nowhere in the core curriculum, however, are these commitments to the shared thin political values of diversity, tolerance or cooperation described in terms of citizenship identity, but rather as a common framework of understanding within which the pupils' different, both individual and collective, identities are developed. As I argue in the following section, this lack of describing common citizenship in terms of shared (thick or thin) identity has certain advantages, as it caters for an even broader and deeper acceptance of diversity within a society construed of, no doubt, multiple, fluid and contested (personal and collective) identities. Viewed in this way, the core curriculum can also be seen as supporting an alternative notion of citizenship to those of shared identity views, that is, a notion of 'citizenship as shared fate'.

### III CITIZENSHIP AS SHARED FATE VS. CITIZENSHIP AS SHARED IDENTITY

The notion of 'citizenship as shared fate' has been developed as an alternative to the potentially homogenizing and excluding notions of 'citizenship as shared identity'. Following Melissa Williams' work (2003, 2004, 2010), the shared identity theories of citizenship can be divided into two categories. On the one hand, there are the more robust, 'ethnic national' understandings of citizenship that view citizenship in terms of shared ethnicity, language and history, or in terms of a set of comprehensive, e.g., religious or cultural, values shared by the citizenry. Let us call these understandings of citizenship 'thick identity theories of citizenship'. On the other hand, there are also thinner, 'civic national' or 'political liberal' understandings of citizenship that emphasize the political nature of citizenship and the citizenry's shared commitments to the core principles of democratic legitimacy (Williams, 2003, p. 210). John Rawls' (1996) political liberal understanding of citizenship provides a good example of this latter kind. Contrary to the need for the citizenry to share certain sets of substantive, e.g., cultural or religious, values or a common ethnicity or bloodline, what binds citizens together are their shared commitments to certain (thin) political values, such as respect for diversity, tolerance, and a commitment to proper political procedure. The so-called thicker markers of identity, such as shared religion or (somewhat more contestably) language,<sup>9</sup> are no

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9 It should be noted that, while the political liberal conceptions aim at bracketing, e.g., religion, culture, and language from being any essential markers of citizenship identity, this does not mean that the political institutions would, or even could (see Kymlicka, 1995) remain neutral

longer viewed as central elements of shared citizenship, but replaced by thinner, and presumably more inclusive political notions.

Importantly, according to Williams (2003, 2004), it is not only the more robust, thick identity theories of citizenship that prove to be problematic in contemporary pluralistic societies, but also the thinner, civic national/political liberal conceptions. Understanding citizenship in terms of shared substantive values, or in terms of common ethnicity or bloodline (thick identity), is clearly problematic, as it excludes or at least marginalizes those members of the political community who may not share the apparent core values of the nation, and/or whose ethnicity or bloodline is seen to be different from the bloodline of the majority. According to such thick understandings of citizenship, the Indigenous Sami would, by default, be relegated to second-class citizens in comparison to their non-Sami Norwegian counterparts.

However, while the thin identity theories of citizenship are set to escape some of the most obvious difficulties of thick identity theories, they too may be potentially exclusionary and marginalizing. Note that the thin, civic-national/political-liberal conceptions still require citizens to be committed to a certain set of (thin) political values, as well as to the political institutions supposedly governed by these values. Creating substantive conditions for citizenship in terms of the endorsement of a particular set of (thin) political values and their corresponding institutions, however, marginalizes those participants of the political community who, for whatever reason, may not be willing to give their full endorsement to these values, or to the institutions supposedly governed by these values. In societies characterized by long histories of distrust (such as, e.g., settler colonial states), such requirements may indeed be too demanding.

In opposition to the understanding of citizenship in terms of shared (thick or thin) identity, the notion of ‘citizenship as shared fate’ focuses, not on people’s shared commitments and endorsement of a particular set of either substantive or political values, but on a realization of the interconnectedness and interdependency of different groups of people that tie their fates together (Williams, 2003, pp. 229–233, 2004, pp. 103–109). These interconnections can be of various kinds, including cultural (tying a particular historical-cultural community together),

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with respect to these. For example, it is impossible for institutions to function without a common language, and, even if the official languages may be extended to also include Indigenous and minority languages, it is clear that the choice of the common institutional language(s) will necessarily have an effect on both the public conceptions and practices of language in society. For specific discussions on the role of language in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations and education, see several contributions to this volume: Belancic; Harvey; Johansen and Markusson; Ninkova; Olsen; Outakoski; Sollid.

institutional (tying members of a particular political community, e.g., the state, together), and material (tying a variety of groups and, presumably, the whole of humanity to one another [see Williams, 2010]). In the current, state-centred system of political organization, it is these webs of interconnectedness that tie people living within a particular political community (e.g., the Norwegian state) together, and also provides a sufficient bond for them to cooperate, without there being a need for the sharing of any particular set of substantive – or political – values or identities. All they need to share is the realization of their interconnectedness and interdependency within a political community (state) that ties their fates together, and, by virtue of this shared fate, also creates a need for them to work, in one way or another, with one another.

It should be noted that although ‘citizenship as shared fate’ is here portrayed as an alternative to the theories of ‘citizenship as shared identity’, it does not exclude the possibility of people organizing themselves in terms of collective identities, nor is it against the idea of identity groups as being politically relevant, for example, as a basis for discussing, deciding, or promoting the interests of one’s identity group. Like the shared (thin) political identity views of citizenship, ‘citizenship as shared fate’ aims to account for deep diversity within the political community by allowing people to keep their distinctive group identities and commitments to their own cultural, religious, linguistic, etc. norms and practices. Contrary to the shared political identity views of citizenship, ‘citizenship as shared fate’ does not, however, require people to form a shared political identity, nor a shared political loyalty that would, in cases of conflict, override the other group identities or loyalties. Although ‘citizenship as shared fate’ requires a shared realization of the interdependency of different groups within a particular political community, and a practical realization that this interdependency also requires some form of cooperation, these realizations of shared fate are substantively weaker than the requirement of a commitment to a shared political project underpinned by shared political identity and loyalty.

Before assessing in more detail how the Norwegian core curriculum can be seen to support this notion of citizenship as shared fate, let me say a few words about the potential benefits of understanding citizenship in terms of shared fate rather than shared identity.<sup>10</sup> Firstly, as described by Williams (2003, 2004, 2010), ‘citizenship as shared fate’ is, first and foremost, a pragmatic and forward-looking notion of citizenship that allows for a certain degree of disagreement in the different groups’ understandings of history and the legitimacy of the status quo. While some knowledge and common understanding of the past may well be necessary

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10 I have elaborated on these benefits in more detail elsewhere, see Vitikainen (2021).

for any respectful cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, it is also important to acknowledge that the two parties may nevertheless hold somewhat different views on how this history has unfolded and the present situation come about. By focusing on the present, and directing their views to the future, the two parties will allow for some disagreement in their views on history while simultaneously realizing that the premises of today will, by necessity, have an effect on their future cooperation. Let us call this the *non-normative status quo* benefit that allows for reasonable disagreement among the different groups' views of history, without sacrificing their willingness to cooperate.

Secondly, it would seem clear that 'citizenship as shared fate' requires far weaker commitments for the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to commit themselves to a common citizenship identity, or loyalty to the existing institutional structures, than the alternative shared identity views of citizenship. Contrary to these views, citizenship as shared fate does not require citizens to prioritize their common (in this case, Norwegian) political identity over, e.g., their Sami Indigenous identity, nor does it require the Indigenous (or non-Indigenous) peoples to vow their overriding loyalty to the prevailing mainstream institutions over, e.g., the Indigenous political institutions. This benefit – *no requirement for dominant identity or overriding loyalty* – is important, as Indigenous peoples may well have good, historically grounded reasons not to prioritize their Norwegian citizen identity over the Indigenous Sami identity, or to vow overriding loyalty to those mainstream political institutions that have, many times in the past, not treated them well.

Thirdly, the two first benefits – non-normative status quo, and no overriding identity or loyalty – bring forth a third benefit allowing for multiple political spaces and citizenships that do not need to be in opposition to one another. Let us call this the *plurality of citizenship* benefit. Indigenous peoples can, in accordance with the understanding of 'citizenship as shared fate', be citizens of *both* the modern state (Norway) *and* the Indigenous nation (Sapmi). This dual citizenship need not be hierarchical, nor need it include an inherent conflict of identity or loyalty, as citizenship is no longer understood in terms of overriding (substantive or political) identities or loyalties to the political unit to which the citizenship is attached. This possibility of multiple citizenships also has the benefit of being in alignment with international law and the right of Indigenous self-determination (see UNDRIP, 2007; ILO, 1989), and provides for the possibility of citizenship not only of modern states, but also of self-determining political units within, and possibly transcending, these states.

## IV CITIZENSHIP AS SHARED FATE AND THE CORE CURRICULUM

Having discussed some of the benefits of understanding citizenship in terms of shared fate, I now turn back to an assessment of the core curriculum as supportive of such view. In the following section, I further present some words of caution against a too simplified understanding of citizenship as shared fate in the Norwegian educational system.

As stated earlier, the core curriculum pays a fair amount of attention both to the need to cater for the pupils' development into active citizens, and for the development of their individual and collective identities. These two strands (active citizenship and identity development) do not, however, intersect, and the core curriculum avoids (whether deliberately or not) any expressions of common Norwegian identity or citizen identity throughout the document.

Instead of discussing 'Norwegian identity', the core curriculum does, however, discuss 'Norway's cultural heritage' and 'Our shared cultural heritage', supposedly constituted by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritages. The curriculum also refers to 'common reference frameworks' via which the pupils' individual and collective identities are supposed to develop, alongside their sense of belonging and solidarity within the broader Norwegian society (p. 7). All this, it should be noted, would seem to point towards an understanding of citizenship in terms of shared fate rather than in terms of shared identity. According to the core curriculum, the Norwegian history includes both Christian and humanist heritage and traditions (pp. 5–7) *and* Indigenous Sami cultural heritage (p. 7), and the pupils are explicitly supposed to learn of both as inherent parts of Norway's cultural heritage. This 'shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations' (p. 7).

It is important to note at this point that the two above-mentioned cultural traditions ('Christian and humanist' and 'Indigenous Sami'), while being both part of the cultural heritage of Norway, are not viewed as merging into one common history or identity. On the contrary, the core curriculum recognizes the distinctiveness of the two traditions and the role of these traditions in shaping the existing democratic institutions. While the Christian and humanist heritage and traditions are seen to have played 'a vital role in the development of our democracy' (p. 7), Sami cultural heritage is not accorded such status, even if it has been part of Norway's cultural heritage in various other ways. While I do not wish to draw any normative conclusions from such claims (it is, after all, empirically true that the Norwegian mainstream political institutions have been shaped by the Christian/

humanist traditions, and may even have been at times hostile to the Indigenous traditions), it is important to note that this description already incorporates certain power imbalances between the two groups. I will come back to these power imbalances in my cautionary remarks in the final section of this chapter. For the time being, it suffices to say that such power imbalances, while implicitly present in the wordings of the curriculum, are not explicitly mentioned or addressed in the curriculum. On the contrary, the core curriculum notes the distinctiveness and legitimate differences between the two groups and aims to cater for these differences by arguing for a common framework of reference via which the two groups can understand each other and ‘live together with different perspectives, attitudes and views of life’ (p. 7). The development of pupils’ identities (individual and collective) is inherently tied to a respectful, and equal, encounter with other world views:

The experiences the pupils gain in the encounter with different cultural expressions and traditions help them to form their identity. A good society is founded on the ideals of inclusiveness and diversity (p. 7).

Rather than merging the Christian, humanist and Sami cultural heritages and traditions into one, the core curriculum thus praises their coexistence, viewing such diversity as a strength rather than a weakness.

There are various connections between this view and the notion of ‘citizenship as shared fate’. First, the core curriculum at least *aims* not to make any substantive, normative claims about the historical relations between the two groups, but acknowledges that both groups have played a part in Norwegian history and continue to do so at present. This coincides with the *non-normative status quo* benefit that also allows a certain level of disagreement in the two parties’ views of history, without sacrificing their willingness to cooperate.

Second, the core curriculum encourages, or even celebrates, the pupils’ formation of their individual identities, and thus avoids the controversial claims for the citizens to form a common, even overriding identity as (primarily) Norwegians. While the curriculum advocates the acquiring of knowledge from each others’ perspectives, this is only for the creation of common frameworks of reference and solidarity that connect each individuals’ identity into the greater community and historical context (p. 7). The pupils can, and are also encouraged, to develop their individual identities without this creating a conflict with their sense of belonging to the broader Norwegian society. This coincides with the second – *no dominant identity or overriding loyalty* – benefit.

Thirdly, while the curriculum avoids talking of the concrete arenas of citizen participation, it is clear from the outset that some form of pluralism into the political arenas is permitted. The municipalities that are part of the administrative area for Sami languages are to follow a parallel and equal Sami curriculum, and the Sami pupils residing in the rest of Norway are to have access to their rights as Sami. This coincides strongly with the *plurality of citizenship* benefit, where the Sami pupils are set to develop their skills of citizen participation, not only in the broader Norwegian political spaces, but also in distinctively Indigenous spaces of political interaction.

## **V CITIZENSHIP AS SHARED FATE AND THE CORE CURRICULUM: SOME CAUTIONARY REMARKS**

While there is no doubt that the understanding of citizenship in terms of shared fate has certain benefits as it is expressed in the core curriculum, I believe some words of caution are in order. As described above, the curriculum paints a picture, in line with the notion of citizenship as shared fate, of a Norwegian society where the cultural heritages and contributions of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are recognized as part of the cultural heritage of Norway. The pupils' individual identities and their development into active citizens is further nurtured by this recognition of diversity, cooperation and mutual respect. As a document for the values and principles of primary and secondary education, the core curriculum thus provides an idealized picture of Norwegian society, where each pupil – and citizen – has equal opportunities to express themselves, to participate in decision-making processes, and to nurture and develop those aspects of their individual and collective identities that they wish to develop. The different groups, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are set to work together and cooperate under the ideal circumstances of equal opportunities and mutual respect.

However, such an understanding of citizenship as shared fate may not always be able to recognize, let alone correct, the historically embedded power imbalances that often continue to affect the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (see also Vitikainen, 2021). Even if both parties were to recognize that their fates are interconnected, and that they thereby need to work together under the conditions of tolerance and mutual respect, this does not, as yet, guarantee that their cooperation would happen on fair terms. Recall that the notion of citizenship as shared fate allows for reasonable disagreement on the events of history, as well as on the legitimacy/illegitimacy of the present situation (the non-normative status quo benefit). While the two groups are thus set to work together, they may



also continue to view their past and present relations differently, including the conditions under which they would (or could) cooperate on equal terms. For example, if the majority Norwegian population (including mainstream political institutions) were to view the past treatment of Indigenous peoples as already fully rectified, and the present status quo as just, there may not be many grounds for the strengthening of Indigenous voices in decision-making processes, or for the amending of public processes (including school curricula) for Indigenous representation.

This, of course, is not the case. That is, it is not the case that the majority Norwegian population (including mainstream political institutions) would view the past treatment of Indigenous peoples as already fully rectified. Nor is it the case that they would view the present relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples as fully just. However, even under such favorable<sup>11</sup> circumstances, understanding citizenship in terms of shared fate may, unless properly amended, help to hide, rather than expose, some of the persistent power relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Recall that, citizenship as shared fate is a primarily pragmatic and forward-looking notion that aims to cater for different groups' cooperation under equal terms. As such, it may be prone to view the present situation, while far from ideal, as still constrained by an idealized set of normative rules of tolerance and mutual respect. However, even if such normative constraints were to apply, the past and present power relations between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples remain. Returning to the Norwegian context, while much progress has been made, the Indigenous Sami nevertheless continue to live in a situation where they must have their voices heard in a system that, for decades, was not willing to hear their voices on equal terms. Furthermore, in current political circumstances, where the Sami self-determination is still subject to and conditional on the willingness of the 'host'-states to recognize such self-determination under state jurisdiction,<sup>12</sup> the Indigenous Sami also continue to be more dependent on the will of the non-Indigenous majority than vice versa. After all, the political self-determination of the non-Sami Norwegians has never been conditional on the recognition of the Norwegian political institutions by the Sami, while the Sami political self-determination, including the Sami parliament,

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11 By 'favorable,' I mean simply that the two parties (Indigenous Sami and non-Sami Norwegians) have at least a minimal agreement on the direction and persistence of disadvantage as related to the Indigenous – non-Indigenous relations (not that the persistence of such disadvantages would create favorable conditions for cooperation).

12 Notably, this dependency is also recognized in international law, incl. UNDRIP, 2007, that describes not only the obligations of states towards Indigenous peoples, but also maintains the ultimate authority and sovereignty of the existing state institutions (UNDRIP, 2007, esp. Art. 46.1.).

continues to operate firmly under the broader legal frameworks of the Norwegian state. Far from being an ideal speech situation where the cooperating parties could bring their views forward under conditions of equality, the whole structure of cooperation continues to be heavily power laden and thus inevitably distorts the communication and cooperation between the Indigenous Sami and the non-Sami Norwegian majority.

Such persistent power relations, while not explicitly recognized by the core curriculum, may nevertheless be found in some of its rhetoric. As mentioned in the previous section, the core curriculum gives very different roles to the Christian and humanist heritage and traditions on the one hand, and the Indigenous Sami traditions and heritage on the other. While the Christian and humanist traditions are described as having played a vital role in the development of democracy (p. 7), no such status is given to the Indigenous Sami heritage or traditions. A similar disparity is apparent in the Objectives clause of the Education Act, stating that 'Education and training shall be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, and on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity' (p. 5). While such values thus form the very basis of the education system and are considered to be fundamental in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, no such centrality is given to the values of Indigenous Sami traditions. On the contrary, the same values are said to be 'values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights' (p. 5).

When discussing the cultural heritage of Norway – 'the values and traditions which contribute to uniting people in our culture' (p. 7) – the curriculum again makes a subtle, yet noticeable difference in its treatment of the Christian and humanist heritage on the one hand, and Sami cultural heritage on the other. While the 'Christian and humanist heritage and traditions are an important part of Norway's *collective* [my emphasis] cultural heritage', the following is said of the Sami cultural heritage: 'Sami cultural heritage is *part of* [my emphasis] Norway's cultural heritage' (p. 7). Not an important part, nor, indeed, something that could be called *collective* cultural heritage, pertaining across the whole Norwegian society. While the curriculum then goes on to talk of 'Our shared cultural heritage' (p. 7) (without specifying its exact reference), it has already made clear that both the role (centrality) and the breadth (applicability) of the two heritages – Christian/humanist and Indigenous Sami – are viewed as different. While the Christian and humanist heritage remains the main, historically embedded, collective tradition to which *all* Norwegians are seen to be tied to, the Indigenous Sami traditions remain secondary and marginalized. No doubt, the Sami cultural traditions are recognized as part of the cultural heritage of Norway, and thereby also something that

all Norwegians should have knowledge of, although they do not break through to the collective memory of everyone, nor are they accorded any central place ('vital role') in the development of Norway's cultural traditions and heritage. While, historically speaking, there are of course differences in the roles that the Christian/humanist traditions on the one hand and the Indigenous Sami traditions on the other have been accorded, the core curriculum may not only be thought of as stating historical facts, but also as delivering future aspirations (after all, it is about values and principles, not only of historical empirical findings). In this sense, the subtle difference between the centrality and applicability of Christian/humanist and Indigenous Sami traditions may be seen as referring not only to the past, but also to the present and future understandings of the roles of the two traditions, thus also perpetuating the secondary and marginalized role of the Sami traditions in the Norwegian educational context.

In order to be clear, my intention here is not to argue that the Indigenous Sami heritage, as described in the core curriculum, should – normatively speaking – also be viewed as secondary or marginalized in the senses described above. Nor is my intention to say that such differences, and marginalizing effects, in the presentation of the two traditions in the curriculum would have been intended. For the purposes of this chapter, I give it the benefit of the doubt that these wordings do not represent the actual normative aspirations of the core curriculum, but can be viewed as unfortunate and unintentional formulations written in a context where the unequal power relations, while undesired, nevertheless continue to affect the ways in which such sensitive issues are communicated. This is important also in light of the notion of citizenship as shared fate as supported by the curriculum. Recall that the notion of citizenship as shared fate aims to cater for Indigenous/non-Indigenous cooperation under the normative constraints of equality and mutual respect while recognizing both the differences and interconnections of the two groups in question. And indeed, the core curriculum does its best in providing an ideal basis for such cooperation, aiming to strive for an understanding of citizenship that recognizes both the differences and interconnections between the Indigenous Sami and non-Sami Norwegians. It is not, however, entirely capable of shedding some of the old preconceptions and hierarchies attached to the two groups.

This is not, however, necessarily a bad thing. Catering for an understanding of citizenship as shared fate, and striving towards a fruitful and mutually respectful cooperation on equal terms also requires that the power relations and inequalities between the two groups are explicitly acknowledged. While it is doubtful whether the curriculum indeed manages to do so, it does nevertheless manage to provide a relatively desirable and inclusive picture of the end product to which the pupils'

citizenship education should be striving towards. While the core curriculum can thus be applauded for its efforts to achieve equal and mutually respectful cooperation between the Indigenous Sami and the non-Sami Norwegian majority, it must also be acknowledged that the present structures – contrary to the idealized picture painted by the core curriculum – are still far away from such ideals, and any efforts for such ideals must take these non-ideal circumstances into account.

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## 6. Sámi language education policy and citizenship in Norway

Hilde Sollid

**Abstract** The Sámi languages are important for contributing to social cohesion in the Sámi society; as a result of colonisation and assimilation, they have a complex role. In this context, language education policy plays a key part. This article investigates how social cohesion and the recognition of diversity is expressed in Sámi language curricula from 1974 to 2020. The analysis shows that from being a tool for literacy learning, today's curricula additionally are mediating belonging to and participation in Sámi societies.

**Keywords** Sámi language education policy | citizenship | social cohesion | diversity | curriculum analysis

### INTRODUCING SÁMI LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY

The Sámi languages are at the heart of belonging to Sámi cultures and communities. They are important for creating distinct Sámi identities and contributing to social cohesion within Sámi society. This role is, however, complex due to centuries of colonisation and assimilation policies. This article investigates how social cohesion and the recognition of diversity is expressed in Sámi language education.

The destructive policies of colonisation and assimilation have resulted in the fragmentation of Sápmi, and in the social and political marginalisation and what Léglise and Alby (2006) describe as the minorisation not only of the Sámi languages, but also of Indigenous and other minority languages around the world (see also Costa, De Korne, & Lane, 2017). In Norway, the Norwegianisation policy was a political strategy of fragmentation and the eventual assimilation of the Sámi people (Andresen, Evjen, & Ryymin, 2021; Minde, 2003), with the majorisation and extensive distribution of Norwegian as a nation-state language as part of the process. Processes which devalue the Sámi languages are a long-term outcome of minorisation as are the shifts in language use from Sámi to Norwegian. (see Huss, 1999).

Today, language revitalisation and reclamation (cf. Leonard, 2017) are prioritised in the Sámi communities (cf. Aikio-Puoskari, 2018; Todal, 2002). The goal is to value Sámi languages and their users, and to increase the number of Sámi language users. In Norway, this broad priority has political and juridical support for three Sámi languages – North Sámi, Lule Sámi and South Sámi – through the ratification of The European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages (cf. Pietikäinen, Huss, Laihiala-Kankainen, Aikio-Puoskari, & Lane, 2010). In addition, Skolt Sámi, Pite Sámi and Ume Sámi have historical links to Norway, but today these languages are mainly connected to Finland (Skolt) and Sweden (Pite and Ume). There are initiatives to strengthen these languages in Norway as well. Language revitalisation and reclamation are thus ongoing processes in communities where access to Sámi languages is not equally distributed. Some have access to Sámi through intergenerational transmission within the family and support from Sámi medium education. Others identify as Sámi through a range of discursive means like political engagement and personal narratives about the family's language history, but with limited or no access to developing Sámi language competence. Thus, the complexity involves diverse values attributed to the Sámi languages under different political regimes, and to the fact that today some have Sámi language competence whilst others do not.

The role of Sámi languages in creating Sámi identities and belonging to Sámi cultures and communities is an expression of the relationship between language and citizenship (cf. Horner, 2015; May, 2017). In general terms, the language–citizenship relationship is expressed by implicit or explicit language requirements for people to be considered as a member of a community. As citizens we are individuals with agency and legitimacy to act to shape our own future together with other citizens (cf. Ahearn, 2001; Isin, 2008). To identify with others is thus a basis for citizenship. A view of citizenship as active participation in nested networks on any part of the scale between the community, society, and the nation-state is also integrated here (see Olsen & Sollid, this volume). As colonialism had the fragmentation of Indigenous societies and linguistic and cultural assimilation as a main goal, in a postcolonial setting it is important to find a strategy to re-create and maintain social cohesion. As May (2017) shows, social cohesion can be achieved through either ignoring or appreciating pluralism. On this basis, an important question becomes how Norway and the Sámi society deal with the complexity connected with the Sámi language–citizenship relationship. From other contexts we know that the main debates over language and citizenship revolve around whether a language should be a requirement for citizenship, and whether this mandated language should be at the expense of or in addition to other languages in the society (May, 2017, p. 2).

In Norway, from 1950s and onwards one of the key responses to the challenges created by internal colonisation has been to focus on Sámi languages through the education system (Andresen et al., 2021, pp. 327–335). This suggests that Sámi language education is important for social cohesion and that there is also a space for three Sámi languages. All educational institutions are part of reclaiming Sámi language in this political turn, from kindergarten (see Storjord, 2008) to school (see Todal, 2002) and higher education (see Porsanger, 2019). In this education system, de-minorisation of Sámi and breaking with the suppressive colonisation and assimilation politics are connected with decolonising and Indigenising the field of education through centring Indigenous perspectives (cf. Sollid & Olsen, 2019). The introduction of the first national Sámi subject language curriculum in 1974 (cf. Todal, 2009) and the introduction of a parallel Sámi curriculum for Sámi schools in 1997 (cf. Gjerpe, 2017; Todal, 2003) are achievements in the process of Indigenising the education system. Additionally, Norwegian language plays a role in the multilingual Sámi society.

Today, the Sámi languages are important to the individual Sámi, and they are politically and socially supported by the Sámi society. Also, the Norwegian state provides political and juridical support through national as well as international laws and agreements. Taken together, this points to a language policy for social cohesion in Sámi societies, where also diversity within Sámi societies is recognised and part of the ideas of citizenship. Against this backdrop, the research question of this article is how social cohesion and the recognition of diversity is expressed in Sámi language education. This question is explored through a critical discourse analysis of the relationship between language and citizenship articulated in Sámi language curricula for primary and secondary school between 1974 and 2020.

## **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

This chapter builds on theories of language education policy and citizenship that view language policy and citizenship as processes rather than static objects, the concepts point to something we do rather than something we possess. Following McCarty (2011, p. 2) language policy is ‘processual, dynamic, and in motion’, and a field of social practice where overt and covert policies work for or against each other, sometimes creating ambivalence. An official language education policy builds on what is considered shared language ideologies, that is, cultural, or sub-cultural beliefs about language (cf. Irvine & Gal, 2000). These language ideologies frame and regulate language use and language competence in official educational settings on shorter and longer timescales. As such, language education policy is an



expression of the society's imagined role for the language users and languages in the future society.

Likewise, Isin (2008, 2009) emphasises citizenship as dynamic and in flux – as doings – which echoes current theorising in language policy through highlighting actions and practices. As citizens we are formally linked to a nation, and we can also be citizens of several collectives on different parts of a place scale (cf. Hult, 2015) where we are able and allowed to participate together with others to shape our future. Citizenship is, however, not a static practice, it can change, for instance in response of a society's policies, through performative acts of citizenship (cf. Isin, 2008).

Colonisation and Norwegianisation have contributed to an erasure of Sámi languages as part of the collective idea of Norway (cf. Sollid, 2009). These political processes have affected the Sámi languages, language users and Sámi societies differently and at different times. Todal (2015) therefore emphasises that there is not one but several Sámi language situations. Between these language situations, the local language policies, ideologies and practices might diverge, but on an overarching level, three of the Sámi languages are part of the same Sámi language education policy in Norway.

Today's Sámi language education policy in Norway builds on past and present Sámi grassroot initiatives to provide education in and on Sámi languages (see Broderstad, this volume). The policy is today situated in a public education system which is a top-down policy mechanism that reaches all members of society. As such, education is a powerful tool for implementing ideas of citizenship through creating and shaping collective knowledge and social roles for Sámi language students as active participants. From overt, *de jure* language policy, we can infer ideas of what are considered legitimate languages and language use for doing citizenship and becoming a citizen of a society. The policy can thus tell us something about the language rights and obligations sanctioned by national and international laws and charters, for example Norway's constitution, the Norwegian Education Act, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. It is at the same time important to emphasise that local conditions in the different Sámi language situations have implications for how the overarching language policy is locally adopted and how policy mechanisms work in practice. Therefore, even if official regulations like Education Acts and curricula are powerful texts with a wide scope of authority on long timescales, there is an ideological and implementational space, to use Hornberger's (2002) ideas. In this space, local ideas and social practices can resist or support the overarching official policy. These *de facto* language policies can be mediated by for instance teachers, teaching resources and actions in classrooms (e.g., Menken & García, 2010). This suggests a dynamic relationship between

bottom-up resistance and activist citizenship on the one hand, and overt, official minorising policies on the other. As with language policy, citizenship can be negotiated locally through acts of citizenship (cf. Isin, 2008) that potentially change the future for the individual and the communities.

## METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

To explore the research question of how social cohesion and the recognition of diversity is expressed in Sámi language education, the following analysis is based on twelve Sámi language curricula. Curricula are pedagogical documents, as well as instantiations of policies and ideologies envisioned by politicians and curriculum designers (e.g., Apple, 1990). In addition to the national and international laws and charters, curricula are framed by both the politicians' mandates but also the curriculum designers' beliefs, knowledge, and experiences. As such, a curriculum is the powerful result of a multifaceted social action (cf. Scollon & Scollon, 2004) of adapting an overarching language policy to education contexts, and simultaneously paying attention to the grassroots level where the curricula become practice. The goal of the curriculum is to imagine future citizens' virtues on basis of the past and present policies and ideologies.

The Norwegian curriculum of 2020 consists of four parts: 1) the Education Act, 2) the quality framework, 3) the core curriculum, and 4) subject curricula for primary and secondary schools. Each part is important for understanding the complexity of the policy and must thus be read and interpreted together. In Norway's system of parallel Norwegian and Sámi curricula, parts 1, 2 and 3 are the same, while the difference between them is expressed in the subject curricula.

The following analysis is based on Sámi subject curricula from 1974 to 2020. Analysing curricula from a timespan of almost 50 years enables us to trace changes in the curricula with respect to the language–citizenship relationship. The emphasis is on the first section of 12 Sámi language curricula. This section is relatively short (322 words on average) and connects the overarching goals in the Education Act and the core curriculum to specific competency goals in the subject curricula. This section is therefore a statement about the central values and goals of the subject. Between 1974 and 2020, Norway has had five curriculum reforms: in 1974 (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1974), 1987 (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987), 1997 (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet, 1996), 2006<sup>1</sup> (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2006) and 2020 (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2020).

1 The 2006 reform had three revisions, thus there are four versions of each curriculum. Since the revisions of the first sections are minor, only the 2006 versions are included in the analysis.

Table 6.1 is an overview of the Sámi language curricula of these reforms, and the documents analysed in this paper, with names given in North Sámi and Norwegian and translated into English.<sup>2</sup> The analysis is based on the Norwegian versions of the documents.

**Table 6.1:** Overview of Sámi language curricula between 1974 and 2020

Year (Short name)	North Sámi name	Norwegian name	English translation
1974 (M74)	–	Samisk m/skriftforming	Sámi with handwriting
1987 (M87)	Sámeigiella vuosttašgiellan Sámeigiella nubbingiellan	Samisk som førstespråk Samisk som andrespråk	Sámi as first language Sámi as second language
1997 (L97)	Sámeigiella vuosttašgiellan Sámeigiella nubbingiellan Sámeigiella ja kultuvra	Samisk som førstespråk Samisk som andrespråk Samisk språk og kultur	Sámi as first language Sámi as second language Sámi language and culture
2006 (LK06)	Sámeigiella vuosttašgiellan Sámeigiella nubbingiellan	Samisk som førstespråk Samisk som andrespråk	Sámi as first language Sámi as second language
2020 (LK20)	Sámeigiella vuosttašgiellan Sámeigiella nubbingiellan 2 Sámeigiella nubbingiellan 3 Sámeigiella nubbingiellan 4	Samisk som førstespråk Samisk som andrespråk 2 Samisk som andrespråk 3 Samisk som andrespråk 4	Sámi as first language Sámi as second language 2 Sámi as second language 3 Sámi as second language 4

In the analysis, the attention is on the circulating discourses about the relationship between Sámi language and citizenship. I see these discourses as discourses in place (see Hult, 2015; Scollon & Scollon, 2004), in that they are both expressed in the texts but also connected to the wider circumference and scales of space and time of Sámi language in education. The analysis thus describes both the ways language and citizenship are linked in the texts and how this relationship is linked with the broader context of the Sámi languages and Sámi language education.

The analysis builds on the perspectives of critical discourse analysis, where the use of language and other semiotic resources are not only simple reflections of social life; they are used by someone to accomplish some action in the social world (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 2). In the analysis there is a special focus on how difference and diversity in terms of Sámi language competence is expressed, and how these expressions produce power (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 173), for instance,

2 In 1974 there was no Sámi version of the curriculum. In 1987 the curricula are in North Sámi and Norwegian. Since 1997 the curricula are also available in Lule and South Sámi. Names and quotes from the curricula in English are my translations.

in terms of legitimacy to practice citizenship. I have searched for relevant content, for instance, choice of words or phrases and presence vs. absence of themes. As the texts are relatively short, each choice of linguistic and semiotic resource is significant.

Here I want to include a note on researcher positionality. I consider myself both Norwegian and Sámi, and as for all researchers my social and theoretical background influence my questions and interpretations. Transparency in the analysis is therefore crucial.

As emphasised above, language policy is here viewed as dynamic. This suggests that a curriculum is a space where we find variation, contestations, and contradictions. Thus, as part of a Sámi language policy, the ideas about language and citizenship in the curricula are framed by policy and social practice, and they are not stable or static across time or space. The ideas are situated and in a dialectic relationship with historical, current, and future discourses about Sámi language, (see the notion of discourses in place above). The curriculum analysis is framed by links across time and place scales of Sámi language policy.

## **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE AND CITIZENSHIP IN NORWAY**

Before analysing the Sámi language curricula, it is important to reveal ideas about the relationship between language and citizenship in Norway in a historical perspective. Going back to the start of Norway's compulsory education in 1739, we can trace Norway's response to the question of a mandated language for citizenship. This response is associated with the Danish-Norwegian union on the one hand, and restrictions of diversity through colonisation and assimilation of the Sámi people on the other.

Language education in Norway was, at the time of the introduction of compulsory education, related to the church's promotion of the Lutheran religion. In 1736, when confirmation became compulsory by law, citizen rights, like getting married and participation in military service, became connected to the confirmation certificate (Dahl, 2017, p. 80). In addition to intercession, confirmation included a knowledge component, which in turn instigated the first Education Act for compulsory schooling in 1739. The goal was that students should learn to read religious texts. In the beginning, the language of instruction depended on the teachers' beliefs about whether Sámi or Danish (the majoritised language of the Danish-Norwegian union), was most effective in promoting God's word. However, Danish soon became the main medium of education. This way, education for confirmation linked citizenship to language.

The idea of using the language of the majorised people in education continued after the end of the Danish-Norwegian union in 1814 and during the subsequent building of the Norwegian nation. For the new Norwegian nation-state, it became important to educate Norwegian citizens. Significantly, in this phase of language education policy, it was Norwegian that was promoted rather than Danish; it therefore linked the Norwegian language with Norwegian citizenship. This differentiation policy was at the expense of Sámi and other minorised languages (Sollid, 2009). The promotion of Norwegian as a mandatory language became part of the official assimilation policy towards the Sámi people in Norway that started around 1850 (Minde, 2003). Opposition towards linguistic diversity was not the main force behind the assimilation policy, as the processes that led to praise of the Norwegian dialects and a situation with two written standards, *bokmål* and *nynorsk* (Venås, 1993) in Norway, emerged around the same time as Norwegianisation became more targeted. Rather, the Sámi languages (and other languages, e.g., Kven) represented people and cultures of little value to the Norwegian state.

The role of national education in the Norwegianisation policy cannot be underestimated (see Dahl, 1957; Huss, 1999). The education system became more extensive through official policy mechanisms like education acts, curricula, and teachers' instructions (Dahl, 1957). Norwegianisation policy was thus explicitly voiced in the curricula of the expanding education system at the turn of the 19th century. Following May (2017, p. 4), mass education played a key role in choosing Norwegian as the only nation-state language. From this it is fair to say that the compulsory schooling system from its beginning was all about colonisation and minorisation, creating social cohesion within Norway through ignoring Sámi languages in education (or in other official domains for that matter). Using Irvine and Gal's (2000) theory of language ideology and linguistic differentiation, an iconic relationship between Norwegian language and education emerged, and is recursively reproduced linking the Norwegian nation with its education system to the Norwegian language. In this process, Norwegianisation was naturalised in language education, and languages other than Norwegian were erased as relevant for learning and for citizenship in Norway.

## **DISCOURSES IN SÁMI SUBJECT LANGUAGE CURRICULA 1974–2020**

Since 1974 there has been a development with respect to the offer of Sámi as a subject language in Norway. Based on the main question of the article, in the following analysis, the focus is on three discourses: discursive shifts towards decolonisation,

the discourse of the differentiation of language experiences and the discourse of active participation.

### Discursive shifts towards decolonisation

Gradually and as part of the political shift from official colonisation to decolonisation after World War II, Sámi language education has become prioritised both in Sámi and Norwegian politics (Andresen et al., 2021). When the reorientation of Sámi in schools and in learning processes occurred, we saw grassroots attempts to break the iconic relationship between education and the Norwegian language. These are important steps towards renegotiating the idea of one mandatory language for Norwegian citizenship, and making space for diversity and multilingualism. In this process, promoting Sámi language education might be seen as what Isin (2008, 2009) describes as acts of citizenship. There are many examples, but it is worth mentioning that in two municipalities from 1967, students with Sámi as their home language have been able to choose to have initial literacy training in Sámi. In 1969 the Education Act included a sentence giving parents of children with Sámi as a 'daily spoken language' the right to claim education in Sámi (Todal, 2009). In 1974, the 1967-project became part of the official national language education policy, and the first national Sámi subject language curriculum was introduced (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1974). It was labelled *samisk m/skriftforming* ('Sámi with handwriting'), a naming practice that linked the Sámi subject to the Norwegian subject *norsk m/skriftforming* ('Norwegian with handwriting'). There is no doubt that Sámi with handwriting was a breakthrough for Sámi language education, and it was oriented towards early literacy development in Sámi. It was, however, also a pathway to establishing Norwegian as the main language for learning. The goal was to keep Sámi as *sidemål*, after the initial years of literacy learning. The notion *sidemål* (literally 'side language') applies to Norwegian language situation through the use of two written Norwegian standards, *bokmål* and *nynorsk*. Students have one of the two standards as their first written language, and the other as the second. There are lower competence expectations in the second written language, be it Sámi or one of the Norwegian standards as *sidemål*. The choice of terminology indicates how Sámi language education policy is based on ideas of the Norwegian subject, and that Sámi and Norwegian were not equally valued. Note that the use of *sidemål* was dropped in later Sámi language curricula.

Despite the goal of transition from Sámi to Norwegian, the 1974 curriculum states that teaching about Sámi enables the students to 'love one's own mother tongue' (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1974, p. 116). This phrase also

links the Sámi subject to the Norwegian subject where there is an identical phrase (Johansen & Markusson, this volume), and it is an example of recursively produced language policy from Norwegian to Sámi (Irvine & Gal, 2000). To love one's own mother tongue is a noteworthy statement in an educational context where minorisation of Sámi language has been a naturalised idea for so long. In this case, recursivity contributes to a recognition of the value of Sámi language in a process of de-minorising a previously suppressed language and language users. Hence, in 1974 we see a process of discursive shift from Norwegianisation to acknowledging Sámi language and culture. At this stage of the long timescales of language education policy in Norway, Sámi was no longer erased from the curriculum, but was not fully recognised as a main language for learning.

### Discourse of differentiation of language experiences

From 1974 to 2020 there has been a process of differentiation of the Sámi language subject. In this discourse, the number of curricula is a relevant semiotic resource. Today, there are four different curricula for Sámi language education, covering primary and secondary school. This process started with only one subject curriculum in 1974, which according to Todal (2009) with goodwill could be called a curriculum for modern first-language education. At this point, differentiation was about the relationship between Sámi and Norwegian, which created a space for the Sámi language in the Norwegian curriculum. The 1987 reform introduced differentiation within the Sámi subject, more specifically through the curricula labelled 'Sámi as first language' and 'Sámi as second language' (see Table 6.1). This differentiation could be said to be a step towards an acknowledgement of students who come to school with different Sámi language experiences. For some students, Sámi is their 'mother tongue' as they start school. This group of students were the first to have their educational needs acknowledged by the Norwegian education authorities. With the 1987 reform, Sámi became a legitimate language for learning not only basic literacy, but also a medium for learning subject content and a space for exploring one's Sámi identity. This was important for the individual student, but also for the wider Sámi society as these students were seen as bearers and future cultivators of the Sámi language that others could learn from. Sámi as a first language is thus a subject mainly for this group of students.

For other students, Sámi was weakened or lost as a family and community language due to colonisation and Norwegianisation. These students' educational needs in Sámi language were not considered before 1987. With the 1987 reform, they were able to choose Sámi as a second language, which is a curriculum that

takes little or no Sámi language experience as a point of departure for learning the Sámi language. This curriculum is for students who are in the process of reclaiming the language (Leonard, 2017) for themselves, their families and for the Sámi community. From the 1997 reform onwards, the system of differentiation has been further developed. Today there are two tracks into the subject Sámi as a second language, one for students with some Sámi language experience (Sami as second language 2), and one for students with no experience in Sámi (i.e., Sami as second language 3 in primary and lower secondary school, and Sami as second language 4 in upper secondary school).

In a broader perspective, the 1974 curriculum could be said to express an idea of social cohesion (May, 2017) in the Sámi society through the Sámi as ‘mother tongue’. Since the 1987 curricula, the curricular differentiation between first and second language acknowledges diversity in Sámi language experiences and competences. With this differentiation, the education system is not only about maintaining Sámi for those who managed to keep the language despite the Norwegianisation politics. This differentiation also shows how the education system invests in reclaiming Sámi for students with little or no Sámi language experience.

### Discourse of active participation

Sámi political engagement and activism have been important for finding new directions for Norway’s Sámi politics from the 1950s. This value is also present in the Sámi language curricula, where active participation is described as a value for future Sámi citizens. From the 1987 reform and until today, this discourse of active participation is linked to Sámi language competence, like in this quote from the 1987 Sámi as first language curriculum: ‘The society needs people who can participate actively in society, who express their opinions and through this contribute to influence the future development’ (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 157). In the 2020 Sámi as first language curriculum, we find a similar goal:

‘The subject shall contribute to the students’ social learning and to preparation of students for participation in democratic processes in different parts of society and in working life’ (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a).

Given the context of the Sámi language curricula, the quotes refer to Sámi values and language use in Sámi society.

At the same time there is a noticeable difference between the first-language and second-language subjects with respect to the connection between language and



participation. The overall discourse is that first-language students are considered to have Sámi as their mother tongue, and they are learning to express themselves and participate actively in and for the Sámi society. Second language students are framed to be part of a bilingual society where active knowledge in both languages is required. In this bilingual society, they have Norwegian as their mother tongue, and through Sámi as second language they ‘develop practical and functional knowledge of Sámi’ (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 170), rephrased in L97 as ‘functional bilingualism’ (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet, 1996, p. 141). Second language students are developing Sámi language competence to the extent that they can be active participants in Sámi societies. These ideas are followed up in the 2020 curricula, in which second-language students are envisaged as becoming users of Sámi and developing their sense of belonging to their own Sámi communities:

The subject shall contribute to that the students become Sámi language users. [...] The subject shall contribute to that the students get a positive self-image and a safe identity as Sámi language users, and that they develop their belonging to their own language community, to Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie and the global Indigenous community. (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020b)

For second-language students, participation in democratic processes is not mentioned. In comparison, first-language students already belong to Sámi communities, and they participate in democratic processes. This difference is expressed partly by the absence of the ideas of *becoming* and of *developing*, and partly by explicit mentioning of participation in democratic processes in Sámi as a first language, which as we saw was not mentioned in the 2020 Sámi as second language curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a, 2020b).

There are also different participation roles apparent in a language policy and planning discourse that is present in the Sámi as first language curricula in 1987 and 2020. In 1987 the teaching of Sámi as a first language should emphasise ‘language cultivation’ (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987), and in 2020 knowledge and awareness about Sámi contributes to that students ‘can care for and develop the language for the future’ (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). This social role as a language cultivator is not described in any of the second-language curricula.

The difference in social roles between first- and second-language students is highlighted by the fact that in the 2006 curricula, the distinction in terms of language competence and membership was downplayed. The following phrase was used in both of the 2006 curricula: ‘Education in Sámi language shall contribute to that children and adolescents can be incorporated into Sámi culture and society’ (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006a, 2006b). Here, the use of the modal verb

‘can’ in the phrase ‘can be incorporated’ is important, as both first- and second-language students were considered to be becoming members of the Sámi societies. Nevertheless, the main idea that has developed over the decades is that there is a difference with respect to active participation between those who already have Sámi and those who are becoming speakers of Sámi. Embedded in the discourse on participation as part of citizenship is a view of Sámi societies and Sámi citizens that is based on Sámi language competence.

As language is important in the discourse of participation, it is interesting to identify the ‘articulated imagined communities’ (see Gjerpe, 2017) where the students can participate. Over the reforms since 1974, there is a growing awareness of society and place in the curricula. As the 1974 curriculum aimed to transition the student into Norwegian as a main language of learning, this suggests that the Norwegian society is an implicit imagined community for participation. In the 1974 core curriculum, there is a chapter about students in ‘language mixed areas’ that serves to locate Sámi languages to areas in the north (North Sámi) and in the middle of Norway (South Sámi) (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1974, pp. 71–72). With updated terminology, the 1987 core curriculum describes the distribution of Sámi languages, and in addition mentions the unity between Sámi people across Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, pp. 33–35). This practice is continued in later curricula, and, from 2006, with reference to the name of the Sámi nation in three Sámi languages, Sámegiella/Sápmi/Saepmie (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2006; see also Gjerpe, 2017). In the 2020 curricula, Sámi language competence is considered to connect the students to Sámi societies in Norway as well as the whole of Sámegiella and the global Indigenous community.

Although the focus in the Sámi language curricula is on Sámi language competence for Sámi societies, this is situated in a context where Norwegian is the majorised language. The Norwegian language therefore is present in the discourse on active participation in the Sámi language curricula. In the 1974 curriculum, the students were expected to develop competence through Sámi that would later be useful in Norwegian and in a Norwegian context (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1974, p. 116). In the 1987 Sámi as second language curriculum, the first sentence states that ‘a bilingual society needs participants with active competence in both languages’ (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 170). In the 2020 curricula, the role of Norwegian in active participation is connected to multilingualism, and students ‘shall be able to use their multilingual and multicultural competence in different Sámi, national, international and Indigenous contexts’ (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a; see also Johansen & Markusson, this volume, on multilingual citizenship).

When it comes to the description of Sámi communities in Norway, there is a discursive difference between the Sámi as first language and the Sámi as second

language curricula. In the 1987 Sámi as second language curriculum, there was a goal of learning to express oneself in formal and informal situations in daily life (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 170). From this goal, the students' Sámi language competence is linked to daily life in their 'milieu' (*miljøet*). In comparison, in the M87 first language curriculum, the place of participation is the 'society' (*samfunnnet*) (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 157), which denotes a wider space scale than milieu. This difference in scale in the perspective of place and society is also present in the 2020 curricula. The Sámi as first language curriculum mentions both the Sámi society, the Norwegian society and 'area belonging' (*områdetilhørighet*) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). The latter is described as one of the fundamental Sámi values in Sámi language education. The phrase 'area belonging' is vague, but might refer to the wider language areas (e.g., North Sámi, Lule Sámi and South Sámi areas). Interestingly, this phrase is missing in the second-language curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020b). Here belonging to place is linked to 'own language community' (*eget språksamfunn*), which denotes a more specific place, for instance, where the student comes from. From this, we see that the 2020 curricula express a place scale (see Hult, 2015), where the Sámi as first language students have a wider and more overarching 'articulated imagined community' (see Gjerpe, 2017) compared to the Sámi as second language students. This difference is also connected to power, as the overarching society is linked to wider political power than a local community, hence the curricula express a hierarchy within the Sámi society (see also Olsen, this volume).

To summarise, the three discourses are intertwined and point towards the same direction, namely to centre Sámi language as a part of a process of deminorising Sámi and creating social cohesion within Sápmi. At the same time, the language education policy acknowledges pluralism, both through references to different social settings across Sápmi, to diverse starting points for pursuing Sámi language education, and to multilingualism. How this acknowledgement is discursively constructed has developed through the reforms since 1974. Depending on their Sámi language competence, which is linked to the colonial past and the history of family and place, the students are or can become active citizens using Sámi in Sámi societies and communities. In the curricula, the idea of belonging to a Sámi society and place is part of the idea of the active, participating citizen. These changes in the curriculum discourse represent a development in the society towards seeing Sámi language competence as not only relevant for the individual student's language learning and development, but also a foundation for an idea of collectiveness and social cohesion within Sápmi. In this context where colonialism and assimilation politics hit hard, social cohesion is complemented with an acknowledgement of diversity within the Sámi society.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis has shown that there have been developments in the Sámi language curricula between 1974 and 2020, and through this development we see that official Sámi language education policy is dynamic (see also McCarty, 2011). The changes emerge from chains of what Isin (2008) describes as acts of citizenship, and they reflect political activism during the years 1950–2020 for the Sámi living in Norway (see also Andresen et al., 2021; Broderstad, this volume). This development includes dealing with the complexity and diversity of Sámi language experiences created by colonisation and assimilation politics. Given the view that the use of language and other semiotic resources in the curricula not only reflects social reality but is also used to accomplish something (see also Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 2), it is interesting to discuss what the curricula do.

One of the discourses that has developed over the years is the close relationship between Sámi language competence and citizenship as active participation in Sámi society and Sámi communities. This finding supports the idea of developing social cohesion (see May, 2017), and mass education plays an important role in promoting Sámi as a highly important language in Sámi society. The legacy of colonial de-legitimisation and minorisation of the Sámi languages and its users is nevertheless still causing language shifts. According to Aikio-Puoskari (2018, p. 356), even in the few communities where Sámi is the majority language, the language is not safe. In this way, the role of the Sámi languages in social cohesion seems to be linked to two diverging processes that on both long and short timescales frame Sámi language education policy, namely nation-state-initiated language shifts on the one hand, and Sámi initiatives to maintain, revitalise and reclaim Sámi on the other. In this context, the Sámi language curriculum envisions a special role for the Sámi as first language students in Sámi society. As language bearers they are the future Sámi language cultivators. As Sámi language education is a tool to decolonising and Indigenising education, these students are at the front of resisting and overcoming the legacy of colonialism and Norwegianisation on a societal level. There is thus an urgent need for Sámi society to support those who grow up using Sámi daily (see also Todal, 2004).

The curricula differentiate between different levels of Sámi language competence, namely Sámi as a first language and two tracks of Sámi as a second language. The ideas of diversity and differentiation in Sámi language education acknowledge that language shift is one of the effects of colonisation and Norwegianisation, and that it is possible and desirable on an individual as well as societal level to reclaim Sámi. In addition to the two second language tracks in the curriculum, diversity is also supported by the role of local place and belonging in language learning.

Acknowledging diversity makes space for many ways of creating a sense of Sámi belonging, and thus also many ways of active participation. The main role envisioned for the second-language students is, according to the curriculum, to be active users of the Sámi language in local communities, and thus from the ground up to be part of the overarching process of language (re)vitalisation and reclamation (see also Todal, 2004).

In the 2020 curricula, there is a balancing act between creating and maintaining social cohesion and acknowledging diversity. In seeing Sámi language competence as a criterion for participation in Sámi societies, the Sámi language is linked to citizenship in the curricula. Sámi as first language students are from the outset considered to be Sámi citizens, while Sámi as second language students can become citizens through becoming active users of Sámi. Following Isin (2009, p. 371), this is a differentiation between ‘citizens’ and ‘subjects’, or insiders and outsiders, which is in a hierarchical relationship. This is, however, not a clear or static situation, as second-language students can develop their status to become insiders and citizens at least through becoming new, active users of Sámi. Labelling the Sámi subjects as ‘first language’ and ‘second language’ therefore seems to not only point to students’ sequenced language acquisition trajectories (Sámi or Norwegian first), but it also differentiates social roles and power relations in the Sámi societies.

Curricula are statements about the past, the present and the future. Based on the past experiences and ideas about the future, the 2020 curricula see Sámi language competence as essential for active citizenship and ultimately also social cohesion. My interpretation is that seeing Sámi language competence as an indicator of citizenship is a language ideology (see Irvine & Gal, 2000) that has been expressed since 1974, and the first phase of dismantling the Norwegianisation policies in and through education. The 1974 curriculum was primarily for Sámi ‘mother tongue’ students, and typically these students are from North Sámi areas where Sámi language against all the odds was maintained throughout the long phase of assimilatory politics. In the later reforms, this language ideology has become an integrated part of the Sámi language education policy.

At this point, it is interesting to ask how the expressed relationship between language and citizenship in the curriculum relates to the wider Sámi society today. Looking at the Sámi political system in Norway, the link between language competence and citizenship seems to be less strict compared to the curricula. To enter the electoral registry for the Sámi parliament, a person must fulfil subjective and objective criteria. Firstly, a person must identify as Sámi and then demonstrate that they, or that at least one of their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents spoke Sámi at home, or that one of their parents is or was registered in the Sámi electorate (see Sametinget, n.d.; Berg-Nordlie, 2021, p. 3). Hence, there is no

requirement to be an active user of Sámi to be eligible for a seat in the parliament. At the same time, the question of Sámi language competence and citizenship is an emotional topic that from time to time emerges in public debates (Berg-Nordlie, 2021, pp. 12–13). While there is a strong shared determination to strengthen the Sámi languages, this determination in some cases creates a feeling of marginalisation among Sámi who do not (yet or anymore) have Sámi language competence. For people, families and communities who have experienced language shift, these are multifaceted discussions, which involve values like legitimacy and authenticity as Sámi.

In practice and looking beyond the curricula and the electoral register, identifying as Sámi, belonging to Sámi societies, and active participation is not dependent on a person's language competence. This suggests that the links between language competence and citizenship in the Sámi language curricula is an expression of dominant language ideologies in official language education policies, and of the significance of Sámi language as a value and an indicator of distinct Sámi identity. What we learn, then, from the role of Sámi language in the electoral registry for the Sámi parliament and public debates, is that there are more language ideologies at work in the Sámi society than what we find in the curricula. There is thus an ambivalence between the language education policy, and other language policy domains. Potentially, the tension can affect a sense of belonging to and thus also active participation as citizenship practice in the Sámi society, or as Stroud (2016) writes,

‘Feeling in or out of place is one of the main determinants behind whether individuals are able to exercise agency and local participation, as well as whether encounters across difference are expressed as contest or conviviality. (p. 3)

At this point it is important to notice that curricula are intentions, something to work towards. There is thus a space for local interpretation and practice (see Hornberger, 2002; Menken & García, 2010). Following this, the overarching language policy can be adapted locally to the specific Sámi language situation. In this context, the emphasis of the dynamics of place and place-based pedagogy (see Fogarty & Sollid, this volume) is an ideological space where the complex and dynamic links between Sámi language competence and citizenship can be worked out.

## FINAL REMARKS

The relationship between language and citizenship in Sámi language curricula has developed from 1974 to 2020, and they show how the society through the curricula

is dealing with the colonial past. In 1974 the Sámi language curriculum was a tool for early literacy learning for the individual students who would eventually transition into using Norwegian as the medium for learning. Today, in addition to goals of language competence in Sámi, the curricula mediate belonging to and encouraging active participation in Sámi communities and societies within and across nation-state borders. The Sámi language curricula are both an expression of social cohesion and a recognition of Sámi diversity and multilingualism. The development in the curricula shows that the balance between cohesion and diversity is not decided once and for all in the official language education policy. Also, there is an ideological space where teachers, students, and parents as local policy makers can implement the language policy according to the local context.

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# 7. Globalised language and culture policy borrowing for Aotearoa: Colonisation, history and language power

Sharon Harvey

**Abstract** This chapter examines the introduction of intercultural competency into the New Zealand learning languages curriculum released in 2007 and based largely on the work of the Council of Europe. An important question is raised as to whether such theoretical models emanating from Western Europe can address the historical power imbalances that have resulted in extreme forms of oppression and the silencing of Indigenous languages and cultures in previously colonised countries.

**Keywords** language education policy | Aotearoa New Zealand | indigeneity | colonization | subject languages

## INTRODUCTION

Much of the policy work on language and culture education emanating from the Council of Europe has ‘gone global’ with the Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) having been adopted by many countries (Valax, 2011). Alongside, the theory of intercultural competency (ICC) accompanying the CEFR has been folded into language curricula in a range of countries. The apparently winning combination is widely considered to be one answer to the education of tolerant and interculturally competent citizens, and particularly those who are internationally mobile.

This chapter examines the concept of global language policy with a focus on ICC and its particular reception into the national curriculum of Aotearoa. The country has a history of colonisation and, concomitantly, an historical and contemporaneous power imbalance between the Indigenous language, te reo Māori, and the language of the coloniser and now globalised language – English. To add to this

specificity, Aotearoa New Zealand can be considered ‘super diverse’ (Royal Society of New Zealand, 2013), in that 160 languages are spoken in the community and more than 25% of its population have been born outside the country (Statistics New Zealand, 2020).

In charting the introduction of ICC into Aotearoa through the national curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007a), a question is raised as to whether language and culture policies emanating from other places can be unproblematically transposed into new linguistic contexts without considerable renovation and repurposing. This might be particularly the case where Indigenous languages co-construct and, in New Zealand’s context, legislatively frame the linguistic landscape (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2016; Te Tiriti o Waitangi: The Treaty of Waitangi, 1840). In an attempt to rethink education in ‘new times’ (Luke, 1998), Olsen’s (2017) call to education scholars researching Indigenous matters is applied here, specifically to the field of languages education. Olsen (2017, p. 209) writes: ‘What is indigenous ought to remain in the centre.’ This idea is mobilised to critically consider how languages education, particularly with respect to intercultural competency, should be different in Aotearoa and perhaps in all countries with a history of colonisation.

To underscore the potential problem for non-European countries, researchers have noted that various of the discourses contained in the CEFR policies, accompanying documents and supporting scholarship can be seen as hegemonic in their sanguinity (see as an example, Porto, 2019). By contrast the historicities and accompanying entanglements through which languaging assemblages (Demuro & Gurney, 2019) gain and lose power and become enmeshed in each other may be anything but straightforward. Valax writes that

the claims made in the CEFR itself in relation to its purposes are, at best, optimistic. They are also problematic when considered in relation to growing unease about what Canagarajah (2005, p. xiv) describes as the ‘one-sided imposition of homogeneous discourses and intellectual traditions by a few dominant communities’. (Valax, 2011, p. 47)

In exploring the policy reception of intercultural competency within languages education curriculum and policy in Aotearoa, it is worth considering whether there might be further ways to conceptualise and teach intercultural communicative competency in tandem with languages education. Colonisation and the resulting unequal relations of power vested in different languages (Indigenous and other) have not been an area that the Council of Europe has particularly broached. Presumably this is because the authors are writing for the European context and these are not sufficiently salient issues in that part of the world. However, for settler

countries like Aotearoa, colonisation and the resulting vast inequalities between the language of the coloniser and the colonised has had a deleterious impact on Indigenous languages, their numbers of speakers and levels of speaker proficiency. This, coupled with the dominance of English and the historical tendency to copy the format of languages education from Great Britain (Northey, 1988), alongside ongoing immigration, has irreversibly changed the linguistic ecology of the country, including that of languages education.

As noted, in the Aotearoa context, the Indigenous language is New Zealand Māori. In addition, languages Indigenous to the New Zealand Realm which have been seriously affected by colonisation and, more recently globalisation, are Tokelauan, Cook Islands Māori and Niuean. Other Pacific languages represented by sizeable diasporic populations continue to be impacted by language loss over several generations through the societal primacy of English. In Aotearoa these are, most notably, Samoan (see, for example, Wilson, 2017) and Tongan.

Professor Mike Byram, the key architect of intercultural communicative competency and its application and integration into language teaching and learning has from time to time noted his wish to see the ICC model (Byram, 1997) and subsequent theorising critiqued and perhaps challenged. This chapter is offered in that spirit, one that recognises the huge contribution ICC has made to language education across the world. It is also offered in recognition that we must keep reflecting on and interrogating these matters, particularly with the insight gathered in local sites of language teaching and learning. This chapter is written as a contribution to the ‘conversation’ that will help us ‘think what we are doing’ (Arendt & Canovan, 1998, p. 1, as cited in Biermann & Townsend-Cross, 2008, p. 149). As Suresh Canagarajah suggests in an interview with Melina Porto ‘We have to keep moving and rethinking’ (Porto, 2020, p. 7).

## **BACKGROUND ON THE CEFR AND ICC**

The Council of Europe Framework of Reference for languages (Council of Europe, 2001) (CEFR) was launched in 2001 as part of a determined move to create European Union level policy to underpin and support languages education across the region. This was because language education was and is seen as an important tool for developing European citizenship and integration. The Second World War had highlighted the large-scale chaos, trauma and violence divisive diversity and racism could produce. For post-Second World War Europe, the educational project became one of working towards long-term peace. Language education, with the purpose of creating and supporting widescale multilingualism and international mobility, was considered to be an important way to educate for tolerant

citizenship in Europe and further afield. The Council of Europe's mission in focusing on language education, in effect putting it in the centre of the educational project rather than having it on the sidelines, was to ensure that language proficiency in more than one language and reflexive intercultural competency was seen as the norm and that one language was not considered superior or more important than another. Subsequently the Council of Europe explained their values around language and culture through research and related policy:

the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding ... (Council of Europe, 2001)

Traditional approaches to language pedagogy with a linguistic, functional and technical focus were not considered sufficient to fulfil the new goals (Byram, 2014). Learning 'the language' was not enough. Rather, there needed to be a recognition of the symbiotic relationship between language and culture. Reflexively understanding one's own culture and how it plays out in any interaction, particularly between those of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, became an important part of the new theory contributing to language education in Europe (Council of Europe, 2001). Therefore, a key component of the developing of thinking around language learning by the Council of Europe was that language teaching would need to become infused with culture teaching. The idea was that culture teaching would go beyond traditional, tandem 'culture classes' focused on the 'target culture', comprised mainly of what Claire Kramsch (1989) and others have referred to as the 'four f's': foods, fairs, folklore and statistical facts.

Much of the theorisation around the new approach was developed by Professor Michael Byram who first published his model of intercultural competency as it related to language teaching in 1997. While the CEFR itself comprises a number of language proficiency descriptors over six levels which can potentially serve for any language (Council of Europe, 2001), the important, even indispensable accompaniment is Byram's (1997) model for developing intercultural competency within the language classroom. Melina Porto (2019), a former PhD student of Byram's, has described the model as follows:

The model of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) laid out the different dimensions of knowledge, skills and attitudes, beyond the linguistic, that language education should address. In terms of knowledge or *savoirs*, intercultural

competence comprises, for instance, knowledge of the ways of life in a given society or context including work, education, traditions, history, dress codes and food, among others. Attitudes have a place and involve the attitudes of curiosity and inquisitiveness, or *savoir être*, which are complemented with the skills of interpreting and relating those savors, or *savoir comprendre*, and the communicative skills of discovery and interaction, or *savoir apprendre/savoir faire*. Finally, critical cultural awareness, or *savoir s'engager*, is paramount in this model and involves not only critical thinking but also social transformation through critical self-reflection, intercultural dialogue, and action (Holmes, 2014; Houghton, 2012) by both learners and teachers. (p. 143)

It should be noted that Byram's intercultural competency model originated in 'foreign' (sometimes called 'modern') language teaching, particularly of French and German, in Great Britain (Byram, 1997, 2014). This observation is important because it serves as a cautionary signal that perhaps the ICC model should not be applied holus-bolus to language education that differs in character and context from whence it originated. It is salient also that by 2014, Byram's 1997 ICC model had moved beyond language education to be conceived as an all of education approach for citizenship learning: to combat 'discrimination, stereotyping and all forms of racism' (Barrett, Byram, Lázár, Mompoin-Gaillard & Philippou, 2014, p. 7). As explained in *Developing Intercultural Competence through Education*:

Intercultural competence is a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through (inter)action which enables one, either singly or together with others, to:

- Understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself
- Respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people
- Establish positive and constructive relationships with such people
- Understand oneself and one's own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural 'difference'. (Barrett et al., 2014, pp. 16–17)

The Council of Europe's design of language policy for post-Second World War Europe was undoubtedly the most ambitious in terms of geographical spread, country coverage, diversity of languages and ethnicities, promulgation and publications the world had seen. It may not be surprising then that other countries,

even those from quite different socio-historical and political contexts, went on to consider and adopt aspects of the policy (Byram & Parmenter, 2012; Valax, 2011). For example, Valax (2011) cites the Chief Inspector of Education for Modern Languages in France and the French National Representative to the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe (CoE), Francis Goullier, at a CoE intergovernmental language policy forum in 2007 in Strasbourg, noting the presence of country delegations from non-European countries Canada, China, the US and Japan, as well as representatives from Australia. Some questioned whether there was much that was European about the CEFR given its wide international appeal. With such demand, the CEFR was translated into 30 languages (Valax, 2011).

Perhaps the logic seemed therefore irrefutable that with an incoming language learning strand in New Zealand's new national curriculum to be launched in 2007, ideas about language education flowing from the Council of Europe might be picked up by policy makers in New Zealand. In their report 'on intercultural language teaching and its implications for effective practice' (Newton, Yates, Shearn & Nowitzki, 2010, p. 1) in New Zealand, Newton and colleagues undertook a review into the integration of intercultural communicative competency in language policies internationally. One section was entitled 'A global trend' with the final comment in the section providing a rationale for intercultural language teaching in Aotearoa:

There appears, therefore, to be broad consensus on the role of languages education in fostering cross-cultural understanding. New Zealand is clearly on firm ground in developing an approach to language education which reflects this consensus. (Newton et al., 2010, p. 15)

The report, commissioned by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, provided a rationale for a decision to incorporate ICC that had been made several years prior (see Koefoed, 2012), at least as early 2006 when Professor Byram visited Aotearoa for keynote addresses (Durham University, n.d.) and discussions with curriculum writers.

## **EUROPEAN LANGUAGE POLICY ARRIVES IN AOTEAROA**

Byram and Parmenter's (2012) book documents how aspects of the Council of Europe's work were borrowed into many country contexts. The book is called, *The Common European Framework of Reference: The Globalisation of Language Education Policy*. In a contributing chapter, Glenda Koefoed (2012), a

former manager of language education contracts for the New Zealand Ministry of Education, including those for language teacher in-service professional development, details some of the history of the policy borrowing into Aotearoa. She notes that despite efforts to produce a national-languages policy and concomitantly, a more coherent approach to languages education, the ‘turbulent’ policy and institutional upheaval in Aotearoa in the 1990s and early 2000s, not least in the education arena, mitigated against this:

policy developments in languages in this country gain traction through a combination of the legacy of history, external policy, legal, academic and economic influences, changing population demographics, internal stakeholder pressure and overall government policy directions. (Koefoed, 2012, p. 233)

Instead of working from Aotearoa’s own linguistic and historical context, however, New Zealand officials actively engaged with the work of the Council of Europe in the 1990s and 2000s, with the goal of incorporating those language policy developments into the writing of the new Learning Languages strand of the curriculum (Koefoed, 2012; Valax, 2011).

Unlike the language policy documents emanating from the Council of Europe (e.g. 2001) and Byram’s own academic work (e.g. 2014) where languages in education were generally referred to as modern or foreign languages, Koefoed (2012) refers to the languages in the new Learning Languages area as ‘additional languages’, noting ‘Languages ... supported (in the curriculum) include European, Asian, Pasifika and official languages (Te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language)’ (p. 235). The unmarked ‘normal’ language that the subject languages in Learning Languages (including te reo Māori) are ‘additional’ to is English. Nowhere does the key difference seem to be highlighted, that Aotearoa’s languages include Indigenous languages and that this might impact on the way policy borrowing from global ‘centres’ such as the United Kingdom and Europe might or should proceed. Alongside this, there appears to be no recognition, either, that Aotearoa’s history of colonisation could have some bearing on intercultural relations and therefore intercultural competency education requirements in Aotearoa. Part of the reason for these oversights may be the relentless focus in Aotearoa on learning languages to speak ‘overseas’, rather than to be a well-educated and fully participative citizen in multilingual Aotearoa. In this sense, educators see our languages curriculum as being just like that of any other country. The *Joint Statement of the Academies* (2020) is a recent example of a global statement on languages education that purports to speak for all English-dominant countries but does not give more than titular attention to Indigenous languages.



Byram's 2014 paper is a retrospective consideration of the development of his first ICC model of 1988, as well as the more well-known 1997 model of intercultural competency for foreign language education. The article includes commentary from members of his online international 'cultnet' group describing their experience and knowledge of ICC in language education in their countries. Byram (2014) observes that 'The strongest statements come from New Zealand and Argentina' (p. 6). In the former, 'cultural studies is now recognised as a core part of the Learning Languages area of the *New Zealand Curriculum* 2007. Culture and Language are now two equally weighted strands of Knowledge awareness that support students' ability to communicate (Conway & Richards)' (Byram, 2014, p. 6).

This new curriculum learning area, Learning Languages (Ministry of Education, 2007a), unbundled the instructed learning of languages, perhaps more accurately described as subject languages (Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008), from the medium of instruction languages (in this case English, but also in New Zealand, *te reo Māori*). The new learning area required that subject languages other than English, but including *te reo Māori*, be available to students from years seven and upwards, although the learning of subject languages was not made compulsory. While a range of primary and intermediate (upper primary to year eight) schools had offered languages prior to this, it had been on a voluntary basis, generally unfunded by the government, and dependent on the availability of language teachers and the somewhat diverse views of individual schools and their communities.

As noted above, from the beginning, the new learning area had incorporated language education trends emanating from Europe, most obviously that of intercultural competency. One of the key documents for teachers is a visually dense wall chart (Koefoed, 2012). The chart, available as a PDF on the Ministry of Education's website, is known as the 'Generic framework for teaching and learning languages in English medium schools' (Ministry of Education, 2007b). The document is multimodal in that information is presented through diagrams, text and images. It aims to communicate key messages about the new learning area to teachers, and presumably, teacher educators. The hard copy poster format for the Learning Languages framework is salient because no other learning area in the 2007 curriculum has been produced in the form of a wallchart. Perhaps the thinking behind the new format was that because this was a new curriculum area and since a new way of language teaching was being proposed (incorporating intercultural competency), it was important to produce it in a fashion that would allow easy access and reference for teachers. The decision to do this may also have been due to the enthusiasm of the curriculum writers to widely disseminate the message that intercultural learning was now an integral part of language learning in Aotearoa (Koefoed, 2012).

Many parts of the chart refer to culture, culture learning and intercultural competency (Ministry of Education, 2007b). None of the text, however, specifically informs the reader that the integration of intercultural competency is a new move in languages education in Aotearoa, and a new requirement for teachers of languages. The Learning Languages curriculum statement (Ministry of Education, 2007a) and the generic framework (Ministry of Education, 2007b) are intertextually linked to Byram's work in several places, both as attributed and unattributed text. For example, in the generic framework the following excerpt appears in the second section under the heading 'Why Study a Language' towards the top, left-hand side of the poster, an important position when reading in English:

Interaction in a new language, whether face to face or technologically facilitated, introduces ... [the students] to new ways of thinking about, questioning, and interpreting the world and their place in it. Through such interaction, students acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes that equip them for living in a world of diverse peoples, languages, and cultures. As they move between, and respond to, different languages and different cultural practices, they are challenged to consider their own identities and assumptions. (Ministry of Education, 2007b)

This text recirculates the 'knowledge skills and attitudes' of Byram's 1997 model. It also incorporates the important reflexive component where students are asked to question their own cultural positioning in order to respond empathetically and knowledgeably to others.

A shift in New Zealand language teaching to so-called 'intercultural communicative language teaching' or iCLT as Newton et al. (2010) coined the approach was what was hoped for and expected (Koefoed, 2012). However, guidelines for the implementation of iCLT were not included on the generic framework wallchart alongside what came to be known as the Ellis principles (Ellis, 2005 cited in Ministry of Education, 2007b) and so did not have equal visibility for teachers who needed further explication of the new focus on language and culture integrated teaching. The Learning Languages wallchart (Ministry of Education, 2007b) includes ten principles for designing effective language programmes based on a 2005 literature review written in preparation for the new learning area (Ellis, 2005). The principles focus exclusively on pedagogy for language acquisition with no mention of culture or intercultural learning.

The wallchart is named 'the *generic* [my emphasis] framework for teaching and learning languages in English-medium schools' (Ministry of Education, 2007b). It was explained that individual language guidelines would offer necessary advice

for teachers for each language. However, the generic framework itself provides no specificity related to the different languages available through the curriculum. In effect, languages are conceived as interchangeable learning packages even though these languages are very different from one another in terms of their power, number of speakers, function, historicities and their place in any putative hierarchy of languages in Aotearoa (de Bres, 2015). Demuro and Gurney (2018) describe this as ‘positioning them [languages] as neutral objects of study rather than historically and culturally situated phenomena through which social practices are interpreted and, reflexively, are constructed and shaped’ (p. 287).

In a wall chart designed to educate New Zealand language teachers about the new learning area more or less at a glance and with a strong emphasis on the introduction of intercultural communicative competency, no particular profile is given to the Māori language or the Treaty of Waitangi. Te reo Māori appears only briefly on the wallchart as the whakatauki or proverb for the Learning Languages strand at the top of the wall chart. The whakatauki is ‘He taonga ngā reo katoa’, which can be translated as ‘All languages are to be treasured’ (Ministry of Education, 2007b). The chart could just about belong to any English-dominant country.

There has never been a New Zealand language policy document explicating why some languages are offered in the curriculum and others are not. Koefoed (2012) explains that languages have appeared in the New Zealand curriculum through a combination of what has been available historically, political pressure for trade languages and domestic lobbying for community languages. As observed above, this lack of clarity in policy making adds to the problem that subject languages in Aotearoa are popularly imagined as something that is of use ‘over there’, in far off foreign countries. They retain the fixity of the label used in European and British academic literature and policy, of ‘foreign or modern languages’ even though the suite of offerings in Aotearoa includes Indigenous languages and languages that are used in New Zealand’s diasporic communities (often referred to as community or heritage languages).

This European and British construction of languages as being foreign and/or modern also plays into the organisation of the learning of subject languages. The New Zealand language-specific guidelines are written for people learning from scratch, starting with beginner level and moving through eight levels of increasing proficiency to advanced (Ministry of Education, 2007b). These levels roughly map onto the CEFR levels of language proficiency, and are generally targeted at monolingual English-speaking New Zealand students, rather than diasporic and Indigenous students who may already have good proficiency in a language. It is also rarely considered that New Zealand students may have the goal of expanding their multilingual repertoires to communicate more meaningfully with diasporic

communities in Aotearoa (rather than for travel for business, education or tourism overseas).

## INTERPRETING ICC FOR NEW ZEALAND TEACHERS

In 2010 the report on iCLT commissioned by the New Zealand Ministry of Education to provide guidance to teachers on how to teach iCLT was released (Newton et al., 2010). The report was seen as a necessary accompaniment to Ellis's principles for language learning and teaching which were included on the 2007 Framework chart (Ministry of Education, 2007b). It should be noted that 2010 was the year that the goals for the new learning area were already supposed to have been reached: that all New Zealand students in years seven and eight would have access to learning a language additional to their language of instruction.

The Newton et al. (2010) report went further than the Learning Languages curriculum statement (Ministry of Education, 2007a) and generic framework (Ministry of Education, 2007b) to tentatively suggest that ICC theories could be more relevant for the New Zealand context. For example, the first chapter of the report discusses the Treaty of Waitangi in relation to iCLT:

In as much as intercultural language learning explores the relationship between the environment, peoples and cultures, in Aotearoa New Zealand it necessarily has its foundations in the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840 between Māori and the British Crown. (Newton et al., 2010, p. 7)

The authors go on to suggest that the Ministry of Education's new policy move behoves that

careful consideration must be given to the implications of intercultural communicative language teaching (iCLT)<sup>1</sup> for indigenous peoples in New Zealand. (Newton et al., 2010, p. 7)

It is not clear why the implications of iCLT would be for Indigenous peoples in Aotearoa, rather than for non-Indigenous peoples who may need to take indigeneity more self-consciously into their intercultural frame of reference. In addition, the authors do not take the next step and explain how and when 'consideration'

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1 See the note on terms in the introduction for an explanation of the distinction between 'intercultural language learning' and 'intercultural communicative language teaching' or iCLT.

might be given. Nevertheless, the report suggests that there is more to be done in refashioning ICC for the New Zealand education system, particularly to address the entrenched sense of entitlement and privilege in the predominantly English-speaking, monolingual Pākeha community in New Zealand:

Thirty years ago, Hohepa (1978) presented the intercultural challenge for Māori:

[I]t is true that Māori people have had to adapt to Western civilisation in terms of technology, education, housing, clothing and the like. The striving for the continuation of Māoritanga does not mean the automatic rejection of all which is not Māori. ... A bicultural person cannot merely switch languages if he (sic) is bilingual but is also able to handle different cultures in exactly the same way. ... The conclusion one can reach is of a possible ideal New Zealander who has his (sic) feet firmly rooted in one cultural tradition but has an informed knowledge of and empathy with others. That there are already many people of this kind in New Zealand is worth noting. But that most of them are Māori or other Polynesians is regrettable. (Newton et al., 2010)

This quote from Bill Hohepa is a gently formulated yet somewhat damning indictment of Pākeha culture and race relations in Aotearoa and stands as an intercultural challenge for non-Māori. Newton et al. (2010) present some New Zealand literature on multicultural approaches to education, as well as bilingual and immersion education in respect of te reo Māori and Pacific languages, noting that ‘only a small proportion of this literature specifically addresses the topic of our review, namely intercultural language learning’ (p. 9).

Chapter two of section two is entitled ‘International trends in the practice of intercultural language learning’ (p. 10). From this point the report does not return to the question of how New Zealand’s version of iCLT would take into account the colonised history of the country and the inequality between languages and peoples. The justification for ICC in the New Zealand curriculum, notwithstanding the earlier section, is broad international consensus. Given that all the literature Newton et al. (2010) refer to in the ‘International trends’ chapter is about language education and the implementation of intercultural competency, one might have expected that some other countries would mention indigeneity and Indigenous languages as part of the range of issues to be considered, particularly perhaps the United States of America and Australia. This is not the case. In fact, the languages the literature refers to are most often identified as ‘modern’ and ‘foreign’ languages. Sometimes these two lexical items are discursively chained as though they are synonyms. For example:

The Council of Europe's Framework of Reference has been described by Australian researchers as 'immensely successful and influential' (Ingram & O'Neill, 2001, p. 12) for *foreign language* [my emphasis] education policy worldwide. Gohard-Radenkovic et al. (2004), drawing on the European experience of language teaching, claim that:

[T]he teaching/learning of *modern languages* [my emphasis] seems to us to be the discipline par excellence for intensifying the openness to other cultures and the contact with otherness in the development of positive cultural representations associated with xenophile attitudes. (Newton et al., 2010, p. 11)

Significantly, some jurisdictions have several curriculum documents addressing different categories of languages. For example, Australia now has a separate language framework for Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2015) which was produced in 2015. However, the international frameworks cited by Newton et al. (2010) refer to 'modern' and 'foreign' languages. The practice in Aotearoa of bundling te reo Māori as well as the Indigenous Pacific languages into the same subject languages framework is never remarked upon in policy documents (Ministry of Education, 2007a, 2007b). Thus, the labels of 'modern' and 'foreign' languages are often applied to all New Zealand's subject languages, which is inaccurate and inappropriate.

The six iCLT principles arrived at by Newton et al. (2010), while very helpful to New Zealand language teachers for integrating culture and reflexivity into language education, do not touch on New Zealand's context and history. There is no signpost there for how teachers might begin to consider the historicity of languages and the impact that may have on current linguistic ecologies, and how all this might affect intercultural communicative competency.

## **POINTING A WAY FORWARD FOR ICLT, PARTICULARLY IN POSTCOLONIAL CONTEXTS?**

In order to address issues of linguistic power and history, particularly in respect to Indigenous languages in language education, it may be worth turning to a recent paper by Demuro and Gurney (2018). They make the point that languages are currently served up to students and teachers in curricula as though they are the same kinds of learning 'bundles', as though they require the same kinds of approaches to learning and then deployment of the language and culture, once acquired. However, languages and culture do different things in different contexts and over time. Demuro and Gurney (2018) say that discursive constructions of language:

‘have placed parameters on the ways in which language is taught and assessed, and function counterproductively to the goal of comprehending ... complexities, trajectories and potentiality (p. 287)’. They therefore ‘advocate for a critical analysis of both language and culture – concepts intrinsically linked – and consider how dominant ideological positions are constitutive of hegemonic discourses and material inequalities’ (Demuro & Gurney, 2018, p. 287).

As Alistair Pennycook (1994, 1998) was able to do some years earlier and comprehensively for English, Demuro and Gurney (2018) demonstrate their argument through a deconstruction of the history and politics of Spanish. They establish how contingent and situated the power of language is and that languages are not neutral objects of study:

Spanish is a global language used in various configurations, and across domains, by millions of individuals around the world. Through conquest and colonisation, it has become the official language of numerous nations and territories. It has achieved its status by razing local languages and monoglossically inhabiting high status domains of language use, including government, law, media and education, while simultaneously being positioned as a strategic resource uniting native speakers and determining shared cultural practices. Significantly, however, ownership of Spanish is not equally distributed amongst users of the language. (Demuro & Gurney, 2018, p. 289)

Demuro and Gurney (2018) are referring to foreign language education, but here we can also advocate this kind of tracing back and explication of power relationships for Indigenous languages like te reo Māori, so that students can understand why things are as they currently are in Aotearoa. Alongside, students can be encouraged to chart the development of national, regional and local, (whatever seems more relevant) linguistic ecologies so that they begin to understand the power relationships between speakers of differing linguistic and cultural repertoires, as well as apprehending that things could be different. Like the people who poured their lives and aroha (love) into the regeneration of te reo Māori in Aotearoa, students could learn that their efforts might also make a difference in reshaping language/s in favour of something more equitable, empowering and engaging for all citizens.

Through a reading of critical scholars like Demuro and Gurney (2018, 2019) as well as Nakata (2007), we can begin to appreciate that language and culture education needs to be able to work with power and history in order to increase the chance of students becoming powerful themselves in terms of their own agency in intercultural interaction. It may also lead them to a more activist-oriented

standpoint, one that extends and expects compassionate and politically and historically aware intercultural interaction. As Demuro and Gurney (2018) observe,

In the ... language classroom, the omission of critical accounts of language, culture and power – and of their intersections in educational settings – has the potential to reify existing social, cultural and linguistic inequalities. Language cannot be divorced from society and culture because the prevailing conceptions of language promoted within and across sociocultural contexts are axiomatically tied to historically situated and politically driven social processes. (p. 289)

Martin Nakata (2007), a Torres Strait Islander Indigenous scholar in Australia, also emphasises the importance of historical analysis in accounts of language. He adds that an understanding of the histories of the users/speakers of the language and an appreciation of their ‘standpoint’ is something that has too often been missing in linguistic studies. He writes, ‘If the history of a language and its users is not factored into ... theory as a primary standpoint, then any knowledge generated about that language is flawed’ (Nakata, 2007, p. 37). Without this historical understanding, it is arguably impossible to analyse power dynamics between speakers and languages. In critiquing structural linguistics and its implication in entrenched conceptions of the linguistic superiority of European languages and, by association, their speakers, Nakata, via Volosinov, suggests ‘that in its most basic position, modern-day linguistics assumes some ‘special kind of discontinuity between the history of language and the system of language (i.e., language in its ahistorical, synchronic dimension)’ (Volosinov, 1973, p. 54, as cited in Nakata, 2007, p. 39). Nakata (2007) states that

the early linguists needed to incorporate a political path to the speech event being described, and a presence that situates it fundamentally in an economy of negotiating social futures. To achieve this requires no less than a full consideration of the people and their connection to the land and seas, their histories, and their political position. (pp. 38–39)

He believes that the continuing neglect of accounting for actual language speakers and ‘the history of a language ... remains a fundamental limitation of linguistic practice to this day’ (Nakata, 2007, p. 39).

In 2014, Byram explained that politics had been left out of his intercultural competence model because it was not appropriate in a European context. There is no mention of history in the model either. Following Nakata (2007) and Demuro and Gurney (2018) then, there is a question as to how well Byram’s (1997) ICC model



can address intercultural competence in language education, especially where the learning context includes Indigenous languages.

In their report, Newton et al. (2010) make the point that context must be factored in when languages education is being designed and taught: 'language does not function independently from the context in which it is used' (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 8, as cited in Newton et al., 2010, p. 18). The question of what constitutes context is subjective. The context can be deeply or superficially drawn and taken into account.

The suggestion is that the context for languages education needs to be deeply and specifically drawn for each and every educational setting, taking into account the history/ies of languages being taught, alongside their political and social entanglements, and a consideration of what that means for contemporary linguistic, (inter) cultural practices and citizenship.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, Byram's (1997) model of intercultural competency as explicated through the Council of Europe language and culture policy (see e.g., Council of Europe, 2001) has been examined in the context of its reception into Aotearoa. The model was integrated into the new Learning Languages strand of the curriculum in 2007 (Ministry of Education, 2007a). There are many reasons why the model has not taken hold in New Zealand language education (Harvey, 2018), but one arguably is its inability to account for the specific linguistic, cultural, historico-political context of the country. Language education policy, emanating from the global centres of the United States and Europe, in its relentless focus on foreign and modern languages, is discursively constructed as something that is ahistorical and apolitical, and important to learn for being a 'global citizen.' However, languages education is just as, and perhaps more important, for becoming a good national and local citizen, especially in countries characterised by colonisation and its deleterious impacts on Indigenous languages, multilingualism and superdiversity. New Zealand students need to expand their multilingual repertoires and develop intercultural competency to aid them in becoming compassionate, responsible and historically aware citizens in Aotearoa. If this is achieved, they will also be 'good' global citizens.

It is therefore incumbent on policy writers to deeply consider the national and local context within which language policy is to be situated and activated. Byram's (1997) theory does not account for Indigenous languages at all, and especially vis a vis English and other global, historically colonising languages such as Spanish, German and French. Liddicoat et al. (2003) have suggested that the local context

does indeed need to be taken into account as language policy travels across the globe. It may be that language policy should be quite thoroughly renovated for its uptake in countries and contexts geographically, linguistically, historically and culturally far from its origin in Europe.

In addition, for New Zealand language learners to become interculturally competent, they and their teachers may need to engage in some critical questioning of what they are doing and why. Some starter metadiscursive questions could include: Why are we learning this language and not another at this time in Aotearoa? How does this language fit into the language ecology of our country and globally? Who are its speakers and what is their history? What (political, social, economic) work does this language do locally and globally? How does this language interact and impact on endangered languages e.g., Indigenous languages, and what is our responsibility towards them? What is our linguacultural standpoint in relation to this language and its speakers? As students are supported to research and formulate answers to these questions, their discursive constructions and lived enactments of citizenship will be critically remade.

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# 8. ‘I know the world in two languages’: Sámi multilingual citizenship in textbooks for the school subject Norwegian between 1997 and 2020

Åse Mette Johansen and Elin Furu Markusson

**Abstract** This article presents how Sámi multilingual citizenship is represented in four textbooks for the school subject Norwegian in junior high school (school years 8–10). The books were published between 1997 and 2020. Based on insights from critical discourse analysis as well as research on language ideologies and multilingual citizenship, the study shows how textbooks gradually present a more detailed and nuanced picture of Sámi languages, which also to a certain extent integrates Sámi perspectives.

**Keywords** Sámi | textbook analysis | multilingualism | multilingual citizenship | Indigenisation

Compared to Norwegian subject education we have limited access to pedagogical materials. We have a rather thin textbook entitled *Áššis* which we are supposed to use all three years. The textbook for Norwegian is twice as thick, and we use that book the first year only. We will use other Norwegian textbooks the second and third year. (Student of North Sámi as a first language in upper secondary school as cited in Germeten, Bongo, & Eriksen, 2012, p. 13, our translation from Norwegian)

## THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL EMBEDDEDNESS OF SÁMI CONTENT IN TEXTBOOKS FOR THE SCHOOL SUBJECT NORWEGIAN<sup>1</sup>

Textbooks are useful educational tools. Many students or teachers of minority languages around the world – like the student of North Sámi in the above quote – will agree to this statement as daily learning and teaching activities are often characterised by no or limited access to this pedagogical resource. Textbooks are also powerful (Curdtt-Christiansen & Weninger, 2015). Some are more powerful than others. This last point is illustrated in the above-mentioned contrast between the ‘rather thin’ North Sámi subject textbook, which covers three years of language education, and the ‘twice as thick’ Norwegian subject textbooks, in the plural form, available. The student’s comparison of these books as physical artefacts illustrates asymmetric distributions of power that describe the coexistence of Sámi and Norwegian at different scales in the education system in Norway and in Norwegian society.

In this article, we take a closer look at the ‘thick’ textbooks through the lens of critical sociolinguistics (see also Martin-Jones, Blackledge, & Creese, 2012). More precisely, we analyse shifting discourses and ideologies concerning Sámi multilingual citizenship in a series of four textbooks for the school subject Norwegian in junior high school (school years 8–10) published in the period 1997–2020. We explore to what extent and how these textbooks include the Sámi in the greater Norwegian multilingual ‘we’. We also discuss potential implications of these findings for negotiations of Sámi multilingual citizenship in education and society today. The analysis builds on insights from critical discourse analysis (CDA; e.g., Fairclough 1995), research on language ideologies (Irvine & Gal, 2000) and multilingual citizenship (Jaffe, 2012; Williams & Stroud, 2015). Different societal and educational processes support this research focus as the representation of Sámi content in textbooks from the last couple of decades is rooted in discursive and ideological shifts and tensions in society, school, and subject.

Norwegian is indeed a ‘thick’ school subject. In the 13-year span of primary and secondary education, it is the largest subject in terms of hours, grades, and exams. It encompasses different aspects of literacy as well as intellectual and emotional formation, and it is regularly subject to discussions of content and form. The debates can often be traced to cultural origin and national legacy. Historically, it served the Norwegian nation-building process ideologically from

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the very beginning. Norway broke free from its 400-year union with Denmark in 1814, and the event propelled the young nation into a paradoxical climate of language policy in which the school subject Norwegian was born (Bull, 2005). Both the use of Norwegian dialects and two written Norwegian standards – one based on Danish, *Bokmål*, and one based on spoken rural dialects, *Nynorsk* – gained legal protection in school. Mother tongue education was seen as crucial for both progress at school and development of self-esteem – for majority children. At the same time, in 1880 and as part of the Norwegianisation policy founded in 1850, the government launched an instruction that stated that Sámi and Kven languages were not to be used in schools more than 'required by circumstances' (Bull, 2005, p. 1474). The mother tongue argument did not extend to speakers of Sámi and Kven, which lost ground. For a long period, national curricula came to reflect a rigid monocultural norm that included only specific and *Norwegian* forms of language diversity and variation (Hårstad, 2019, pp. 26–29; Golden, Opsahl, & Tonne, 2020, p. 138).

Since the 1970s and 1980s, the (re)vitalisation of Sámi language and culture has coincided with the intensified transnational flow of people and languages in the globalised era. In parallel, the monolingual and monocultural norms of the Norwegian society and school have been challenged. Following Sollid and Olsen (2019), this has consequences also for articulation and recognition of Sámi citizenship: 'The new political process [i.e., (re)vitalisation] facilitated the shift from an idealised monolingual and monocultural citizen to an idealised multicultural and multilingual citizen with affiliations with more than one social group or nation' (p. 35). This can also be seen as part of a new political ideology of cultural and linguistic exchange instead of essence: 'Speaking more than one language thus becomes a resource for citizenship' (Jaffe, 2012, p. 84).

The Norwegian school, which used to be the main arena of assimilation, insisting on monolingual citizenship, is now supposed to fulfil a completely different ambition according to the new core curriculum: 'All pupils shall experience that being proficient in a number of languages is a resource, both in school and society at large' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Further, in the new national curriculum for the school subject Norwegian, an overarching formulation on linguistic diversity reads that students shall gain insight into the relation between language, culture and identity as a basis for understanding their own language situation as well as the language situation of others (Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). In other words, the subject is caught in an interesting web of values and interests: its legitimacy is necessarily founded on the *Norwegian* – language, literature, and culture – but what does that mean in the age of diversity and multilingual citizenship? (see Andersson-Bakken & Bakken, 2017)



## CURRICULAR TRAJECTORIES

Historical trajectories for Sámi content in curricula for Norwegian as a school subject correspond with developments in the overarching core curricula (see Olsen, 2019, for an overview). Sámi Indigenous education had its breakthrough in Norway in 1997. A parallel Sámi curriculum (L97S) was launched and was to be used by schools in the newly established Sámi administrative area (1992). Today (2022), this area covers thirteen municipalities in which both Norwegian and Sámi – i.e. North, Lule or South Sámi – are officially equal languages by law. The right to education in and through a Sámi language is strongest within the Sámi administrative area, in which it applies to all children. Due to demographic changes over the last decades, an unknown but considerable number of Sámi children receive their education outside this area (Gjerpe, 2017, p. 154).

The Sámi curriculum overlaps significantly with its national counterpart (Olsen, 2019, p. 135). For instance, the core curriculum is the same. There is a specific curriculum for Norwegian as a school subject for students with Sámi as a first language, but in sum, much Norwegian subject education – textbooks included – is common for students with and without Sámi background. This underlines the complexity of mainstreaming of Indigenous education in this respect (see also Olsen & Sollid, this volume). Additionally, the textbooks that we analyse were/are probably widespread across Norwegian and Sámi educational contexts, making their potential role significant in shaping the linguistic and cultural worldviews of students from a variety of Sámi and non-Sámi backgrounds.

To put it briefly, Sámi issues were largely absent from Norwegian as a school subject before the 1990s. The subject curriculum from 1974 includes the goal of teaching the students to ‘love their mother tongue’ (*‘bli glad i morsmålet sitt’*) – here meaning nothing else than Norwegian (Ministry of Church and Education, 1974, p. 96; see also Golden et al., 2020, p. 138). Sámi content was included for the first time in the 1987 curriculum in a sentence reading that ‘Sámi literature shall be represented’ (Ministry of Church and Education, 1987, p. 137, our translation). Variants of this formulation are to be found also in later curricula.

In the 1980s and the 1990s, children in the Norwegian school constituted a more linguistically and culturally heterogeneous group than ever before. Even so, subject curricula continued to emphasise the national cultural heritage. The overarching curriculum from 1993 stated that knowledge about Sámi culture, language, history and society for all children was included as an important part of Norwegian and Nordic common cultural heritage (Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, 1996, pp. 55, 65). Norwegian language, culture and values were regarded as being under threat, and the subject curricula aimed at maintaining and restoring

everything traditionally Norwegian to enhance 'a safe national identity' (Norw.: *'ein trygg nasjonal identitet'*; Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, 1996, p. 111). This protectionist ideology was partly a response to globalisation with Anglo-American pop culture as its most feared component (Andersson-Bakken & Bakken, 2017, p. 19). The textbooks became more appealing design-wise and were richly illustrated with classics from Norwegian art history, not least from 19<sup>th</sup> century romantic nationalism.

However, in the official 2006 Norwegian subject curriculum a so-called *resource-perspective* on linguistic diversity gained a foothold (Andersson-Bakken & Bakken, 2017, p. 19). Accordingly, competence on specific aspects of Sámi language(s) was included for the first time and strengthened in a 2013 revision. The students were supposed to learn about Sámi place names, graphemes, words and phrases, the Sámi language area, Sámi language rights, and the history of language assimilation. Gjerpe (2017) examines the place of Sámi content in social studies, a subject with a parallel national and Sámi curriculum. She argues that the mentioned implementation of the Sámi curriculum in 1997 resulted in significantly less Sámi content in the 2006 national curriculum. Based on the foregoing, there is undoubtedly *more* Sámi content in the 2006 version of the Norwegian subject curriculum compared to the one from 1997. As mentioned, the school subject Norwegian is mainly taught based on the same curriculum in both the Sámi and the Norwegian school.

The emphasis on linguistic and cultural diversity has been further strengthened in the new subject curriculum from 2020. Not least, the *diversity-as-a-resource-perspective* is now anchored in the core curriculum for primary and secondary education that was launched in 2017, intended to function as a sprinkler system of values and principles with implications for all subjects. Here it is stated that knowledge on Sámi and Indigenous issues are central to education on *identity and cultural diversity*, one of six so-called core values. A paragraph on the status and importance of different forms of written and spoken diversity in Norway mentions Sámi languages explicitly, and it is specified that '[t]he pupils shall learn about diversity and variation in Sámi culture and societal life' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

Still, 'a curriculum stating the importance of knowledge on Sámi and Indigenous issues does not in itself warrant textbooks that provide such knowledge' (Olsen, 2017, p. 75). Textbooks providing that knowledge are needed. Reports state that education on Sámi issues and perspectives is difficult to implement in Norwegian education in general, and in teacher education in particular (Olsen, Sollid, & Johansen, 2017). In other words, there is reason to believe that teachers and students in Norway largely depend on textbooks in their approach to Sámi

language and culture. Although we have some knowledge on representations of Sámi issues in textbooks in Norway and Sweden (e.g., Askeland, 2021; Eriksen, 2018; Olsen, 2017; Reichenberg, 2016) and of different forms of language diversity in Norway (e.g., Hårstad, 2019; L. A. Kulbrandstad, 2001; L. I. Kulbrandstad, 2019; Opsahl & Røynealand, 2016), we know little about Norwegian subject textbook representations concerning Sámi language.

## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES, METHODS, AND DATA

Textbook analysis is a cross-disciplinary field that examines how textbooks as curricular-cultural artefacts communicate norms, values and ideologies through content and design (Weninger, 2018, p. 1). This research is often positioned within CDA (e.g., Fairclough, 1995), which aims at making the power and ideologies of discourses de-naturalised, visible and transparent (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25). Textbook discourses are embedded in educational discourses more broadly. They are central in the development and shaping of sociocultural worldviews in which language is one of the most important aspects. Curdt-Christiansen (2017) links this perspective to the concept of *language socialisation* and how textbooks are supposed to 'help students to become competent members of a cultural and linguistic community' (p. 196). The sociolinguistic framework of *ideologies of linguistic differentiation* launched by Irvine and Gal (2000), who analyse how understandings of linguistic varieties are mapped onto social groups and activities, is also relevant in this regard.

Linguistic and cultural community membership lie at the very heart of the citizenship concept, no matter if citizenship is studied as status, practice, or acts (Sollid, this volume, p. 34; Sollid & Olsen, 2019). Within critical sociolinguistics, research on linguistic and multilingual citizenship has emerged over the last couple of decades. One strand of this research has developed a postliberal participatory model of citizenship (Jaffe, 2012; Williams & Stroud, 2015) which replaces understandings of citizenship that insist on cultural and linguistic homogeneity, almost without exception imposed on minorities by the majority within the frame of the nation-state. It relates to a more comprehensive discursive and ideological shift already mentioned in the introduction (see also Jaffe, 2012). This shift is relevant to understand fundamental changes in the school subject Norwegian in the post-war period. It operates at different scales: Norwegianisation being replaced with (re)vitalisation; the monolingual idealised citizen being replaced with a multi-/ plurilingual one; the monolingual norm in the Norwegian education system being replaced with a *diversity-and-multilingualism-as-resources* norm – and so on and so forth.

These processes are non-linear and messy because they happen at different scales at the same time. For instance, minority language citizenship is no longer

conceptualized at a national scale alone, but also at a European and a global scale, as Jaffe (2012) shows. For Sámi minority languages we can identify different local scales but also a global Indigenous scale, as Sámi language (re)vitalisation and emancipation intersect with a global ethnic renaissance. Consequently, minority language citizenship becomes accepted and celebrated, but also negotiated and contested within the overall ideological and discursive shift in question (e.g., Johansen, 2013). Textbook discourses on Sámi multilingual citizenship over time provide insight into this field of clashing discourses, values, and interests.

The textbook series chosen for our study is published by Gyldendal, one of the most dominant publishing houses in Norway. Our analysis is largely built on Markusson's (2020) CDA study of how Sámi language and language situations are represented in the three textbooks included in Table 8.1 that were published between 1997 and 2014. For this analysis, we have added a fourth book based on the 2020 Norwegian subject curriculum and a new analytical layer by drawing attention to multilingual citizenship.

**Table 8.1:** Overview of textbooks

Curriculum	Authors	Title (year)
1997	Beck, Heggem & Kverndokken (analysed as one book covering three years)	<i>Språk og sjanger 8</i> (1997)
		<i>Språk og sjanger 9</i> (1998)
		<i>Språk og sjanger 10</i> (1999)
2006	Blichfeldt, Heggem & Larsen	<i>Kontekst 8–10</i> (2006)
2013 (revision)	Blichfeldt & Heggem	<i>Nye Kontekst 8–10</i> (2014)
2020	Blichfeldt, Heggem & Huseby	<i>Kontekst 8–10</i> (3rd ed.) (2020)

The textbooks form the core of larger sets of pedagogical resources including other books with readings and tasks as well as online resources that we have not investigated. This study is also detached from the immediate learning contexts in which the use of these books was/is embedded. This might be seen as a shortcoming as the didactic teacher-student-textbook triad in the classroom is central in understanding how textbooks work. That being said, it is a common trait for much textbook research to focus on cultural and ideological contexts instead of situational ones, investigating sociocultural issues implicated in the learning process (see also Weninger, 2018, p. 1).

Our analysis is based on a multimodal approach. We have mapped the representation of Sámi content in registers and index lists; we have analysed all verbal text about multilingualism in general and Sámi in particular, paying specific attention to the use of pronouns and labels for language users and different languages; and we have looked into pictures and other visuals.

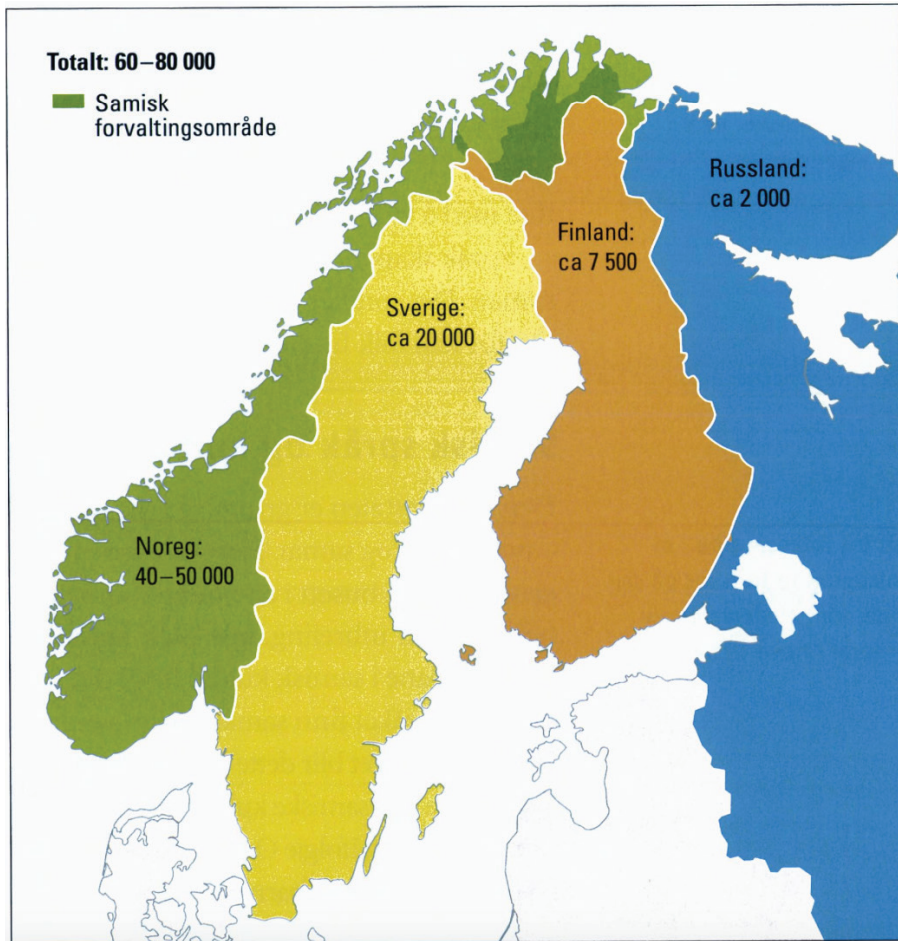
## ANALYSIS

### 1997–2020: Textbook Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie – becoming a linguistically diverse nation

Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie – here referred to in North, Lule and South Sámi, the three Sámi languages spoken and written in Norway – is an immensely diverse area (see Olsen & Sollid, this volume). Todal (2015, p. 199ff.) argues that it covers at least eighteen separate language situations: there are different language policies, minority policies, education systems, and international commitments in the four nation-states involved. Additionally, the situations of the ten Sámi languages vary according to number of speakers, age distribution of speakers, documentation and standardisation efforts, media situation, access to language education, and access to Sámi institutions. It is even meaningless to refer to one North Sámi language situation in Norway (area number 5 in Figure 8.2) as assimilation and language shift have affected the coastal Sámi areas stronger than the inland reindeer herding areas in which Sámi language today holds its strongest position.

Markusson (2020) finds that between 1997 and 2014, the representation of Sámi languages in the textbook series in focus becomes considerably strengthened and nuanced. It changes from treating ‘Sámi’ as one monolithic phenomenon in Norway to presenting Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie as more linguistically and culturally diverse. One example is to be found in two maps representing Sámi people in four different nation-states on one hand (Figure 8.1), and the Sámi language area, i.e., Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie, on the other (Figure 8.2).

The change in perspective is striking: while the map in Figure 8.1 from the 2006 textbook displays four nation-state ‘containers’ with the number of Sámi minority members inside each unit, the map from the 2020 textbook shows the whole language area with all ten Sámi languages included. In Figure 8.1, the nation-state borders and the numbers of minority members are communicated as the most important information. In contrast, Figure 8.2 shows Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie not just as a language area, but also a nation, the area of one people. Noticeably, the language borders in this vast area run horizontally, effectively communicating all the criss-crossing over modern, vertical nation-state borders that has been going on for ages in relation to human mobility: trade, hunting, nomadic reindeer herding, marriages, and religious life. It is also worth noticing that important Sámi centres are located on the map with both their Sámi and Scandinavian or Finnish name. Plassje/Røros and Julev/Luleå are included with their South Sámi and Lule Sámi names respectively, while the other names are in North Sámi, even Murmánska in the Kildin Sámi area, which in Kildin Sámi would be Muurman or Muurman lannj. This last observation exemplifies a general pattern in the textbooks over time: ‘Sámi’ most often refers to North Sámi, and Sámi names and language

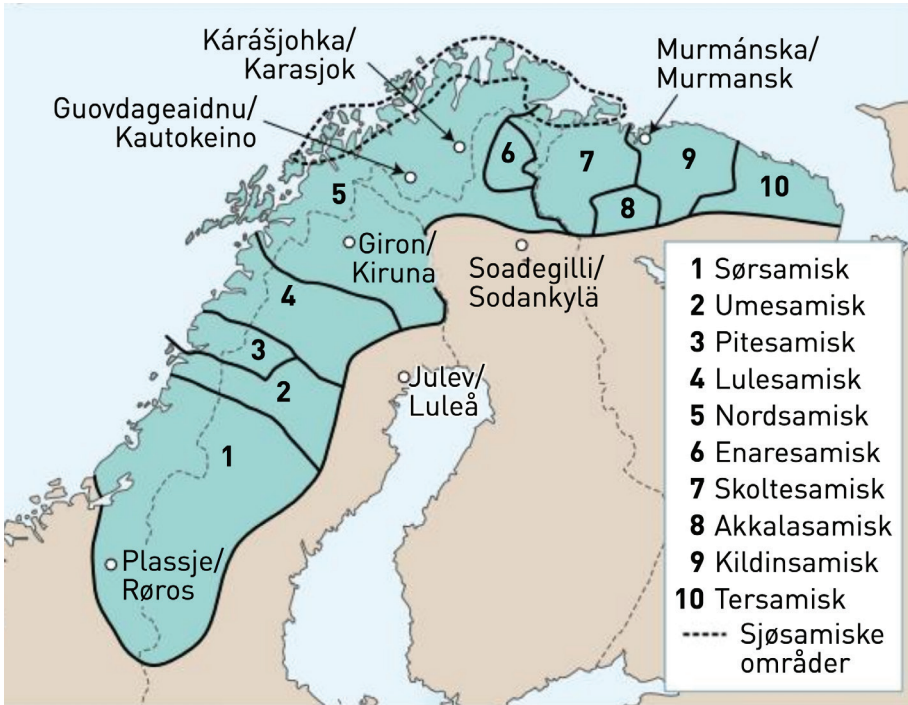


**Figure 8.1:** 'The Sámi people are spread across four countries' (Blichfeldt et al., 2006, p. 292).

examples are presented in North Sámi – the largest Sámi language – without that being made explicit (see Gjerpe, 2017, pp. 157–158, and Sollid, this volume, about the Sámi hegemony).

### 1997–2006: The monolingual Sámi citizen as part of a fragmented multilingual 'we'

In a study of textbooks based on the 1997 curriculum (Bech et al., 1997, 1998, 1999), L. A. Kulbrandstad (2001, pp. 74–76) finds that new multilingual practices in Norway are poorly represented. In comparison, Sámi language(s) are either 'mentioned' or 'treated more in depth'. But how? We will now take a closer look at



**Figure 8.2:** 'The area of different Sámi languages' (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 252).

the opening of a six-page chapter about Sámi (*'Litt om samisk'*) in the textbook by Bech et al. (1998, p. 168, italics by textbook authors, our bold types for pronouns and social categories):

In Norway, **we** have many vital languages. **People who have moved here from other countries** do not forget **their** mother tongue. Still, **we** only have two official written languages. *Nynorsk* and *Bokmål*, **you** might say, but that is wrong, because *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk* are two forms of Norwegian, two written norms [Norwegian '*målformer*']. The other written language in Norway is Sámi.

Sámi belongs to another language group than Norwegian. Sámi belongs to *the Finno-Ugric language group*. Therefore, **we** have little in common when **Sámi** and **Norwegian-speaking Norwegians** are supposed to understand each other's languages.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> All translations are by the authors. With the exception of Blichfeldt, Heggem & Huseby (2020), we have analysed the Bokmål versions of the textbooks. There are certain differences between the Bokmål and the Nynorsk versions that might affect the analysis at a more detailed level.

The opening sentence refers to spoken language diversity in Norway and establishes a greater multilingual 'we' with 'many vital languages'. In the following, it becomes clear that not all Norwegians are considered multilingual, as language diversity is linked to modern transnational mobility and the presence of speakers 'from other countries' who 'do not forget their mother tongue'. Golden et al. (2020) have examined *mother tongue* conceptualizations in Norwegian documents and media texts in the era of increasing globalisation. They distinguish between the 'novel use' of *mother tongue*, referring to non-Norwegian languages in multicultural encounters, as opposed to the 'traditional use', referring to Norwegian and monocultural encounters only (see introduction). In the textbook, the use of *mother tongue* alludes to origin, heritage, and background – important aspects of the concept (Golden et al., 2020, p. 136). Interestingly, we also get the impression that *mother tongues* in a Norwegian context are first and foremost present in the memories and minds of new citizens, whose rights in the education system in fact are very limited; *mother tongue education* in Norway is based on a subtractive bilingual and transitional model, providing this form of education only until the student can follow teaching in Norwegian only.

Further, the text emphasises that in contrast to the many spoken languages in Norway, 'we only have two written languages', which are not the two written norms of *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*, as 'you' – the student reader – might think, but Norwegian and Sámi. The text addresses that the reader is probably unfamiliar with the legal status of these two languages in Norway, and at the same time assumes that the reader's perspective is positioned in the traditional monocultural norm of Norwegian diversity (see introduction). The well-known element of *Othering* is prevalent (see Blommaert, 2005, p. 208; see also Eriksen, 2018; Olsen, 2017); the book 'others' those familiar with the legal status of Sámi and who are different from 'you', who only know about the two *written norms* of Norwegian and might mistakenly think that they are *languages*. Almost needless to say, the intended readership is not Sámi. Another aspect is that *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk* are now, based on years of political debate, granted the status of *languages* in the new Norwegian Language Act (2021); 'wrong' has in fact become 'right'.

In the following paragraph, differences between Norwegian and Sámi languages are underlined as Sámi is placed in the Finno-Ugric language group. The text states that 'we' – 'Sámi' on the one hand and 'Norwegian-speaking Norwegians' on the other – have problems understanding each other's languages as they are not typologically related. True, the text establishes a common multilingual Norwegian 'we' at society level but at the same time this 'we' is fragmented into essentialised sociolinguistic groups: Norwegian-speaking Norwegians, multilingual Norwegians who have other mother tongues than Norwegian, and all Sámi in Norway who speak Sámi and represent a clearly different group. Again, we see an example of *Othering*.



This fragmentation can be analysed as a conceptual scheme of multilingualism in Norway based on linguistic differentiation in which language ideological processes are at work (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 35). The ideological process of *iconisation* ‘involves a transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social images with which they are linked’ (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 37). First, the textbook establishes an iconic relationship between having a different mother tongue than Norwegian and the social group of ‘people who have moved here from other countries’ – in other words, new transnational citizens (often referred to as ‘immigrants’ at the time). This implies that being multilingual in Norway means having a different mother tongue than Norwegian; all multilinguals become new transnational citizens. *Fractal recursivity* according to Irvine and Gal (2000) is ‘the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship, onto some other level’ (p. 38). As a third ideological process, Sámi multilinguals become erased from the picture; all Sámi are represented as monolingual Sámi-speaking citizens although practically all Sámi-speaking in Norway acquire some level of multilingualism. Irvine and Gal (2000) define *erasure* as a process ‘in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible’ (p. 38). In addition, Sámi language again becomes the iconic representation of Sámi people. To the extent that Sámi is a part of the greater multilingual ‘we’ in Norway, it is, at society level, representing a group who speak a different, incomprehensible language. Completely erased are also the large number of Sámi who don’t speak Sámi due to assimilation and language shift.

The text includes another example of erasure. While the terminological difference between *Norwegian as a language* and *written norms of Norwegian* is accounted for, it is not mentioned that there are in fact three written Sámi languages in Norway which result from separate standardisation processes. These languages are not mutually intelligible although they belong to the same Finno-Ugric language family. The reader is not introduced to the broader picture of Sámegiella/Sámegiella/Sápmi (Figure 8.2).

The book *Kontekst* from 2006 treats bi-/multilingualism more extensively but, like its 1997 predecessor, links it solely to new transnational citizens. A relevant sequence opens with a statement suggesting that cultural and linguistic encounters are a new phenomenon in Norway: ‘Norway has become a multicultural society’ (Blichfeldt et al., 2006, p. 287). The textbook claims that Norwegian cannot be the mother tongue of ‘immigrants’ to Norway: ‘A large number of Norwegians are bilingual. This means that they have Norwegian as a second language and another language as their first language: Thus, the mother tongue is not Norwegian’ (Blichfeldt et al., 2006, p. 287). Later, the inclusion of Sámi language and culture

is reduced to two pages, and again, Sámi citizens are not represented as multilinguals: 'If Sámi children are supposed to learn how to read, it is important to see Sámi texts' (Blichfeldt et al., 2006, p. 292).

### 2014–2020: The multilingual Sámi citizen as part of the greater multilingual 'we'

'Do you know what a rapper from Bronx in the U.S., Belleville in France and Kautokeino in Finnmark have in common? All of them use their mother tongue, the language closest to the heart, when they are supposed to express thoughts and feelings' (Blichfeldt & Heggem, 2014, p. 356). This is the opening of the chapter 'Sámi language and culture' in the textbook adhering to the 2013 revision of the curriculum in which more detailed knowledge about Sámi languages is required (see above). For the first time in the textbook series, a parallel between Sámi and non-Sámi language practices is highlighted and linked to the concept of mother tongue. The student is also invited to reflect: 'How important do you think it is to use your own language?' This chapter is based on the curriculum goal of learning about the area of Sámi languages (in the plural form) and Sámi language rights. Furthermore, 'Indigenous' is used about the Sámi: 'The Sámi in Norway are an Indigenous people because they have lived in this country before the current nation-state borders were drawn' (Blichfeldt & Heggem, 2014, p. 357). Moreover, Sámi language diversity is emphasised instead of the difference between Sámi and Norwegian: 'There is not one Sámi language, but many. The difference between the Sámi languages can be just as large as between Norwegian and German. Therefore, all who speak Sámi do not understand each other' (Blichfeldt & Heggem, 2014, p. 358). Nevertheless, with the exception of the Sámi flag, all photographs are from the North Sámi inland, limiting the Sámi cultural repertoire represented in the chapter considerably. Sámi multilingualism is not commented upon. The representation is a clear parallel to Gjerpe's (2021, p. 295) description of 'Textbook Sápmi' – 'a particular narrative about Sápmi and Sámi societies [...] that does not represent the existing diversity in Sámi societies and which does not necessarily exist outside the textbook'.

In the 2020 edition (Blichfeldt et al., 2020), Sámi content is no longer limited to a separate chapter like in the other books, but integrated in the chapter 'Multilingual Norway' ('*Det fleirspråklege Noreg*'). Under the heading 'Language diversity', we get to know that:

Norway has always been inhabited by different peoples. Long before Norway was defined as a separate state, Sámi lived in the area called Sápmi. More than

a hundred years ago it was illegal to speak other languages in school – even for those who had spoken Finnish, Kven or Sámi in their families for generations. This has changed. Now we know that it is important to be able to speak one's mother tongue. Therefore, The Norwegian Language Council works to improve the status of both minority languages and Norwegian. Languages from all the world are a part of language diversity in Norway and new minority languages are included all the time. Most people in Norway speak more languages than Norwegian. (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 250)

This sequence focuses on both historical and new forms of linguistic diversity in Norway, and does not split the multilingual landscape in Norway up into *language-and-social-group* categories underlining the linguistic and cultural differences between them. *Mother tongue* is claimed to be important for all speakers no matter their background or origin. The text argues that this is something we have learned from the history of linguistic assimilation of the minorities: 'Now we know that it is important to be able to speak one's mother tongue.' The impression of a more dynamic and flexible approach to describing – and analysing – different forms of multilingualism is strengthened by this paragraph being followed by a 'toolbox' of terms 'that you need to talk about language diversity': *minority language, mother tongue, first language, second language, foreign language, bilingual, and multilingual*. These terms are not linked to specific groups. Not least, multilingualism is described as a widespread phenomenon including 'most people'.

When the text later moves on to focus more specifically on Sámi, the reader is invited to '[i]magine that **you** are not allowed to use your language. Many Sámi parents and grandparents were not allowed to speak Sámi in school. That is one of the reasons why not everybody with Sámi background knows Sámi' (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 252; our bold types). The addressee, 'you,' can be a student of any linguistic and cultural background, also Sámi. This is also the first time the textbook series mentions that not all Sámi speak Sámi due to assimilation and language shift. Right below, the text says that 'Sámi newspapers and web sites often have text in both Sámi and Norwegian, and **you** find news on the three main languages in NRK [The Norwegian Broadcasting Cooperation]' (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 252; our bold types). A Sámi reader can find this sentence informative and meaningful; it is an invitation to explore the use of different Sámi languages in media.

Furthermore, the textbook combines elements from different parts of Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie in its multimodal approach to Sámi language and culture: pictures of multilingual road signs including North Sámi, South Sámi, and Kven; a picture with the hashtag #SoMeSame of two Sámi girls taking a selfie at a festival concert; a picture with a brief presentation of the young Lule Sámi Indigenous, feminist, and queer activist Timimie Mäarak (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, pp. 252–253). The textbook

has obviously embraced the emergence of 'Sámi peripheral cool' (Pietikäinen et al., 2016, p. 13), which refers to new positions and possibilities of minority languages and cultures in the Northern periphery. After the sequence about Sámi, there are also two pages with content focusing on other linguistic minorities in Norway: Kven, Romani, Romanés, and Norwegian Sign Language (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 255–256). Sámi content is also integrated in other parts of the book, for instance in a sequence dedicated to exploring structural and lexical differences between Norwegian, English, Spanish, German and North Sámi in an SMS (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 239).

### **TOWARDS INDIGENISED PERSPECTIVES ON MULTILINGUAL CITIZENSHIP WITHIN THE POLITICS OF THE ORDINARY?**

As presented in the introduction, the school subject Norwegian historically served to protect and enhance monolingual diversity as part of constructing a Norwegian-only space. It has struggled correspondingly to deal with multilingual diversity in a late-modern, post-national multilingual space. By focusing on how curricular content related to Sámi languages has been interpreted in Norwegian subject textbooks over time, our analysis shows that these teaching materials gradually present a more fine-grained and accurate picture of Sámi multilingual citizenship. Firstly, we observe the gradual introduction of a linguistically and culturally more diverse Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie. Secondly, we see a step-by-step movement away from a monolithic representation of Sámi language and citizenship. While the earliest books treat Sámi language proficiency as a *sine qua non* for Sámi citizenship, the later books introduce more heterogeneous cultural and linguistic practices among people who self-identify as Sámi. In pictures and visuals, North Sámi reindeer herding culture becomes replaced with young 'peripheral Sámi cool' (Pietikäinen et al., 2016, p. 13). Sámi perspectives become integrated in the greater Norwegian multilingual 'we' and in a broader representation of traditional and contemporary language diversity in Norway. These perspectives are juxtaposed in different ways with perspectives linked to multilingual practices that emerge from globalisation and transnationalism in late modernity. These textbook developments result both from the strengthening of Sámi content in the mainstream school and from the introduction of the *diversity-as-a-resource* perspective in Norwegian education over the last two decades.

More importantly, these changes are linked to discursive and ideological changes that provide 'new resources for the articulation of minority language identity and for minority language policy, planning and educational practice' (Jaffe, 2012, p. 83). Cultural models in textbooks potentially have implications for ongoing negotiations of identity and citizenship in the mainstreaming Norwegian school context,

which involves both Sámi and non-Sámi students. As already pointed out, research calls for strengthening of the knowledge of Sámi issues in the Norwegian education system. But what is a ‘sufficiently strengthened’ level of knowledge? Less interesting than a discussion of ‘the body of information’ is the question of how Sámi and non-Sámi teachers and students *do diversity*, in and outside the classrooms. Following Olsen’s (2017) distinction between *ignorance*, *inclusion* and *Indigenisation* of Sámi content, we would like to highlight two examples of Indigenised perspectives from the textbook series that, in our opinion, opens up a space for exploring and discussing multilingual citizenship both within and beyond Sámi contexts.

While concepts like *bilingualism* and *mother tongue* find no explicit mentioning in the sequence about Sámi in the 2006 textbook (Blichfeldt et al., 2006, pp. 291–292), the authors have chosen to include a powerfully quiet poem by Sámi author Risten Sokki (Blichfeldt et al., 2006, p. 292). The poem is published in North Sámi and Norwegian in a bilingual collection by the poet. We cite it here with the North Sámi diacritics that have fallen out of the textbook version (our translation to English):

<i>Dovddan</i>	<i>I know</i>
<i>máilmmi</i>	<i>the world</i>
<i>guovtti gillii</i>	<i>in two languages</i>
<i>In diehtán</i>	<i>I didn’t know</i>
<i>ráhkisvuoda</i>	<i>that love</i>
<i>máhttit</i>	<i>knew</i>
<i>dušše ovttá</i>	<i>only one of them</i>

There is a gap between the majority perspective in the textbook voice completely ignoring Sámi multilingualism and the silent complexity of the poem expressing both the bilingual experience from an Indigenous perspective and the love of the mother tongue – in North Sámi often referred to as *gollegiella*, ‘the golden language’, or *váimmugiella*, ‘the language of the heart’. It catches how ‘the plurilingual repertoire is not just differentiated in terms of the nature and types of competencies an individual has in a set of codes, but also offers differentiated experiences of language’ (Jaffe, 2012, p. 92). This points to a more general aspect: textbooks can communicate different and paradoxical narratives and perspectives at the same time. *Integrating* the Indigenous voice in texts and visuals without *Indigenising* the voice of the textbook might simply interrupt the coherence in the (re)presentation of the issues at hand. The textbook in fact combines inclusion and Indigenisation on the very same page.

We would also like to draw attention to the opening chapter of the latest book from 2020, ‘The text researcher’ (*Tekstforskaren*; Blichfeldt et al., 2020, pp. 10–53). Ten different texts introduce the student to ‘the world of texts’ (p. 10). Together with

Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I Have a Dream', Norwegian rap lyrics and an extract from Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, we find a complex text – a *gákti* made and worn by a young Sámi, Charlotte Solli Larsen (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, pp. 47–49). It is a *gákti* of *pride and protest* – a 'trolling *gákti*' ('netthetskoft'); Figure 8.3) putting hate speech and online discrimination of Sámi and other minoritised groups on the agenda.



**Figure 8.3:** Charlotte Solli Larsen's *gákti* of *pride and protest* (Photo courtesy of Charlotte Solli Larsen).

In 2018, this *gákti* received media attention and an interview with Larsen is printed in the textbook: ‘This is my way of showing that we Sámi are much stronger than they believe, and that trolls cannot pull us down’, she says, and continues, ‘The lower part of the *gákti* is supposed to show all the hate emerging in the comments. The higher part shows that I am still proud of being Sámi’ (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 48, our translation).

Here, the textbook highlights a Sámi *act of citizenship* (Isin, 2009, p. 371; Olsen & Sollid, this volume) embedded in *the politics of the ordinary*, which according to Williams & Stroud (2015, p. 407) refers to engagement with diversity and marginalisation in informal and non-institutional political arenas. In the interview, Larsen says that she has worn her *gákti* – in other words, claimed Sámi citizenship – at a bar in a Northern Norwegian town. By including this text in the introduction to ‘the world of texts’ (see above), the textbook implicitly expresses an awareness concerning the very local contexts of claiming citizenship. In an invitation to reconsider what citizenship is in a post-colonial, post-national era, Williams & Stroud (2015) stress the importance of these contexts:

Because interactions among marginalized, mobile and diverse, often (trans-locally) located people take place in the context of the local, bars, streets and other places of everyday encounter, the politics of the ordinary is increasingly a site where diversity and marginalization are constructed and deconstructed, negotiated and challenged. (p. 407)

Additionally, they emphasise ‘the variety of semiotic means through which speakers express agency, voice and participation in an everyday politics of language’ (Williams & Stroud, 2015, p. 408). Larsen’s *gákti* is not just a semiotically complex text, but a multilingual text combining elements in Norwegian (the trolling comments), English (‘Sámi Power’, ‘Made in Sápmi’) and Sámi (the Sámi flag, letters in Sámi colors – and, of course, the *gákti* itself). It is worth noticing that the textbook has chosen a Sámi text in which there are no elements of Sámi language, but it is still – no doubt – a statement of Sámi citizenship.

This is a clear example of Indigenisation (Olsen, 2017, p. 72). *The gákti of protest and pride* is filled with tensions, conflicts, and dilemmas. Wearing this *gákti* is an act of citizenship made *possible* by the historical chain of citizenship acts leading to Sámi revitalisation (see Sollid, this volume). At the same time, it is an act of citizenship made *necessary* by hate speech and discrimination which are partly anchored in Norwegianisation, one of the darkest chapters of both Sámi and Norwegian history. It is worth noticing that in the textbook, the *gákti* is not treated as a text ‘about the Sámi who are different from us’, but rather as a starting point of

reflecting upon and discussing the all-encompassing phenomenon of hate speech and discrimination against minoritised groups.

## FINAL REMARKS

In the introduction, it is taken as an axiom that textbooks are useful and powerful. That is not necessarily true. Textbooks can be useless – misleading, essentialising, ignorant, fossilising – and challenged by knowledge. It is uplifting that the last textbook in the series is less focused on linguistic and cultural differences between sociolinguistic groups. For instance, we have shown how the inclusion of a complex text representing an Indigenised perspective on the complexity of Sámi citizenship potentially serves as a starting point for discussing larger problems in both Sámi and Norwegian society. There is enough *difference* to address in a broader educational and societal context anyway: 'Now we know that it is important to be able to speak one's mother tongue', the textbook claims (Blichfeldt et al., 2020, p. 250). Still, a growing number of students are waiting for the Norwegian education system to make more room for their mother tongues and multilingual repertoires (Svendsen, 2021). Our reading of the textbook series has also provided insight into how ideologies that may now be considered outdated in the education system are still part of the larger circulation of ideas, values, and interests with deep implications for *the politics of the ordinary* in which young people's everyday language practices are embedded.

Multilingual citizenship for both Sámi and non-Sámi students comes with friction between 'thick' and 'thin' at different levels. Dealing with Indigenised perspectives on these frictions opens up for *exchange*, which is a way more promising strategy than *essence* (Jaffe, 2012), and the school subject Norwegian – textbooks included – provides one of the most important educational arenas for this exchange to happen after all.

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# 9. ‘Not good enough for anyone?’ Managing Sámi education in the cultural interface

Torjer A. Olsen

**Abstract** This chapter is about the situation of educators working within Sámi education. It can be challenging to merge the demands of the national curricula with those of the local authorities and the Sámi parliament as well as the local situation of kindergartens and schools. The empirical basis of the chapter is a set of research conversations held with those in charge in municipalities and educational institutions. I argue that a Sámi diversity perspective is needed in the enactment of Sámi education.

**Keywords** Sámi education | early childhood education | Indigenisation | diversity competence

## INTRODUCTION

Education does not only belong in classrooms. When Sámi education is undertaken in the classroom, it has gone a long way from international treaties, national law, regional and local government, kindergarten or school leadership to the teacher and the children and students. This entire system, which enables and consists of a series of encounters between macro and micro levels, can be talked of as a nexus (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). Those in charge on different levels answer to demands coming from different parts of the nexus. The nexus of Sámi education reaches from international treaties, through national law and regulations, Sámi political claims and regulations, local regulations and demands, to what happens in kindergartens and schools. The subject of this chapter is the encounter between the latter and the former: I am interested in how local leaders and educational leaders answer to demands and regulations from above, and how they deal with them in their respective local settings. At all levels, there is a constant concern about resources – financial, human, and educational. At all levels, the ones in charge work with what they consider to be important.

In this chapter, I take as a starting point the encounters between the demands of the national curricula, the demands from the local authorities and the Sámi parliament, and the local situation of kindergartens and schools. The empirical basis of the chapter is a set of research conversations held with those in charge in municipalities and educational institutions. The conversations have in common an explicit responsibility for Sámi education as they all have institutional and legally based connections to Sámi communities in different areas. The research participants come from municipalities in different parts of Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie, from Sea Sámi/North Sámi areas, from a Lule Sámi area and from a South Sámi area. I look primarily into the overarching aspects of both kindergartens and schools, not particular subjects or themes, and into how these are implemented and faced on the local level amongst leaders. Further, I rely on previous analyses of Sámi issues in curricula (e.g., Folkenborg, 2008; Gjerpe, 2017, 2018; Olsen, 2020; Olsen & Andreassen, 2018; Sollid & Olsen, 2019).

Early childhood education (ECE) and primary education belong to different fields and have distinct purposes. They refer to different institutions that oversee discrete levels and age groups. In Norway, ECE means preschool age 0–6, while primary education means year one to seven in school, age 6–13. This is shown in their respective curricula. In kindergarten, teachers shall ‘meet the children’s need for care and play, and they shall promote learning and formative development as a basis for all-round development’, and further aim to prepare children for school through providing experiences, knowledge, and skills (Directorate of Education, 2017 p. 8). Primary education aims to provide knowledge and competence, and to ‘open doors to the world and give the pupils and apprentices historical and cultural insight and anchorage’ (Directorate of Education, 2020 p. 2). Differences aside, both ECE and primary education are explicitly mentioned as part of the educational system in Norway. There has been – to some extent – an alignment of the respective curricula. They do share some of the same purposes and ambitions, especially when looking at the overarching and ideological parts of the curricula. The Sámi content is an example of this, with a strong emphasis on Sámi rights and on the implications for the respective institutions.

Both the current curricula recognise the Sámi as an Indigenous people and acknowledge that this implies a set of internationally and nationally recognised rights. All the research participants acknowledge this and take it as a point of reference. As they all come from areas in Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie where the Sámi are in a minority situation, they share some experiences of how to articulate the local situation and of how to put Sámi education into practice.

The chapter is primarily an empirically driven text. The research conversations have been instrumental in defining and deciding the direction and main topics

for the discussion. At the same time, the basic theoretical principles and considerations are in line with what is presented in the introduction of this book (Olsen & Sollid, this volume). I look to Martin Nakata's (2007) perspectives on the cultural interface to understand and shed light on the experiences of the research participants, especially when it comes to the often-mentioned challenges related to being in-between. All participants express a similar kind of experience related to being in-between the Norwegian and the Sámi communities – either for themselves or for their respective kindergarten/school and local community. In Norwegianised Sámi communities, some experience the cultural interface through the paradox of being neither Sámi (enough) nor Norwegian (enough) and both Sámi and Norwegian. In the discussion, I also look to Åse Røthing's (2016, 2020) concepts concerning diversity, diversity competence, and norm-critical pedagogy for the analysis of Sámi diversity and hierarchies. As defining statements concerning Sámi identity and language involve normative ideas, there is a need for norm-critical perspectives (Røthing, 2016). For the final discussion – adding a broader perspective and frame of understanding – I find inspiration in literature from Māori education (Bishop, 2008; Smith, 2017) especially related to hybridisation and culturally responsive/transformational pedagogy. This provides a new way of understanding the role and situation of Sámi education today.

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

In Norway, a lot has changed since the beginning of the public school system in the early 18th century, which coincided with the intensified colonisation towards the Sámi. From the middle of the 19th century, the Sámi were one of several minorities who were hindered from speaking their native tongue or learning about their own culture and history in school. After about a hundred years of assimilation, the Sámi communities changed. Some Sámi languages had become extinct, while others were close to extinction. Only in the inland of the North Sámi region did the Sámi language remain a majority language. On an individual level, many Sámi (numbers are hard to find and verify) 'became Norwegian' (Zachariassen & Ryymin, 2021). This is a way of saying that some (quite a lot) stopped speaking Sámi, registered as Norwegian, and started self-identifying as Norwegian (Dankertsen, 2017). At the end of the assimilation period, in national public contexts in Norway, the Sámi had become marginalised. Within the public school, the Sámi seem to have had little or no place in the post-Second World War and post-Norwegiansiation era (Andresen, 2021a; Folkenborg, 2008; Olsen & Andreassen, 2018; see also Broderstad, this volume).

Assimilation and Norwegianisation did not happen without resistance, though. The first wave of Sámi politics, with activists and politicians working for the rights of the Sámi, occurred in the beginning of the 20th century and crossed the borders of the states of Sweden, Finland, and Norway (Zachariassen, 2012). The same happened with the second wave of Sámi politics, with the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Council in 1956. Sámi activists also took part in the beginning of international Indigenism from the 1970s onwards (Crossen, 2017). Following the conflict around the building of the Alta hydro dam around 1980, Norway changed its policy towards the Sámi. A policy of recognition was introduced in place of silencing and continued oppression. The work of Sámi activists and politicians had a truly important impact on the changing of Norwegian policy (Broderstad, this volume; Somby, 2021).

The first Sámi national curricula for primary and secondary education were launched in 1997. This was an important step in the official recognition of the Sámi (see Olsen & Andreassen, 2018). In 2006, the ECE curriculum explicitly recognised the Sámi as an Indigenous people (Directorate of Education, 2006). It was not until 2017 that this was made explicit in the primary and secondary education core curriculum (Directorate of Education, 2020). Still, the development and growth of the curricular recognition has led to a stronger emphasis of the Sámi rights to education and of Sámi matters in both kindergartens and schools.

When the Sámi are explicitly recognised as an Indigenous people in the current ECE and school curricula, it is with reference to ILO-169 and to national law. This is key to the obligation of the state to provide education, both for Sámi students and children, and about the Sámi for all students. The current curricula are published in Norwegian and in the three official Sámi languages – North Sámi, Lule Sámi, and South Sámi – reflecting the official status of these languages in Norway. For ECE, there is one joint curriculum with separate sections on Sámi ECE. For primary and secondary education, there are two parallel curricula. The main parts of the Sámi curriculum, including most subjects, are the same as in the majority curriculum. Some additions and special mentions are found. A representative example is how the Sámi social studies curriculum states that ‘the curriculum is grounded in Sámi values and Sámi language, culture and community’ (Directorate of Education, 2020, p. 1).

Kajsa Kemi Gjerpe (2017), in her analysis of the making of the first Sámi curriculum in 1997, argues that it has been of huge importance, but that the main importance may have been a symbolic one rather than one with actual impact. Not all Sámi students follow the Sámi curriculum, while the main effort towards Sámi education is put in the Sámi schools following the Sámi curriculum. In addition, as I also show in this chapter, the Sámi curriculum has not necessarily been

easy to fully implement for schools and kindergartens. Still, I would argue that the importance of the first national Sámi curriculum lies in the fact that it is the actual expression of Norway's move from assimilation and marginalisation to an explicit recognition of the needs of Sámi students and the Sámi community.

In addition to the responsibility for Sámi children and students, the kindergartens and schools also have as a purpose to provide knowledge about and perspectives from the Sámi for all students and children. All kindergartens, no matter their location, should 'highlight Sámi culture and help to ensure that the children develop respect for and solidarity with the diversity of Sámi culture' (Directorate of Education, 2017, p. 9). This is an ambitious statement making it the responsibility of the whole ECE sector to provide knowledge about the Sámi to children regardless of where they live or go to kindergarten. Similar statements are found in the school curricula: 'Through the teaching and training the pupils shall gain insight into the Indigenous Sami people's history, culture, societal life and rights. The pupils shall learn about diversity and variation in Sami culture and societal life' (Directorate of Education, 2020).<sup>1</sup>

A general challenge when it comes to the rights of Sámi students, as expressed in the curricula, is that the meaning of the term 'Sámi' is ambiguous and not explained. The national school curriculum has, since 1997, used the concepts of 'the Sámi school' and 'the Sámi student' (Gjerpe, 2017). The ECE curriculum uses the terms 'Sámi kindergarten' and 'Sámi children' and adds other somewhat ambiguous terms like 'Sámi values' and 'a Sámi understanding of nature'. On a formal and legal level, the closest that can be found to a definition of a Sámi and a Sámi child is given in the Education Act, which formally governs schools (and not ECE). Here, a Sámi child is defined as the child of one or two parents who are eligible to register for the Sámi electorate (Education Act, § 6-1). This is accessible but opens in practice for the ambiguity and diversity of real life. At the same time, the concepts used in the curricula are useful and necessary signifiers of distinction. They are not necessarily easily defined though. Or – at least – formal and legal categories may need more nuanced didactical and pedagogical practices related to them to avoid over-simplified claims and interpretations.

## ON DATA, METHOD, AND METHODOLOGY

Kindergartens and schools are different institutions with different aims and purposes, but there are some similarities that allow for a more joint analysis. For

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1 In the ECE curriculum, the teachers are the ones actively doing something. In the school curriculum, it is the pupils.



this paper, I have had research conversations with municipality leaders who deal both with kindergartens and schools, and with kindergarten and school leaders. Both kindergartens and schools are defined as belonging to the educational system, which means that they share the state's goal on an overarching level. When it comes to Sámi and Indigenous issues, both kindergartens and schools are stated as key areas for the recognition of rights. Perhaps most important for this chapter – as well as for the implementation – is that both kindergartens and schools are the responsibility of municipalities, and that they belong to the same sections of local authorities. In my chapter, I follow the overarching perspective, looking at neither specific school subjects nor specific practices in kindergartens or schools. Rather, I am interested in the encounter between the national demands and the leadership level. Here, the leaders seem to share most of the experiences across different levels when it comes to the place and situation for Sámi rights and knowledge about the Sámi.

The municipalities represented all have formal connections to the Sámi parliament, either as members of the Sámi administrative area or through formalised agreements. In none of the municipalities are Sámi in majority. Still, to join the Sámi administrative area is an act of citizenship, an act to actively contribute to the revitalisation and reclamation of the language, culture, and society of the Sámi (Evju, this volume; Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012). The main tools were the right to use the Sámi language in communication with local authorities and societal institutions (like health services and church services) and the right to learn Sámi and to have Sámi-medium education. The establishment of the Sámi administrative area is thus part of a chain of acts of citizenship, through making it an active choice for municipalities to become members, and thus to become Sámi municipalities (Sollid, this volume). This seems to have led to a renegotiation of position more than as a binary system restricted to Sámi and Norwegian but offering more dynamic and relational positions (Dankertsen, 2017). According to the model referred to in the introduction of the book (Olsen & Sollid, this volume), joining the Sámi administrative area in many ways implies a shift from being mainstream Norwegian to becoming Indigenous Sámi. For education purposes, it means that the municipalities at hand follow the Sámi curriculum or the demands for Sámi kindergartens and schools.

The municipality, school, and kindergarten leaders I have talked to come from four different municipalities. I have met five of the research participants online and had three real life meetings. For ethical reasons, I do not give the names of the municipalities or of the research participants.

## **'NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR ANYONE': THE FEELING OF BEING IN-BETWEEN**

'It feels a bit like we are not good enough for anyone.' This was said by one of my research participants when we were talking about their municipality's endeavour to make a proper Sámi education through its schools and kindergartens. They worked in the municipality administration and said this as part of an answer to the question of how to adhere to the Sámi curriculum (this was in 2019, between the launch of the new ECE curriculum [2017] and the launch of the new school curriculum [2020]). For the Norwegianised Sea Sámi community that this municipality is located in, the demands of the Sámi curriculum and the Sámi parliament were experienced as not being met. They felt that they were not Sámi enough for the Sámi curriculum and not Norwegian enough for the Norwegian curriculum. Talking to other research participants both with similar roles and working in schools or kindergartens in Sámi communities, I found that similar experiences were expressed also there.

In the aforementioned conversation, we discussed the fact that there are different Sámi communities. As a Sea Sámi community, where the Sámi language was and is under pressure, they differ from the areas where the Sámi language has prevailed and is even in the majority (Hansen, 2007; Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012). The municipality representative talked about the struggles to fit in and respond to the demands from the curricula and from the Sámi parliament: 'We are a bit on the side, I guess. Language is an important part of this. Only a few use the Sámi language in daily life. But we try to remember' (research conversation). This connected well to the experience of otherness that we returned to later in the conversation:

Leader: About not being good enough, not finding your place. The Sámi parliament is now in the process of redefining the Sámi municipalities. This means that it is important to find your place and to think that this is where we belong. How much Sámi should we have? What kind of content should we have about Sámi matters and culture? As it is now, we sort of have the feeling of not being good enough.

Me: What is the bar? Who measures? The Sámi parliament?

Leader: Yes, it is – sort of – for us having a Sámi unit in the kindergarten. We cannot have a Sámi kindergarten, because we do not have enough people who speak Sámi well enough. We are not qualified. (Research conversation)

This refers to the curricular demand that the staff in Sámi kindergartens are supposed to know the Sámi language: ‘Staff are required to master the Sami language and possess knowledge of Sami culture’ (Directorate of Education, 2017, p. 24). Such a demand is complicated in Norwegianised Sámi communities. In the comment made by the research participant, there is clearly a critique directed towards the curriculum and its rather narrowly defined understanding of the diverse Sámi situations. The dilemma concerning Indigenous languages is recognisable in many minority language situations (Harvey, this volume; Sollid, this volume). An important principle states that it is necessary to emphasise, naturalise, and reward the use of Sámi languages. At the same time, such actions come with the risk of alienating and creating a distance to assimilated communities where the language is in a more pressured situation (see also Fogarty & Sollid, this volume; Sollid, this volume). There are language minorities within language minorities.

Within discourses on Sámi education, there has been a tendency to let one kind of Sámi experience, or one articulation of Sámi culture, define Sámi experiences and culture in its entirety (Gjerpe, 2017, 2021; Sollid & Olsen, 2019). This goes particularly for the school curricula of 1987 and 1997. They were based on a particular part of the Sámi communities and left less space for diversity (Gjerpe, 2017). This tendency is seen in the emerging literature on Sámi pedagogy and Sámi upbringing. In Asta Balto’s important book about Sámi child-rearing (1997), stories and experiences from one community in Sápmi were used to form the basis of a more generalised Sámi pedagogy. Balto’s work was crucial to create the field and to articulate the first systematic Sámi pedagogy, and clearly a parallel to initiatives in other parts of the Indigenous world. At the same time, seen with a contemporary perspective, Balto’s book lacks an opening for diversity and does not present other parts of Sápmi.

On a more practical level, a Sámi town, school, kindergarten, child, or student is not necessarily easily defined. The pedagogical leader of a kindergarten with Sámi units in an urban and rather Norwegianised area talked about the challenges of defining what it is to be Sámi. More parents seek to have their children in a Sámi kindergarten, and the town is in a period of transition. The tendency is the increased interest in Sámi history and identity:

Leader: What does it mean to be Sámi? When are you Sámi? Our town is Sea Sámi. And Sea Sámi communities were subject to quite harsh Norwegianisation. Both amongst the staff and the parents there is someone who does not speak Sámi. But it is important to recognise their being Sámi despite them not speaking Sámi. At the same time, language is really important. We have employees who come and say

that their Sámi is not very good, but that they have learnt it from scratch, struggling with grammar. And we have employees who speak Sámi as their mother tongue. We aim to be able to mentor each other in the Sámi language, and not take it as criticism.

Me: This can be quite difficult as language is also quite personal?

Leader: It is. Language in a Sámi setting has a lot to do with identity. (Research conversation)

Language clearly matters in this kindergarten – as does identity. At the same time, being in a town that gathers many Sámi from all over Sápmi alongside Norwegianised Sea Sámi creates some challenges that go beyond language.

In the more outspoken Sea Sámi village, this finds resonance when we talked about the challenges related to Sámi language education and education about Sámi issues in general:

In our municipality, there has been a feeling of not being good enough. We have been Norwegianised to such an extent that the Sámi language has vanished. There have been some discussions about Sámi language, and there has been resistance. Often, we hear that we do not have good enough Sámi competence. Now, there is talk about us lacking Sámi language competence. Because the Sámi competence must be recognised. This means those who live here and what they are doing. This means the culture. If you hear that your *culture* is not good enough, then it is ... (Research conversation, italics used to show the participant's emphasis)

They left it hanging and shook their head. The two participants who speak in the quotations above point to an important aspect of contemporary Sámi education: Sámi education today exists and is practised in a post-assimilation or postcolonial era. Even though the national educational system, through the move from a politics of assimilation to a politics of recognition and inclusion (Olsen & Andreassen, 2018), has gone through a major change, the hundred years of assimilation have created a complex and troublesome situation (Broderstad, this volume). Through Nakata's (2007) concept: the cultural interface between who is Sámi and who is not Sámi holds quite a few people, and the boundaries are quite blurry in some places.

Thus, Indigenising education in this situation is a similarly complex enterprise. Making your educational practice Sámi requires that you define what that means. What does Sámi mean – and what does it mean in your area? What kind of Sáminess do you refer to? This requires a set of active choices and the recognition of

the need for more knowledge, especially in the Norwegianised areas. If you define your kindergarten as a Sea Sámi kindergarten and the area where it is located as a Sea Sámi area, it sets in motion several necessary choices. These choices concern the articulation of Sea Sámi culture, tradition, and practices, in opposition to but also connected to other articulations of Sámi cultures, traditions, and practices. These choices also concern language. As Sámi language is considered, both by national curricula (Directorate of Education, 2020) and through the measures taken by the Sámi parliament (Sámediggi, 2018), to be immensely important in the Indigenisation process (see also Sollid, this volume), it can be complicated in an area where Norwegianisation removed or severely impacted the local Sámi dialects. This is connected to multilingual communities, to loss and to feelings of shame (Andresen, 2021b; Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012).

Shame and hurtful emotions were common through the transition from Norwegianisation to revitalisation. This relates to Sara Ahmed's thoughts on shame as not only an individual emotion, but a collective one that is deeply rooted in politics (Ahmed, 2004). The Sea Sámi, in the decades following Norwegianisation, have been described as living with a 'neither-nor' identity suggesting that they were neither Norwegian nor Sámi. Through the emergence of new generations and of revitalisation, new thoughts and practices occurred. The children of the 'neither-nor' generation became more of a 'both-and' generation. They can – within certain boundaries – be Norwegian, Sámi, and Kven at the same time (Hansen, 2007; Høgmo, 1986; Olsen, 2017). This can, however, create a feeling of being in-between and of not being good enough. Articulating Sámi education in such a situation has its challenges, to say the least.

Within the international field of Indigenous education, there are approaches that resonate. Russell Bishop (2008) argued for a culturally responsive education articulated in Indigenous contexts. The change of starting point is key here, with the emphasis on education on their terms as Māori. Graham Smith's (2017) discussion of culturally transformative pedagogy goes along the same lines, with the kaupapa guiding Māori theory and/or education. Smith takes as a starting point that Māori are not homogenous in their educational aspirations. The transformative dimension of education requires making space for Indigenous and minority cultures, protecting languages at risk, struggling for the minds to be educated out of false consciousness and hegemony and recognising the small victories along the way to transformation (Smith, 2017). Smith's and Bishop's perspectives also find resonance in United States Indigenous contexts. Red pedagogy, as described by Grande (2008), is an Indigenous pedagogy combining critical pedagogy and Indigenous knowledge. Amongst the main principles are the emphasis on 'red pedagogy' as rooted in Native American Indigenous knowledge, the connection

to mainstream critical theories and the desire to relate to democracy and self-determination (Grande, 2008).

### **'MISSION IMPOSSIBLE'?**

Alongside the pedagogical challenges come the practical ones: 'To staff a Sámi unit of the kindergarten with qualified teachers who also speak the Sámi language is mission impossible.' This was said – accompanied by a sad smile – by a research participant in charge of kindergartens in their municipality. In their municipality, which is in the South Sámi area, the South Sámi language is under severe pressure and is, alongside Lule Sámi, considered to be in a severely endangered situation (NOU 2016: 18). Although the language situation here is critical, there are similar challenges also faced in other parts of Sápmi.

To find and recruit competent teachers is a shared and now well-known challenge related to making and running Sámi kindergartens and schools. This has been repeated in several reports and surveys over the last decades (Hirvonen, 2004; Hirvonen, 2004; Homme, Danielsen, & Ludvigsen, 2021; NOU, 2016: 18; Solstad, Nygaard, & Solstad, 2012). The growing demands from the first Sámi national school curriculum in 1997 and the consecutive curricula both for kindergartens and schools led to an increased demand for teachers with a particular set of competences. A competent teacher within Sámi education needs to be a qualified teacher and to have Sámi language competence. This has proven to be quite complicated, probably mainly due to small numbers of Sámi candidates (Homme et al., 2021; NOU 2016: 18, p. 200).

This has of course historical dimensions. Hence, there is the state-born dilemma or paradox: State policy drove away Sámi languages through the hundred years of assimilation. Today, the same state has a different policy and a different set of regulations including language demands that have changed direction. In the Sea Sámi community, the municipality representative talked of not being qualified to make and run a full-scale Sámi kindergarten (see above). This is an example of a system where the different actors (state and Indigenous) together provide two-edged communication and make a proper paradox or even loop: Following Norwegianisation, the Sea Sámi communities lost the Sámi language, and both the South Sámi language and the Lule Sámi language have become severely endangered. Following Indigenisation and the increased recognition of Sámi rights to education in the Sámi language, the state – and the Sámi parliament – demand Sámi language proficiency to be recognised as giving a proper Sámi education.

In the conversation with the municipality leader from the South Sámi area, recruitment for kindergarten teachers showed to be a main point also in other Sámi contexts:

When we now are having a Sámi unit with Sámi as the main language, we are trying to make a full Sámi design. And we realise something that is more difficult than we had imagined. This is when we understand that the people who speak South Sámi in the world are not many. This is when we understand and see the connections between the low number of South Sámi speakers and the oppression of the language. People stop speaking – the few who actually speak South Sámi – when non-Sámi-speaking persons enter the room. We discover something we had not realised. We have also found out that manning a Sámi kindergarten unit with someone who has both ECE competence and speaks the Sámi language is mission impossible! No ... Now it sounds like I have given up. I have not! We put a lot of effort into building competence in the kindergarten and educating people with and without a connection to the Sámi community. (Research conversation)

Similar statements and experiences are repeated by several research participants. The situation seems to be recognisable across different levels. The struggle to find kindergarten teachers with Sámi language competence is similar to the struggle to find schoolteachers with Sámi language competence. The higher education sector finds it challenging to educate Sámi language teachers and also to find teachers for university courses (Olsen, Nutti, & Hov, 2021). As such, this is not limited to local communities and their kindergartens and schools, it is a challenge across all levels of education, from ECE to tertiary education, and across the state borders in Sápmi (Keskitalo, this volume).

There are at least two ways of understanding this in addition to the more quantitative aspect of the low numbers of potential Sámi speakers. First, it is the result of state assimilation as well as an expression of a post-Norwegianisation ignorance from the state side regarding Sámi education for a long period of time. On the other hand, though, it can be seen as a system that struggles to keep up with itself. Following assimilation and marginalisation, wherein the educational system played a major part, a period of growing recognition has taken place, leading up to today's situation (Gjerpe, 2017; Olsen & Andreassen, 2018). Now, the state, through policy and curricula, funds kindergartens and schools and sets forth a set of curricula with quite high demands when it comes to competence in Sámi language and culture. These demands are – following such a position – reflexive of an ambition for the Norwegian educational system to be culturally responsive to the situation of the Sámi and to answer to the rights of Sámi students and children. Regardless of how you see it, the Sámi communities struggle to have enough candidates for the many positions. This is clearly another paradox and dilemma.

## HIERARCHY, DEMANDS AND DIVERSITY

An important part of understanding any community is a concept of diversity. The national curricula in Norway have embraced the term. Diversity has, to a great extent, replaced concepts like 'multicultural' (Olsen & Andreassen, 2018). There are tensions when using the diversity term (Røthing, 2020). It can be used both as a descriptive, a normative and potentially an analytical term. I use this here mainly as a descriptive term and as a term used by the participants, and follow Åse Røthing (2020) in the call for a critical perspective. Røthing claims that there is a need for a norm-critical perspective to be an integral part of diversity competence, questioning processes and categories of normality, normativity, inclusion, and exclusion.

Sámi communities are diverse. Applying a critical perspective to diversity, also within Sámi communities, reveals a complex issue: hierarchies, power structures, and the experience of being left outside. These are complex topics and parts of communities. They are difficult to address as they dwell and work in the spaces between system and individuals, and between politics and emotions.

Diversity is also a quite practical matter in this cultural interface. The majority of the Sámi in Norway speak Norwegian. At the same time, the North Sámi, the Lule Sámi, and the South Sámi languages are in different situations and under pressure in different ways. This goes for culture, ways of living, gender, sexualities, and geography. There are Sámi living in different parts of Norway and in Sápmi. Some live in rural, others in urban areas. Some live in areas where Sámi languages are spoken; others do not. For Sámi education, this means that pedagogy and institutions need to find ways to reflect, understand, and handle diversity also within Sámi communities. As such, this is the same as diversity in a more general sense. In a Sámi context, an outspoken diversity perspective means that it is impossible to claim and articulate a Sámi pedagogy, education, knowledge, or perspective as if it is one univocal whole. Instead, there is a need to open for the plurality of Sámi voices (Gjerpe, 2021; Olsen & Sollid, this volume). This is also in line with the culturally transformative pedagogy from the Māori context.

Another dimension of diversity is more complex and deals with emotions, belonging, and citizenship. It touches upon or has grown out of the complex matter of assimilation. There is diversity when it comes to how gravely Norwegianisation affected Sámi communities. Several Sámi communities were affected to such an extent that the use of Sámi language was weakened and almost disappeared. Some Sámi even chose (or were pushed to) to become Norwegian. Sámi names vanished, and there were fewer Sámi registrations in the censuses, while Sámi languages became endangered (Andresen, 2021a; Dankertsen, 2017).



Nonetheless, identity is not static. In Sápmi – as in many other parts of the Indigenous world – the second part of the 20th and going well into the 21st century is a period of vitalisation, revitalisation, and reclamation. Following decades of revitalisation, Sámi identities are re-emerging, and Sámi languages are again spoken in some places where they were silenced. Hence, there are many ways of being Sámi (Dankertsen, 2017), or many subject positions available (Nakata, 2007; Olsen & Sollid, this volume). The relationship between the different ways of being Sámi in the post-Norwegianisation era is complicated. This, of course, also has elements of hierarchy to which my participants refer.

The dominant discourses have set their mark both in the making of the Sámi curriculum and in the representations of Sámi people and communities within educational contexts. The feeling of not being good enough to provide Sámi education as laid out by the Sámi parliament does indicate the presence of a hierarchy, albeit an informal and unspoken one.

The existence of hegemonic discourses and internal hierarchies represents a challenge for dealing with diversity. The leader in the kindergarten with both Sámi and Norwegian units explained that this is a sensitive topic, and one that evokes both personal, emotional, and power-related matters. We talked more generally about how diversity situations tend to include hierarchies that can be both outspoken and silent. There are hierarchies of both kinds in Sámi contexts. The kindergarten leader talked about hierarchies both in the group of parents and in the group of teachers. They stated that this was more complicated on the Sámi side of the kindergarten than on the Norwegian side, and sensed the complicated matters as well as the emotional aspects:

Leader: To separate between case and person in these matters is difficult and can be tense. Not many wish to speak about this. What is diversity? And what about hierarchy? Will the one that shouts the loudest be seen the most? Then there is also conflict. Instead of dealing with it and getting it over with, they would slide away and talk about family and relatives. Again – about upbringing – the whole family is part of the upbringing but will also say a lot about who you are, I have understood.

Me: Do you mean that you carry with you the family as ‘baggage’?

Leader: Yes, for better or worse. (Research conversation)

The hierarchies at play in the kindergarten are complicated and demand the ability to see invisible lines. Who you are, where you are from, your Sámi language competence; these issues matter and carry meaning even though they are not necessarily talked about openly. For Sámi education and those working within

Sámi education, this is a topic rarely addressed, and a topic that requires ethical reflection.

In writings on Sámi pedagogy and education, the hegemonic discourse is one where the Sámi community is a community of Inner Finnmark, the 'heartland' of the North Sámi language. This can be seen both in Sámi textbook representations in the previous curricula and in the educational resources made related to the curricula. Gjerpe (2021) refers to the Sápmi found in these representations as 'Textbook Sápmi', arguing that there is a particular kind of Sáminess, a particular Sápmi, that is portrayed (see also Johansen & Markussen, this volume). What is missing are the other parts of Sápmi: cultural, geographical, and linguistic.

In a recent textbook (Balto et al, 2020) published through the Sámi parliament's kindergarten project *Sámi mánát ođđa searvelanjain* ('Sámi children in new pedagogical spaces'), a similar picture is painted. The book is given to all interested kindergartens and is written in four languages – the three Sámi languages and Norwegian. It is mainly written by and based on Asta Balto's work and presents thoughts on Sámi childhood and pedagogy. The book is central to the project's outspoken ambition to 'Sámify' (Indigenise) kindergartens and formalise a particular Sámi pedagogy. Through the book, the reader can receive suggestions to practices and ways of thinking in ECE settings. Even though the book mentions diversity, the portrayal of the Sámi way of life is not very diverse. As the book aims to be a constructive contribution to the field of Sámi pedagogy, rather than an analysis, the approach is rather harmonising. Still, it means that there are areas and topics that are typically not addressed and presented. Dynamics of power, diversity, and hierarchy are clearly also part of pedagogical practice in Sámi kindergartens and schools – but not so much in literature and discourse.

Similar experiences are also given and told of in research related to urban Sámi communities in general. Sámi living in urban areas may experience a kind of 'negotiation' related to where you are from and to your language proficiency (Berg-Nordlie, 2021; Gjerpe, 2013; Vuolab, 2016). It is also possible to draw lines from this to the debate and discourse on the Finnish side of Sápmi. In recent years, there has been a complex debate about how to define and recognise who is Sámi and who is not (Valkonen, 2019). Without going into the finer points of this debate, I recognise the existence of hierarchies in the understanding and articulation of Sámi identity in the debate.

## **DISCUSSION: FROM PRACTICE AND PEDAGOGY TO POWER AND POLITICS**

A clear observation from this study is that there are a lot of activities on different levels of the nexus of Sámi education. The national curricula are going through

what I will term an Indigenisation process. Sámi matters and rights are put to the forefront. The Sámi parliament plays a major part in this, both in the curriculum processes and in the project of articulating a Sámi pedagogy for kindergartens. Further down in the nexus, leaders in municipalities, kindergartens, and schools work hard to answer to new demands – within a budget that has not been expanded – acting to put ideals and curricula into pedagogical practices.

To understand and navigate within diverse communities, there is a need for critical perspectives. Åse Røthing (2016, 2020) presents diversity competence as a key in contemporary educational contexts. Diversity competence consists of knowledge about diversity, skills to deal with and handle diversity, and norm-critical perspectives. I will dwell on the latter, as they connect well with the mentioned issues of being in-between and of hierarchies in Sámi contexts. Norm-critical perspectives are a way of understanding how some dimensions, aspects or roles are presented and/or considered to be what is norm and normal in a particular social context. When this happens, these relations are not questioned and do not even need to be defended. They can be taken for granted. A norm-critical perspective looks for such dynamics and aims to deconstruct them (Røthing, 2020).

In a Sámi educational context, there are norms and claims of normativity at play. Textbook presentations of a particular Sápmi as being the one and only Sápmi is one example (Gjerpe, 2021). The stories of not being good enough for the demands of the curriculum are another. This is when members of Sea Sámi communities, for instance, express how the arrangements for and the curricular presentations of Sámi language and culture do not (or poorly) fit their situation. As such, I ask through a norm-critical perspective about different levels of the nexus of Sámi education: What norms govern or form the Sámi curricula and the representation of the Sámi in the mainstream curricula? Which norms or expectations of what ‘Sámi’ means apply in the implementation of the curricula?

To counter the normative presentations, and with reference to Nakata’s concept of the cultural interface, it can be necessary to emphasise that there are many ways of being Sámi in Sápmi. These are to a great extent dependent on where in Sápmi you live and/or come from. One aspect of this is related to the distinction between Sámi and non-Sámi identities. It may, at least in some areas, be difficult to see people as belonging to only one category, ‘Sámi’ or ‘Norwegian’ (on the Norwegian side, that is), and that this is a dichotomic relation of either-or. In Sámi kindergartens, defining a Sámi child is similarly more complex than it may seem (Homme et al., 2021, pp. 247–248). The categories are to some extent in flux, especially in the most strongly Norwegianised areas. Here, the cultural interface is a good description of the Sámi community and a good starting point to articulate educational practices. Following Graham Smith (2017) in his description of

culturally transformative education in Indigenous contexts, Indigenous students are not homogenous and should be treated as such in their educational contexts. Rather, the transformative dimension of education makes it necessary to provide and build space for minority cultures, to protect languages at risk, and to struggle for an education that challenges norms and hegemony.

Returning to the everyday life of the research participants of this chapter, their endeavours are often more practically oriented. Even though they are dealing with matters connected to the huge topics and concepts mentioned here, they would still conclude that their main challenges are more practical ones. Who will be the teachers today, tomorrow, next week, and next year? How can we enable our schools and teachers in the best way possible to do the important job of putting Indigenous education into practice? At least they should not have to feel that they are not good enough for anyone.

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# 10. It may be invisible to you but it still affects us: Extending the comprehensive view on language and writing

Hanna Outakoski

**Abstract** Sámi education is a shared, and simultaneously divided, enterprise of four nation states. Sámi writing instruction is also influenced by the writing didactics of the majority languages. This chapter investigates the appropriateness of one non-Indigenous model for writing instruction in the North Sámi context. This chapter suggests that although the model can to a large extent describe many discourses for the Indigenous Sámi context, there is a need to expand the layers of the model.

**Keywords** Sámi languages | literacy | discourses | writing didactics | ideologies

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter proposes that theoretical models arising solely in the non-Indigenous writing pedagogical context can be unintentionally incomplete. This incompleteness is due to an incapability to recognize power relations, hierarchies, and ideas that are connected to minority contexts. Such contexts can be invisible in the majority contexts and to many majority researchers, and, as such, they can become contextual boundaries that do not promote understanding of Indigenous education in varied contexts. This can lead to inappropriate use of the comprehensive model, or to inconclusive results with less serious consequences. Exclusive use of such models as analytical tools in Indigenous literacy contexts can lead to an imbalance in the contents, instruction, and evaluation of Indigenous writing and literacy development within a majority education system without addressing the underlying shortcomings of the system itself. Also, the interpretation of the research results in Indigenous contexts can give false indications of the situation or lead to wrong or inadequate counter measures.

Although the formal needs of reading and writing skills between minorities and Indigenous communities may not differ at large, the need to acknowledge local literacies and local literacy content is urgent. Local literacies recognize Indigenous voices and give them status, and they are also rooted in the cultural consciousness of the language community. With non-Indigenous models, certain hierarchical understandings and ideologies of languages, skills, knowledge, and linguistic competence can take hold of the educational contexts and may further decrease the opportunities for the minorities to become biliterate. Promoting biliteracy is the only way to keep Indigenous literacies alive since monoliteracy in a multicultural context almost always equals literacy solely in the majority language. Also, although biliteracy may offer the majority learners bonus knowledge of literacy contents in other languages, biliteracy is not a condition for the survival of majority literacy as it is for the minority.

On the other hand, literacy models should not be directly excluded or rejected only since their origins are in the non-Indigenous context. Instead, it should be in everyone's interest to see in which way, if any, the models can be adjusted to also include or understand new contexts. This is, I think, especially true for frameworks that are seemingly neutral and based on grassroots practices within larger formal educational systems shared between majority contexts and Indigenous/minority contexts. Although there is no escaping the fact that majority pedagogies are dominant in the schooling of most minority students today, the acknowledgement of this situation and adjustment of the models has the potential to produce more solidary, accepting, and tolerant education systems.

The need to adjust non-Indigenous models to accommodate an understanding of Indigenous contexts is, in my view, also not in contrast or in conflict with the idea that the Indigenous contexts have an additional need to create their own models. Expansion of the non-Indigenous models to include an understanding of Indigenous/minority contexts can instead create space for Indigenous models that strengthen local literacies and Indigenous didactics. In this way, 'education can also be an opportunity for Indigenous people to engage in (re)claiming, transferring and articulating their own cultures and languages' as stated by Olsen and Sollid in the introduction of this volume. This inclusive perspective is also shared by e.g., Martin et al. (2017), who see the educational sector as one of those many spaces for Cultural Interface where different ideas, ideologies, and practices inevitably intersect. Martin et al. (2017, p. 1159) also point out that, for a long time, very little has been known about the mechanisms that support Indigenous pupils' learning. Understanding how people act in different spaces, including educational settings, contributes to the understanding of complex systems. It is at that interface that



traditional forms and ways of knowing, or the residue of those, that we bring from the pre-contact historical trajectory inform how we think and act and so do Western ways, and for many of us a blend of both has become our lifeworld. (Nakata, 2002, p. 285)

To learn more about those mechanisms, there is a need to learn more about the ways teaching and learning is organized in such settings. This chapter is one contribution to that work and has been encouraged through my participation in the Indigenous Citizenship and Education project.

This chapter discusses a specific area of inquiry, namely writing and writing instruction in North Sámi educational and Nordic transnational settings. However, the implications of this chapter can be extended to include many areas of research. This applies especially for disciplines in which discourses specific to Indigenous contexts are studied without a proper grounding in the Indigenous perspective and without a critical look at the models that the research methodologies use.

The discussion and the examples presented in this chapter are based on a specific case study that targets one theoretical framework and one Indigenous educational context, the context of North Sámi writing instruction in compulsory schooling in the Nordic countries. I am aware of the risk of producing a too narrow theoretical generalization, the very same generalization that this chapter seeks to nuance. I therefore welcome further studies within Indigenous and other minority communities that can either confirm the general need for framework extension, or that will show that the extension proposed here is more appropriate in specific Indigenous and minority contexts, but not in all.

I also want to make a short note on researcher positionality since I belong to the Indigenous community but do my research in the Nordic academic context. The views and perspectives that I offer are unavoidably affected by my position as a simultaneous insider and outsider. I seek to undertake my research following the ethical guidelines that concern both the Nordic academic tradition and Indigenous research. When it comes to objectivity, I am unapologetic of my aspiration to find ways to include Indigenous communities in the wider educational discussion arena. I do so without forgetting that my call is also to find strategies to identify potential weaknesses in the Indigenous writing instruction. Finding the internal gaps of the system and understanding their origins is in my mind a leap towards Indigenous literacy and Indigenous citizenship.

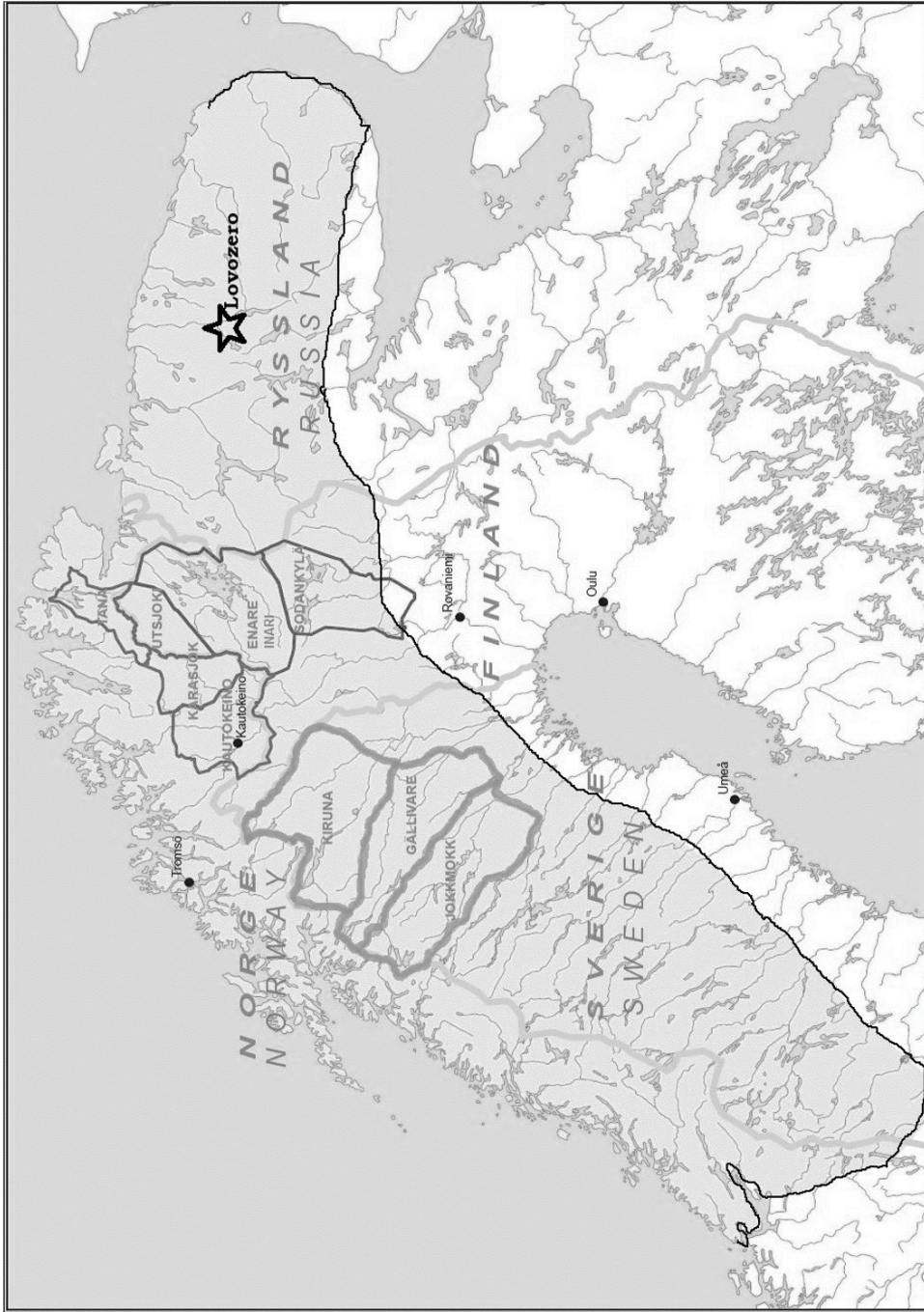
The organization of this chapter is as follows. Following this introductory section, section 2 focuses on numeric data from the Sámi compulsory schooling in four countries. The numbers give a compressed background for the study that has been undertaken in the educational context where North Sámi, the largest of the

Sámi languages, is used as the medium of instruction and as the mediator of literacy contents. Section 3 presents the original theoretical framework of Ivanič (2004), which is the target of the proposed theoretical expansion. Section 4 provides arguments for the expansion of the framework in the Sámi educational and literacy development contexts and discusses how factors that affect writing instruction and writing in such contexts can be misinterpreted or overseen. Section 5 presents the proposed expansion of the framework arguing that the sociopolitical layer of the original model cannot alone explain and cope with the ideological, historical, and power-related effects that impact Indigenous writing contexts. The final section offers some concluding remarks.

## **SHORT OVERVIEW OF SÁMI LITERACY CONTEXTS IN COMPULSORY SCHOOLING**

Sámi education is an example of teaching an Indigenous language and culture within a majority school system, and therefore also a matter of maintaining, nursing, and developing bilingual literacy among the Sámi young, or of hindering such development. Today, Sámi learners are formally educated within the Nordic school systems and at a single primary school in Russia (see the black star on Map 10.1). This study focuses solely on compulsory school (ages 6–15) that is the only level of Sámi education that is comparable and formally steered in all four countries: Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia. Further, the case study focuses on the North Sámi school context.

Most of the Sámi speakers live in the traditional settlement area called Sápmi (North Sámi spelling), shown in grey on Map 10.1, but many Sámi also live outside this area, for example in urban centers and the capital cities of Sweden, Norway, and Finland. The statistics about the overall numbers of speakers or people with ethnic affiliation to the Sámi culture are scarce or reported circularly and vaguely, and continuously state a range between 50 000–100 000 people (e.g., Friborg, Sørli, & Hansen, 2017, p. 1010; Olthuis, Kivelä, & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013, p. 27; Outakoski, 2015b, pp. 7–8; Seurujärvi-Kari, 2012, p. 18).



**Map 10.1:** Sápmi – The traditional settlement area of the Sámi people, shown in grey, stretches over Northern Norway and Sweden to Finland and further to Kola Peninsula in Russia. The circumscribed regions within Sápmi present some of the North Sámi maintenance and development areas central for the case study.

**Table 10.1:** National statistics from Sweden (Kitok, Vannar, & Sparrok, 2020), Norway (Johansen, Møllersen, Aslaksen, Tovmo, & Rasmussen, 2020) and Finland (Aikio-Puoskari & Pulska, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c), and the estimated figure from Russia (Zmyvalova & Outakoski, 2019) show the number of Sámi learners in primary schools who have part or whole education in Sámi language, or who study Sámi language as a separate subject in school.

Country	Education partly or wholly in Sámi			Sámi as a separate subject or mother tongue subject (curricular or extra-curricular)		
	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Sweden	158	161	173	529	612	571
Norway	849	833	857	1419	1561	1543
Finland	198	217	189	382	432	497
Russia	0			+/- 20 pupils		
<b>Total</b>	1205	1211	1219	2350	2625	2631
<b>All totals for education in and on Sámi</b>				3555	3836	3850

In the school year 2019–2020, there were altogether 3850 pupils registered in the formal Sámi education programs or studying the Sámi language in compulsory school in the four countries (see Table 10.1). Of these pupils, 744 primary school pupils were registered in Sweden (Kitok et al., 2020), 686 primary school pupils in Finland (Aikio-Puoskari & Pulska, 2019b), 2400 pupils in Norway (Johansen et al., 2020), and around 20 pupils were registered in Russia (Ekaterina Zmyvalova, p.c. May 2020). In the school year 2019–2020, 857 pupils in Norway and 189 pupils in Finland had Sámi as their main language of instruction, and 173 pupils in Sweden attended Sámi schools where some of the instruction, but not more than half, was in the Sámi language. In Russia, no Sámi learners attend formal education that is given mainly in their native or heritage language. See Table 10.1 for the 2017–2020 official statistics from Sweden, Norway and Finland, and an estimation from Russia.

The four countries, where the majority of Sámi live today, have chosen different trajectories when it comes to educating the Sámi people and offering them the possibility to learn their native heritage languages in school. The opportunities also differ within countries, regionally. In some regions in Norway and Finland, Sámi learners can receive teaching mainly in Sámi throughout their compulsory schooling. In Sweden this opportunity is restricted to five Sámi schools and only continues up to grade 6 (age 12); in practice, the amount of teaching in Sámi can, however, be much less than half of the school time. In Russia, Sámi classes are offered as extracurricular and timewise very limited options up till grades 4 (age 10) and 5 (age 11). For a comparative overview of the Sámi education in Norway, Finland, and Sweden, consult Aikio-Puoskari (2005). Learn more about

the Norwegian Sámi school forms in Hirvonen (2008). Consult Zmyvalova & Outakoski (2019) for an understanding the present situation in Russia, and for the current Swedish situation, see Hetteima & Outakoski (2020).

In all countries where the Sámi live, there are many Sámi children and youth who do not attend Sámi educational programs, nor do they study the language and culture in school. This is alarming since the Sámi schools are among the most important ideological and implementational places that nurture the development of Sámi identity and Sámi languages (Hornberger & Outakoski, 2015; Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2014). The existence of a variety of informal language arenas is of great importance for language survival, but the impact of these non-formal language revitalization efforts on Sámi literacy attainment has not yet been researched in a larger scale.

It is against this highly varied literacy attainment context that I view Ivanič's (2004) theoretical framework for writing instruction, learning writing and teaching writing. The different educational trajectories that we see in the present are products of historical and ideological power negotiations in which the Sámi people have had their own voice for only a relatively short period of time, if at all.

## IDENTIFYING A NEED FOR A THEORETICAL EXPANSION

The model that is discussed in detail in this chapter is Rosalind Ivanič's (2004) philosophical-theoretical paper on the discourses of writing, learning to write, and teaching writing. Ivanič (2004) describes the connection between our thoughts and ideas about writing and writing instruction, and the way we learn and teach writing, saying that '[t]he ways in which people talk about writing and learning to write, and the actions they take as learners, teachers and assessors, are instantiations of discourses of writing and learning to write' (p. 220).

Ivanič (2004, p. 223) identifies and graphically describes four main layers in the view on language that steer and affect writing and writing instruction. According to this model, we can focus on the written text itself, on the mental processes of writing and composition, on writing as an event with participants and roles, or on the socio political settings in which the writing is conducted or instructed, or we can reach for a more comprehensive view on all or on a combination of some of the layers. These orientations need not be mutually exclusive, but for most of the time, the focus of a separate teaching event is directed towards one or two of these layers, even if the teacher might be able to move between the layers in their overall writing pedagogy. In the original framework, the layers are organized metaphorically in a nested box formation situating the text in the innermost box and the sociopolitical layer in the outermost box. Ivanič (2004) herself writes that the

framework is based on 'research and practice on writing pedagogy in Anglophone countries' (p. 224), and she further welcomes revisions and development of the framework so as to extend its scope.

Ivanič's (2004, p. 225) original framework<sup>1</sup> also identifies six discourses for writing, learning to write, and for writing instruction. These include: 1) the skills discourse that focuses on the form of the written product and on linguistic conventions, 2) the discourse of creativity that concentrates on writing that springs from the writer's interest and imagination, 3) the discourse of the writing process and the phases of the composition, 4) the genre discourse that focuses on text types and the characteristics of different kinds of writing, 5) the discourse of writing as a social practice where the roles and the actions of the writer and the receiver are the main concern, and 6) the sociopolitical discourse where the motivation and reasons behind different kinds of writing are considered. The six discourses are in turn connected to the different layers of the language view. It is possible to view the connection as movement on parallel scales where the innermost layers (Text and Cognitive processes) are more connected to the discourses of writing skills and creativity, while the latter discourses are more connected to the outer layers of the writing event and the socio political context of the writing or writing instruction (Ivanič, 2004, p. 225: Figure 2). My understanding of the graphical presentations of the original framework are presented later in this chapter, in section 5, in connection to the suggested expansion of the model in Figures 10.3 and 10.4.

This chapter has no desire to diminish the importance of Ivanič's (2004) model for analyses of writing discourses in the Anglophone majority language learner contexts. Instead, I suggest that there is a need to expand the model so that it can also be used and interpreted appropriately in the minority and Indigenous contexts. An attempt to accommodate Indigenous writing research and instruction under this model acknowledges the value and importance of the original framework since most of the formal Indigenous literacy instruction, at least in the present Sámi context, aligns with the majority model. I am also attracted to and intrigued by this model since I recognize so many parts of it as having been clearly visible and present in the Sámi schooling that I received as a pupil/student, and that I have been involved in as a Sámi teacher later. At the same time, I have discovered the need for an expansion of this model since Indigenous writing is most often carried out and instructed in a revitalization or language shift context

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1 Ivanič (e.g., at the LITUM Symposium in Umeå, May 2018) has herself also raised the question of a need to expand the discourses to include a very important discourse that connects with learning through writing and to the writing experience as a learning event, but since this discourse is not included in the original framework, it will not be discussed here.

where various power relations, historical traumas, and hegemonic ideologies linger. Since such effects of colonialism and ongoing reclamation processes are not a visible or an announced part of the sociopolitical discourse of the formal and national school system of the Nordic countries, I wanted to see where they could be placed and positioned in the Ivanič (2004) model.

The expansion proposed in this chapter comprises of a seemingly minor addition in the model of Ivanič (2004, p. 223), but of a sort that can turn out to be a major addition to the comprehensive view on language, language learning, and instruction in language revitalization contexts, as well as in majority contexts that are heavily influenced by certain ideological underpinnings, or that are undergoing a major pedagogical shift. I suggest that there is an additional fifth layer in the comprehensive view on language that works differently from the other layers of the model. While the other layers of the model are connected to the different writing discourses and teaching practices, the fifth layer, suggested here, functions as a mediating layer that has the ability and potential to blur the connections between the other layers and the discourses, or that sometimes functions as a convex lens that, for different reasons, diminishes the number of available writing discourses and practices for writing instruction in the minority contexts. In the majority contexts this layer can be so plane and transparent that it becomes almost invisible and therefore difficult to detect, or it could, in the case of major pedagogical reforms, have similar effects on the language view and available discourses as in the minority context.

The main aim of this chapter is therefore to argue for an extension of Ivanič's (2004) model to include a fifth layer in the comprehensive view of language to make it usable in the Sámi and in similar Indigenous writing contexts, and elsewhere. The main gain from this adjustment of the model makes visible the (reasons of) missing, weak, or overemphasized layers and discourses of writing instruction in minority contexts. Visibility, in turn, makes it possible to strengthen and diversify teaching and learning of writing in all contexts, and to counteract and prevent potential categorization of Indigenous writing as inferior or less versatile than other writing.

In the next section, I will provide more detailed examples and arguments to support the need for the expansion of Ivanič's model. Concrete examples are fetched from the North Sámi education context and are based on the data, materials, and results of an International Post Doc project that looked to answer the main research question on whether and how the teaching practices in multilingual educational contexts support writing in heritage languages. The project has investigated writing instruction and writing practices in Sámi higher level education in three countries during the 2017–2018 academic year, and through a one-year-long

case study at one North Sámi primary school during the 2018–2019 school year. The project is summarized in Attachment 10.1.

## WRITING INSTRUCTION IN THE INDIGENOUS SÁMI CONTEXT

Writing instruction in the Sámi context faces challenges that most majority writing classrooms, teachers, teacher instructors, and learners do not need to worry about. Some of the challenges are of a practical nature, some of an ideological nature, and some of them are a blend of both. The practical obstacles (such as lack of appropriate materials) are, however, the ones that are better known and more visible, and therefore of less interest in this chapter. Instead, in this section, I have chosen to highlight the challenges that arise from the imbalanced power relations and/or the context of revitalization. These challenges are also shared between different national contexts indicating that there is a layer of language view that is beyond the political and sociocultural sphere of the national educational contexts, a layer of ordinance and hierarchy between competing literacy contexts.

The effects of the additional layer either blur, redirect, erase, or delimit the connections between writing discourses, writing instruction, writing practices, and writing ideologies in school and in the Indigenous communities as a whole. In the following, five challenges in the Sámi writing context, and their effects on Sámi writing and writing instruction are exemplified and discussed. Many more challenges could also be included on the list, but these five are chosen since they in different ways exemplify the core mechanisms that steer the effects of the suggested additional fifth layer of the comprehensive language view that is discussed in section 5.

### Language ideologies and language practices

Schools and schooling are powerful channels for conveying ways of viewing, evaluating, and categorizing societies, people, race, knowledge, cultures, and many other structures and phenomena that form and reform our lives. Controlling access to literacy or the language of literacy has been, and still is, an effective way to maintain control over people, and especially over Indigenous peoples and minorities. At the same time, Indigenous groups may also internalize the idea that writing, literacy, and schooling belong to the majority society, while traditional knowledge, oral traditions, and immaterial culture are seen as being at the core of the Indigenous cultures. This way of thinking feeds the idea that writing and literacy



are not as important as oral communication. Literacy also loses its meaning as a human right and, instead, is easily seen as a skill or apparatus that is forced on the people through an educational system that does not acknowledge local Indigenous literacies. In Sápmi, many parents' and grandparents' negative school experiences also enforce the negative attitudes towards writing in general, and writing in Sámi in particular (Outakoski, 2015a, pp. 51–52).

Ideologies about literacy and writing in Sámi languages, among learners and teachers, are to some extent in conflict with the ideologies of the documents that steer the school activities. Literacy skills are given a lot of space in the national curricula, while the knowledge that is valued internally in the Sámi community (e.g., knowledge of the lands, the people, and the cultural and oral traditions) is implemented only at the local level or through separate Sámi subject curricula.

Indigenous Sámi literacy is only in its infancy and has not yet managed to connect the internal and external values of writing in the Sámi context. It is also clear that the ideologies about the secondary nature of writing compared to other language skills has an impact on the planning of the teaching and on the writing discourses that are allowed to enter the Sámi educational scene in form of teaching practices.



**Figure 10.1:** A screenshot of an illustration from the first page of an older Sámi school book that teaches Sámi learners to write and speak accurately by Per Jernsletten (1998, p. 9). The name of the book is *Čále ja hálá ná* 'Write and talk in this way'. The figure is accompanied by the author's translation of the original North Sámi text.

Figure 10.1 is just one of the numerous examples from the Sámi textbooks and teaching materials; it shows how these understandings of writing and literacy as something foreign, less important, less valuable, less interesting, less genuine,

or difficult (in this case, too trivial) are time after time conveyed to the Sámi pupils and students. This happens through non-Sámi as well as Sámi literacy contents. Sometimes the message is very clear, as in the prescriptive older textbook from which Figure 10.1 has been taken. Sometimes the ideologies and attitudes are subtler, or are accentuated through omitted writing tasks, writing lessons, writing homework, and writing projects, or through missing writing discourses.

### Distorted and redirected materials

Ideologies also play an important role in deciding which teaching and learning materials enter the Sámi educational scene or the Sámi literacy scene. The imminent threat to the culture and language is easily interpreted in a way that favours certain types of materials and keeps other materials out of the context. I have called this mechanism compartmentalization (see, e.g., Outakoski, 2015b, p. 67), and it can distort and delimit available sources for teaching and learning. The compartmentalization of Sámi writing and written sources is deeply rooted in the ways in which one makes space or closes space for written materials, translations, new genres, and other written products.

An example of such distortion comes from the Swedish side of Sápmi, where reading and learning materials have sometimes been rejected by the Sámi parliament only because they do not concentrate on traditional Sámi livelihoods such as reindeer herding (Outakoski, 2015b, p. 67). This mirrors the situation where the minority culture is under such a tremendous pressure that the threats on and from the sociopolitical and cultural context wipe out the possibilities to use versatile materials in teaching contexts, and therefore might wipe out entire discourses connected to the versatility. This is alarming as it has been shown that multilingual writers 'need supportive instructional contexts that encourage their development as writers in varied genres and build upon multilinguals' unique abilities to draw upon multiple resources as they write' (Kibler, 2014, p. 648).

### Didactic models and pedagogy for writing instruction in Sámi

There is not very much to say about this area of inquiry since no specific Sámi writing didactic courses existed for teachers during the research period. These zero results are still one of the most important findings of my postdoctoral study, in which two universities from Finland and two from Norway participated, and where my home university represented the fourth university in Sweden.

According to the survey and the interview study conducted in Sámi higher education in the spring 2018 (see Attachment 10.1), many teachers had experienced that language studies and pedagogical studies were separated from each other in the Sámi higher education context. This does of course not mean that the language is separated from pedagogy, but the language didactic contents were often either replaced by formal linguistic studies, or the didactic methods were dealt with within the parts of the teacher training program that was given in the majority language or that targeted majority language didactics. In the language courses that were part of the teacher training programs, the focus was often on the students' own knowledge of Sámi grammar, semantics, morphology, etc., rather than on didactic skills, methods, and models that were needed for teaching the language. This could either lead to some uncertainty about the way Sámi language should be taught, or, alternatively, the focus in teaching would be on the same formal skills that were highlighted in the courses, i.e., the skills discourse.

The models and the methods of teaching learned in the majority language context can surely be of significance and help for the Sámi teachers, but there is also a risk that the methods for teaching writing in, e.g., Norwegian might not directly transfer to the teaching of Sámi. Burgess and Ivanič (2010) also raise concerns about how certain writing practices can affect the identity of the writer, as

asking a person to write a particular type of text, using particular media, materials, and resources, and particular discursal and generic features, in a particular context, will be requiring that person to identify with other people who write in this way. Writing demands in educational settings are also identity demands. (p. 228)

The writing discourses and ways to teach writing that come from the majority teacher programs therefore run a risk of redirecting and affecting Sámi writing in the long run.

A positive development in this area of inquiry should, however, be mentioned. After 2018 and my postdoctoral study, new teacher positions with the profile towards Sámi pedagogy and language didactics have been announced at several higher education institutions. The language didactic gap that has existed a while in the Sámi higher education has somehow become visible and detectable, and several different measures have been taken to counteract further separation of Sámi language studies, language didactics, and teacher education.

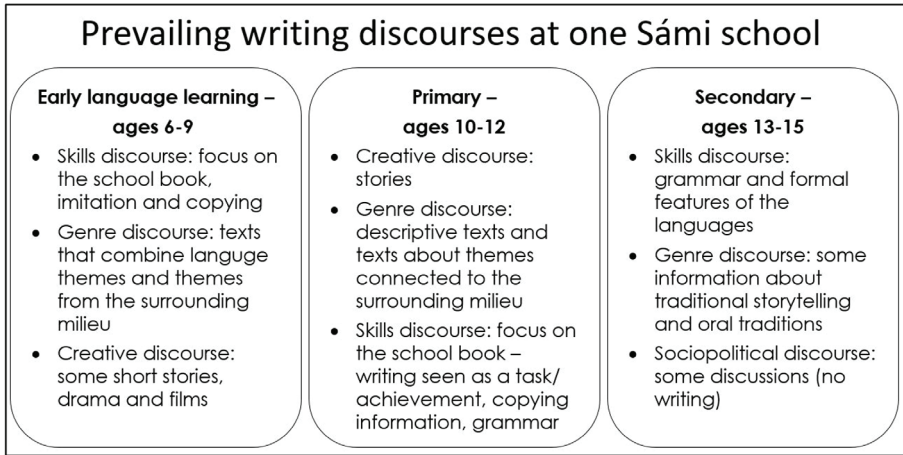
## Dominant discourses

According to the preliminary results of the study that is summarized in Attachment 10.1, it is very common in the Sámi classes, at all educational levels, that the skills discourse is overly emphasized in writing instruction although the language teachers might have pedagogical and didactic aspirations to include other discourses in their teaching (and do so outside writing instruction). The same is also true for most of the teaching materials, where other discourses may be mentioned (e.g., genre discourse and the discourse of the writing process), but that often turn out to test or create writing tasks that focus on the text and the skills discourse.

This kind of focusing on the skills discourse in the Sámi educational sector has many reasons, but they are often, according to the teacher interviews, in one way or another connected to the context of revitalization or language shift. In the Sámi context, this view is often a result of ongoing development work, where language didactics, genres, and writing processes or writing situations are not prioritized as highly as is the basic linguistic knowledge of the form and the vocabulary. Also, the skills discourse offers a comfortable and solid basis for evaluation and assessment. Such a formal base is much easier to control as a common internal discourse than are, perhaps, some of the other discourses existing between four nations and four educational systems.

The risk with overemphasizing the skills discourse and the text level writing tasks is that the pupils learn to separate natural language use from writing, and only connect Sámi writing with correctness, spelling, word choice, form, and rules. Learning and training only formal skills and understanding of linguistic conventions and rules in connection to writing will not help the pupils to become versatile writers. These skills should, in my understanding, be trained in connection to the other writing discourses that look beyond the text and the form to the other contexts of writing.

Figure 10.2 summarizes the observation results from the 3.5-month-long observation period that was conducted at one Sámi primary school during fall term 2018 and comprised of 84 Sámi language lessons (see Attachment 10.1). Figure 10.2 shows that also genre discourse and creative discourse can be present and even dominant in the Sámi primary school. The assessment of the writing products that were connected to these discourses were, however, assessed against the skills discourse. During this observation period, none of the writing instruction was clearly connected to the discourses of the writing process or writing as social practice. When the skills discourse was negotiated in the classroom, a lot of trust was placed in the teaching materials and the text and exercise books. This will, and should, of course raise the question concerning the materials and their



**Figure 10.2:** Observed dominant writing discourses during 84 Sámi language classes at one Sámi school during a period of 3.5 months (translated and fetched from Outakoski, 2018, p. 20).

creators, and what discourses they choose to convey; a question that has not yet been investigated in depth in Sápmi.

Emphasizing the skills discourse in writing is, however, in no way only a Sámi or minority context phenomenon. It is related to a much wider formalist view on language teaching in school. Further, although I firmly believe that writing instruction in the Sámi context is not intentionally formalist, it is easy to see how certain language didactic models have had an impact on Sámi writing instruction, and how the formalist view on language may easily live on at least in teacher ideologies. Skills discourse is often also considered the most important discourse also among the learners. For example, Lambirth (2016) has undertaken research on children's ideological perspectives on writing and learning how to write, and concludes that 'accuracy and correctness overrides many other considerations for the use of the written word' (p. 230). If the teacher instructors, teachers, and other writing instructors promote the formalist view, or assess against it, this view will be automatically transferred to the learners at all levels. In Sámi contexts this one-sidedness is potentially a threat towards the future of Sámi language competence and use in the local communities, and in the Sámi society as a whole, since it compartmentalizes Sámi literacy to the formal uses in school textbooks and grammars, and to written texts that are mainly assessed based on formal criteria.

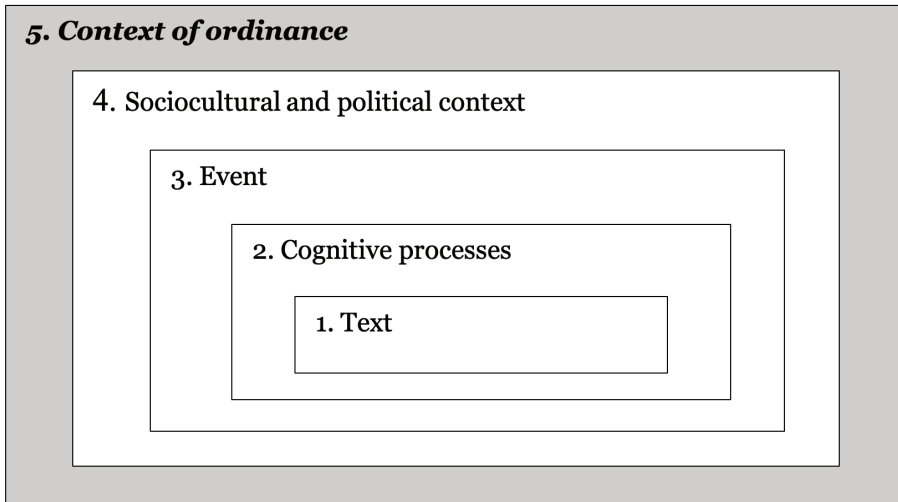
## Visibility and contents

Hirvonen (2008) has noted that, outside the Sámi core areas, Sámi education may be restricted to Sámi language lessons only. Also, Keskitalo (2010) and Linkola and Keskitalo (2015) have noted that even in the core Sámi areas, the visibility of Sámi literacy and languages in the schools is not at the same level as the visibility of the majority languages, leading to an imbalance in literacy outcomes and attitudes in different languages.

Besides the visibility of Sámi language in school environments, there is also a problem with the ways Sámi language knowledge and writing are steered and assessed in schools in comparison to the majority language. For example, the curriculum for Sámi schools in Sweden does not differ as much from the national curriculum as it does in Norway – it basically only adds the Sámi subject (language, history and culture) to the curriculum. However, Belancic and Lindgren (2020) have shown that the language subject curricula for Sámi and Swedish as first language differ quite substantially from each other at ideological levels concerning the content and breadth of the curricula. According to their study, the difference in the curricula prevents the Sámi children from acquiring the same level of literacy in their two main school languages, and gives Swedish an advantage. This is a serious finding as it indicates that the Sámi pupils are not given the ‘full opportunity to participate as democratic citizens in all aspects of Sami and Swedish society, nor to develop their identities as multilingual, multicultural and Indigenous individuals’ (Belancic & Lindgren, 2020, p. 614). Helander (2012, p. 59) has further criticized the way in which curricula and the Nordic school systems assess bilingual language knowledge, as it is often assessed in comparison to monolingual knowledge, and the monolingual majority language knowledge is taken as the norm in such assessments.

## **EXTENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE VIEW ON LANGUAGE AND WRITING**

This chapter suggests, based on examples fetched from the Sámi educational and writing instructional context, that the comprehensive view on language proposed in Ivanič (2004) is insufficient when it comes to Indigenous languages, or at least North Sámi. This chapter recognizes the invaluable synthesizing work of Ivanič that brings together learning and teaching aspects of writing, but also welcomes the invitation to revise and expand the framework to also make it usable and comprehensible in Indigenous and minority contexts of literacy attainment. The original four layers from Ivanič’s meta-analytical

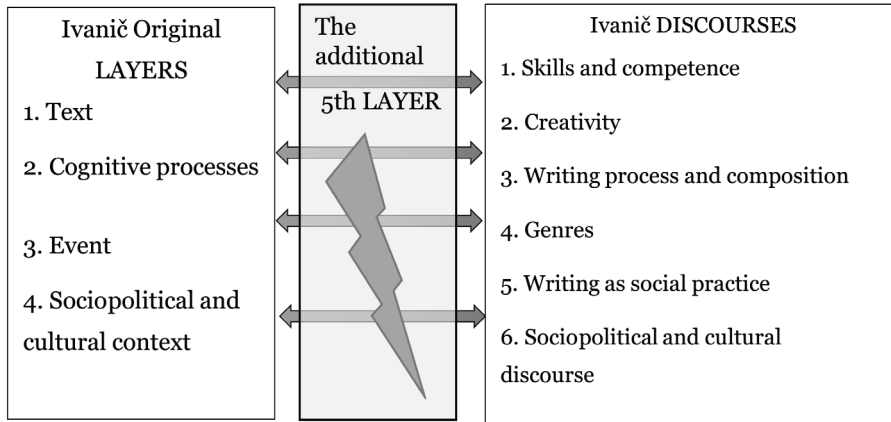


**Figure 10.3:** The four innermost white boxes exemplify Ivanič's original multi-layered view of language (in Ivanič, 2004, p. 223) while the fifth grey layer expands the model to include a layer of revitalization, restart, power relations, and ideologies that affect most Indigenous languages and belong to the context of ordinance.

framework are shown in white in Figure 10.3. However, the main innovation proposed in this chapter concerns the additional grey tinted layer in Figure 10.3 and Figure 10.4.

Although I have, somewhat neutrally, called this additional layer the context of ordinance (and therefore also sub-ordinance), see Figure 10.3, the neutrality connected to the naming of this meta-level is far away from the real-life struggles that this additional layer causes for indigenous literacy attainment. This layer is closely connected to the concepts of power and ideas, the never-ending processes of restarts, revitalization, and reclamation, and to the mechanisms of resistance and resilience that belong to the linguistic and cultural revival that has been gaining momentum in the Indigenous and minority communities since the 1970s.

This additional fifth layer could also alternatively be called the layer of the minority context or revitalization, or all the Res as in revitalization and restarts. However, similar struggles and processes could certainly also be detected in majority contexts where the sociocultural and the political layer is somehow affected, limited, and subordinated by historical or present ideologies making this layer essential also for other contexts than the Indigenous ones (e.g., in dictatorships or systems undergoing major pedagogical shifts). Accordingly,



**Figure 10.4:** The organization of Ivanič's original layers and discourses in white boxes and the intervening additional layer proposed in this chapter in grey situated between the layers and the discourses.

this layer is there also in the majority contexts, but it may be more transparent and more easily penetrable than in the minority contexts, and therefore less opaque, or even completely invisible. I have also added the notion of power or power relations to this additional level, since unequal power relations do not necessarily have to be a visible part of the recognized sociopolitical and cultural contexts of a majority society, while they most certainly are so in many Indigenous contexts.

I further propose that the effects of this additional layer are more detectable in those Indigenous contexts where reclamation and vitalization processes are somehow part of the educational sector, or that have been initiated in the language community. Since most national languages or official languages in nation states are usually well established, whether because of colonialism or otherwise, they do not necessarily ever experience such processes or might not recognize them. Therefore, this additional layer can be said to be invisible for those coming from the majority literacy culture, and the four initial layers are sufficient to describe the views on language. To understand how this proposed fifth layer in the comprehensive view on language is situated in relation to the original framework (see also section 2 of this chapter), we need to look at the relationships or connections between the original layers and the arising discourses for writing and writing instruction (see Figure 10.4).

The fifth layer is often opaque in the Indigenous and minority contexts, but rather transparent and easily penetrable in the majority contexts. I suggest that



the fifth layer, the context of ordinance within power and ideas, is not neatly added to either ends of the list of layers, nor is it connected only to the socio-political and cultural discourse of writing and writing instruction. Instead, this layer is situated in between the original layers and the discourses (see Figure 10.4). The examples in section 4 have shown the different ways in which the effects of the fifth dimension can become visible and detected. In a minority context, it can distort, redirect, or blur the connections of the original model, or entirely wipe out certain discourses, as has been shown in this chapter. The fifth layer can also function in a similar way as does the convex lens that gathers the rays of light into one point, as is the case with repeatedly dominant discourses, such as the skills discourse.

Thus, the examples in section 4 in this chapter show the effects of the fifth layer in Figure 10.4. The less transparent the fifth layer becomes, the more unexpected, and even unwanted, effects it has on the dynamics of the system. These effects, then, are reflected, for instance, in restricted accessibility to different discourses and in distorted or blocked connections between layers and discourses.

## SUMMARY

This chapter concludes that, in the Sámi educational settings, the suggested additional fifth layer in the comprehensive view on language seems to be present at most levels of language instruction starting from the ideologies that form the steering documents all the way down to grassroots classroom practices. This is also why it is so important to acknowledge its existence. In the Indigenous contexts, the fifth layer of ordinance, within power relations and ideas, can explain why some of the discourses of writing are more common or preferred than others, and it can increase our understanding of the resistance mechanisms that arise from hegemonic ideologies that are rooted in the Indigenous educational contexts. At the same time, revitalization may open new arenas for literacy and writing in the Indigenous context if the fifth layer can be made visible and is recognized among the educators. Only by acknowledging the existence of the fifth layer is it possible to come up with strategies to make it transparent and more easily penetrable, as it is in many majority contexts.

On a more general level, some of the conclusions presented in this chapter indicate that the discourses of writing, learning, and teaching writing in the North Sámi context are sensitive to the priorities of the teacher training programs and the language programs' contents. Further, the teacher students have different prerequisites for learning about writing instruction depending on the course offerings

of their home universities. We can't expect to see versatile and confident Sámi writers in schools if the teachers lack the tools and knowledge, or only have partial tools to boost the writing of their pupils, and to expand the writing discourses and the comprehensive view on language. Cooperation between the Nordic higher education institutions concerning the development of Sámi writing didactics is thus called for.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ATTACHMENT 10.1: SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND DATA

<p>Aim of the collaborative and participatory study:</p> <p>The aim of this study was to investigate the realization and attainment of literacy goals in two Indigenous language environments, the Sámi classrooms at one school in Sápmi and the Sámi teacher training programs in higher education in Norway and Finland. Focus was put on mapping and discovering how teacher training programs and the teaching practices in a multilingual educational context support writing in an Indigenous language. The main theoretical framework that was used in the study was Ivanič (2004) discourses for writing and writing instruction.</p>				
<p>Research periods:</p> <p>Sámi higher education, Spring term 2018: observations, interviews, and surveys (no writing classes or writing didactics during this period)</p> <p>Case study at one Sámi primary school, 2018–19 school year: participatory classroom observations, active writing intervention, and survey among the teachers and the participating pupils' families. The researcher spent the whole school year at the school: first term as an observer and resource teacher, the second term as a teacher/researcher leading intervention activities that the school had decided on based on the observation report from the fall term.</p>				
	<b>Observations in class (45 min)</b>	<b>Active writing intervention</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Survey</b>
Primary school	84 Sámi language 72 other subjects	182 hours	–	23
Ages 13–15	12	85	–	21
Ages 9–12	31	51	–	
Ages 6–8	41	34	–	
Workshops	–	12	–	–
Teachers	–	–	–	2
Higher language or teacher education	15 (no writing classes during the observation period)	–	16 teacher interviews (45 min–2 h)	14
Total	171 classes (128 hours)	182 classes (136 hours)	16	36
Production of materials for the primary school	During the school year 2018–2019 the researcher produced and created over 350 files and documents to be used in Sámi language teaching and writing instruction – these were tested and used during the observation and intervention periods. The materials were shared with, and distributed to, the teachers at the school. The materials ranged from pictures to text tasks, from drama manuscripts to spell checker advice, and to complete course materials.			
Analysis methods	<p>Mixed methods approach including:</p> <p>Descriptive mapping – observation report for the school            (Critical) discourse analysis – interviews and surveys in higher education            Comparative analysis – methodological and ethical issues            Theoretical analysis – inductive reasoning supporting expansion/extension of the theoretical model</p>			



# 11. Mother-tongue education for the Omaheke Jul'hoansi in Namibia: Between policy and practice

Velina Ninkova

**Abstract** This chapter explores the gap between language policy and practice for an Indigenous San language in Namibia – Jul'hoansi. The globally influenced policy, while designed to facilitate democratization and equality for all factions of the post-apartheid society, has not led to educational inclusion and social justice for the most marginalized groups in the country, such as the Jul'hoansi. In this chapter, I present the barriers to the implementation of the language policy, and the consequences of this failure.

**Keywords** San | Namibia | sub-Saharan Africa | language policy | mother tongue education

## INTRODUCTION

Namibia is a southern African country, which after independence from South Africa in 1990 has democratized its education system and has adopted one of the most progressive education policies in the region. Among other tenets, the policy recognizes the pedagogical value of mother-tongue education, particularly in the first years of schooling. Yet, despite the state's positive attitude towards linguistic and cultural diversity and its commitment to include all citizens irrespective of their cultural, linguistic, economic, or social background, implementation of the education policy with regard to small Indigenous languages has been severely compromised. Jul'hoansi<sup>1</sup> is an Indigenous San language with about 10 000 speakers in Namibia and Botswana (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011). In Namibia, the

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1 Ju|'hoansi ('true, proper people') refers to the people and the language. Ju|'hoan is an adjective (as in 'a Ju|'hoan student').

Ju|'hoansi reside in the Omaheke region in east-central Namibia, and in the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in the north-eastern part of the country. In stark contrast to the progressive education policy, the inclusion of culturally relevant material in the school curriculum or the teaching in the Ju|'hoan language have been hindered by a combination of structural, economic, and sociocultural barriers (Hays, 2016; Ninkova, 2020). This has resulted in low performance and high drop-out rates for Ju|'hoan students, often in rates much higher than for students from other groups (see Dieckmann, Thiem, Dirkx, & Hays, 2014).

This chapter is concerned with the Omaheke Ju|'hoansi, with whom I have conducted ethnographic research since 2008. The Omaheke is a predominantly rural and sparsely populated region that hosts three distinct Indigenous San communities – Ju|'hoansi, !Xoon, and Naro. Ju|'hoansi is the only San language recognized as a language of instruction in Namibia. Yet, for reasons that I will describe below, in the Omaheke, it is used in one school only – Gqaina primary school, and not as a language of instruction but as a subject only. Since each school can determine its language of instruction depending on its location, the composition of its student population and availability of teachers, the language of instruction in most government schools in the Omaheke is English, Otjiherero, Khoekhoegowab, Setswana, or Afrikaans. Despite the existing language policy that aims to include all Namibian students on an equal basis regardless of their socioeconomic or cultural background, historical and ongoing power dynamics allow for the inclusion of some and the exclusion of other groups and languages from the system. Currently, Ju|'hoan children attending school in the region begin their educational careers in languages they are either not fluent in, or that are completely foreign to them. Due to the diversity of classes and the lack of resources specifically directed to support the Ju|'hoansi, many struggle with the oral and written acquisition of these languages, and some drop out before they have acquired them sufficiently enough.

Focusing on the Ju|'hoansi language education situation in the Omaheke, this chapter offers an ethnographically informed analysis of the challenges to the implementation of a national language policy on a local level. The use of ethnography in inquiries focused on education has been recognized both as a theory and a method that helps illuminate ‘messy and complex social activit[ies]’ (Hornberger, 2009, p. 355) and elucidate the social meaning behind policy and practice (Hornberger, 2015). Ethnographic inquiry is thus well suited to understanding the complex social meanings of language policy, and its implementation and contestation on a local level. Before I describe the specific barriers to the local implementation of the policy and the impact of this status-quo on Ju|'hoan learners and communities, I will trace the aspirations and discontinuities that have occurred in

language planning, policy, and practice between the different levels of policy conception and implementation – globally, nationally, and locally. Following Johnson (2013), I regard language policy not as a product but as a practice that is continuously negotiated and shaped by multiple (and not seldom) divergent social and political forces. These contestations are further impacted by the historic and ongoing political struggles and hierarchies of legitimacy, which favour certain factions of society and exclude others. Within the broad field of Indigenous education, language choice and use has served both as a means of continued oppression and exclusion (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000) or as a means of recognition and inclusion (see Sollid & Olsen, 2019). Decisions regarding languages in education occur at the level of policy planning and writing. The enactment of these policies, however, occurs and is contested at the local level. My purpose here is to illuminate the frictions that have occurred between the different levels and to empirically investigate how they have impacted the experiences of Indigenous Ju|'hoan students in rural east-central Namibia. Just as policies and practices normalize values and behaviours, so too do they elicit responses from those who have been excluded and stigmatized in these processes (McCarthy, 2011). In an unjust and unequal playing field, those who are structurally oppressed and 'othered' are silenced and often opt for withdrawal. For Indigenous students, as the Ju|'hoansi case highlights, this translates as mass dropping out or underperformance in the system.

The discussion of language policy implementation with regards to Indigenous learners in a postcolonial African state touches upon several themes. On the one hand, postcolonial African states have concentrated efforts in breaking away from the colonial legacy of European languages and developing national languages as languages for education, science, and research (Kamwangamalu, 2016). African states have also had to mitigate local political concerns about the status of different local languages as to ensure the equal recognition of competing groups and factions of society. Furthermore, the national education policies of many developing or recently developed nations have been conceived under the guidance and vision of overseas policy experts and advisers and the international donor community. The globalization of Western education practices, policies, and ideologies has not been unproblematic, and its logic and success has been contested, especially in (post)colonial, hyper diverse and politically unstable contexts (Grigorenko, 2007; Harvey, this volume; Moland, 2019; Ninkova, 2020). Language policies exist at these intersecting social and political fields and converge numerous ideologies, aspirations, and contestations.

As the case presented here will show, the ideal of linguistic inclusion and representation on a national policy level does not lead to social justice through inclusion and representation on a local level. In the case of severely historically marginalized



groups, unless other, special measures are considered, equality on paper does not lead to equality in practice. In what follows, I present the Ju|'hoansi people and their language, followed by an outline of the Language Policy for Schools in Namibia and its inception and interpretation on both national and local levels. Afterwards, I present some of the main barriers to the implementation of the policy with regards to Ju|'hoansi in the region, and some of the impacts brought about by the continued linguistic marginalization of Indigenous languages in the country.

## **BACKGROUND: THE PEOPLE AND THE LANGUAGE**

'San' is a collective term that denotes all (former) hunter-gatherer groups living in the southern African region. Despite the common denominator, San groups exhibit great linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as sociohistorical development and current livelihood circumstances. The Ju|'hoansi are one of seven San groups presently residing on the territory of Namibia (Dieckmann et al., 2014). The Omaheke Ju|'hoansi number about 2000 people and constitute one of the three main San groups living in today's Omaheke region.<sup>2</sup>

Starting at the beginning of the 20th century, waves of European and Bantu settlement in the Omaheke had gradually dispossessed the Ju|'hoansi of their land. Under Apartheid during South African rule, the land suited for agriculture was divided into commercial farmland (occupied by European settlers) and communal land (set aside for the local Bantu population). As nomadic hunter-gatherers, the Ju|'hoansi were not seen to need a permanent land base for their subsistence and survival. Instead, they were incorporated as an underclass of manual farm workers on commercial and communal land (Suzman, 2000; Sylvain, 1999). After Independence, Namibia has undertaken a massive land redistribution reform. However, the situation of the Omaheke Ju|'hoansi has not changed much. The contemporary Ju|'hoansi subsist from a mixed economy based on government welfare, manual or piece labour, small-scale subsistence farming and traditional foraging. A limited number of families have gotten access to government-owned land on resettlement farms, where the government is trying to turn them into self-sufficient small-scale farmers. Many continue to provide for their families as underpaid manual farm workers – a scarce job that is both despised and sought after. Despite the dramatic historical developments that have undermined their culture and very existence, the Omaheke Ju|'hoansi have also exhibited remarkable

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2 The Ju|'hoansi also reside in north-eastern Namibia and north-western and west-central Botswana. Their exact number is subject to interpretation, however, the whole Ju|'hoan population comprises about 10 000 people (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011).

resilience, most notably through the maintenance of their kinship system, and egalitarian social organization (Ninkova, 2017).

Jul'hoansi is a click language that belongs to the Ju language family of the Khoisan languages, spoken in southern Africa. Linguists and anthropologists sometimes refer to the variety spoken in the Omaheke as †X'ao-l'aen, Kung Gobabis or Gobabis Jul'hoansi (after the administrative centre of the Omaheke region) (Biese, 2011). The people refer to their language and themselves as Jul'hoansi (meaning 'true people'). The language is part of a language complex without clear boundaries, with varieties spoken in western Botswana, in north-eastern Namibia, and in southern Angola (Biese, 2011; Biese & Hitchcock, 2011; Hasselbring, 2000). Omaheke region is an ethnically heterogeneous region, with a complex and shifting linguistic ecology. The Jul'hoan language is actively spoken at home, and children acquire it as a first language. Despite its active use in the home, the language is threatened at several different levels. All Jul'hoan communities live in proximity with other ethnic groups, and many adult Jul'hoan speakers are multilingual and fluent in Afrikaans, Khoekhoegowab, Otjiherero, and/or Setswana. These languages hold a higher status than Jul'hoansi and are replacing it in contact zones. With participation in the education system, and greater exposure to popular global culture through music, films and the internet, English is becoming increasingly widespread among the younger generation. Urbanization is also increasing, and a growing number of young Jul'hoansi are seeking employment on the outskirts of urban centres. These squatter melting pots facilitate the use and spread of more dominant regional tongues.

## **NAMIBIAN EDUCATION POLICY AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT FROM A GLOBAL AND NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

Namibia achieved independence in 1990 after first German and then South African colonization. Prior to independence, the country had a highly segregated education system that was designed to serve the interests of the colonial elites, and that 'was irrelevant and unsuitable to the needs and aspirations of the Namibian people' (MBESC, 2004, p. 3). In this segregated environment, provision of equal access to quality education was seen as one of the main pillars of national reconciliation and the path to democracy (Gonzales, 2000). Through a comprehensive educational reform, the country adopted one of the most progressive and inclusive education and language policies in the southern African region, with English as an official language of instruction. The adoption of English, as Brock-Utne (1997) observes, was a highly politicized decision, whose purpose was to distance the

country from the legacy of South African apartheid, and to create a sense of unity among the country's diverse population. It was also heavily influenced by overseas donors with interest in international educational development. As such, the language policy is just one example of the impact of the transplantation of global ideologies and practices without their critical examination with regard to their suitability in a particular context or in terms of the preparedness of the system to adopt them.

The Language Policy for Schools of Namibia of 1991 (and revised in 2003) recognizes that: 1) language is an important means for the transmission of identity and culture; 2) all national languages are equal regardless of their level of development and number of speakers; and 3) learning in a mother tongue, particularly in the early years of schooling, constitutes a good pedagogical practice (MEC, 1993). The pedagogical value of the inclusion of mother-tongue teaching and culturally appropriate materials in school is also recognized in the National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalized Children (MBESC, 2001) and in the more recent Sector Policy on Inclusive Education (MoE, 2013). Currently, the National Curriculum for Basic Education recognizes fourteen African and European languages as mother-tongue-level languages that can be taught from pre-primary to grade 12. Among these, Ju'hoansi is the only San language recognized as an official language of instruction for grades 1 to 3.<sup>3</sup> The development of the language was spearheaded by a group of dedicated academics and local community activists in the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in north-eastern Namibia. The development of an orthography for the language laid the groundwork for the establishment of a curriculum committee that oversees the development of school materials in the language at the National Institute for Educational Development (Davids, 2011). The establishment of the Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project, an innovative community-based education project, in the early 1990s, also became the basis or the development and the active use of the language in a school setting (see Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011; Hays, 2016).

Despite the progressive policy framework and efforts invested in the inclusion of mother tongues as official languages of instruction, the current and future status of Indigenous languages in the system remains precarious. Namibia does not recognize the term 'Indigenous peoples,' and instead refers to its Indigenous citizens as 'marginalized communities.' San children are targeted as 'educationally marginalized children,' and on a policy level the government has committed to uphold their educational rights, and to 'allow them to keep and be proud of their

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3 Kwedam and Naro are the other two San languages with standardized orthographies; however, their level of development is not deemed sufficient for adoption as mother tongues in the education system.

origin and culture' (MBESC, 2000, p. 12). This treatment, however, precludes their right to self-determination as an Indigenous people, which, among other tenets, may navigate their development, including in the sphere of education. San communities, including the Ju|'hoansi, have repeatedly requested education in their own languages, which is inclusive of their cultural values and knowledge (Dieckmann et al., 2014; Hays, 2016; Ninkova, 2017). Yet, the number of children who have access to this right is very limited (Hays, 2009). Before we investigate the specific challenges to the implementation of the school language policy with regard to Ju|'hoansi, the next section outlines the context in which Ju|'hoan children access education and the status of language teaching in the region.

## THE LOCAL LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE OMAHEKE REGION

The Omaheke region is a sparsely populated region, comprising predominantly of large commercial farms and scattered settlements in the communal areas. Amidst this unevenly populated landscape, government schools are located either by major roads, in the region's administrative centre, Gobabis, or on the outskirts of small settlements. The organization of labour in the region, as well as the severe land dispossession of the Ju|'hoansi, means that for the most part, Ju|'hoan families live in remote or inaccessible parts of the region, often far away from any school facilities. As a result of this, the overwhelming majority of Ju|'hoan children attend boarding schools from the age of 7. Lack of transportation often results in weeks or months without any contact between children and parents. The harrowing impact of boarding schools on Indigenous children and whole communities has been long documented, and attempts for amendments, reconciliation, and decolonization have been spearheaded by boarding school survivors, governments and religious institutions across Scandinavia, the Americas, and Australia (Carroll, 2009; Dawson, 2011; Lind Meløy, 1980). In many parts of the African continent, as is the case in Namibia, the impact of boarding schools on Indigenous and minority students remains to be critically examined and addressed.

The quality of the physical infrastructure of the boarding schools in the Omaheke varies and depends on the commitment of the school management and the school's access to national and international donors. Most schools, however, are poorly equipped and maintained. The everyday routine of pupils is strictly regimented and controlled. The student population is heterogenous and can comprise children from as many as 6 or more ethnic groups.<sup>4</sup> Teachers often come

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4 Despite school desegregation, white and elite Black Namibian students do not attend government schools, and instead opt for private institutions.

from dominant groups and have little experience, knowledge, or appreciation for the Ju|'hoansi, their language or their culture. The numerous challenges that San children face and their large number in schools in the Omaheke, also means that the region is perceived as a difficult workplace for teachers, particularly those coming from other regions.

As mentioned above, only one school, Gqaina Primary School, offers instruction in the Ju|'hoan language. The school is locally known as 'the Bushman school', as it was established by local white farmers for the children of their 'Bushman' workers. In the years since, the school has transitioned into a government school that admits children regardless of their background, with the majority of its students being Ju|'hoansi. The school has only one teacher fluent in the Ju|'hoan language, although he himself is not of Ju|'hoan descent. Currently, the medium of instruction for all grades (1 to 7) is English, and Ju|'hoansi is only taught as a subject in grades 2 to 4. While the teaching of the language creates a positive environment for the Ju|'hoan children, the limited hours of teaching do not result in literacy in the language, and children reported little or non-existing written and reading comprehension of the language. The other primary schools in the region use Khoekhoegowab, Setswana, Otjiherero, English, or Afrikaans as the language of instruction in the first three years of schooling.

The Ju|'hoansi, and the San in general face many challenges in education, which have been well documented (see Dieckmann et al., 2014; Hays, 2016; LeRoux, 1999; Ninkova, 2017). As I have elaborated elsewhere, the barriers to schooling that the Ju|'hoansi face can be broadly separated into three categories: 1) barriers related to socioeconomic status; 2) barriers related to stigma and ill treatment; and 3) barriers related to cultural and linguistic alienation (see Ninkova, 2020). While the failure to implement the language policy may seem most directly linked to cultural and linguistic alienation in school, it also relates to aspects of the other two categories – poverty, geographic isolation, and stigma.

Since independence, Namibia has invested considerable efforts and resources to develop several local dominant and non-dominant languages. The question of language dominance deserves further attention, as it relates to the status of the Ju|'hoan language and its use (or lack thereof) in school. English, which is the official language of instruction, does not have any historical presence in the country. At the same time, numerically small languages that are invisible on the national linguistic map can be dominant in certain areas. The situation with Ju|'hoansi-speaking learners is such that in the areas where they reside, their language is never in a dominant position, even if they constitute the majority of learners in a school. As Benson (2013) has argued, the challenge for non-dominant language learners is that educators blame learners for their own failure, and not the system that creates

the conditions for this failure. The use of terms such as ‘language barrier’ or ‘the language problem’ that educators often employ to describe the language situation of Ju|'hoan learners, are reflective of this attitude, and highlight the unequal power relation embedded in the politics of language use in schools.

One of the starkest reminders of the status of Ju|'hoan language in the Namibian society in general, and in the education system in particular, lies in the observation that Ju|'hoan learners can receive education in any other national or local language, such as Afrikaans, English, Setswana, Otjiherero, or Khoekhoegowab, that they may or may not speak prior to schooling. When asked whether Ju|'hoansi can be taught to *all* students, for example, in schools with a majority Ju|'hoan student population, educators perceive the idea as inconceivable. Whereas other languages can be taught to all learners regardless of their background, Ju|'hoansi is seen as having no value to others and is reserved for the Ju|'hoansi only.

In the remaining empirical sections, I outline the main challenges to the implementation of the language policy with regard to Ju|'hoansi in the Omaheke, and trace some of the consequences of this failure.

## **BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION**

### Lack of qualified teachers

The major obstacle to teaching Ju|'hoansi in school is the lack of Ju|'hoan or Ju|'hoansi-speaking teachers. Indigenous teachers are recognized as valuable assets in school not only due to their linguistic expertise but also due to the cultural, and symbolic value they add to the school. Many government officials, principals, and school staff have acknowledged this, and have expressed their frustration with having to grapple with the implementation of the education policy, without the necessary resources to do so. Said one principal:

You ask me about implementation of the policy, but I have to ask you this: where are the San teachers? They are not on the market. The policy is one thing, but when it comes to implementation, our hands are tied. If we have San teachers, the children and the community will have a feeling of belonging. The whole community will feel proud to see their culture [represented] in the school. Right now, they feel like they are colonized. (November 2018)

The lack of qualified Ju|'hoan teachers is a result of the government's commitment to providing quality education and not committing to exploring alternative tracks for the training of Ju|'hoan teachers. There are provisions that allow San individuals who have only completed grade 10 to access professional training (particularly

nurse and police training). When applying for a degree in Education, however, San members must have completed grade 12. The number of Ju|'hoan individuals who have completed grade 12 in the Omaheke are in single numbers. Many of those who enrol in secondary education after grade 7 drop out in the first year. For those who remain, successfully attaining grade 10 continues to be problematic. There simply does not exist a pool of Ju|'hoan individuals who have completed grade 12 and who are interested in pursuing education or another equivalent degree. The issue is well known and discussed at different levels in the region. Well performing Ju|'hoan secondary school students have also expressed their frustration with the attention and the high expectations that come from donors and institutions invested in the field. The few individuals who have completed grade 12 simply want to pursue further studies and professions based on their interests and talents and not based on the pressure to bridge this gap.

### Lack of materials and dialectal differences

As described above, Gqaina Primary School is the only school that provides Ju|'hoan classes to a limited number of its Ju|'hoan students. The Ju|'hoan teacher, however, has repeatedly reported that the school materials in Ju|'hoansi that have been developed by the Language Committee at the National Institute for Education Development (of which he himself is a part), are based on the northern (Nyae Nyae) variety of the language. The two dialects, while belonging to the same language, have some differences, due to the different historical circumstances in the two regions. The Nyae Nyae Ju|'hoansi remained relatively secluded well into the 1960s, and currently reside in a conservancy where they are the majority, and where they hold land rights. In the Omaheke, the Ju|'hoansi have lost access to traditional territories and have been in close contact with other European, Khoisan, and Bantu languages since the beginning of the 20th century. Practices, concepts, and words have been lost and replaced by loan words from other languages.

### *The importance of terminology*

Namibian schools do not collect data on students' ethnicity but on languages. Each student's record thus contains the personal information of the student and their mother tongue. The form offers a short list of languages, including Afrikaans, English, Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, and Khoekhoegowab.<sup>5</sup> Ju|'hoansi is

5 Oshiwambo and Oshierero are Bantu languages, spoken by the Owambo and Herero, respectively. Khoekhoegowab is a Khoisan language, spoken by the Khoe people, the Damara.

simply listed as 'San language'. This nomenclature is problematic on several levels. First, it lumps all San speakers in one homogenous category with one language and culture and reinforces colonial and apartheid-era stereotypes about the San and their 'culture.' Second, it obscures the variety and diversity of San languages spoken by San students. In the Omaheke region alone, in addition to Ju|'hoansi, there is a large number of !Xoon and a small number of Naro students. The lack of data on actual number of speakers of each San language, minimizes the visibility of the San languages and the need for their development as languages of instruction. The practice also obscures the dire situation with regard to Ju|'hoan teachers. Some schools with predominantly Ju|'hoan students pride themselves on having 'San teachers'; however these teachers come from other groups, do not speak Ju|'hoansi, and teach in some of the other local non-San languages. Finally, the use of the term 'San language' further exoticizes Ju|'hoansi. Many in the education system and in the government cannot pronounce the name of the language correctly, and treat it as a curiosity without much value in itself. This attitude trickles down to the classroom, and students receive the message that their language is not respected on par with the other languages taught at school.

### Heterogeneity of classes

Apartheid-era education was segregated along racial and ethnic lines with each group receiving the type of education deemed necessary for their imminent development. The San groups, perceived as too small, scattered, and ill-equipped to benefit from schooling, were not considered in this scheme at all. Bantu education, on the other hand, was mostly vocational in nature and was designed to serve the economic needs of the colonial class. In independent Namibia, all citizens have access to all education institutions, at least on paper, and in the heterogenous Omaheke region, government schools are open to all children. The student population differs greatly, depending on the location of the school. Thus, some schools may have a majority of speakers of a certain language (e.g., Otjiherero in the communal Herero-dominated areas in the eastern border region with Botswana). Arguing for the need for segregated schools that serve specific groups and exclude others goes against the government's nation-building policies. All factors described above – the lack of Ju|'hoan-speaking teachers, the lack of materials and dialect differences, the lack of knowledge of San language diversity – all result in Ju|'hoan children learning in other more dominant local languages.



## Mother-tongue languages beyond the primary level

In 2018, the Ju|'hoansi Language Development Committee at the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) had been working on the development of materials for grade 4. It had been working on materials for grade 4 since at least 2013. Initially, the language was in a group with Khoekhoegowab under an Education Officer for Khoe and San Languages, Laurentius Davids. In in-person interviews in 2013 and 2015, Davids expressed concerns about the stagnation of the process, the lack of financial resources for more frequent committee meetings, and the unwillingness of publishers to work with small languages such as Ju|'hoansi. 'I do not see a future for Ju|'hoansi', were his concluding remarks in an in-person interview in July 2015. After Davids' retirement in 2017, Ju|'hoansi and Khoekhoegowab were moved in an umbrella group with RuKwangali, a better-developed Bantu language spoken in northern Namibia. In interviews with education officers and members of different curriculum committees at NIED in November 2018, interlocutors related the importance of mother-tongue teaching, and expressed concerns about the challenges they faced with publishers. Some also expressed concerns about the slow pace at which small languages, such as Ju|'hoansi, were being developed.

In comparison, the more dominant languages spoken in the Omaheke – Otjiherero, Setswana, and Khoekhoegowab – are all taught throughout the full basic education cycle of twelve years. This not only sends messages to Ju|'hoan students about their place and value in the system, but it also makes it easier for them to adopt another identity, particularly at the secondary level, as I will elaborate below.

## CONSEQUENCES OF THE LACK OF MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION FOR THE JU|'HOANSI

### Decreased capacity for learning

The cognitive and pedagogical benefits of learning in the mother tongue have long been recognized. Literacy and content learning are best facilitated in the mother tongue (Benson, 2002), and submersion or early transition to another language has shown to dramatically disrupt the learning and academic success of students (Rossell & Baker, 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The challenges related to many Ju|'hoan students' inability to speak and understand the language of instruction in the first year(s) of schooling has been widely recognized by teachers in the Omaheke. Many reported that Ju|'hoan students often needed at least a year to begin to understand what was being taught in class. Engaging on an

equal par with other students took even longer. The inability to understand the language of instruction disrupts not only the learning process of young Ju|'hoan students, but also creates a number of other social and practical problems. There exist several points during which the drop-out rate of students is particularly high – usually during the transition from the home to school (in grade 1) or during the transition from primary to secondary level (grade 8). Language plays a particularly important role during the transition of young students from their communities to boarding schools. The situation was eloquently described by a grade 1 teacher:

Look at them now. What do you see? They look at me but they don't understand what I'm saying. They just blink with their eyes, and don't understand a word. How can I teach them? If someone wants to go to the toilet, they don't know how to ask for it. That's why we lose so many of them in grade 1. They are just afraid of everything.

### Continued oppression

The visibility of Indigenous languages in the education system does not only have pedagogical and cognitive significance. The symbolic significance of having Indigenous languages as languages of instruction in school is of equal importance. Language policies and practices are written and implemented in a politically and socially unequal field, where visibility, representation, and inclusion signal a group's status in the wider society and send intended or unintended messages both to students and to the society at large. On the one hand, the Namibian government's commitment to include a San language as a language of instruction is a confirmation of the country's commitment to equality and inclusion of all in the new democratic state. On the other hand, the lack of measures to successfully implement this progressive policy confirms the belief held by numerous Ju|'hoansi I have interviewed over the years – that the government's commitment to them is on paper only, and that the legacy of the apartheid-era segregation still lives on. This continued oppression, or erasure, as Olsen and Sollid (this volume) have argued, was recognized by actors in the education system as well:

[The San] get the message that their culture is not respected in school. In the colonial period, Otjiherero was not taught in schools, only Afrikaans. Now we teach Otjiherero. Nothing has changed for the San [since] independence. They still have to learn in another language, and this tells them that others are more important than [they are]. (Primary school secretary, July 2013)

## Loss of confidence and loss of culture

The stigma of being a San individual in contemporary Namibia is one of the biggest obstacles that hinders San groups and individuals' participation in the larger Namibian society on an equal social, cultural, and economic footing. This stigma is a vestige of the colonial era and most broadly centres around the perception of the San as a backward people whose existence is more firmly established in the natural rather than the 'civilized' world. 'To admit to someone that you are a San, is like admitting to them that you are an animal and not a human', a young San scholar and activist from Botswana once recounted to me (personal communication, 2012). These perceptions are held by individuals in all spheres, including teachers and other fellow students.

The stigma of 'being a Bushman' is particularly strongly acted on in secondary schools. Teachers reported that when presented with the opportunity, Ju|'hoan students more often than not attempted to hide their identity by pretending to not speak and understand the language. Since in Namibian school settings, language and ethnicity are closely interlinked, language use is often associated with ethnic identity. Ju|'hoan students are well aware of this association. As some teachers and other fellow students observed, the Ju|'hoansi's multilingualism and fluency in more dominant local languages (which they have acquired in primary school) was actively used by the Ju|'hoansi to hide their identity at secondary level:

Teacher: We have more San learners in the secondary level now. But when they come, they are no longer San.

VN: How do they identify themselves?

Teacher: Maybe as Nama or Damara or Setswana.

VN: How many do that?

Teacher: Most of them. If you don't know them [from before], they would always go like that. So, when I started this [San cultural] group, I had to force them to accept that you are a San. Because others were also telling me, 'No, this one is also a San.' (secondary school teacher, 2008)

Student: You know, she's not a real San [referring to another female student].

VN: Why not?

Student: Because she was speaking Ju|'hoansi before but then she stopped and now she is Damara.

VN: So, she only speaks Damara now?

Student: Yes. And when I speak to her in Ju|'hoansi she pretends she doesn't understand.

VN: Why do you think she's doing it?

Student: She doesn't want to be a San anymore. She is a Damara now.

(Ju|'hoan secondary school student, 2008)

Given the current situation, not surprisingly, Ju|'hoansi parents expressed concerns about the well-being of their children, as well as the future of their language and culture. These concerns have been repeatedly expressed by Ju|'hoan and other San parents in the southern African region. The urgency in the words of this San woman speaks for itself:

If we have San teachers they will not neglect our language. We think our traditions and language can also be taught through books. If we just wait, some of those traditions might not be there any more by the time the books come. (San woman, Omaheke Region, Namibia, quoted in LeRoux, 1999, p. 80)

The stigma associated with being a San also means that some students, particularly those who have had some years of secondary level education, have started to perceive their home culture and their parents as inferior and 'less than' their newly acquired identities. Since the majority Ju|'hoan students would end up back in their communities, many experienced a reversed stigma – their own families and communities perceived of them as 'more than' themselves, which sometimes resulted in social exclusion or lack of sense of belonging (see Ninkova, 2017).

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have outlined the Namibian language policy and have traced its path of implementation with regard to a small Indigenous language, Ju|'hoansi, between the global, national, and local level. I have described the challenges of implementation with respect to Ju|'hoansi in the Omaheke region in east-central Namibia and the consequences it has for the learning, self-esteem, and cultural belonging of Ju|'hoan students. While the case study is based on a small Indigenous minority in southern Africa, the historical context, as well as the structural and systemic forces that continue to marginalize and endanger Indigenous languages and cultures, is of global character. On a global level, the experiences of Indigenous students in state education systems have been universally similar with regard to the extent of the harm inflicted upon individuals, communities, languages, and cultures. In similar veins, recent research has shown that the legacy of colonialism continues to inform education policies and practices in contexts as diverse as Namibia and Aotearoa (as described by Harvey, this volume). Furthermore,

even when recognized in policy, the use and status of Indigenous languages is still threatened in practice (see e.g., Belancic, this volume). In the Namibian context, as I have described above, the progressive language policy has not benefitted Ju|'hoan students in the Omaheke. On the contrary, it has allowed for the development and inclusion of other dominant local languages. In an unequal social, political, and economic environment, in which the Ju|'hoansi occupy the lowest rungs, this has meant that their language (and as a consequence of that – their identity and culture) has been further marginalized, exoticized, and endangered. Instead of creating a sense of belonging and a positive environment for learning and pride in one's culture, the current implementation of the language policy in Namibia has resulted in the reiteration of local ethnic and social hierarchies in a school setting. Instead of uplifting Indigenous students, the system has further stigmatized and excluded them.

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# 12. ‘We don’t talk about Sámi versus Norwegian; we talk about us.’ Local articulations of education practices in Sápmi

Kristin Evju

**Abstract** This chapter investigates Indigenous education through the lens of school practices in Gáivuotna/Kåfjord/Kaivuono in Sápmi. The analysis is based on interviews with teachers and participation at the Sámi National Day celebration and a school camp. The schools in Kåfjord have developed locally situated practices that account for articulations of Sámi identity and enable a local sense of belonging. However, their scope for action is in some ways constrained by the demands of a national education framework.

**Keywords** Indigenous education | Sámi education | cultural interface | articulation

## INTRODUCTION

Gáivuotna/Kåfjord/Kaivuono is a place in Sápmi and home to Sámi, Kven, and Norwegians. In 1992, the municipality became one of six across Northern Norway included in a Sámi language administrative area. This was part of a policy enacted to safeguard and promote Sámi languages, after centuries of Norwegian assimilation policies had almost eradicated them. In 1997, the national government established a Sámi curriculum in order to provide culturally relevant education to Sámi pupils. These frameworks have since shaped educational policies and practices in Kåfjord. Through an analysis of some of these, I ask whether the schools are able to develop and maintain practices that center local and Sámi experiences, within the framework of Sámi education in Norway.

This chapter engages with the topic of Indigenous education through the lens of school practices in one local context. From a Sámi perspective, researchers have investigated how processes of colonization and assimilation have impacted



Sámi society (Bjørklund, 1985; Minde, 2005). Much attention has been paid to curricular developments, demonstrating the change in policy towards improved education on Sámi issues and for Sámi pupils (Olsen, 2019; Olsen & Andreassen, 2018). Research efforts on the impact of the Sámi curriculum and role of Sámi schools have highlighted challenges on both policy and practice levels (Gjerpe, 2017; Keskitalo, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2013). However, there is still need for explorations of how these historical processes, policy developments, and school practices have an impact on each other.

Kåfjord has been subjected to processes of colonization and revitalization that are recognizable throughout the Indigenous world, but also include local particularities. I will situate Kåfjord's recent past and its effects on education before I provide an analysis of school practices. First, I investigate the Sámi National Day celebration and a school camp, as sites that articulate Indigeneity and a local sense of belonging. This will be further illustrated through an analysis of how teachers understand the role of Sámi identity, language, and culture. Finally, I will consider how, under the national system of Sámi education, the schools face constraints that limit the scope for local policy and practice development. While this chapter is based on one municipality in Northern Norway, I maintain it demonstrates an overall need for approaches that pay attention to local articulations of Indigenous education practices.

## THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

Though mainly empirical in scope, this chapter is written under the theoretical framework of Indigenous education. Scholars, such as Pigga Keskitalo, have written extensively on topics concerning education for Sámi pupils and use of Sámi pedagogy (see Keskitalo et al., 2013). I will employ Martin Nakata's (2007) concept *the cultural interface* to describe the empirical context in this article, as Sollid and Olsen (2019) have done. The interface is a dynamic space that de-emphasizes a binary understanding of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships. Instead, it accounts for multi-layered, contested positions and relationships that emerge when different systems of thought intersect (Nakata, 2007, pp. 195–212).

Several scholars have written about identity in the coastal Sámi area, and I draw on their work to understand identity as dynamic and contextual (Hansen, 2008; Hovland, 1999; Sollid & Olsen, 2019). Steinlien (2006) maintains that Sámi belonging in Kåfjord is influenced by its relational, cultural, and political aspects and makes space for both continuity and change. The anthropologist James Clifford (2001) has argued for similar notions of identity through his theory on articulated Indigeneity. His conceptualization draws attention away from Indigeneity as either

purely primordial or postmodern. According to Clifford, authenticity does not matter as much as cultural adaptations and processes and how they continuously produce understandings of identity. Articulation theory moreover allows them to include both consensus and conflict (Clifford, 2001, pp. 472–479).

My analysis is based on empirical material consisting of qualitative interviews and participation at two school events – the Sámi National Day celebration and a school camp. Pupils from ages five to sixteen attended these since the schools in Kåfjord comprise both primary and lower secondary levels. The first event included pupils from the two state schools in the municipality, while the second involved just one of them (subsequently, school 1). I have only been able to interview teachers from this school. As such, the analysis poses some challenges regarding representation and difference that will be discussed.

The research process has been collaborative. Together with a colleague, I attended the Sámi National Day celebration on February 6, in 2019. Afterwards, we interviewed two teachers at the local School of Music and Performing Arts (SMPA),<sup>1</sup> who had helped organize the event. I attended the celebration by myself in 2020. The second event is an annual camp for school 1, which I attended together with my colleague in August 2019. We had planned to go in 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was cancelled. I have also collaborated with colleagues in gathering and sharing empirical data. For this chapter, I have used four interviews with teachers who teach at both primary and lower secondary levels at school 1, and one interview with a municipal leader, conducted between the spring of 2018 and June of 2021. Quotes from the interviews that appear in this text have been translated from Norwegian to English by me.

My position as a non-Indigenous person in the field of Indigenous studies has shaped my outlook. Although an outsider perspective can be valuable in analyzing Sámi issues, I recognize that my viewpoint is restricted by my lack of first-hand knowledge of the variety and nuances of Sámi experiences. At the same time, Kåfjord is a place I am familiar with outside of this academic project, which also informs my position.

## **KÅFJORD: HISTORICAL PLACES AND EDUCATIONAL SPACES**

Kåfjord is home to just over two thousand people, per January 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022). In this chapter, it is relevant to speak of it as a municipality since

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1 Schools of music and performing arts are found in municipalities nationwide and offer after-school activities for children and youth.

it dictates both policy and practice in the educational sector. There are two state schools located in different villages along the fjord Kåfjorden. They are both Sámi schools, which are schools that follow ‘a parallel and equal Sámi curriculum’ (Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 4). Moreover, they can be categorized as bilingual (Keskitalo et al., 2013, p. 60). At school 1, 73% of the children received education in North Sámi, either as a language of instruction or as a subject, per January 2020. At school 2, 10% of the children received education in North Sámi (Visjona AS, 2020, p. 16). Additionally, a few pupils at school 1 are taught Kven as a language subject, according to one of the teachers.

This educational situation can be considered the most common one in the Norwegian part of Sápmi (NOU 2016: 18, pp. 96–99, 114–115). Moreover, it reflects a diversity at the schools in Kåfjord. School 1 is situated in one of the villages where Sámi language use and culture has been most prominent and persistent in the area. The second school is in a village that has not had as strong a relationship with Sámi identity, either now or in the past. Indeed, it is possible to speak about the villages as being at different ends on a scale of ‘Sáminess’ (Hansen, 2008, p. 20; Hovland, 1999, p. 122). These differences play out in educational settings, as well as in approaches to Sámi culture and politics overall. There is also a third school – a private, Christian school – that is not part of my analysis.

Kåfjord is not only a municipality, but also a place and community, or the collection of many smaller communities or rural villages. Depending on the context, people here describe themselves as belonging to a specific village; as Sámi, Norwegian, or Kven; or as a ‘Kåfjording’ (Lervoll, 2007, pp. 34–35). This sense of belonging speaks to the dynamic and ambiguous aspects of identity and how the boundary between who is Sámi or not can sometimes be difficult to outline. Moreover, this context invokes Nakata’s (2007) cultural interface, where the intersections between different relations, such as place, language, and narratives, shape ‘how we can speak of ourselves and each other, how we understand one another and the ongoing relations between us, and how we describe and represent our “lived realities”’ (p. 199). For further discussion on the relationship between place and education in Indigenous contexts, see Fogarty and Sollid (this volume).

### The language law of 1992 as a starting point

The Sámi language law was implemented nationwide in 1992. Kåfjord became one of six municipalities in a Sámi language administrative area, where one of the Sámi languages was made equal to Norwegian not only in rights but also in use. The law is part of the Sámi Act of 1987, which was enacted to ‘enable the Sámi people of Norway to safeguard and develop their language, culture and way of life’ (The

Sámi Act, 1987, §1–1). The Sámi language law, or more precisely 'the language rules of the Sámi Act', was highly consequential for the education sector by giving Sámi pupils the right to education in a Sámi language. It also gave people the right to use and receive information in Sámi in government agencies, in courts, and at hospitals (The Sámi Act, 1987).

The law's proposal had met resistance, and after it was implemented it immediately received backlash in Kåfjord. People were worried about obligatory Sámi language teaching in school and about the requirements for Sámi language competency in public hiring processes. In 1994, the North Sámi name *Gáivuotna* was added to the official name of the municipality and placed above the Norwegian name Kåfjord on official signs, which further ramped up conflicts. Communities and families were split, people argued in local newspapers and homes, and the new road signs with Sámi names at the top were vandalized (Centre for Northern Peoples, 2021; Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012, pp. 158–161).

## Being Sámi in Kåfjord during the processes of colonization and revitalization

This conflict must be understood in terms of its historical context and the impact of colonization on the Sámi. Since the thirteenth century, the Norwegian state had gradually increased its political, economic, and religious control of the northernmost parts of the country (Hansen & Olsen, 2004). From the mid-1800s, the state enacted an assimilation policy known as Norwegianization, through which the government sought to solidify its control over the Sámi population, by turning them into Norwegians, changing their way of life, and limiting the use of Sámi languages. In schools, children were prohibited from speaking Sámi, and in certain areas of Sápmi the government built boarding schools. Although these assimilationist efforts were overturned in the 1950s, their effects outlasted them by several decades (Andresen, Evjen, & Rymmin, 2021, pp. 157–172; Minde, 2005).

In Kåfjord, Norwegianization policies coupled with the Second World War had especially damaging effects on Sámi culture and language. Towards the end of the war, people were forcibly evacuated further south, while German troops destroyed homes along with most of the Sámi material culture in Kåfjord. When they came back afterwards, parents began speaking Norwegian to their children (Andresen et al., 2021, pp. 291–298; Centre for Northern Peoples, 2021). The government's assimilation policies had turned Sámi language and culture into something people were ashamed of, and, in the decades after the war, many in the coastal Sámi areas distanced themselves from their Indigeneity (Bjørklund, 1985, pp. 393–395; Johansen, 2010, pp. 15–17; Steinlien, 2006, p. 108). At the same time, the growing

Indigenous political movements brought with them possibilities for change. The protests against building a hydroelectric power plant in the Alta-Kautokeino waterway in the 1970s gave Sámi rights issues national attention (Andresen et al., 2021, pp. 373–377). In Kåfjord as well, people organized into Sámi political groups, making it possible for many to reclaim a Sámi identity (Steinlien, 2006, p. 102).

Those in the so-called ‘pro-Sámi movement’ were attempting to reconceptualize what it means to be a Sámi. It led more people to reflect on their own histories and how Norwegianization policies had affected Sámi culture and language in the coastal communities. Local traditions and Norwegian phrases and dialects, which were previously thought of as somehow different, or only local, were now being rediscovered as having Sámi roots (Johansen, 2010; Lervoll, 2007). A local *gákti* (the traditional dress) was reconstructed from old images (Hansen, 2008, p. 50). People documented the many Sámi place names in the area, an effort that also mobilized political engagement (Hovland, 1999, p. 147). But while some in Kåfjord embraced the ‘new’ identity, others rejected it. They saw the revitalization process as an articulation of the entire area as Sámi. An individual’s reclamation of their Sámi identity led to, by association, a collective announcement of Indigeneity, which some people were vehemently against (Johansen, 2011; Hovland, 1999, p. 145).

While the revitalization efforts created conflicts in the coastal areas during the 1990s, the era also saw the growth of Sámi institution building locally and an increase in language learning and cultural awareness (Centre of Northern Peoples, 2021; Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012, pp. 99–108). Kåfjord is home to the Indigenous music festival, Riddu Riddu. It is often mentioned as an expression of a local Sámi identity and as an arena for exploring it (Hansen, 2008, p. 9). While older generations in Kåfjord might have felt like they were neither fully Sámi nor Norwegian, younger generations have experienced that Sámi belonging and identity is not a simple either/or. It is possible to be both (and Kven) (Hansen, 2008, p. 81; Olsen, this volume). The conversation has, as Nakata (2007, p. 200) would argue, moved away from seeing the relationship between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous as dichotomous and fixed. Moreover, the revitalization processes have opened up for broader negotiations of what it ‘takes’ to identify as Sámi (Steinlien, 2006). But discussions over Indigeneity in Kåfjord were still at their height in 1997, when a Sámi curriculum was introduced for all the municipalities in the language administrative area.

### Sámi curriculum: A source of conflict or opportunity for local education?

The Sámi curriculum of 1997 can be seen as a turning point for Sámi education (Gjerpe, 2017; Olsen, 2019). The educational developments of the previous

decades had been building towards this moment. By the 1990s, there were many voicing the need for a Sámi curriculum *and* enough support nationally to make it happen. On a policy level, Sámi children had gradually been given stronger rights to education in their primary languages (NOU 2016: 18, pp. 63–67). But on a practice level, many saw the need for education for Sámi pupils that would center Sámi languages, histories, and cultures (Magga, 2011).

The introduction of the curriculum was rushed. In Kåfjord, parents felt overlooked, and protesters saw the new curriculum as an attempt to 'Sámify' the children (Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012, p. 194). Instead, some argued for a curriculum that would emphasize the multicultural aspects of Kåfjord. Others, who generally were in favor, found the curriculum imbalanced towards Sámi culture and society associated with reindeer herding and felt it did not accurately represent the coastal traditions of Kåfjord (Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012, p. 182; Johansen, 2011, p. 95). After protests, the government revised the plan. Among other things, parents were given the right to choose whether their children should learn North Sámi. Once the curriculum was implemented, many discovered that through it, it was possible to achieve the multicultural, locally based education they had asked for. Pedersen and Høgmo (2012) claim that, while the conflicts over Sámi revitalization processes took years to resolve, many of them were eventually made harmless through social practice. Putting everything in the open allowed for inclusivity and reconciliation (Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012, pp. 180–185, 215, 301–303).

## ANALYSIS OF LOCAL EDUCATION PRACTICES

### The Sámi National Day celebration

The Sámi National Day, or *Sámi Álbmotbeaivi*, was established in 1992 and is celebrated annually on February 6<sup>th</sup>. The date commemorates the day of the first national, Sámi political gathering in Tråante/Trondheim in 1917. Since 2003, the national day has been an official flag day and is celebrated across Norway (Sámi Parliament, 2019). In Sápmi, schools and kindergartens are important arenas for celebrations, and elsewhere in the country the day is often marked to highlight Sámi content in the curriculum. In Kåfjord, the national day has been celebrated since the mid-1990s and can be described as an established tradition. Although it has developed over the years, there are components of the program that appear constant.

The celebration(s) I attended took place at a Sámi cultural center in the village of school 1, and the pupils from school 2 were taken there by bus. The event was jointly put together by the schools, the local SMPA, one of the kindergartens,

and several of the Sámi institutions housed at the center.<sup>2</sup> In both 2019 and 2020, Riddu Ridđu arranged a school concert with different Sámi artists, and in 2020 the museum hosted the older pupils. The same year, staff from the Sámi Parliament helped serve food and clean up afterwards. The various host roles these institutions took on illuminate how the event provides an opportunity for them to engage with the schools.

There is an ongoing process in Kåfjord to establish February 6th as a day with its own traditions, symbols, and components. The event begins with raising the Sámi flag and singing *Sámi soga lávlla*, the national anthem. For lunch, everyone is served *biđus*, the traditional reindeer stew. Many of the pupils and teachers wear *gávttiid* or use other clothing or ornamentations that signifies a Sámi belonging. These aspects of the celebration are found elsewhere, both in and outside of Sápmi, and can therefore be described as part of a development in Kåfjord towards ritualizing the Sámi National Day (Olsen & Sollid, 2019). But many of the activities are also locally based. In 2019, the older pupils watched a movie made by and about people in the village of school 1. The artists holding the concert were locals, or from nearby communities. One of the games played outside by the younger children, called *riebangárđi*, has strong local roots (Solhaug, 2021).

The two schools celebrated together. Although they belong to the same municipality, there are apparently not many arenas where the pupils meet. As such, February 6th offers an opportunity for the kids to get to know each other. One of the SMPA teachers who organized the event in 2019 was pleasantly surprised at how well it had turned out. According to them, there had previously been some reluctance to the event on the part of school 2, or ‘slowness in relation to Sámi stuff.’ Such a description could point to the ambiguous relationship to Sámi identity that lingers on from previous conflicts. As such, the national day celebration can make visible how approaches to Sámi content in school practice are related to the different historical contexts of communities in Kåfjord. A sense of belonging to Sámi culture is articulated with differing strength from one place to another, and, following Clifford (2001, p. 473), there is room for both agreement and conflict in its expression.

But these differences did not visibly play out during the celebration itself. When asked about their role in the event, the SMPA teachers talked of wanting the day to be fun for everyone. Moreover, ‘we can focus on Sápmi being a peaceful nation and spend the day becoming friends. (...) And, well it is, in a local politics way, incredibly important.’ This was evident in the different activities, which put pupils together across grades and schools. The emphasis on coming together highlights

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2 The local SMPA does not participate every year.

the Sámi National Day as a celebratory day for everyone, regardless of whether the pupils think of themselves as Sámi or not (Olsen & Sollid, 2019). It can be argued that because of the history regarding Sámi culture and language in Kåfjord, having fun and making friends across schools and communities becomes an important (local) political move that contributes to peace and reconciliation.

It appears the efforts to celebrate the national day as a community are deliberately made as part of a process of embracing and articulating a local Sámi culture. While the national day is an extraordinary occasion, the teachers spoke about these issues as part of their year-round practice. The camp offers an opportunity to emphasize Sámi topics from the beginning of the school year, and the week surrounding February 6th is spent highlighting different themes, such as language and identity, or Indigenous rights. Beyond this, speaking of Sámi topics as its own curricular entity is not as relevant. When asked whether the school defines this in their teaching plan, one teacher said, 'We don't separate it in *that* way.' The national day celebration and school camp provide opportunities for highlighting certain topics but there is no need for 'pulling out the Sámi [stuff].' However, the teacher stated that they do make conscious choices about *how* they highlight issues.

The SMPA teachers reflected upon a similar approach in their practice, in how they represent Sámi culture. One of them brought up the importance of honest language in teaching generally, in order to meet children where they are at:

*[Not only looking to the past] is perhaps especially important, when meeting children, who have their own perspective on the world?*

It might be, that we have this idea about a lot of things that might not actually be a part of the kids' world. This romantic picture. But to make honest expressions and have honest language. And in particular because we live by the coast. (...) We have other cultural markers as well [besides reindeer], that we should say are Sámi! Not only coastal Sámi, but Sámi. I'm beating the drum for fish cakes.

While there are strong ties to reindeer herding in Kåfjord, the teacher reflected on the disadvantages of portraying a romanticized version of Sámi culture and advocated for highlighting several traditions that represent coastal Sámi culture today. On the one hand, cultural markers that unite Kåfjord with the rest of Sápmi are important. On the other, grounding them locally not only brings them closer to the children's everyday lives, but it also contributes to the process of reclaiming local Sámi culture in the area. This discussion also makes visible Kåfjord's recent history, namely the dispute in 1997 over a curriculum that more accurately reflected the children's reality.



As I see it, the Sámi National Day celebration provides the schools with a teaching opportunity that is situated locally. They have a well-established tradition in place that takes into consideration pupils' multilayered positions but still celebrates Sámi people as one people. Moreover, the day has become an arena for articulating an Indigenous belonging that is grounded in local cultural markers and traditions. The negotiations over what it means to be a Sámi and what it means to be a Sámi from Kåfjord speak to the dynamic state of Indigenous culture. This process of articulation allows for more nuanced perspectives on revitalization in the schools, as it highlights not authenticity, but persistence (Clifford, 2001, p. 479).

### The school camp

The camp is held every year in August over one school week and includes children from one kindergarten and pupils from primary and lower secondary levels of school 1. The camp rotates between three locations – the fjord, the valley, and the mountains. The locations determine some of the themes for the camp, which covers many of the pupils' subjects and includes several interdisciplinary activities. In August 2019, the school camp was held at the seaside of Kåfjorden. The campsite was on a hill overlooking the fjord and the surrounding mountains, close to the remnants of a German fort built during the Second World War. The pupils helped setting up the camp, consisting of *lávut* and tents shaped like a *gohti*,<sup>3</sup> and some of the older ones were responsible for preparing the meals served.

Throughout the week, pupils learned about local history and businesses, studied life in *fjæra* – the seaside area visible during low tide – and went kayaking, among other things. Those who receive education in North Sámi sometimes followed a separate teaching plan. They had language-based activities that focused on the local surroundings. While my colleague spent a lot of their time with this group, I joined the activities of the other lower secondary level pupils. We visited several farms and fishing companies close-by. At one point, a community member came to the camp site to give a talk about the history of the fort and the German occupation of Kåfjord. They also made an effort to mention the post-war history of the area and how it had affected Sámi identity and language.

These are just some of the activities we participated in, and they change from year to year. The ones mentioned here shed light on the relationship between the school and the community and reflect how the school camp implements the curriculum through local involvement (Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 18). They

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3 The *lávvu* and the *gohti* have historically been used to live in when moving with the reindeer herd, or as a permanent structure.

demonstrate the use of local knowledge by having the school invite outside speakers to give lectures on history and cultural traditions in the area. During a visit to a local farm, the owner took everyone to the old barn to show them their grandfather's *nordlandsbåt*, a traditional fishing boat used in Northern Norway since the Viking Age (Eldjarn, 2019). They drew attention to how this type of boat belongs to a Sámi boatmaking tradition as much as a Norwegian one. The comment speaks to the processes evident during the national day celebrations, of reclaiming cultural traditions as Sámi. It signals the effort among people in Kåfjord to reconnect their identities to the past, and as such, 'transcend colonial disruptions' (Clifford, 2001, p. 482). Moreover, both the farm owner and the community member who spoke about the war emphasized the *Sámi* aspects of local histories.

Throughout the week, I noticed various aspects of the camp that point to the strong relationship school 1 has to Sámi culture, language, and identity. This was despite several teachers telling me the camp would not consist of many activities that covered Sámi topics in the curriculum. In my interview with another teacher, which took place almost two years later, I mentioned my participation at the camp and asked them to give a general description of the school. The teacher brought up that the school camp offers pupils their first encounter with Sámi issues in the school year. They mentioned that place names and coastal Sámi fishing traditions are frequent topics during the camps by the fjord. Both this teacher, and others during the camp, discussed how they cover a variety of Sámi curricular content when they go to the valley or on the mountains, through activities focused on local storytelling, place names, and reindeer herding. As the pupils attend these school camps every year, the rotation offers multiple possibilities for addressing different topics.

Interestingly, then, it seemed that the teachers spoke in differing ways about the school camp as a site of learning about Sámi issues. This can be understood methodologically, in how I approached the question. Empirically speaking, it relates to the larger conversation on the ambiguous nature of 'Sámi content.' While some curricular topics can easily be defined as a Sámi topic, such as Norwegianization policies, other issues might appear more implicit. In Kåfjord, which exists at an interface where different understandings of identity and Indigeneity meet, the border between what is Sámi and what is not Sámi appears less clear-cut.

Another aspect that points to ties to Sámi identity and culture was markers in the camp itself. For instance, *lávut* and *goahti*-shaped tents were in prominent use. Some wore decorated belts and knives that are common when camping or spending time outdoors in Sápmi. Several wore clothing with the logo for Riddu Riđđu on it, indicating a connection to the local, Indigenous festival. Separately, these markers might signal different things to different people and are more ambiguous in their

expressions. Put together, however, they speak to where this camp takes place – in Northern Norway, in Sápmi, in Kåfjord. As a contrast to the Sámi National Day celebration, the school camp has fewer activities that can be sharply defined as Sámi. Despite this, we can understand the site as an ‘articulated site of Indigeneity’ (Clifford, 2001, p. 472). The markers can be seen as reflections of the revitalization processes in Kåfjord, where “‘Sáminess’ is something one can slip in and out of’ (Hansen, 2008, p. 81). The camp offers the possibility to express belonging to a place with a strong Sámi identity, while allowing for ambiguity through symbols that can also signify belonging to a community.

‘We might not always call it Sámi culture; we call it local culture’

In interviews with teachers from school 1, several remarked on how important the school camp is to their teaching. One of them described the valuable relationship that exists between the school and the local community:

*Does the community play a role in [teaching according to the Sámi curriculum]?*

Yes, I think so absolutely. It depends on the school. [This school] has been very good at using the local environment, and they have had a tradition with school camps, for example, where you use the local environment a lot, both in Sámi [language] education and otherwise. And they build quite a bit on local knowledge. Everyone kind of knows whom to talk to, who can make this or that, and who knows this tradition, everyone sort of knows that here.

This teacher was not from Kåfjord themselves but saw value in having resources outside of the school to rely on and the ability to make the teaching practice close to the pupils’ lived realities. They further stated that the school uses community involvement whenever it is possible to do so. It points to a locally grounded practice that builds on continuity and nurtures relationships between the school and the nearby community.

As with the school camp, the quote illuminates how local and Sámi perspectives are tied closely together. Of course, it is important to center local viewpoints in education regardless of connections to Indigeneity, but in Kåfjord, as in many other areas of Sápmi, local connections are impossible to fully separate from Sámi connections. Another teacher noted that the school does not have strict boundaries between what is *Sámi* or *Norwegian* when they teach: ‘We don’t talk about Sámi versus Norwegian; we talk about us. We are a mix of everything, both Kven and Sámi and Norwegian.’ Such a sentiment reflects how identity in Kåfjord is dynamic

and that teachers approach their teaching as an interface where different intersections shape how they understand and speak of each other (Nakata, 2007, p. 199).

Articulating local history and culture can moreover make room for interest in the Sámi aspects of these. One teacher stated that the school offers opportunities for pupils to explore their identities, especially because

[t]he school is in a way imbued with Sámi language and culture and an awareness of it. Even though we might not always call it Sámi culture. We call it local culture because that is what it really started with here. There is a focus on the local, right, but what is the local?

This statement evokes those made by some of the community members at the school camp, and signals how Indigeneity is approached through local content. The teacher also stated that awareness among pupils comes from the environment fostered by the school over many years. It is possible here to draw lines to the revitalization processes of the 1970s and '80s, which centered on untangling and negotiating what being Sámi (from Kåfjord) means. There was a movement to redefine and reclaim traditions and cultural elements, which had previously been described as local, as *locally Sámi* (Johansen, 2010; Lervoll, 2007). Based on conversations with the teachers, it appears this reclamation has also taken place in the schools.

Another important articulation of Sámi belonging in Kåfjord is place names (Hovland, 1999, pp. 145–153). Several of the teachers identified local place names as important to their teaching about the area as a Sámi area. One was asked whether their teaching practices might have an impact on the pupils' identity:

I think it has a lot do to with the focus we have always had at school, on local history, local culture. (...) And place names. I had never thought about [names of local places], that they are Sámi place names. It is just their names, you know. Suddenly, one day, when you have learned a bit of Sámi you understand that 'oh my goodness, those are Sámi names.' You have not really thought about it being Sámi, it just is. It is kind of part of the package that belongs to the village.

Through a process of learning North Sámi, these place names opened a door for the teacher to talk about Kåfjord as a Sámi place. Several teachers used place names in their teaching and noticed how pupils made similar discoveries and connections. In this sense, a teaching practice that centers on local culture and surroundings has opened for talking about the Indigenous identity of a place (Fogarty & Sollid, this volume). Kåfjord's Sámi identity becomes articulated through place names. This practice is also a sign of a continuous revitalization

project, which reclaims Indigeneity and thus resists the colonial attempts at disrupting it (Clifford, 2001, p. 482). As evidenced by the school camp and the Sámi National Day celebration, there is room for both explicit and implicit expressions of Indigeneity at the schools. Through the teachers quoted here, we can see how they employ local history and culture in their teaching practice and moreover how ingrained these aspects appear to be. How the teachers talk about the 'local' and 'Sámi' aspects of their teaching reflects the historical and contemporary situation in Kåfjord.

### Sámi schools in policy and practice

Some of the debates during the 1990s revolved around ensuring pupils were given an education that reflected their experiences. The current local practices described above very much echo this goal, but certain aspects of the standardized education system still place Kåfjord at the periphery. As such, discussions of locally based education call for a broader analysis of the framework of Sámi education, in particular the conditions under which schools enact their practices and develop policies. One such condition is the Sámi curriculum. In addition to Sámi language subjects, it offers plans in most subjects that are separate from, but run parallel to, the Norwegian curriculum. There has been some research that suggests the differences between the Sámi and the national curriculum are small (Gjerpe, 2017; Keskitalo et al., 2013). This is noteworthy, considering one of the sources of conflict in Kåfjord earlier was whether the introduction of the Sámi curriculum would radically change what was being taught in schools (Pedersen & Høgmo, 2012). There has recently been a reform that indicates that the curriculum has been strengthened (Mikkelsen, 2020; Olsen & Andreassen, 2018).

One teacher, interviewed prior to this reform, was asked about the difference between the Norwegian and Sámi curriculum. They remarked that the Sámi one presupposes a certain amount of Sámi language competency. It can make it challenging for pupils who do not have Sámi as a subject; for instance, when working on competence aims that address differences between the two languages:

*[In order to] have a conversation about the differences between Norwegian and Sámi, you kind of have to know the language in order to understand:*

Yes, you almost have to. We have interdisciplinary projects related to the school camp every year. (...) And when we cover other topics, we make sure to have tasks that can be done in both Sámi and Norwegian, and we mix the pupils, at least in the lower secondary school.

These projects, such as the school camp, bring pupils with different language competencies together, which helps the teachers overcome some of the language barriers in classrooms where not every pupil is bilingual.

Several teachers brought up how important interdisciplinary projects and practices are for including Sámi topics in many different subjects. It ensures such content is not limited to pupils who are taught North Sámi at school and can make other pupils more interested in learning more. An interdisciplinary focus might also lessen the burden for Sámi language teachers of organizing Sámi projects. One such teacher reflected on how vital it is to have a stable number of Sámi-speaking teachers at the school to build good practices. They wondered about the situation at the other school and how difficult it must be for the lone teacher(s) to ensure that Sámi language and culture is a natural and constant presence. This relates to the different circumstances of the schools, as being located at an internal center and periphery in terms of 'Sáminess' in Kåfjord, which affect the teachers' scope for action. As I have not been able to interview teachers at school 2, the comment above represents only half of the picture. Still, it points to a larger problem in Sámi education in Norway – a lack of educators with Sámi language competency (NOU 2016: 18, p. 120). For Kåfjord, as well as other municipalities in Sápmi, the national educational policies for Sámi schools thusly present certain limits.

These are also found in the relationship between the municipality and the Sámi Parliament. As the latter is responsible for Sámi education nationally, the municipalities in the language administrative area are dependent on their funding and policy decisions. The municipal leader wondered about the parliament's future plans for these municipalities, including Kåfjord. While they get opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, the municipality often do not have the capacity to attend. The leader worried therefore that some voices end up not being heard in important discussions. As such, the vulnerability of a small municipality becomes apparent not only in teaching but also decision-making. The municipal leader further brought up disappointments over the Sámi Parliament's decision not to grant funding to create textbooks, which the municipality had applied for: 'The Sámi Parliament chose not to give us funds because [the books] were also in Norwegian. Then you do not recognize that to get anywhere, we have to use the language that is here.' The leader described this as not feeling good enough and was frustrated over not being able to establish practices that are better suited for the pupils in Kåfjord.

These examples point to Kåfjord's position on the periphery of education policy and reflect the constraints of a national system. The municipal leader argued for the need to 'use what is here.' It echoes the revitalization efforts to reclaim and rearticulate a sense of belonging that accurately represents Kåfjord and highlights

pragmatism as a means for continuity (Clifford, 2001, p. 479). Despite the challenges with funding, the municipality was able to create new textbooks. While they are an important tool in the Norwegian education system, textbooks in Sámi languages are few in number, and have received criticism for following the familiar pattern of only representing a small part of Sámi society (Gjerpe, 2021; Keskitalo et al., 2013, p. 62). Two teachers at school 1 responded to this by creating their own materials, basing the books on the school camp and its three locations – the fjord, the valley, and the mountain. As Sollid (2019) argues, the textbooks locate language-learning in the community while relating to common experiences in Sápmi. Such a local initiative is a possible answer to the lack of national resources. Nonetheless, this example, together with others presented here, illustrate some of the challenges of the Norwegian education system that have an impact on local school practices in Kåfjord.

## DISCUSSION

The schools in Kåfjord have over the past thirty years undergone several cycles of change and renewal, both due to local and national educational processes and societal developments. We can look at these processes through the concept of the cultural interface, as occurring in a dynamic space of negotiation. The schools are sites where different experiences and narratives meet and shape teaching practices. To understand local articulation of education in Kåfjord, we must be informed by ‘the historical specificities of this Interface’ (Nakata, 2007, p. 198). The coastal population in the area was subject to colonization by the Norwegian state, which disrupted the continuation of Sámi society and language use. Through processes of resistance and revitalization, people in Kåfjord have been able to rearticulate a Sámi sense of belonging.

I argue for adopting Nakata’s (2007) understanding of an Indigenous interface to the Kåfjord context. Here, people hold multilayered positions that are dynamic and reject that *Norwegian* and *Sámi* are binary oppositions. It is possible to be both, or even more (Hansen, 2008, p. 81; Olsen, this volume). The Sámi National Day celebration and the school camp serve as illustrations of opportunities for locally based practices that account for such multilayered positions. In Kåfjord, the February 6<sup>th</sup> celebration is articulated through well-known Sámi symbols (Olsen & Sollid, 2019, p. 129). It communicates the importance of celebrating belonging to a larger community and place – Sápmi. At the same time, the schools have incorporated elements that affirm their relationship to the local community and ground them in the lived realities of the pupils. The school camp exemplifies this as well, by bringing pupils into the community and welcoming knowledge holders

into the school setting, which is a vital aspect for the further development of Sámi education (Keskitalo et al., 2013, p. 56).

These grounded school practices make room for both apparent and ambiguous notions of Indigeneity. They disrupt the need for authenticity, which Clifford (2001, p. 479) argues should be secondary to processes of cultural and societal adaptations and persistence. The rejection of binaries is evident in how teachers describe their pedagogical approaches as well. While (re)claiming something as Sámi can be an important part of a revitalization process, they emphasize articulations of belonging over definitions. This takes into consideration the historical and contemporary processes that shape peoples' understanding of identity in Kåfjord and account for the diversity of experiences with Indigeneity. Who 'we' are as a community, is more important than 'Sámi versus Norwegian,' as one teacher described it.

According to Clifford (2001), while Indigenous cultures adapt and change, they also 'transcend colonial disruptions' (p. 482) through their relationship to place. This is evident in several ways. The reclamation of Sámi place names is a sign of transcending the colonial power's attempt at disruption between people and their language. The relationships to place are further reaffirmed by using Kåfjord's landscapes – the fjord, the valley, and the mountains – in teaching practices. They provide sites of education (the school camp) and frameworks for learning (the textbooks).

The schools have worked long-term to establish practices that center local histories, cultures, and languages and seem to find possibilities for doing so at the cultural interface. But following Nakata (2007, p. 200), we can also contextualize the interface as a space of constraints. While the Sámi curriculum has provided many possibilities, the municipality of Kåfjord are faced with challenges within this national framework. Some are related to the limits of the curriculum as a policy, while others speak to the negotiations taking place within Sápmi. In some ways, Kåfjord is considered a center for Sámi culture, for instance due to the local and global importance of Riddu Riđđu. In other ways, the municipality still exists on the periphery of Sámi education policy and must strive to ensure the needs of their pupils are met. By establishing locally grounded practices, the schools have been able to curtail some of these constraints. It seems that the way forward for Kåfjord is to continue the work of building these, while advocating for room within the national system to adapt education frameworks to local circumstances.

## FINAL REMARKS

After centuries of colonization policies, the introduction of the Sámi language law and curriculum in the 1990s created conflicts that affected all Kåfjord. The schools



in the municipality have established teaching practices that build on these experiences but moreover are centered on the lived experiences of their pupils, as they are today. The past and present processes in Kåfjord are related to, and relevant for, challenges and opportunities found elsewhere in Sápmi. In many Sámi communities, negotiations take place between national frameworks and local needs in education. Regardless of particular contexts, schools at the cultural interface might find possibilities for locally situated education through teaching practices that reflect Indigenous history, society, and identity, and articulate a sense of belonging that represents pupils' everyday realities.

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# 13. Sámi pupils' language beliefs and practices as implicit language policy

Kristina Belančić

**Abstract** Implicit language policy enables individuals to shape policies that matter to them, while citizenship allows them to engage with or reject their community. I apply Spolsky's framework of language policy as practice to explore how children's beliefs and practices can shape citizenship and implicit language policy. Drawing on interviews with Sámi children, the findings suggest that Sáminess can shape children's beliefs and ideologies and develop citizenship. In turn it enables children to create implicit language policies that matter to them.

**Keywords** language beliefs | language practice | implicit language policy | citizenship | Sámi children

## INTRODUCTION

Indigenous and minoritized communities have always struggled to receive education that is relevant to their specific context and to maintain their language due to oppression and assimilation policy. This has also been the case for the Sámi people in Sweden, not only in the past but till today. Notably, in 2000, Sweden ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, granting Indigenous Sámi and other minority languages an official status as national minority languages in Sweden. Additionally, in 2010 Sweden introduced a new curriculum for Sámi schools, the only Indigenous schooling form, promoting education from grades one to six. These political decisions mark an important shift in Swedish minority politics, as Sámi is now considered to be part of Swedish cultural heritage and therefore, must be protected and promoted within Swedish society.

Supporting Indigenous people's rights through policies is equally important as listening to individuals and agents at the local level to shape relevant language

policies representing their own beliefs. According to Pennycook (2002), language policy on the grassroots level or micro level is influenced by the individual's or agent's beliefs and ideologies about what should be done with language and their language practices. Schiffman (2006) refers to this notion as implicit language policy. Within a community, agents such as parents, teachers and children have the power to form policy at the grassroots level or create language practices through sharing experiences, recourses and knowledge about the culture (Wiley & García, 2016). Through citizenship, however, children can decide whether to engage within a community or reject the community, which in turn is connected to their identity, norms and ideology (Isin, 2008).

In this study, Sámi children are the heart of micro language policy, and I aim to explore, through interviews, how their language practices and ideologies shape both citizenship and implicit language policy in Sweden. The concept of implicit language policy will be elaborated in the theory section. Hence, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. What do Sámi pupils do with their Sámi language in school and outside school?
2. What are Sámi pupils' beliefs about Sámi languages?

## THE SÁMI CONTEXT AND THE SÁMI SCHOOLS

Sweden recognized the Sámi people as an official Indigenous minority group in 1997, and in 2011 the Constitution of Sweden recognized the Sámi as a people (Mörkenstam & Lawrence, 2012; Sametingslag, SFS 1992:1443). Taken together, Sámi people have additional rights such as self-determination, the right to use the traditionally inhabited land, or the use of Sámi language in the current 25 administrative Sámi areas in Sweden (*Förvaltningsområdet För Samiska*, 2015) In these administrative areas, Sámi pupils have the right to pre-primary education in Sámi, through nursery and pre-school education, integrated Sámi education, mother-tongue tuition, or Sámi schools.

Currently, there are five Sámi schools located in Tärnaby, Gällivare, Jokkmokk, Kiruna, and Karesuando which follow the Sámi National Curriculum. Since 2018 the Sámi school also covers the pre-school class, also referred to as F-6. Sámi children must complete their last three years of compulsory education in a regular Swedish school with the option of receiving integrated Sámi instruction, from grades 7–9. According to the School Act, the language of instruction in Sámi schools is both Sámi and Swedish. Thus, each school decides how and to what extent Sámi and Swedish are taught. In 2020, according to statistics from the

National Agency of Education, 174 pupils attended the five Sámi schools, and 37 teachers taught in those schools (Skolverket, 2019b).

## SWEDISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY

Throughout history, many Indigenous peoples, including the Sámi peoples, have suffered from assimilation policies. As a result, Sámi people experienced discrimination and negative attitudes towards Sámi. Such attitudes were widespread in all aspects of society (Hansen & Sørli, 2012). Nowadays, Sámi people have the right to use Sámi languages with an administrative authority, such as in courts or in schools, according to Swedish legislation (Act on the right to use Sami in administrative authorities and courts, SFS 1999:1175). The right to choose languages in Indigenous education – or the principle of linguistic self-determination – is important for language policymakers because it promotes social equality and fosters diversity (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996).

The use of Sámi in Sámi schools is regulated by the Education Act (2010:800), by the Compulsory School Ordinance (2019:275), as well as the Sámi National Curriculum for Sámi schools. These regulations foreground that teaching should be given both in Swedish and Sámi, and that Sámi should be included throughout grades F-6. In other words, each Sámi school in Sweden decides about the implementation of Sámi and Swedish in the classroom. The legislations together with the development of the Sámi National Curriculum in 2011 contributed to strengthening the position of the Sámi languages. It states that

[T]he Sámi language is an important cultural carrier that expresses common experiences, values, and knowledge and unites Sámi across the Sápmi borders. Language knowledge of Sámi and Swedish and knowledge of Sámi culture strengthens its own identity and enables participation in both Sámi society and Swedish society. (Skolverket, 2019a, p. 226)

Further, the Sámi National Curriculum explicitly sets different goals from the Swedish National Curriculum. As such, Sámi pupils have to 'speak, read and write in Sámi as well as become functionally bilingual' (Skolverket, 2019a, p. 13). From a macro policy perspective, the Sámi National Curriculum neither explicitly describes how to accomplish these activities nor how functional bilingualism should be taught in the classroom. Instead, it states that Sámi pupils should receive the possibility to develop functional bilingualism (Skolverket, 2019a). On the one hand, it allows teachers to decide what teaching practices to use; on the other hand, teachers may be unsure of what teaching practices are appropriate

for their students. Thus, the curriculum does not mention how this particular goal, to become functionally bilingual, should be implemented in the classroom. Wiley and García (2016) argued that even when such policies ‘intend to promote language, they may not always be well-conceived, received, resourced, or implemented’ (p. 48).

The Sámi syllabus foregrounds the development of functional bilingualism. However, a school policy analysis of the Sámi and Swedish syllabi showed that they do not provide Sámi pupils with equal language opportunities to develop Sámi and Swedish. Belančić and Lindgren (2020) found that the Sámi syllabus focuses on the development of everyday knowledge, while the Swedish syllabus foregrounds the development of academic knowledge. Also, the Sámi syllabus focuses on oracy, while the Swedish focuses on literacy.

## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Language policy, which originated in the 1960s, seeks to understand or to establish the rights of individuals or groups, such as Indigenous peoples, to use and maintain languages. While at first not taking into consideration individuals’ and agents’ voices, language policy recently focuses on agents’ and individuals’ voices for the creation, interpretation, and appropriation of language policy texts as well as discourses on multiple levels of language policy. This approach is meant to resist dominant views on languages and instead focus on minority and Indigenous languages and agents’ views and voices on language ideologies and practices (Hornberger & Johnson, 2011, 2007; Johnson & Johnson, 2015). Thus, language policy on the micro level and grassroots level is concerned with individuals’ language choices that are based on their ideologies, attitudes, and practices and are contextualised in ‘cultural phenomena socially, historically, and comparatively across time and space’ (McCarty, 2011, p. 10).

Further, Schiffman (2006) acknowledges that attitudes, beliefs and assumptions influence practices on the grassroots level:

It is important to view language policy as not only the explicit, written, overt, de jure, official, and ‘top-down’ decision-making about language, but also the implicit unwritten, covert, de facto, grass-roots, and unofficial ideas and assumptions, which can influence the outcomes of policy-making just as emphatically and definitively as the more explicit decisions. (p. 112)

Language policies are often defined as explicit and written, whereas implicit language policy represents the cultural notions about language which are often

ignored or treated as impediments that must be overcome. However, implicit language policy created by grassroots have more influence on language practice within a community compared to written language policies which intend to promote language. Similarly, Johnson (2013), for example, differs between 'de jure' policies that are based on laws and 'de facto' or implicit language policy activities that are what actually happens in reality or in practice. What Schiffman and Johnson point to are that locally produced implicit policies might differ from what is explicitly stated, or intended, by official written policies.

In educational contexts, it is essential to ask questions related to agency and implicit language policy to understand what actors such as children want with language, and whether they have the power to make decisions. Children's ideologies help to motivate their language practices, but at the same, their views on what they believe about language either empowers or rejects language use and their practices. In this study, I consider the Sámi pupils as agents in implicit language policymaking and I use the notion of agency to describe a child's 'sociocultural mediated capacity to act' (Ahearn, 2001, p. 11) and to exercise control over their actions. But also, to view children as 'active and creative social agents who produce their own unique cultures, all the while contributing to the production of adult society' (Lanza, 1997, p. 333). Shaping children's own culture often reflects ideal and desired ways of being as well as how they reflect upon themselves and others trying to achieve their personal social goals (Du Bois, 1987; Duranti, 2007). Thus, children can exchange ideas and act together to shape their future which relates to democratic values and which in turn relates to citizenship. Citizenship and implicit policy are shaped by multiple factors such as culture, language, environment, as well as the individual's worldview and ideology. As Sollid and Olsen (2019) explain 'citizenship is thus about both the individual member's engagement with the community and goals that are achieved interactionally between participants – something that can be ratified, ignored, modified or contested' (p. 35). As Sollid (this volume) points out, citizenship is negotiable through performative acts of citizenship, just as language policy, and can change the future.

## **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' FORMAL AND INFORMAL POLICY MAKING**

Within implicit language policies, families, and schools play an important role in language maintenance and language revitalization in minority and Indigenous contexts (Fishman, 2001; Hinton & Hale, 2001). Families' language choices are often influenced by (explicit) language policies, which in turn influences parent's (implicit) language choice at home (King & Fogle, 2013). For example, in



the Sámi context, Hansen and Sørli (2012) found that parents who chose not to speak Sámi at home due to explicit language policies had influenced their family's (implicit) language choice negatively. As language policies are changing towards supporting the use of Indigenous and minority languages, an increasing number of Sámi families speak Sámi at home to revitalize Sámi languages (Belančić, 2020).

Even though schools are equally important for Indigenous language learning and for revitalizing Indigenous languages, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) argued that schools are constructed to assimilate Indigenous and minority groups into the main society. Recently, language policies all over the world argue for self-determination in Indigenous education for appropriate teaching and learning. In Sweden, the implementation of the Education Act (2010:800) and the Compulsory School Ordinance (2019:275) to support Sámi language use in education were crucial steps towards supporting Sámi languages (Belančić, 2020).

While families and education are primarily cultural and linguistic domains for language learning, children as agents within (implicit) language policy are just as important. Children are interested in participating in various Indigenous language activities and cultural events even though they are in favour of the dominant languages, culture, and social media trends (García, 2009; McCarty, Romero-Little, Warhol, & Zepeda, 2009; Nicholas, 2009). Luykx (2005) and Choi (2003) argued that children are agents who form and negotiate language policy that is influenced by their attitudes and beliefs about language use and multilingualism. For Indigenous children, it is important to create practices that reflect their cultural identities (Lee, 2013). Likewise, Indigenous children can influence the future of their language as they 'are positioned as *de facto* [implicit] language policy makers whose choices are highly consequential for future generations of language learners' (McCarty et al., 2009, p. 304).

Practicing traditional methods, such as planting corn by hand, is a way for Hopi children to maintain their ways of Hopi life without being fluent in the Hopi language (Nicholas, 2009). Even though the Hopi children had a desire to become fluent in Hopi, they carried on using traditional methods and expressed language as a cultural practice. Their actions and choices showed that language fluency is not the only way to engage with the language and created their implicit language practice. Belančić (forthcoming) explored Sámi pupils' language use during play activities in Sámi schools and found that it depended on the play activity. If pupils played reindeer herding, an important cultural activity for many Sámi people, they were more likely to use Sámi even though they were not proficient in Sámi. Thus, children were able to create their implicit language practice, which facilitated their language learning.

A study about Sámi children's attitudes showed that Sámi culture and Sámi language played an important role in Sámi children's life. Their positive attitudes towards Sámi reflected upon their willingness to use Sámi with relatives, peers, as well as teachers (Belančić, Lindgren, Outakoski, Westum, & Sullivan, 2017). However, Sámi children did not always have positive attitudes towards the Sámi languages; instead, they were negative. In order to bridge these negative attitudes towards positive attitudes about Indigenous languages, it is important to combine traditional and modern practices and include all languages and culture that derive from children's interests. It is vital to consider children's living surroundings, to understand how children, as agents, experience language or how they negotiate their own experiences. This process of negotiation, or as Wyman (2012) referred to it, linguistic survivance, describes the use of languages 'to creatively express, adapt and maintain identity under difficult or hostile circumstances' (p. 2).

## METHOD AND MATERIAL

Conducting interviews with Sámi people from an Indigenous research perspective takes the Indigenous peoples' views, their knowledge systems, and their values into account. These should be respected and included in research to challenge the conventional view of Indigenous peoples and other oppressed groups (Smith, 2012). Also, within an Indigenous research paradigm, questions are flexible to account for changes in the context and the needs of the community. Each child was asked all questions, which were rephrased if there were any difficulties with comprehension. At the same time, I was careful not to miss the questions' intended meaning to regain consistency. The children were able to freely choose the spot for the interview. Some children chose a table in the classroom, and we sat face-to-face during the interview, others leafed through a book while they were interviewed, and yet others chose the corridor bench. Letting children choose the interview setting makes the children feel more comfortable as they are familiar with the environment (Clark, 2010).

The data for this paper has been gathered over a two-week period of fieldwork in two Sámi schools in Sweden and consists of semi-structured interviews with eleven Sámi pupils. The pupils were between nine and eleven years old and attended grades four and five. The individual interviews took place during ordinary school activities and lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. The dialogue with the pupils focused on their language practices in the school and home environment, visions for the future, and beliefs about the Sámi language. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were analysed to identify ways in which pupils expressed their language practices and their thoughts about the Sámi language.

## Data analysis

The analysis builds on Spolsky's (2004) framework of language policy as practice and consists of three elements: language practice, language beliefs, and language management. The data from the interviews were coded for language practices and ideologies, but additional factors such as the sociopolitical context of the society and the role of family and community were defined as codes.

Spolsky (2004) described the first element, language practice, as the community's 'habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire' (p. 5). Language practice is concerned with what people do with the language, and the language choice made by the language user. Additionally, it provides indications regarding the situation and context as well as the speaker's attitude towards language.

The second element, language beliefs, is explained by Spolsky as the beliefs about language and language use. The choice of language might be driven by different factors, such as accommodation of an audience, discourse, setting, or social and cultural identities, and reveals a person's ideology. Language belief is concerned with what a community believes should happen with language and is the manifestation of social, political, and cultural principles into language beliefs (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994).

According to Spolsky (2004) the third element, language management, is considered as an attempt to provide children with linguistic resources to enrich their language learning. Spolsky (2004) suggested that some of these attempts can involve traveling the country of origin, 'visiting heritage language speakers (e.g., relatives), and importantly, using the target language in interactions with children' (p. 8). However, this study includes the first two aspects, as it is used to identify and to analyse children's language practices and ideologies for implicit language policy.

The analysis can be described as a mix of an inductive and a theoretical approach – the overall purpose and interview questions provided guidance, but efforts were made not to let the creation of themes be limited to those starting points. Several re-readings of the data, complementary coding and thematic revisions led to a set of themes and subthemes. Questions about when, with whom, and how Sámi pupils use Sámi were identified as language practice, and Sámi pupils' assumptions about Sámi language were considered to be following language beliefs. Thus, two themes were found to be represented in the analyses by individual answers in relation to Spolsky's framework of language policy as practice.

## FINDINGS

### Theme 1: Sámi pupils' language practices

Language practices are understood as pupils' assumptions about their actual use and action that includes the context, the person(s), and the modality, such as speaking or talking. One theme derived from the findings was the core issue that pupils used Sámi in the family context, with parents, grandparents, or siblings.

1. ... we speak Sámi at home, read a little, but do not write it unless it is school-related.
2. ... mum is reading books in Sámi, but we do not write in Sámi.
3. ... I do speak Sámi with my brother and sister.
4. ... you can talk [Sámi] with your parents, and if you are with, for example, your hockey team that does not speak Sámi, you can talk [Sámi] with your parents, so the others [from the hockey team] do not understand.

The Sámi pupils used Sámi mainly orally together with their parents and siblings (3–4) and in one case, a parent read to their child in Sámi (2). The pupils did not write in Sámi at home unless it was school-related (1).

Besides parents and siblings, the pupils reported that grandparents, relatives, and friends are another linguistic resource to use Sámi with actively.

5. ... I speak Sámi only to my grandparents.
6. ... I use Sámi with my grandparents because they learned it when they were children.
7. ... only my áhku [grandmother] talks to me [in Sámi].
8. ... all my relatives talk Sámi, so with, them, I use Sámi.
9. ... because you have friends who speak Sámi and not Swedish.

It seems that some pupils did not use Sámi at home actively, as they reported that they only speak Sámi with grandparents due to their active role in children's everyday life (5–7). Besides, grandparents, relatives, and friends played an essential role in practicing the language (8–9).

The pupils also talked about the importance of language use when traveling abroad and reindeer herding:

10. ... when we are, when we go to Norway. Everybody speaks only Sámi there.
11. ... when we do reindeer herding. All the terms are in Sámi. Even though Swedish is the main language, the terms we use are in Sámi.

Traveling abroad to Norway (10) and reindeer herding (11) provided Sámi children with opportunities to use the Sámi language actively. During these two activities, the Sámi language was identified as the more dominant language because it was used by most of the interlocutors.

While some pupils described using Sámi during their spare time and in the family environment, others did not use Sámi at home nor in their free time.

12. ... I never speak Sámi when I am at home or when I meet relatives who speak Sámi.
13. ... I do not talk Sámi to my relatives nor at home. I only use Sámi during Sámi classes.

Some pupils said that they did not use Sámi at all, neither at home with relatives nor at school (12), except during Sámi language classes (13). For those Sámi pupils, Sámi language classes were the only domain for language learning.

The Sámi schools and the school context were identified as domains for Sámi language practice. Although some Sámi pupils did not use or speak Sámi in the home context, all eleven Sámi pupils viewed Sámi schools and Sámi classes as an essential opportunity to learn Sámi to communicate with other Sámi-speaking people (14).

14. ... we have at least the possibility to listen to Sámi daily because many teachers talk to us in Sámi, or they speak to our peers or other teachers.

In this study, Sámi pupils valued literacy and oracy as important modalities for their language learning. In particular, they talked about writing and speaking in different contexts and for different purposes.

15. ... writing is difficult, but I try writing in Sámi because it is important so I can write a text or a story in Sámi.
16. ... it is difficult to write in Sámi or to fill in important documents correctly.
17. ... it is difficult to spell in Sámi because there are many different letters.
18. ... learning new words is important, and it is good so that you can talk more to others, like old [Sámi] people. But we do not speak Sámi at home.
19. ... pronouncing words in Sámi is difficult, but I try to talk to my relatives.
20. ... I talk Sámi to everybody, but not everybody knows Sámi.
21. ... speaking Sámi makes me feel safe.

It seems that Sámi pupils did not only value writing (15–16), but also speaking (17), and some pupils wanted to learn more words to speak to other Sámi people

(18). One pupil used Sámi with everybody but was aware that not everybody knows Sámi (20). Some speak Sámi because it makes them feel safe (21), while others are trying to use and increase their Sámi use. Research has shown that writing is the most important skill for educational success, but also one of the most challenging skills to master (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Therefore, these examples suggest increased literacy practices among Sámi pupils.

Some pupils foregrounded various occasions when learning happened efficiently:

22. ... teachers also correct me when they are talking to me. And that is all right.
23. ... I understand better when teachers talk to me in Sámi and not in Swedish.
24. ... I learn best when reading because afterwards, we translate into Swedish to understand better.

Few pupils stated that they were aware of making mistakes and that being corrected was part of a learning process (22). While some reported that using Sámi during teaching made them understand better (23), others learnt best when translating Sámi text into Swedish (24). This indicates that students have different learning preferences and strategies that may, or may not, relate to their language use.

As Sámi pupils in this study were multilingual, they had to negotiate between Sámi and Swedish:

25. ... it feels strange to speak both Sámi and Swedish, so a switch to Swedish happens, just like that.
26. .... with people whom I do not know very well I speak Swedish, but after a while, I ask if they talk Sámi, and if they do not speak Sámi, I continue talking Swedish.
27. ... I understand when the teachers speak in Sámi, but sometimes when they talk to me in Sámi, I answer in Swedish since I do not talk Sámi very well.

The above comments suggest that Sámi pupils had the possibility to switch between two languages, Sámi and Swedish (25). However, their language choice depended on their language proficiency and on the counterpart's language skills (26). All the pupils reported that their receptive language skills were stronger than their production; they all understood Sámi, but some had challenges in responding in Sámi (27). The examples demonstrate that Swedish was the more dominant language of the surrounding context, even though some Sámi pupils had Sámi as their stronger language.

Sámi pupils mainly used and practiced Sámi in two domains: the family and the school domain. For some of the Sámi Indigenous pupils, only the schools provided them with the Sámi language because it was not present in the home context. It seems that the pupils were socialized into their parents' and grandparents' ideologies. For many Sámi families, whether or not Sámi was spoken at home, the choice of Sámi schools was a strategic move to extend the use of Sámi and proficiency in Sámi. Besides the school and home contexts, some Sámi pupils had more opportunities to use Sámi, such as when traveling abroad to Norway or Finland, or reindeer herding. Pupils in these examples suggest that they engage with the Sámi community through the notion of citizenship as it reflects the same interests and goals (e.g., reindeer herding).

## Theme 2: Sámi pupils' beliefs about Sámi language

While Theme 1 talks about Sámi pupils' actual Sámi language use, Theme 2 points out Sámi pupil's beliefs about Sámi language. Within the second theme, a strong connection between language and identity (28–30) was identified. Some pupils said that the Sámi language and speaking Sámi correctly were essential because they shaped the identity and provided a sense of belonging (31–32).

28. ... it is part of your Sámi relatives, and your whole family speaks Sámi.
29. ... we live here, and we talk Sámi, people work a lot. They work for Sámi issues, so others understand the importance of Sámi.
30. ... if other Sámi people talk to you in Sámi, and you do not know Sámi, then they ask why you do not talk Sámi. You are Sámi, so you have to know it.
31. ... you have to understand and talk to them [the Sámi people] if they say something in Sámi.
32. ... if you want to belong to the Sámi community, then you have to speak Sámi because if you are Sámi, then you should know it.

The pupils shared the belief that Sámi was important to their cultural heritage and cultural identity, and they seemed to be aware that it was not enough to understand Sámi. Rather, speaking Sámi correctly and properly was more important in order to belong to the Sámi community. However, one child highlighted not knowing Sámi should not exclude Sámi pupils from feeling Sámi:

33. ... everybody has the right to their own language, and everybody can speak their language. There is nothing wrong with not knowing a language and still feeling like a Sámi.

This Sámi child feels that being part of a community does not require language knowledge (33), however, without language learning among Sámi pupils, active participation in decision-making is not happening in Sámi.

Sámi Indigenous pupils found that learning Sámi language is fun but also difficult, and sometimes disappointing:

34. ... sometimes Sámi is fun, mostly when you understand, but it is too difficult, when you do not understand, or when other Sámi people speak another Sámi language. It is disappointing when traveling to Norway, and you do not understand.

The Sámi pupils believed that talking Sámi language is fun, but at the same time challenging, as North Sámi spoken in Sweden differs in terms of lexicon and morphology from North Sámi spoken in Norway (34). Thus, Sámi pupils have to be challenged and provided with more opportunities to practise in order to develop their Sámi language as well as become aware of differences between other Sámi languages so they can understand and talk to others.

The importance of learning other languages than Sámi and of knowing other Sámi languages was emphasized by a Sámi pupil:

35. ... it is good to know many different languages, not only Sámi. Learning new languages is cool, and knowing and understanding other Sámi languages such as South Sámi is important.

The Sámi Indigenous pupils believed in the value of bilingualism and multilingualism and chose to learn Sámi regardless of whether they use Sámi correctly or not (35). Many young Sámi learners grow up in a multilingual environment, and they are exposed to many languages and cultures from different media, such as the Internet, TV programs, and books, but also in school and in the Sámi community.

Language beliefs about the future of Sámi were identified as a further category. Some Sámi pupils believed that Sámi would not be used to the same extent as it is nowadays, but they hoped that the language would gain a higher status:

36. ... well, it does not look so bright, and it seems there are not so many who care and understand. We have to help people not to lose the Sámi language.
37. ... it [the Sámi language] decreased a little. Many people do not talk [Sámi] anymore. When we grow up, Sámi languages have to gain a higher status so that they become more visible, and therefore, we have to talk a bit more.



38. ... it seems that it [Sámi] is decreasing quite a lot, but we would like to keep it, and this is what we are trying. We have to start reminding ourselves to speak more Sámi.

The pupils were aware of the endangered Sámi language situation and had a desire to make the language more visible (36–38). There is hope that speaking Sámi more consciously and in more contexts will lead to a revitalization of the Sámi languages.

Some Sámi pupils had positive beliefs about the future of the Sámi language (39–40), while others were less positive about it (41–43):

39. ... it is good to know Sámi as you need it [Sámi] to teach the language to your own children.
40. ... it [Sámi] has to exist, that everybody continues to speak Sámi, so it does not disappear when we grow up.
41. ... it [Sámi] will die out because children do not want to learn Sámi and because there is no need as there was before.
42. ... people are not going to speak Sámi as much because many Sámi people are not using and speaking Sámi anymore.
43. ... already now many live, for example, in Kiruna, or outside Kiruna, and talk Swedish. They are Sámi, but they lose the language and they cannot talk [Sámi] anymore. I do not know why this is happening, it just happens maybe because you hear so much Swedish all the time.

The statements above highlighted the contradictory ideological discourse on language, which is also represented in Swedish society. While the analysis shows that some pupils were in favour of Sámi and valued learning Sámi, other pupils did not believe in maintaining the Sámi languages, although they identified themselves as being Sámi. It seems that the pupils favoured Sámi identity over their Swedish, which might be explained by the dominant ideologies that surround the pupils.

## DISCUSSION

The home and educational context were identified as two major domains where pupils used Sámi. In both settings, the pupils reported few forms of cultural, social, and linguistic resources, a sign that the pupils were not provided with enough resources to practice in Sámi. The family context, according to the pupils, enabled them to speak Sámi and explore their culture and traditions. However, the study found ideological contradictions within families and extended family members,

which are contextualised in 'cultural phenomena, socially, historically, and comparatively across time and space' (McCarty, 2011, p. 10). For example, in a few cases, pupils did not use Sámi at home but practiced Sámi with their grandparents. It seems that some parents never got the opportunity to learn Sámi and therefore did not use the language in the home environment, while grandparents are the one source for some pupils to learn Sámi. Even though the grandparents were not allowed to speak Sámi in the past, Sámi remained strong in their lives. It may be the case that Sámi was the grandparents' strong language and that they identified themselves with Sámi and therefore, the pupils reported the use of Sámi with their grandparents. In another Indigenous context, such as California, grandparents, and elderly people, their language knowledge and the context, played an important role in passing on the language. For example, the last speaker of the Californian Indian language was coupled with the young relatives who wanted to learn the language by doing different practices together (Hinton & Hale, 2001).

At home, some pupils spoke Sámi with their parents and siblings, while others did not use Sámi at all and thus had difficulties responding in Sámi. While some pupils read in Sámi, writing in the home context seemed to be absent, which is contradictory to the findings of a recent study where multilingual Sámi children practiced writing at home (Belančić et al., 2017). For Baker (2017), bilingualism and biliteracy go hand in hand, and if one of them is left out, there is a risk for language decline. He further states that if someone only speaks but does not read or write in a language, the person is limited in their use of that language, and the language is at risk of disappearing in the long run. Thus, the development of oracy is equally important as the development of literacy; otherwise, the status of the language in society will decrease (Baker, 2017).

Children's practices revealed the varied ways in which language is situated to negotiate one's identity in specific social contexts, or what Wyman (2012) referred to as linguistic survivance. The results in this study reported a somewhat complex relationship between language and identity, and it raises the question of Indigeneity – what it means to be Indigenous. While some pupils in this study felt that language knowledge is not a requirement to belong to or to be part of a Sámi community, others argued that knowing Sámi makes them feel Sámi. Also, Nicholas (2009) suggested that language proficiency and knowledge are not the only way to engage with language; participating in different and traditional approaches, not using the minority language, is a way of belonging, too. It is about the making of citizenship through language, identity, culture, and how individuals define one's Indigeneity.

Some Sámi pupils were aware of the benefits of bi- and multilingualism, as they lived in a multilingual context. Similar results were obtained by Outakoski (2015)

who analysed Sámi youth's literacy skills and found that young Sámi children spoke Sámi across the home as well as the school settings. The possibility to use Sámi in these contexts influenced pupils' positive attitudes, their self-awareness, and the fact that they valued Sámi as a cultural resource, which mirrors the result of Belančić et al. (2017). While others, who had a negative attitude towards Sámi felt that Sámi had little educational and economic value, which resulted in Swedish having more power. Sámi pupils' knowledge of and their attitude towards Sámi are crucial factors that may facilitate implicit or unwritten language policy and what Isin (2009) calls acts of citizenship. These acts of citizenship challenge the existing practices and activities through the creation of new practices in which Indigenous rights are claimed.

This study found that explicit language policy, such as the syllabus, differs from pupils' implicit language policy, which mirrors the findings of Johnson (2013), who argued that implicit language policies might differ from what is explicitly stated. In the Sámi educational context, pupils have the possibility to develop their numeracy, oracy, and literacy skills since the goal of the Sámi schools is to provide pupils with the possibility to develop their functional bilingualism. However, the current Sámi and Swedish syllabi provide Sámi pupils with unbalanced access to develop oracy and literacy in Sámi and Swedish (Belančić & Lindgren, 2020). The syllabi, which are part of the National Sámi Curriculum, becomes citizenship policy, meaning, as pointed out in the introduction by Olsen & Sollid (this volume), that education includes or excludes members or citizens of a community by deciding who's knowledge and values matter. Even though access to language within the two syllabi differs, it does not mean that the Sámi syllabus does not provide pupils with access to literacy. The syllabus foregrounds the use of literacy and writing, yet in this study pupils used Sámi mainly orally, and reported writing as the most difficult modality. Listening to pupils' voices, educational policymakers could advance Sámi people's right to self-determination – creating practices supporting their literacy skills.

Similar to implicit language policy, citizenship is seen as each child's engagement with the Sámi community (e.g., at the home and school environments), but citizenship can also be rejected, accepted or changed by each citizen, member, and child. Citizenship, as Isin (2008) explains, is a matter of belonging where people want to and are allowed to engage. The Sámi pupils in this study expressed citizenship, on one hand, by belonging to the Sámi community, creating relationships with family members and friends. On the other hand, they questioned if the relationship between identity and language determines belonging to the Sámi community. Regardless, if the pupils accept or deny citizenship, their norms, habits, and ideologies help them develop their own

identity and citizenship, which in turn enables them to create implicit language policy.

By taking pupils' language use and beliefs into account, policymakers can create language policies reflecting pupils' ideologies and practices across different contexts, and shape citizenship in them. Thereby, they may contribute to opening spaces for teachers and pupils to enact their own multilingual, context-specific, ideologically sensitive language policies.

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# 14. The role of cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging to the social-emotional wellbeing of diverse students

Melinda Webber and Selena Waru-Benson

**Abstract** Social-emotional wellbeing at school is related to students' connectedness to their cultural selves, their sense of ethnic group belonging and pride, and the ways they participate confidently as critical citizens who recognise and protect the rights, beliefs, values, and identities of others. Using a Kaupapa Māori approach, this chapter discusses the social-psychological conditions for cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging for primary school students (n = 2149) aged 5–12 years and secondary school students (n = 584) aged 13–18 years in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

**Keywords** cultural connectedness | ethnicity | Aotearoa New Zealand | citizenship | social-emotional wellbeing

## INTRODUCTION

Social psychology is a discipline that studies the cultural context of human behaviour (Sonn, Rua, & Quayle, 2019). In essence, it is the study of how and why people think, feel, and do the things they do depending on the context they are in. Cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging are social-psychological aspects of self that manifest differently depending on context. Cultural practices – socially patterned activities organised with reference to community norms and values – are important for the enactment and formation of ethnic identity, and it is through cultural practices – as people ‘do’ life – that cultural identities are shaped, constructed, and negotiated (Nasir & Saxe, 2003, p. 14). Culture is characterised by shared values, beliefs, behaviours, styles, and tool-kits of ‘symbols, stories, rituals,

and world-views' (Swidler, 1986, p. 273), practices ranging from speech styles and language to specific kinds of physical interaction, tastes in music, clothing, and food, and other symbolic ethnic cues (Gans, 1979). While the ways self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy affect the academic engagement of diverse students has been well researched (DiBenedetto & Schunk, 2018; Usher & Weidner, 2018; Webber & Macfarlane, 2018, 2020), few studies have examined the affective and social-psychological drivers of cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging to the social-emotional wellbeing of diverse students.

In this chapter, I contribute to this discussion by focusing on how self-perceptions about the value of cultural identity (as it relates to ethnic group membership) affects the social-emotional wellbeing of students in schools in New Zealand. In line with the views of Olsen and Sollid (see Introductory chapter, this volume), this chapter is interested in the ways diverse students 'act and make choices, are acted upon, and relate to each other in a variety of ways' based on their understandings of cultural identity and sense of cultural connectedness. Using a Kaupapa Māori approach, this study examined the social-psychological conditions for cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging for primary school students ( $n = 2149$ ) aged 5–12 years, and secondary school students ( $n = 584$ ) aged 13–18 years, from one regional cluster of schools ( $n = 16$ ) in the northern region of Aotearoa, New Zealand. This chapter evidences the ways social-emotional wellbeing at school is related to students' connectedness to their cultural selves, their sense of ethnic group belonging and pride, and the ways they participate confidently as critical citizens who recognise and protect the rights, beliefs, values, and identities of culturally-diverse 'others' in a rapidly changing national context. Olsen and Sollid (see Introductory chapter, this volume) have argued that 'citizenship presupposes the individuals' sense of belonging to a larger collective, where people want to and are allowed to engage' and that 'citizenship can be expressed and negotiated through acts that create or recreate social belonging and relations'. This chapter illustrates the ways citizenship engagements and relations are negotiated and renegotiated with every inter-cultural interaction.

Student engagement in school contexts is dependent on a number of social-psychological factors: a) the skills, background knowledge, and resources available to students; b) the students' attributes including self-efficacy, motivation, mindset, and task commitment, c) how they are identified and identify as belonging to, or in, educational settings; and d) how the educational setting makes space, and provides support and opportunities for students to engage and persist (Webber, 2015). This sense of belonging and invitation to an educational space shapes students' engagement with, and willingness to, persist in that educational setting. In this sense, educational engagement can be said to be a function of developing both



a school-based social identity and an academic identity. And yet, other important social identities such as ethnic and cultural identities do not vanish when students enter schools. Therefore, important questions include: How do academic or school identities, necessary for educational engagement, intersect with these identities to support or constrain social-emotional wellbeing? How do cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging contribute to critical citizenship?

Research has shown that perception of one's ethnic identity can either promote or undermine social-emotional wellbeing depending on whether the content of that identity is positive or negative (Webber, McKinley, & Hattie, 2013). When a positive cultural stereotype exists, for example, the stereotype of Asian academic ability, then making the group membership salient has a positive influence on academic performance and social-emotional wellbeing (Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999). When a negative cultural stereotype exists, such as the case for working class (Croizet & Claire, 1998), gender, and Indigenous and minority groups (Rubie-Davies, Hattie, & Hamilton, 2006), making group membership salient has a negative influence on academic performance and social-emotional wellbeing.

Some researchers have argued that school failure is connected to the process of students doing 'identity work' in response to experiences of racism (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Webber et al., 2013). Whether students stay engaged at school or not depends on (a) 'the sense they make of themselves, their community and their future' (Smyth et al., 2004, p. 131) and (b) 'the adaptive strategies they use to accept, modify, or resist the institutional identities made available to them' (Fraser, Davis, & Singh, 1997, p. 222). Many Indigenous and other minority students must undertake extra identity work to cope with racism at school. This incongruity means that the choice to 'disengage' is easy if they are, as Smyth et al. (2004, p. 131) put it, 'living in one reality at home, in another reality with peers and then negotiating another reality at school'. In this situation, a lack of social-emotional wellbeing, academic demotivation, school disengagement, and underachievement are likely. In addition, if students are to learn think independently and participate confidently as critical citizens in a rapidly changing globalised environment, they need to be historically literate about controversial issues and accepting of the value diverse groups put on their ethnic and cultural identities.

## **RACIAL-ETHNIC IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOL CONTEXTS**

Educational research has documented the pervasive influence of schools' ethnic composition on the academic and cultural lives of students. Although this body of empirical work is large and contains its share of inconsistencies, studies have

generally found that inter-ethnic contact in schools promotes more positive cultural attitudes (Ellison & Powers, 1994) and greater inter-ethnic sociability and friendship (Johnson & Marini, 1998). Despite these beneficial outcomes, attending school with greater proportions of students from other ethnic groups may also pose additional challenges to students, making it more difficult to feel a part of the school community. Like adults, students show strong in-group preferences in social interaction and the formation of friendships (Hallinan & Williams, 1990; Johnson & Marini, 1998; Schofield, 1980). Ethnicity is a highly salient aspect of both social and cultural identity, and similarity with one's classmates along such dimensions is no doubt important in generating a sense of belonging and membership in a school. School ethnic composition may influence engagement behaviours in a number of ways. Being surrounded by students of one's own ethnic group may prevent disengagement indirectly through school attachment. When students do not feel comfortable at school or socially integrated with other students, they may withdraw – skipping classes more frequently and investing less in academic activities.

Consequently, understanding the process through which students come to see themselves as cultural beings and as belonging to particular ethnic groups is important because it can have a tremendous bearing on their school engagement and subsequent academic achievement (Phinney, 1989). For students in multi-ethnic secondary schools, cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging frequently takes on new significance with respect to peer interactions, friendship groups, and transition to university. It is not uncommon in multi-ethnic school settings for students to interact and form friendships easily across ethnic boundaries – if their parents or other adults allow them to do so (Killen, McGlothlin, & Lee-Kim, 2002). However, cultural boundaries can also become problematic as students become increasingly aware of the significance associated with ethnic group difference. In other words, students generally become more concerned with how their peers react to their participation in inter-ethnic relationships and, as a result, they may begin to self-segregate according to ethnicity (Schofield & Francis, 1982). Secondary aged students also become more aware of the politics associated with ethnicity, and more cognisant of ethnic hierarchies and prejudice (Way, Cowal, Gingold, Pahl, & Bissessar, 2001).

As such, schools are sites where students receive and begin to understand messages from society about their cultural identity and the value of their ethnic group membership. Minority and Indigenous adolescents in particular are subject to negative expectations that can have profound implications for their academic performance (Weinstein, 2002). Cross-cultural data focused on a variety of minorities in a number of contexts all over the world suggest that exposure to a negative

‘social mirror’ (Doucet & Suarez-Orozco, 2006, p. 168) adversely affects academic engagement. De Vos and Suarez-Orozco (1990) have demonstrated that the cultural messages minority students receive in school contexts are saturated with psychological disparagement and racist stereotypes. De Vos and Suarez-Orozco argue that this experience can have profound implications for the healthy ethnic identity formation of minority and Indigenous students as well as for their schooling experiences.

Research has also established that some Indigenous and minority students believe that they must choose between a positive ethnic identity and a strong academic identity to be successful at school (Nasir & Saxe, 2003; Webber, 2008). Not only are schools central places for forming ethnic identities, but the way teachers and students talk, interact, and act in school, both reflects and helps shape developing understandings about ethnic hierarchies. As such, students’ experiences at school can influence how they choose to culturally or ethnically self-categorise, how boundaries between their ethnic groups are formed, negotiated, and interpreted, and how the processes of racialisation and boundary-forming affect students’ interactions and opportunities.

## THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

Although New Zealand schools strive to create equitable learning environments, the unfortunate reality is that many diverse students, particularly Indigenous Māori students, are underserved. It is evident that the existing educational provisions work less well for them. One of the core values of education in Aotearoa New Zealand is that through their learning experiences, students will learn about ‘their own values and those of others, different kinds of values, such as moral, social, cultural, aesthetic, and economic values, the values on which New Zealand’s cultural and institutional traditions are based, and the values of other groups and cultures’ (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 12). However, this principle is not put into practice in many schools. For example, research suggests that the enduring problem of Māori educational disengagement more generally may be attributed to factors including: low teacher expectations of Māori (Rubie-Davies, 2015; Turner, Rubie-Davies, & Webber, 2015); deficit theorising about Māori student potential (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009); a paucity of Māori parent/family involvement in education (Berryman, Ford, & Egan, 2015; Rubie-Davies, Webber, & Turner, 2018); culturally irrelevant content and contexts for learning (Bevan-Brown, 2009; Webber & Macfarlane, 2018); and loss of cultural efficacy and pride (Webber, 2012). Additionally, research in Aotearoa New Zealand has shown that Pākehā (New Zealanders of European or British descent) and Chinese students are

less likely to see their cultural group membership as an important part of who they are, nor feel the need to find out more information about their cultural groups. In addition, Samoan students feel a greater certainty of belonging to their cultural group and involve themselves more often in finding out about their cultural group collective history, traditions, and protocols (Webber et al., 2013). Therefore, while cultural identity, connectedness, and ethnic group belonging are important for the social-emotional wellbeing of some students, it appears to be less salient for other groups of students. However, the need for social belonging, for seeing oneself as socially connected, is a basic human motivation (MacDonald & Leary, 2005), and a sense of social connectedness that predicts favourable outcomes (Stuart & Jose, 2014) is important for all students. Developing a sense of cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging is good for everyone – especially in increasing diverse schooling contexts.

Including learning about identity, language, and culture in the curriculum should be an integral part of catering to the social-emotional wellbeing of all students. The extant research shows that a positive sense of ethnic identity is important for students' self-esteem (Chavous et al., 2003; Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005), and it is therefore important for all students to recognise themselves as being cultural, to name themselves culturally, and to mark positive aspects of their culture. Positive cultural identity and ethnic group belonging can improve the academic motivation, achievement, ability beliefs, and career aspirations of students (Webber et al., 2013). It is therefore important to help students recognise and accept that all people are cultural, because this creates an awareness of the values and practices of their own culture(s), as well as an appreciation and willingness to learn about others – and this is a key part of critical citizenship. Our ability to live respectfully and peacefully alongside each other depends on it.

## **TE TIRITI O WAITANGI – A KEY CONSIDERATION IN THE NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM**

New Zealand is a bicultural country, whose tangata whenua (Indigenous people) are Māori. The founding document of the country is Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) which was written and signed in 1840 as a means of partnership between Māori and the government (represented by the Crown) of New Zealand (Walker, 2016). The 2020 Education and Training Act (Ministry of Education, 2020) stipulates that even in contemporary times, Te Tiriti O Waitangi obliges schools, as government organisations, to ensure that they are bringing Te Tiriti into effect. The 2020 Act specifies that schools must give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by:

- working to ensure their plans, policies, and local curriculum reflect local tikanga Māori (protocols), mātauranga Māori (knowledge/wisdom), and te ao Māori (worldviews),
- taking all reasonable steps to make instruction available in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori, and;
- achieving equitable outcomes for Māori students.

These objectives put Māori identity, language, and culture at the centre of teaching and learning, with an expectation that Māori students should be engaged, challenged, and affirmed in their cultural identity at school.

In addition, the New Zealand curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2015) stipulates that schools should provide all students with opportunities to ‘create an Aotearoa New Zealand in which Māori and Pākehā recognise each other as full Treaty partners, and in which all cultures are valued for the contributions they bring’ (p. 10). The New Zealand curriculum puts students’ culture at the centre of teaching and learning, asserting that: a) students should experience a curriculum that acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand, and b) that the curriculum should reflect New Zealand’s cultural diversity and values the histories and traditions of all its people. The New Zealand curriculum asserts that all children should feel proud of who they are, where they come from, and what their culture has to offer the world. As the world around us diversifies, it will become more important to be aware of the values and practices of our own culture(s), in order to have an appreciation and willingness to learn about other cultures.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed mixed-methods surveys to gather quantitative and qualitative data from students over a two-year period. A concurrent nested qualitative/quantitative design was selected in the form of a survey, meaning that, although all data were collected simultaneously, there was an initial emphasis on quantitative data, while the qualitative data were embedded in the study (Punch & Oancea, 2014). The rationale behind this approach was to fulfil the research objective of triangulation: ‘seeking convergence of findings’ (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007, p. 284). Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative data were deemed equally important. The survey comprised a combination of 49 open-ended and closed questions. Initially students were asked to provide demographic data and, then, complete multiple-choice questions, Likert scale items, and open-ended questions.

The 16 schools involved in the project had been working collaboratively for the past two years as part of a regional cluster. The project adhered to ethical principles and practices, including informed consent, protection of vulnerable students, anonymity, and confidentiality, as outlined by Kaupapa Māori protocols (G. Smith, 2012; L. Smith, 1999) and the University of Auckland Code for Human Ethics. Firstly, a Kaupapa Māori approach ensured a respectful, culturally responsive and appropriate pathway was used for undertaking this important work alongside school communities. I involved teachers and school leaders in the gathering of the data, liaison with students and families, and included their perspectives in the interpretation of findings for this study. This was critical in terms of ensuring that the study interpretations were presented from an authentically local perspective. Secondly, following ethical review, the project was lodged with the University and received ethical approval in 2018 (UAHPEC Approval Number: 021775).

The data used for this study were taken from a larger national research project led by Dr Melinda Webber titled: *Kia tū rangatira ai ngā iwi Māori: Living, thriving and succeeding as Māori*. This strengths-based research project investigated how students, but particularly Indigenous Māori students, learn, succeed, and thrive at school. This nationally representative project has large numbers of students ( $n = 18,996$ ), family members ( $n = 6949$ ) and teachers ( $n = 1866$ ) who have completed the project surveys. This project was funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand, Te Apārangi.

The current study is a small component of that wider research project and is focused on examining the social-psychological conditions for cultural connectedness and belonging for primary school students ( $n = 2149$ ) aged 5–12 years, and secondary school students ( $n = 584$ ) aged 13–18 years, from one regional cluster of schools ( $n = 16$ ) in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Thirteen primary schools and three secondary schools from a northern region of Aotearoa, New Zealand were part of the regional cluster.

**Table 14.1:** Study Participants

Participants	Māori	Pākehā	Other	Total n
<i>Primary students</i>	21%	64%	15%	2149
<i>Secondary students</i>	15%	64%	21%	584

The focus of this study is aligned with the broader ICE project in that it articulates the ways educational policy and curricula play an important role in developing citizens for the future. It also illuminates the ways students' cultural identities shape their understandings of citizenship – and its related values,

responsibilities, and relationships with (or not) the Indigenous peoples in their country.

### Data collection

The student survey took between 15–20 minutes for students to complete. The students were not asked to write their names on the surveys, and any information they provided was made unidentifiable. I attended school staff meetings and parent meetings to explain the project and answered any questions about the project. After permission from the school principal and Board of Trustees was granted, parents were informed of their child's invitation to be involved in the project. Both students and parents had two opportunities to withdraw from, or decline participating in the study. I then distributed participant information sheets, or an electronic link to the online questionnaire, for all students at the school, inviting them to participate.

### Open-ended question analysis

Participant answers to one open-ended question were coded and analysed for this particular study in order to answer the question – ‘What aspect of your culture are you most proud of?’ Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase thematic analysis process was subsequently followed and included: 1. Familiarising myself with the data; 2. Generating initial codes; 3. Searching for themes; 4. Reviewing themes; 5. Defining and naming themes; and 6. Reporting the themes. In relation to phases four and five, Saldana (2013) also emphasises that recoding and recategorising is generally inevitable as ‘qualitative inquiry demands meticulous attention to language and deep reflection on the emergent patterns and meanings of human experience’ (p. 10).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, five key components concerning the personal, familial, school, and community conditions for secure cultural identity were identified in the student data. The five conditions, described below, are: Connectedness to Others, Belonging to Place, Positive Identity Markers, Cultural Protective Factors, and Cultural Navigation Skills (see Figure 14.1). The first condition, Connectedness to Others, was ubiquitous – it appeared with incredible regularity throughout the course of the study rendering it the most important condition of cultural



**Figure 14.1:** The social-psychological conditions supportive of embedded achievement and secure cultural identity.

connectedness, ethnic group belonging, and overall social-emotional wellbeing. It must be noted that although most students were able to answer the research question, 13% of primary-aged students, and 22% of secondary students wrote 'I don't know', 'not applicable', or 'I don't have a culture' on the survey form. Between 80–90% of those who could/would not answer the question self-identified as Pākehā New Zealanders.

*Connectedness to Others.* Scholars have emphasised the critical role of extended family members, teachers, and other role models in enhancing positive outcomes for children in the face of stress and difficulty (Morgenroth, Ryan & Peters, 2015; Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). The quality of these relationships is related to the development of competence in children, including academic achievement, cultural connectedness, and social adaptability (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Priest et al., 2014, Rubie-Davies et al., 2018). As such, community engagement in education, and inclusive school-family partnership practices are important to social-emotional wellbeing, cultural connectedness, and ethnic group belonging in students.

The students in this study placed high importance on their connections to a collective, including their wider community 'families'. The students' cultural identities were nurtured and encouraged by their family and teachers, and they consequently felt socially capable and had a sense of connectedness and efficacy across a range of contexts. The students commented that their families valued collective cultural activities like hunting, diving for seafood, and a range of cultural



celebrations like Waitangi Day and St Patrick's Day – which they associated with their cultural identities. Many students, particularly those from Māori and Pasifika backgrounds also indicated that 'representing your family and culture positively' was an important component of cultural identity because one's actions had wider repercussions for family and community members. The self-described expectation that students from Indigenous and minority groups counter negative stereotypes and misrepresentations of their cultural group as part of being a 'good ethnic group member' is well documented in the extant literature (Watson, 2020; Webber et al., 2013).

Many of the students believed that they were key members of their cultural collective, and were nurtured, protected, and guided from an early age to feel like they belonged. Students perceived that their role in 'staying connected' was integral to ethnic group membership and viewed this as a serious undertaking in terms of developing cultural efficacy and pride. One student stated 'We are proud islanders who spread the word and culture and support each other' (Tongan, Secondary). Another student commented 'when we do anything we do it with pride. We are always proud and really supportive and if something happens we are always together. We are related to everyone, we are related to chiefs and Māori kings' (Māori, Primary). Finally, one student stated 'I am proud of how close my family, and extended family stay together. All over New Zealand my family and I stay in contact with those from our iwi' (Māori, Secondary). In line with the extant research, this study has found that a secure home environment, strong relationships, and familial support can have a positive influence on the social-emotional wellbeing and cultural connectedness of students (Watson, 2020; Webber & Macfarlane, 2018).

*Belonging to Place.* Many of the students in this study were proud of their ethnic group membership and wanted to express their cultural identities across multiple contexts. They articulated that the value systems of their ethnic groups were crucial to anchoring a person to their homelands and genealogy. Students commented 'I am very proud of my heritage. I was lucky enough to visit Akaroa, where my late ancestors came from. My family taught me about the ups and downs of life back then' (Pākehā, Secondary), 'Even as a very small country, Ireland has achieved so much. We also have a very rich cultural background and amazing folklore that has been passed down through generations. I'm also very proud of the people who have managed to pass down the Gaelic language, even though it's dying out. Even though many people don't really recognise Ireland as having a very rich culture and history – we do, and I'm very proud of it' (Pākehā, Secondary), and 'I am proud of our culture and language. Tonga is an archipelago of one hundred fifty islands' (Tongan, Secondary). Finally, one student stated, 'I like telling people who

my iwi (tribe) are, where our marae (traditional gathering place) is, and how we have always stayed on our whenua (lands)' (Māori, Primary).

Students were keen to share their cultural knowledge, and many mentioned the places that they felt connected to. Being familiar with where their families originated from seemed to help students to anchor themselves to people, place, and histories associated with those places. This view aligns with Fogarty and Sollid's (this volume) assertion that student understandings of place are central to both their individual and collective identity formation and their ideas of 'belonging to "country" and customary learnings, based in place' form a central tenant in their conceptions of what a 'good' citizen may be. Affiliation to place appears to be a key element of cultural connectedness and ethnic group pride, and should consequently be integrated into classroom teaching and learning. Penetito (2009) has called such a pedagogy 'Place Base Learning' (PBL) and has argued that it can provide students with the answers to two essential questions: what is this place and what is my relationship to it? PBL essentially draws on the strongest features, characteristics, history, and personalities of the land or place where students are born, raised, and educated, thereby creating a synergy between school-based learning and the unique context of the surrounding ecology. It teaches 'through' rather than 'about' culture and encompasses ecological studies, biodiversity, community education and community relations, local history, and sustainable development (Barnhardt, 2005).

Advocates of PBL, such as Kawagley and Barnhardt (1999), Penetito (2009) and Kidman, Abrams and McRae (2011), believe that PBL can help alleviate the tension that currently exists between Western education pedagogies and holistic Indigenous education models. These authors assert that PBL can move the curriculum towards a new and exciting place where ownership by students over characteristics and features of classroom-based learning can be given heightened relevance. It should provide new meanings to enquiry and knowledge that draws upon students' cultural histories and languages.

*Positive Identity Markers.* Many students in this study were able to articulate a strong sense of cultural efficacy, connection, and belonging. Feeling a strong connection to their culture and other members of their ethnic group meant that they knew how to engage meaningfully with relevant cultural practices and protocols. Many students purported to have a keen sense of cultural pride, saying 'My cultural identity is what makes me who I am. The stories and hardships my ancestors faced to allow me to have the life I have now' (Pākehā, Secondary), 'EVERYTHING!!! Despite Pākehā taking over our land, Māori still strived and fought for our country. They stayed strong and showed great mana (pride) and kaha (strength) through it all. Our haka (war dances) and waiata (songs) are just

as amazing, but some just think that we are just here for a cultural performance. I love our reo (language). I am doing my best in school to improve my reo and help revive the language' (Māori, Secondary), and 'I'm proud of the cultural dances like the Siva Samoa, Sasa, Tauluga and the Fa'ataupati' (Samoan, Primary). According to the participants in this study, cultural connectedness and ethnic group pride was not simply about being a member of an ethnic group but also about knowing what that membership entailed. Students mentioned valued cultural attributes such as 'kindness and gracefulness' (Filipino, Primary), 'how forward thinking and business focused most Dutch people are' (Pākehā, Secondary), and 'taking care of our elders and our children ... if you have the ability, help others' (Rarotongan, Primary). Some students also mentioned that academic achievement was a key marker of their cultural identity, stating 'We need to be different from others and show how our culture can achieve things that people don't expect us to achieve. Heaps of Māori are clever you know' (Māori, Primary).

In this study, cultural efficacy was demonstrated when students felt they had the personal resources to engage appropriately and 'live up to expectations' across a range of contexts. The findings show that making sure children are aware of their collective belonging, cultural connectedness, and responsibilities to others as ethnic group and community members is critical. Many of the students in this study asserted that any decisions about themselves were made while recognising their responsibilities to others – their family and communities. Therefore, healthy and supportive family and community contexts are fundamental to positive identity development and for promoting, modelling, and supporting cultural connectedness and ethnic group pride.

*Cultural Protective Factors.* Many of the students stated that they associated positive self-efficacy, knowledge of heritage languages, resilience, and a hard-working attitude as key elements of their cultural identity. They tended to be aspirational, 'we strive to go further than our ancestors did' (Māori, Secondary), determined, 'we are still here even though people tried to stop our language and culture' (Māori, Primary), and committed, 'everyone is hard working and aims to achieve their goals' (Pākehā, Primary). In contemporary times, many students are exposed to increasingly difficult home, neighbourhood and/or school environments that can significantly impact their sense of cultural connectedness and belonging. According to Masten and Coatsworth (1998), resilience largely consists of two components: the presence of significant adversity and the achievement of a positive outcome despite the threat or risk. However, resilience can also be thought of as a continuous interaction between the individual and characteristics of his or her environment (Ungar, 2011). In this sense, resilience is both context dependent and a collective action. Many of the students in this study who described themselves as

resilient, also believed that their communities were resilient, having successfully navigated their way through adversity according to the strengths and resources available to them. The data suggests that student resilience might be better developed when students are afforded opportunities to work alongside their families, teachers, and communities to learn about their cultural identities, languages, and histories in coordinated, continuous, negotiated, and culturally relevant ways.

Many of the students revealed a combination of personal and environmental characteristics that enabled them to maintain cultural pride in the face of educational and social adversity. Familial support, cultural self-efficacy, and an internal locus of control helped the students in this study to retain a sense of cultural connectedness. The concept of cultural connectedness was also closely linked to personal attributes such as pride, 'I am most proud to be culturally diverse, I am proud to be who I am, and I am proud of where I come from' (Pākehā, Secondary), persistence, 'our strong will to stay positive and push through hard times' (Samoan, Secondary), discipline, 'the aspects of my culture that I love the most is that we are very disciplined, hardworking, always caring for everyone in our families and many more' (Chinese, Primary), and knowledgeable about cultural history, 'the Scottish are resilient and tough' (Pākehā, Primary). The development of cultural connectedness was evident in many of the students and manifested as a well-developed understanding about who they were, what they wanted to achieve in life, and the direction they needed to take to realise their goals. These findings suggest that cultural connectedness is associated with a student's ability to cope with adversity and draw on perceived cultural protective factors to overcome difficulties. Cultural socialisation and connectedness can play a vital role in empowering students to function successfully in the milieu of the school culture while remaining grounded in their ethnic group identities.

*Cultural Navigation Skills.* Many students saw cultural connectedness and ethnic group pride as critical to their sense of self. However, they also indicated that particular navigational skills and attitudes were important for retaining strong and positive cultural identities. The students indicated that being inclusive was essential to success, stating, 'New Zealand is a very diverse and accepting. We welcome many different cultures into our country' (Pākehā, Primary), and, 'I have been told all my life to respect all people no matter their sexuality, religion or ethnicity' (Māori, Secondary). In addition, many of the students in this study asserted that serving their community and or 'making their ancestors proud' (Māori, Primary) lay at the heart of their sense of cultural connectedness. This required them to 'give back to others due to privileges I have been given' (Pākehā, Primary), 'do things to honour New Zealand's history and try to right past wrongs' (Pākehā, Secondary), and 'accept different languages and ways of

living' (Chinese, Primary). A strong understanding of one's own cultural identity, alongside a respect for the cultural identities of others is fundamental to students' sense of cultural connectedness and ethnic group pride. As seemingly difficult as making sense of diverse cultural identities and worldviews might be, the ability to successfully traverse them was dependent on the acquisition of navigational skills such as: cultural connectedness, ethnic group belonging, a broad knowledge base, a strong moral compass, and a commitment to learning about and living alongside others.

## CONCLUSION

Cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging influences the thoughts and behaviours of many students, enabling them to act purposefully to achieve their goals, aspirations, and citizenship roles and responsibilities in an increasingly diverse world. In the Aotearoa New Zealand context, due to their experience of colonisation and the attempted erasure of Māori identity, language, and culture, Māori have endeavoured to ensure their children continue to stand tall in the world – secure in their cultural identity (Webber & O'Connor, 2019; Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). Māori have learnt that maintaining cultural pride and connection in the ever-changing national context requires them to teach their children who they are, how they belong, and how they relate to other groups in this place. As Aotearoa New Zealand continues to diversify, all groups of students who call New Zealand home will need to understand who they are culturally and ethnically; the New Zealand curriculum will demand it of them. New Zealand education policy requires both students and teachers to know about, and integrate information about, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Indigenous history of Aotearoa New Zealand into their teaching and learning. The students' articulations of cultural identity in this study showed that they appeared to understand citizenship as involving political, civil, social, and cultural dimensions, which supports Calhoun's (1999) and Humpage's (2008) views that citizenship involves multiple modes of belonging. As Aotearoa New Zealand becomes more multi-ethnic, being able to understand and articulate your own place in the milieu of a future New Zealand will be even more critical.

Cultural connectedness and ethnic group belonging are crucial because they are profoundly powerful social-psychological constructs that affirm and advance student connectedness and belonging in the school context and beyond. These constructs are important for students' self-esteem and social-emotional wellbeing, and it is therefore vital that all students have opportunities to name themselves culturally, and to identify positive aspects of their culture. Schools must promote positive cultural attitudes, the rights, roles and responsibilities of citizenship, and

encourage greater inter-ethnic sociability and understanding. This is important if we are to genuinely create an Aotearoa New Zealand in which Māori and non-Māori recognise their responsibilities to each other as Treaty partners, and value each other for the contributions they each bring.

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# 15. The power of place and the ‘good citizen’

William Fogarty and Hilde Sollid

**Abstract** Across the globe, constructs of place are foundational to Indigenous cosmologies and customary practice. Understandings of place are also central to self and collective identity formation. As such, Indigenous understandings of the self as citizen are influenced by connections to land. Similarly, ideas of belonging to ‘Country’ and customary learnings form a central tenet in Indigenous conceptions of what a ‘good’ citizen may be. Paradoxically, the role of place in education for Indigenous students is greatly underutilised. Through snapshots from Australia and Norway, we argue for the potential of place-based pedagogy in Indigenous education.

**Keywords** place | place-based pedagogy | citizenship | land | identity

I (Hilde) am in a school hallway, on my way to a class in Sámi as second language. The hallway connects the L shaped wooden school, from the gym in one end via administration offices, a hall, and to the classrooms in the other end. The building is a sturdy construction for about 90 students and teachers, a shelter from the cold rain, wind and snow that dominates the outdoor conditions most of the school year. Inside, the walls are covered by golden wooden boards. The atmosphere is warm and welcoming. This spring day, windows on one side of the hallway brighten up the room and illuminate the green doors of the classrooms. Beyond the walls and doors there are a number of historical school pictures and some fabricated posters, highlighting national educational priorities like mathematics and science. However, the many pieces of student artwork and teachers’ homemade posters are the most prominent. I notice three miniature *lávvo*,<sup>1</sup> small Sámi tents made of wooden pillars with knitted grey rugs. The knittings are re-creations of renowned, locally woven rugs. In

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1 A *lávvo* is a traditional Sámi tent used as a temporary shelter.

passing these traces of student activity, I am reminded of how I used to help my mother to spin wool and ball the yarn of local sheep for her knitting, and of my aunt's warp-weighted loom that she used in the making of traditional woven rugs. The miniature *lávvu's* presence in this semiotic landscape creates a link to the local language and culture, and situates students, teachers and people who pass by in a temporal place encompassing past, present and future. In this hallway, I get a glimpse of the interwoven process of teaching, learning and creation of place. In that moment I think about how a simple knitted rug, so intrinsic to this place, relates to a broader pedagogic movement of students, teachers and researchers engaged in reclaiming Sámi language through knowledge about local livelihood traditions and customary cultural practices.

This chapter is a snapshot of an ongoing conversation about citizenship and education between the two authors, William (Bill) Fogarty and Hilde Sollid. Despite the great distance and differences between our contexts in Australia (Bill) and Norway (Hilde) our discussions through this project have unearthed a great many similarities. One of the similarities is around the notion of place.

In our chapter, we argue that constructs of place, 'Country' and land are foundational to Indigenous cosmologies and customary practice across the globe. Understandings of place are also central to both self and collective identity formation. As such, Indigenous understandings of the self as 'citizen', of either a nation state or sovereign Indigenous nation, are heavily influenced by connections to land. Similarly, ideas of belonging to 'Country' and customary learnings, based in place, form a central tenet in Indigenous conceptions of what a 'good' citizen may be. Paradoxically, the role of 'place' in education provision for Indigenous students is rarely acknowledged and greatly underutilised. In this paper, through snapshots from both Australia and Norway, we argue for the potential of 'place-based' approaches to Indigenous education and pedagogy. Further, we reflect on the dialectic role place-based pedagogy might play in mediating the relationship between the state, Indigenous 'community' and understandings of citizenship.

## THE 'GOOD CITIZEN' AND EDUCATION

During his term as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Australian of the year and Yawru leader Professor Mick Dodson (1993) said, and we quote:

'Citizenship' as it applies in the contemporary socio-political context implicitly contains reference to the concepts of nationhood, social organisation, and the structural relationship between peoples and the Nation State. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, each of these terms, as they are currently applied in Australia, are fraught with problems, because they are largely built on assumptions which a priori exclude the claims of Aboriginal people to full political, social and cultural recognition as the first peoples of Australia.

Professor Dodson goes on to suggest that the construct of citizenship, at least as it is applied in Australia, fails to recognise that for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, citizenship may pertain both to membership of an Indigenous Nation and a nation state. Further he challenges the legitimacy of a nation state which usurped existing First Nations and their citizenry, colonising and debilitating pre-existing social structures of governance, law, leadership and language. To this list we can also we can also add Indigenous forms and modes of education.

Perspectives on citizenship for the Indigenous Sámi people in Norway have similarities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, despite distance and differences in the process of colonialism. In Norway there was no external settler colonialism, but rather internal colonialism as the politick for gaining control over territories and the Sámi people. This is significant for today's ideas of citizenship, as the process of colonisation created a hierarchisation between different groups of people (Sámi, Norwegian and Kven) who were living side by side like neighbours. Appropriation of land and suppression of Sámi ways of living was at the heart of colonisation, and comprehensive assimilation politics were influenced by 19th-century ideas of nation states and social Darwinism. Ultimately, the aim was to transform Sámi into Norwegian citizens based on Norwegian ideas of the 'good' citizen. It is important here that although there was little space for Sámi ways of life, the Sámi people were not deprived of, or excluded from Norwegian citizenship, but formal citizenship was largely dependent on Christian confirmation and language competence in Norwegian. A new era of state policy towards the Sámi started after the Second World War, initiated by Sámi grassroots movements (e.g., Andresen, Evjen, & Ryymin, 2021; Broderstad, this volume). In this process the Sámi gained more rights in terms of governance and self-determination, without losing access to Norwegian citizenship. Indigenous citizenship here points to a possible duality of citizenship. In fact, there are signs of trust of, and engagement with, both Sámi and Norwegian political and state institutions (see Selle, Semb, Strømsnes, & Dyrnes Nordø, 2015), contrary to what is found in

Australia (cf. Mercer, 2003). There are, however, still tensions and dilemmas concerning the centring of Sámi rights and belonging in the nation state's societal structures – for instance in education.

The sociological literature generally sees 'education' in a mainstream sense, as a major site for the production and reproduction of societal norms. A factory, if you like, for the engineering of productive and perhaps malleable individuals who will contribute both to civic society and the socio-political and socio-economic stability of the nation state. In this sense, education can be seen as a way to fashion a 'good' citizen. As Bulloch and Fogarty (2016) have argued:

Advanced liberal government seeks to mould a certain type of free subject: autonomous, responsible, enterprising individuals who exercise rational choices in the space of the market and who regulate themselves according to certain disciplined notions of time and space (Rose, 1996a). For example, as liberal citizens, we locate ourselves so that markets and, relatedly, opportunities for formal employment are accessible, allowing us to participate freely as responsible autonomous individuals in the market economy. As free individuals, we regulate ourselves according to the clock. We learn 'to count our lives by hours, minutes, seconds, the time of work and the time of leisure, the week and the weekend, opening hours and closing time' (Rose, 1999, p. 31). Freedom becomes a matter of choosing our vocation in the context of a liberal state and market economy; of choosing items from the supermarket shelf; of choosing how to style our hair, what to watch on television in our 'free' time, and where to go on holiday. As free citizens, we regulate our lives in large part around the market. Being free, in this regard, is a learned behaviour. (pp. 83–84)

But for many Indigenous populations across the globe, this form of citizenry may be complex or even abhorrent, and the education supporting the development of the 'good citizen' a form of structural violence. For Indigenous people, formal education systems may represent a perpetuation of colonial violence through denial of language, societal norms, and customary practices (that are distinctly Indigenous), in favour of the reproduction of the dominant culture (Levinson & Holland, 1996). In other words, the construction of the good citizen for the nation state comes at a cost to what it may mean to be a good citizen of a First Nation. However, a failure within, or rejection of, formal education provided by the colonial state, precludes the Indigenous citizen from enjoying the full benefits of the wider nation state. While not a simple binary, as there is a plethora of educational aspirations across a diversity of Indigenous populations in places like Australia, Aotearoa and Norway,

there is nonetheless an abiding dilemma facing the Indigenous citizen when it comes to education (Fogarty, 2010).

Of course, Indigenous populations have not been agency-less in reforming state education systems. We can point to Kaupapa Māori in Aotearoa, contestations over bilingual education in Australia and the introduction of the parallel Sámi curriculum in Norway as efforts to decolonise and reclaim the pedagogic space. And it is here, in this struggle over what and whose ideas will be reproduced in the development of the future citizen through education, that we wish to introduce the role of place-based pedagogy.

## AN INDIGENOUS PLACE

In Australia, as elsewhere, the continued contestation over land and culture has ensured that 'place' in all its meanings becomes critical in discussions concerning the dispossession and marginalisation of Indigenous people. Whose place is whose and who has the authority, rights, tradition and power in, and through, place have all become key questions as Indigenous interests negotiate new meanings of place and identity in response to colonisation and the impacts of modernity and development. This is particularly acute in the jurisprudence of Native Title in Australia where continuity of tradition and connection to place become paramount in legal contestation over land (Edmunds, 1994, p. 4).<sup>2,3</sup> Also in Norway, despite the Finnmark Act of 2005, which was intended as a remedy to resolve contestations over land in a politically highly important part of the Norwegian side of Sápmi, there are legal contestations over land and over interpretations of the practices on land (see Ravna & Bankes, 2017). In both our cases, questions of connections to land remain a juridical and political battlefield.<sup>4</sup>

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2 The High Court Mabo Decision in 1992 and the passing of the Native title Act in 1993 dictated the ways in which Indigenous ownership of land in Australia may be formally recognised and incorporated within Australian legal and property regimes. In order to make claims to a 'bundle of rights' in land, Indigenous claimants must demonstrate an unbroken connection to land (see Tehan, 2003).

3 A common source of tension and the emergence of disputes over claims is related to knowledge about place and who possesses it (both the land and the knowledge). It could be argued that in the case of Native title and the onus of proof of continuity of connection that the state, through law, has imposed a concept of place that is hopelessly bounded and ultimately destined to fail.

4 Finnmarksloven (2005) transfers ownership over land from the state to a local ownership body (The Finnmark Estate) and authorises a legal surveying commission. The contestations over land are, however, not limited to Finnmark, but beyond this northernmost part of Norway, the legal regulations do not as strongly consider the rights of the Indigenous Sámi.

In a more transnational sense, issues and concepts of place for Indigenous people have come to the fore in the struggle to redress the ‘undoing’ of place through colonisation and wholesale dispossession. Muehlebach (2003), in her analysis of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous populations (WGIP<sup>5</sup>), argues convincingly that delegates were active in the creation of an ‘Indigenous place’ within the forum. Through a discourse of imagery and a ‘way of being in the world’ that transcended the boundedness of geographic differences, they formed a ‘transnational political practice’ that created a ‘place’ for global activism. In this way, we see Indigenous people re-making place as a strategic resistance to pernicious dispossessions of place.

Muehlebach’s form of place making depends upon a distinctly Indigenous concept of place. Indeed, Indigenous people have long expressed a deep and all-encompassing attachment to place. This is also typically, although not universally, presented as different, or in opposition to non-Indigenous understandings of place. In Australia, for example, this is often expressed in the Aboriginal concept ‘Country’.

The relationship between Aboriginal people and place has been a key feature of Western anthropological descriptions of Aboriginal people since first contact. In more recent times, Aboriginal people themselves have co-opted and adapted the word ‘Country’ to describe their relationship to land and place and in the process, positioned the term as central to their identity (e.g., Peterson, Langton & Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1983; Yunupingu, 1997). Inherent in this term is the notion that the people and the land form an indivisible One; a whole that inscribes a partnership transcending the ‘material’ and intimately connected to the ‘cosmological’. ‘Country’, like place therefore, can hold a meaning far greater than a geographical or physiological descriptor. Rather, Country, with a capital C, can be considered a personal pronoun; a sentient being as it were (Baker, Davies, & Young, 2001). Yet from some Aboriginal viewpoints, a mere personification cannot do the term justice. ‘Country’ is more than that. It is, in a difficult and paradoxical sense, both a localised and universal essence, an immediately concrete and inordinately abstract concept. Unsurprisingly, the ‘Western gaze’ (Rose, 1996) has had great trouble seeing and grasping the deeper meanings of the term.

Further clouding the coloniser’s metaphoric lens is the fact that Aboriginal understandings of Country and place are neither homogenous, nor reified; they are, rather, an amalgam of the past and present and the individual and the collective, thrown together in what de la Cadena & Starn (2007) have termed a ‘dense dialogical formation’ (p. 7) of identity. As such, there can be no presumption that

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5 The WGIP has now become the permanent UN forum on the rights of Indigenous people.

one understanding of place and another's hold any defined continuity or fixity. Similarly, an attachment to or understanding of Country is much shaped and configured by the discourses and histories of the struggle for rights and place in land, as well as being a deliberate part of constructing an identity differentiated from the settler state. Out of this complexity grows a multiplicity of Aboriginal cultural formation and identity which is very much underpinned by a sense of place.

The Sámi people in Norway navigate by equally strong and complex ties between land, place, and peoples. The use of land varies according to the landscape and is also changing over time. Land and place as social constructs are thus fluid and changing, but nevertheless important in terms of identity and belonging. In the contemporary Sámi context, the cosmological aspects of this relationship are present and intertwined with Christianity. This creates a blurry notion of land-life relationship in Sámi culture, but at the heart of this relation is reciprocity. Perhaps the most widely known expression of this relationship is found in the *sieidi*, a place, typically a rock or a special formation in the landscape, for sacrifice from people to land and other living entities to ensure benefits such as prosperity and good luck in fishing and reindeer herding (see Mathiesen, 2009). To be in and from a place is to learn about its physical, historical and social dimensions. At the core of a place are processes of meaning making of self, community and land.

Given the demonstrable importance of place to Indigenous Australians and Sámi, it is somewhat surprising that very little effort has been made to explicitly link pedagogy and place. While efforts at linking learning programs with the local environment, for example, have been a consistent feature of Indigenous education over time, these have been disparate. There have been no systemic efforts to develop programs which use local Indigenous concepts of place as the main platform for learning. Conversely, the development of a pedagogy of place in more mainstream educational fields has a relatively long and strong history.

## PEDAGOGY OF PLACE

The importance of place in the cultural production of the educated person (Levinson & Holland, 1996) has long seen an academic and applied interest in place-based pedagogy of one kind or another. A pedagogy of place can arguably be seen as having its beginnings in John Dewey's (1897, 1902, 1916) progressive education theories which, paradoxically, are perhaps the antithesis of more postmodern readings we mention shortly. Essentially, Dewey was a proponent of a positivist educational approach, seen by many as pragmatic, although its essential elements called for a learner-centred approach through scientific inquiry. Throughout its development, a pedagogy of place has had its roots in environmental and science-based



education. Unsurprisingly, the ecology or physiology of the landscape has been very much at the fore of such approaches.

In more recent times, the advent of critical theories of communication, education and development have reinvigorated place in local pedagogy, but with a neo-Marxist or Foucauldian representations of class, power, gender or ethnicity at its centre. This type of education has many generic terms, but perhaps community-based education is used most commonly. Community-based education, concerned with people and their immediate reality, has a reasonably long history and an international research base (Comer, 1984; Corson, 1999, 2000; Corson & Lemay, 1996; Cummins, 1986, 1996; García & Otheguy, 1987; Greenberg, 1989; Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989; Høgmø, 1989; Høgmø, Tiller, & Solstad, 1981). Much of this work draws heavily on the writings of Paolo Freire (1972) and argues that Indigenous communities can reform education by inserting their own educational aspirations into the organisation, management, pedagogy, curriculum and the modes of evaluation in schools. In this way, the community's goals can become aligned with those of educational delivery. This in turn affects which regimes of knowledge can be dominant at a local level.

In 1999, Alberto Arenas coined the phrase 'pedagogy of place'. The notion of a pedagogy of place is positioned as oppositional to the focus on school underachievement as an indicator of social injustice. This approach, in part, can be seen as a reaction to a view of social justice as synonymous with school achievement, because social justice has increasingly been implemented as testing regimes (Arenas, 1999). Furthermore, this position sees a primary focus on statistical achievement as antithetical to place-based education, in that it distracts from a focus on community well-being and other moral purposes of schooling. Therefore, educators

need to do more than echo the mantra of policy makers to prepare learners (future workers) for high-stakes testing and the global economic competition. They need to examine how the discourse of globalization, the discourse of progress, and the discourse of development shape schooling and community life at the local level. (Furman & Gruenewald, 2004, p. 62)

Despite Freire's influence, the ecology, physiology and hard science of the landscape has continued to dominate both classroom and theoretical approaches to pedagogies of place. In traversing this, Gruenewald wrote a seminal paper in 2003 where he explicitly linked a pedagogy of place with the critical theories of education and discourse. Gruenewald's work (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) outlines a field of inquiry which encompasses a number of previous areas of inquiry including

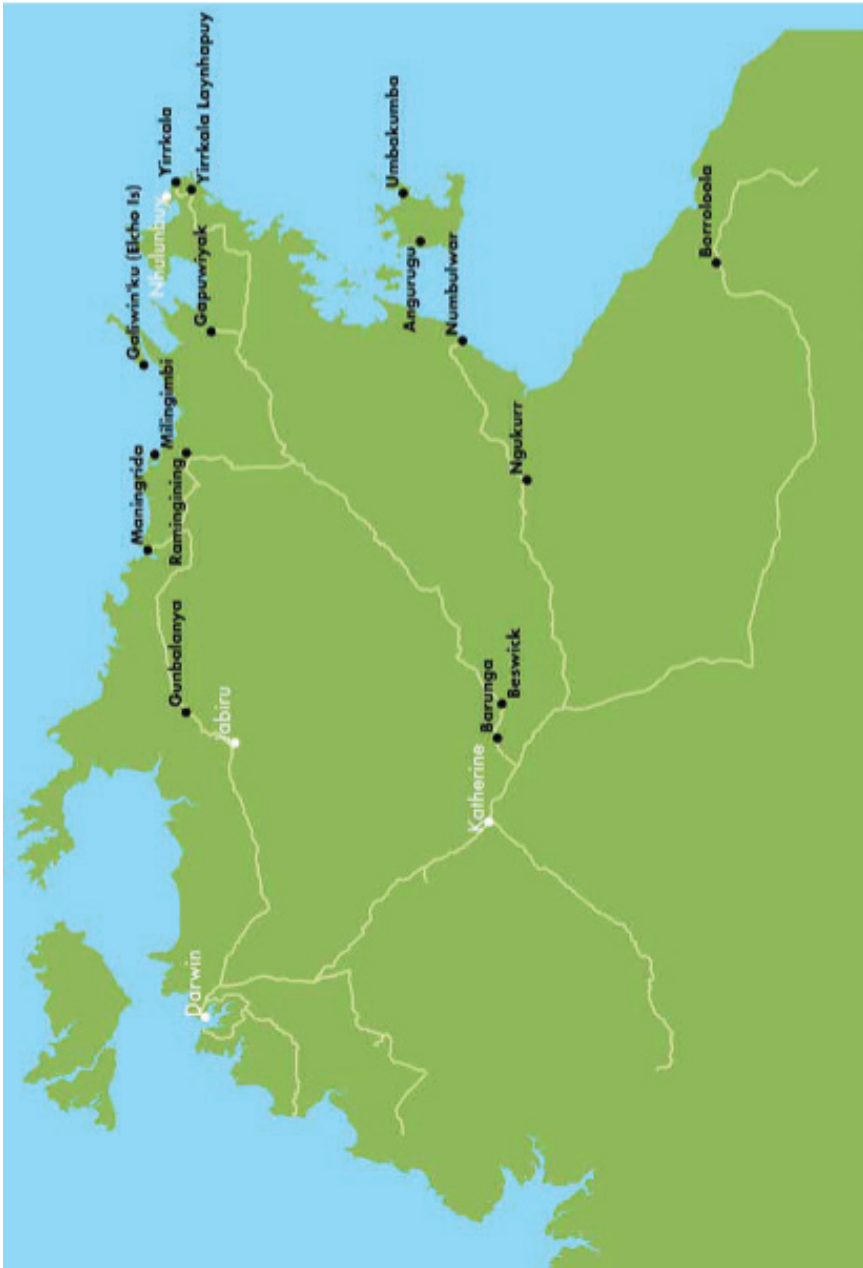
'experiential learning, contextual learning, problem-based learning, constructivism, outdoor education, Indigenous education, environmental/ecological education, bioregional education, democratic education, multicultural education, community-based education' (Furman & Gruenewald, 2004, p. 59). Under this approach, Furman & Gruenewald (2004) note the importance of local contexts and first-hand experiences:

Education for social and ecological justice must provide learners with local contexts where the social and ecological landscape can be studied through first-hand experience; it also must link such experience to the experience of others in other places and to the cultural, political, economic, and ecological forces that connect people and places on a global scale. (p. 62)

Conceptually, this approach is set against a universal trend for Indigenous students to reject compartmentalisation and reductionist nature of school-based knowledge acquisition. Rather, such approaches try to provide what Aikenhead (2000, 2002a, 2002b) and Aikenhead and Ogowa (2007) have referred to as a process of 'border crossing' which provides points of pedagogic alignment between, for example, a student's dominant world view and a scientific experiment (see Fogarty, 2010). Crucially, such approaches are positioned in opposition to the 'normalisation' and 'standardisation' of curriculum and schools while celebrating diversity. In this way, place-based pedagogy rejects the 'atopia' (Carrol, 2017) of schools which can become homogenous in their look, feel and character. A school devoid of connection to place runs the risk of becoming a 'non-place' – a carbon cut-out defined by only its sameness to other schools globally. Airports, mega malls, and office buildings already offer us a dystopian vision of non-places (Arefi, 1999). Pedagogies of place play a vital role in avoiding this.

In tracing the development of a pedagogy of place, its merging with critical theory has allowed a widened frame for examining the role place as a concept can play in education. Finally, if we can agree that education has a role in the creation and recreation of the good citizen, we can perhaps also agree that from an Indigenous perspective we need to decolonise or Indigenise what the concept of a 'good citizen' actually means. It would seem to us, mobilising pedagogies of place can challenge dominant understandings of what being a citizen might mean. More importantly though, place-based pedagogy has the potential to change and challenge existing power relations within education systems.

One powerful example of the role place can play in pedagogy comes from remote Northern Australia, where Bill has long worked with a raft of Aboriginal communities on a program called Learning on Country. Learning on Country is



**Figure 15.1:** Location of Learning on Country Sites, with permission from the Northern Land Council.

a place-based initiative currently running in 15 Northern Territory communities linking Aboriginal land and sea Ranger groups and schools, see Figure 15.1. The program is aimed primarily at late secondary students though children of younger ages are participating in some of the schools.

In many ways Learning on Country (LOC) recreates elements of the original Indigenous classroom, where young people spend time on traditional lands, in the company of Indigenous adults with responsibility for those lands, learning about culture and country, the relationships of various groups to country and one another and the roles and responsibilities in relation to that country they will one day be expected to assume. Ostensibly, Learning on Country is about young people learning who they are. The program engages Indigenous Rangers, knowledgeable senior Traditional Owners and other Indigenous adults with responsibilities for those children and that Country. But in addition, teachers from the local school – who in most cases are not Indigenous – play a key role in articulating on-Country learning with learning back in the classroom. At its best there is a fluid movement of knowledge and responsibility where Rangers step forward to lead in the facilitation of Learning on Country while teachers step back; when the learning moves back to the classroom teachers assume the lead and Rangers and others move into a supporting role (Fogarty & Schwab, 2012; Fogarty, Schwab, & Lovell, 2015). In the ten years since its inception, the LOC program has garnered recognition by teachers, parents and students that the opportunity to learn 'on Country', to engage with learning in local contexts that are rich and meaningful outside the confines of a classroom with four walls, invariably engages students and validates them as learners in a way that a classroom alone rarely does.

While the LOC program meets the state education system's want for student engagement (poor school attendance by Indigenous students has long been a policy issue in remote Australia [Altman & Fogarty, 2010]) and English and literacy numeracy outcomes through targeted experiential learning and curriculum, there is a much deeper element of pedagogy and identity at play within the program. In many regards, local communities see the LOC program as both a reclamation of pedagogic power and as a statement about the importance of place and Country, as citizens of their own First Nations. Inherent in this is the value placed by remote communities (and other First Nations communities throughout Australia) on place and Country as a central tenet of learning. Being a good citizen in this context means understanding cosmological and customary connections to place, participation in ceremony for intergenerational transfer of knowledge and having the right understandings to ensure the future stewardship and custodianship of Country.

While the LOC program is a successful example of place being used as an organising tenet for pedagogy, there nevertheless exists deep tensions between the state and local First Nations' communities about education. Elsewhere Bill has referred to this as a discourse of dissonance, where there are fundamental disjunctures between local aspirations for education and the role of education as seen by the national system. To draw on James Scott here, the propensity to see education 'like a state' ensures dominant cultural norms and assumptions dictate certain educational norms for the fashioning of a 'good' citizen. It begs the question, whose interests the education system should serve when it comes to Indigenous Education; the interest of the communities involved or the state? Furthermore, if there is a meeting of educational aspirations between these two interests, what degree of educational pluralism should be countenanced, if, indeed real pluralism is even really possible at all? More positively, however, the contestation and drive to have local and place-based curriculum included continues unabated. Hilde describes a moment in which local languages and traditions of place experience a resurgence to take their place in their curriculum.

In 2018 Hilde was present when two teachers launched a series of 12 textbooks and a teacher guide for the subject Sámi as second language in primary and lower secondary school (Lyngstad & Monsen, 2017; Monsen & Lyngstad, 2017a; 2017b). Although the audience was small, the launch was considered an important event as the production of comprehensive material for teaching and learning an Indigenous language is scarce. The North Sámi title – *Váriin, Vákkiin, Vuonain* – can be translated as 'On the mountains, In the valleys, By the fjord'. The textbook series is rooted in the teachers' local place both in terms of content and pedagogy, but it transcends both the narrow locality and timescale. They use a spinning wheel<sup>6</sup> and the process of making yarn to outline core pedagogical ideas of the books. These metaphors of teaching and learning connect abstract theories to specific local traditions and the sustainable use of resources from sheep farming. These traditions include a structured process to make raw material into artefacts of wool, like woven rugs. The metaphors include ideas of a reciprocal teacher-learner-community relationship. The teacher guides and textbooks provide the teacher and learner with tools and direction in the process of language learning, and as with yarn balling, the teacher systematically returns again and again to expand the topics from slightly different angles. The learners bring along their knowledge of language, and, guided by the teacher, they work to make sense of what they already

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6 The spinning wheel is not unique for this place but is considered a good symbol for the community to the extent that it is the municipality's coat of arms.

know and also the new tools and directions for learning Sámi. Parents and the wider community are engaged in the creation of a good environment for learning.

In a context of colonisation and assimilation, it is important to consider, as Leonard (2012) points out, if traditional cultural ways of learning and teaching in a case of reclamation of language and culture might be different from today's mainstream ways. Crucial here is the degree of separation and dichotomy between women/men and Indigenous/non-Indigenous. Considering this critical perspective, one might ask if the wool metaphor for teaching and learning Sámi places pressure on the student to think and act in ways that might be very different from the student's other learning experiences and ways of life. Even if the textbooks point to local Indigenous practices, these practices might be very different from what the students are familiar with. It must be noted that the local handcraft traditions and ideas of sustainable use of resources are both historical and contemporary practices. They are for instance manifested in the semiotic landscape of the local school described in the outset of this chapter. Here we see the students' miniature versions of the traditional Sámi *lávvu*. In addition, as places are amalgams of the past and present and the individual and the collective, we want to highlight the dynamics of the pedagogy of place where the students' experiences of practices and places cannot be assumed to be similar. Also, in communities where colonisation struck hard, the articulation of local Indigenousness might change. Evju (this volume) writes about the complexities of the local articulation of Sámi education. As Olsen (this volume) observes, in some cases, it might be easier to articulate a Sámi pedagogy based on historical rather than contemporary times.

Another question is if the local metaphors for learning and teaching are steeped in what is traditionally (but not exclusively) seen as women's field of expertise. Gender has not been thoroughly discussed in our conversations (nor in this volume) about citizenship and education so far, but we must acknowledge the relevancy of this topic, and briefly elaborate on some aspects of the question. As we see it, the question points to a discourse of the feminisation of the teaching profession (Griffiths, 2006). One part of this discourse concerns a tendency that women outnumber men in the teaching profession. In doing so, women arguably contribute to a female view of teaching and learning, and perhaps also to a feminised school culture. Following Griffiths (2006), one could at the same time argue that in the Sámi case, feminisation is a response to men's hegemonic role in a very formative period of primary education in Norway around the turn of the 20th century. This period was when the state's assimilation policy was at its height. Similarly, the LOC program teaches traditional knowledge appropriate to gender but also extends and challenges these roles through new knowledge creation and employment opportunities for both young men and women in caring for and working on Country. So,

while pedagogies of place challenge state assumptions of education for the formation of the good citizen, they are equally challenging the never static Indigenous constructs of citizenry and tradition.

## FINAL REMARKS

This paper is a result of sharing pedagogic experiences and research across two very different places, Australia and Norway. Indeed, it has been through visits to each other's places that we have been able to discuss and understand our contextual differences and similarities. Central to this understanding has been a passionate agreement around the importance of place-based education in Indigenous education contexts. We are far from on our own in this as across the globe, Indigenous populations are driving a resurgence of pedagogic approaches that centre place and 'Country' as at the heart of self-determined educational directions. More broadly, however, our investigation has made clear that the use of education to construct 'good citizens' according to dominant Western ideals is highly contested. Place-based pedagogy is being wielded by Indigenous interests to assert an Indigenous standpoint on what an ideal of the good citizen may actually be. Simultaneously, the same populations are redefining what education within a nation state might look like. This is not without its challenges. Place-based pedagogy can, at times, find itself diametrically opposed to the hegemonic wants and needs of Western education systems and, as we have discussed, such systems have a habit of reproducing themselves. Related to this is the role of colonial educational ideas that works as benchmarks in processes of decolonising education (see Olsen & Sollid, this volume). At the same time, looking at education systems and curricula, there is always an ideological and implementational space for turning the national place-less policy into locally placed practice. Both the Learning on Country initiative (Fogarty & Schwab, 2012; Fogarty et al., 2015), the students' miniature versions of the Sámi *lávvu*, and the Sámi textbooks (Lyngstad & Monsen, 2017; Monsen & Lyngstad, 2017a, 2017b) are examples of place-based pedagogy where local ideas of teaching and learning are at the fore front.

During the course of our deliberations, we were also acutely aware of the changes the COVID-19 pandemic wrought on the notions of place and education. Place-based education, at one level, is premised on ideas of a locality as a point of reference and identification, almost as basic coordinates that we navigate by. This digitisation of education caused by isolation and home schooling has accelerated new lenses to think about place and education in different ways. How can place-based education work when we cannot visit place? In some ways, this is not new. Colonisation has combined with other social and political processes to see many

Indigenous people around the world share experiences of being un-placed and re-placed at another location. This has made many Indigenous populations acutely aware of keeping place histories, and the bonds we share, with different intensities, to the places in our lives (Pascual-de-Sans, 2004). There are thus not 'good' or 'bad' places in a place-based pedagogical perspective. The educational challenge is to create a sense of belonging in the Indigenous students' new locations. Thinking in terms of Indigenous place-based education in new places does not necessarily break the strong bonds with the homeland, as constructs of place are more than simply geographic, you carry place with you. At the same time, the re-creation of the new place can become a significant Indigenous place for the student, and connections between places can emerge and be recast. This also includes creating Indigenous digital learning spaces as a valid and powerful place both locally and globally. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated this throughout Indigenous learning communities, wherever they may be. Regardless, it is clear that notions of place, be they digital, global or local will be essential elements of pedagogy and the formation of the good Indigenous citizen for a long time to come.

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# Seaibi

Hilde Sollid and Torjer A. Olsen

Reaching the end of a research project that saw daylight in 2014, we acknowledge that there are still matters to discuss, tendencies to recognise, and observations to be made. Doing research in the time of a global pandemic created quite a few challenges. Doing educational research while a new national curriculum was launched created opportunities. Add to this, both the field of Sámi education and the more general field of education and pedagogy are constantly growing and evolving. Finally, as these bigger fields and tendencies are important, we cannot forget people and places. In these final words of the book, we point out some topics for further research, we pose questions that have appeared or that are unanswered, and we present some dilemmas.

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN THE TIME OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

One thing that springs to mind is something that has become visible during the period of the research project: A global pandemic creates challenges on many levels. The Covid-19 pandemic created challenges for us as scholars, forcing some to cancel planned fieldwork or at least to change the choice of methods, and making collaboration and meetings more complicated. More importantly than this, however, is of course the impact of the pandemic on communities all over the world. In many parts of the Indigenous world, Indigenous communities were hit harder than the majority population. Such a situation and insight forces scholars to reflect on the importance of research and of the need to put another burden on people and communities.

In the Norwegian and Sámi context, the years of our project have coincided with the period of implementation of new national curricula. The early childhood education curriculum was launched in 2017. The national school curriculum was launched in 2020. From before, we know that implementation is a very complicated process. Implementation gaps are common and seem to be the rule rather than the exception. This is a general observation that is repeated many times about the

challenges and complexities relating to putting new policies into practice. Many of this project's scholars have written about different parts of the Norwegian educational system. Those who visited kindergartens or schools and talked to teachers or educational leaders have all experienced the challenges of implementation. These have been multiplied because of the pandemic as other, more urgent matters need to be solved first. Beforehand, in many parts of Norway, Sámi, Indigenous, and minority topics have been considered complicated to deal with in educational practices. The new curricula included an increased emphasis and mandate on such matters. Instead of having more resources or time to put into working with this, however, the pandemic led to a decrease – in time and resources – allocated to these complicated matters.

Even though we perhaps see the challenges first, the pandemic has highlighted the important role of education in our time and societies. Politicians tend to focus on education as a place for learning, asking how to fill the gaps created and enlarged by the pandemic. Stories from students beg for more attention towards education as a space for sharing and caring, the more dialogical and reciprocal values of education. We are now better prepared for new and creative ways of doing and researching Indigenous education, and we do see a need for more space to the students' voices in the process of Indigenising education.

## DILEMMAS

Working with the project, and especially through a number of conversations between the scholars on the project, we recognised the existence of several dilemmas in the field of Indigenous education. The most pressing one is also related to the most concrete one: There is an often experienced and observed discrepancy between ambitions, ideals, aspirations, and even requirements on one hand, and the resources – both human, financial, and timely – available. This tends to lead to a lack of structural and institutional development and to Indigenous education being kept alive and practiced either through a minimum of resources or through the work of enthusiasts. Praise must be given to the extraordinary individuals. Hopefully, though, we may see the growth and making of educational structure and systems where the enthusiasts can work on top of a proper system of Indigenous education.

This is connected to the relationship between policy and pedagogy. Acknowledging this, we also recognise the dilemma of taking part in what may be seen as another intellectual contribution dwelling in and coming from the corridors of Academia. In this sense, the critical questions posed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith remain important reflexive reminders for us. Whose interests does the

research serve? Who will benefit from our book and project? Hence, how can we work to ensure that our academic work is relevant to what goes on in the practical field of Indigenous education in classrooms, other spaces of learning, and communities of different kinds? What we have done and continue to do is to keep up activities beyond the scope and realms of peer-reviewed and peer-related writing.

Perhaps the most complicated theme that we have worked with is the connected to citizenship. It is a theoretical concept with many meanings and conceptualisations. At the same time, it is a practical concept that emerges in discussions and decisions about the future. As we see it, citizenship is strongly connected both to emotions and to formal descriptions or articulations related to belonging and community. Indigenous education, on different levels of the nexus, touches upon issues of belonging, and of inclusion and exclusion. Adding the complexities of the cultural interface paints a picture wherein there are intertwined relations both within Indigenous communities and with majority society.

A returning topic in this book that relates to the matters of the cultural interface is diversity. Diversity proves to be a complicated matter within Indigenous education. We have seen how diversity, in the early stages of Indigenous education (and Indigenous methodologies), has to some extent been downplayed to articulate a more joint 'program' of Indigenous education. With the knowledge about cultural interfaces integral to understanding Indigenous communities, there is a need for diversity perspectives. This is mirrored in many of the chapters of the book. Still, the potential dilemma may be that of diversity as division. We do not see it as a primary threat to social cohesion, though, and will claim the need for an outspoken and reflexive diversity competence to be part of the process of Indigenising education. Part of understanding diversity is to acknowledge hierarchies (and even conflicts), not only between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, but also *within* Indigenous communities. As scholars, we need to address this.

There are many ways to proceed from this book. We are all connected to other projects that in different ways relate to this one. We do recognise the need for more stories to be told, lifted, and analysed from and about Indigenous communities. This goes in particular for stories from the margins and from different places within the cultural interface.

A part of this, potentially, is a set of perspectives that we admit have not been thoroughly treated in the book: issues related to gender, sexualities, Indigenous minorities, and the intersections connected to these. Gender in Indigenous education is an intersectional field that sorely needs more research.

## THE VALUE OF INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

The international dimension is an important and integral part of the ICE project. Our work grew out of international contacts and of encounters between scholars from different Indigenous contexts. On a smaller scale, the field of Sámi education is in itself an international field as the Sámi live in four different states. This is reflected in this book with chapters covering different state contexts in Sápmi. On this level, we see that a cross-state perspective is interesting and has the potential for new knowledge. Still, we do acknowledge that our contributions are primarily based on state contexts. Thus, we also – at the end of this project – do acknowledge that an area in dire need of research is comparative education research on contemporary matters using a cross-state perspective as a starting point.

Further, the international dimension is part of the project also on the bigger scale. As part of our research journey, we had meetings in Norway/Sápmi, in Aotearoa New Zealand, and in Australia. An important part of these meetings was the chance to learn about and share experiences from our respective contexts, and to see them in relation to one another. A theme of our conversations across contexts is the relative simultaneousness of political events and educational changes. It is in many ways related to the global connectedness of Indigenous peoples. This is not a new observation, but the question that arises is what this connectedness means in terms of how educational policy, pedagogy, and practice travel across contexts.

Although the collective of researchers behind this book use the same concepts, like Indigenous, education, and citizenship, in our writings, we cannot assume that we understand the concepts in the same way. Differences between us relate to different fields of research, we have different relationships with Indigenous communities, we come from different places, and we use different languages. Typically, conversations across contexts take place in scientific journals or conferences that have a narrow audience. What we experience from the ICE project is that doing research across contexts, state borders, and continents requires an ongoing, open and respectful dialogue. This observation is perhaps banal, but underscores a central value of research collaboration, namely that we always have something to learn from each other. Our experience is that research gains from talking and sharing across contexts and positions. Although it might be challenging, we have in the ICE project seen this as an opportunity and quality. In addition to researching Indigenous education from single research fields, we therefore argue for more interdisciplinary research collaborations in this field.

At the tail of this book, we look back on a rewarding time as scholars, authors, educators, colleagues, friends, and storytellers. It is the encounters on different places that stick out: Discussing energetically what we mean by terms like ‘Indigenous’ and ‘citizenship’ early on in the project, while looking out on the coast of Northern Norway and Sápmi at Sommarøya. Visiting a marae in Auckland to talk about the role of Indigenous matters in higher education. Listening to PhD fellows from many parts of Australia in Canberra talking about their respective Indigenous research. Further, of course, the individual encounters the authors have had with communities in Namibia, with teachers and kids in different parts of Sápmi, with Māori students in Aotearoa, and with remote communities in Australia. We see that these encounters are connected to policy, philosophy, and academic writing. May the encounters and conversations about Indigenising education continue.





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This book is about Indigenous education and citizenship. Our center of attention is the politics of Indigenous education to be put into practice. We emphasise the processual aspects of both education and citizenship. We investigate how having both Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens in nation state education systems is reflected in policy, pedagogy, and practice, and how to consider the implications for future forms of education and citizenship.

The book contributes to knowledge about Indigenous education as a field of research, policy, and practice around the world. To reach this goal, we examine the conceptual, political, and pedagogical issues relating to Indigenous citizenship and education in four different contexts, namely Sápmi, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Namibia.

Together, the contributors of the book come from different research disciplines, from Indigenous studies, education, and social anthropology to sociolinguistics, political science, and philosophy. The chapters highlight continua and diversity rather than dichotomies and unity. We look for how local practices relate to national and international demands and perspectives, and for different ways of performing citizenship. Together, we seek the connections between the local, the national and the international, and between educational policy and practice.

**This book is also available open access at Idunn.**

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