



13. Sámi pupils' language beliefs and practices as implicit language policy

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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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