The Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

North Sámi language revitalization: Shifting from passive language carrier to active language user

A case study of individuals who have successfully become new speakers of Sámi in the Márka Sámi areas

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Master's thesis in Indigenous Studies

Spring 2023

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Spring 2023

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Giitosat

Go dán váldofágačállosis lea dát fádda mas lea, de mu mielas heive čállit oasi dás sámegillii.

Vuosttažettiin ferten giitit buot informánttaid go leat juohkán din vásáhusaid. Dii lehpet duođai movttiideaddjit ja ovdagovat sihke munnje ja earáide.

Mu bagadeaddjit Lene Antonsen ja Else Grete Broderstad, giitu buot buriid ráđiid, doarjaga ja ságastallamiid ovddas, ja nai go leaba álo válddán áigi vástidit mu (máŋga) jearaldaga ja hástalan mu go dasa lea leamašan dárbu.

I would like to thank the Center for Sámi studies and the Indigenous Studies program for contributing with travel grants for my fieldwork and for all the exciting lectures and seminars.

To all my wonderful classmates, thank you for all conversations that have provided a lot of new thoughts and inspiration. Especially I want to thank you Danique, for all our conversations about language and for assisting me with reaching the finish line.

Thanks to family and friends for all your encouraging words during this period, it has really meant a lot. To my friend Ida, who has gone through a course of study at the same time as me – we did it!

Giitu maid Ove:i go leat leamašan nu gierdavaš ja go leat lokten mu bajás fas go buot lea orron veadjemeahttun!

Abstract

Language is for many a significant part of one's identity, culture and livelihood. The strict assimilation-policy that the Norwegian state conducted against the Sámi people for over a hundred years led to a severe loss of the Sámi language in many areas. This thesis is about indigenous language revitalization in a Sámi area that suffered a great language loss because of the policy.

By analyzing the interviews of eight informants from the Márka Sámi areas, who have successfully managed to go from passive language carriers to active language users, several main findings have been found. One of them being that every informant has had a strong sense of Sámi identity, which led them to form a personal motivation to want to speak Sámi.These motivations drove the informants to make an individual decision to become new speakers of North Sámi. After they had made the decision, they begun the lifelong process of maintaining and developing their language. As a reward for their efforts, the informants have been integrated into the Sámi speaking community, both in the Márka Sámi areas and in "Sápmi" overall. They are able to give their children a linguistic base and become attractive in the Sámi labor market. These findings are discussed in the light of factors that affects language revitalization by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999), and by Jon Todal (2007). Additionally, the concept of new speakers as an analytical tool is discussed in the framing of articles by Walsh and Lane (2014) and O'Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo (2015). The aim of the thesis is to be a contribution to others who are striving to take back a language once lost.

Keywords: *North Sámi, Indigenous languages, new speakers, language revitalization, Sámi dialects, transmission of language, Sámi language centers, Márka Sámi*

<u>Placenames</u>

Sámi and Norwegian placenames, the Sámi placenames are used throughout the thesis.

Skánik – Are used about both Evenskjer and the old municipality of Skånland

Evenášši – Evenes

Snåase – Snåsa

Gáivuotna – Kåfjord

Unjárga – Nesseby

Olmmáivággi – Manndalen

Guovdageaidnu – Kautokeino

Kárášjohka – Karasjok

Dielddanuorri – Tjeldsund

Divtasvuodna – Tysfjord

Hárstták – Harstad

Romsa – Tromsø

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1 Introduction

During a Sámi youth gathering arranged by the Sámi youth organization, Noereh, in Snåase in 2012, several different workshops were held. In one of the workshops, we received a task to make a short movie where Sámi was going to be the main language. I got the part as a teacher who was going to call a pupil in for class. I had one simple line: «boađe». The word means something as simple as come, and was a word I knew well from before. Still the word would not leave my mouth. The thought of maybe pronouncing such a simple word wrong and in addition being filmed doing so, appeared in my mind. I ended up refusing to say the word and the part went to someone else. After the incident I was left with a feeling of both shame and foolishness because I was not able to just say the word. I believe that this story may be recognizable to others who have strived to make a shift of language. Thus, with this story I wish to set the stage for the topic for this thesis, which is language revitalization with focus on individuals who have gone from having North Sámi as a passive language and changing it to an active language. My focus area is the Márka Sámi areas in south of the County Troms and Finnmark and in North of Nordland County.

1.1 Topic

Language is a fundamental part of a person's identity, culture and one of the most important tools we have to function on a daily basis. The everyday language situation for individuals with a Sámi background tend to vary. It depends on factors such as the majority language in the area one is living in, the education system, family and friends as well as available arenas where one can use Sámi. For some, the language is as good as non-existent and to others it exists to some degree, whilst for some it is their everyday language.

For individuals living outside of the Sámi language core areas[1], who do not master the language well enough to pass it on to their children, it means that they must rely on institutions such as Sámi kindergartens, schools and language centers as sources of learning. This does however not secure that individuals become fluent in the Sámi language, as it depends on factors as Sámi-speaking staff and Sámi-speaking environment within these arenas. Thus, if it for example is a lack of Sámi speaking staff in these arenas, the result is

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[1] Sámi language core areas can be described as areas where the Sámi language is spoken by the majority of the population, as in Guovdageaidnu and Kárášjohka.

often that the majority language is winning as the main language of communication (Pasanen et al., 2022, pp. 11-14).

Another frequent occurrence is when someone with a Sámi background grows up with the Sámi language being a part of their daily life, but without being used by themselves. Even though it may be a common language between grandparents, great grandparents or even parents, it is often not being spoken directly to them. This may cause these individuals to be able to more or less understand the language, without actually speaking it themselves.

For both groups as well as mixtures of the two, this often results in what this thesis defines as a passive language carrier. At the opposite side of the passive language carrier, this thesis defines the active language user as someone who is comfortable with speaking a language in most relations and settings, in addition to using the language on a daily or weekly basis. These criterions have also been central in the search for informants, which I elaborate more on in the methods chapter.

1.2   Previous research

In this section I include mostly previous linguistic work that relate to my research. However, there are several other essential authors who have written about specific historical events, revitalization efforts and the distinct dialect in the Márka Sámi areas. These have been central and are frequently mentioned in the background chapter and throughout the thesis.

Inger Johansen has done research within revitalization of the South Sámi language on an individual scale. Johansen (2008) has interviewed South Sámi individuals and writes about the so-called *language barrier,* which is often addressed throughout my thesis. The barrier is described as something that makes it hard for individuals to practice a language. Johansen argues that the barrier consists of two dimensions: One linguistic and one connected to identity. She concludes that to successfully revitalize the South Sámi language on an individual scale, one must either create one´s own language community, or gain access to an existing community (Johansen, 2008, pp. 122-125). Johansen's research analyzes the language barrier and highlights specific success factors that have contributed to a shift of language for her informants who have been able to start speaking South Sámi. Her findings have been relevant especially for the discussion of the language barrier in this thesis.

Annika Pasanen has written several linguistic articles based on her research of new speakers and the revitalization of Sámi languages on the Finnish side. Her articles address topics such as transmission of Sámi to the next generation, how one can accommodate the needs and

measures of minority languages and highlights factors to successfully revitalize minority languages. There are clear lines between her research and the research of this thesis. Therefore, I have found her articles helpful to build upon my own findings in the analysis.

Carla Jonsson and Mona Rosenfors (2017) have interviewed a young new speaker of North Sámi. In their analysis of the interview, they have found that through the informant learning and speaking Sámi, she has turned what could be a case of language loss into an effort of language revitalization. They also discuss the connection of Sámi language and identity, and how the concept of new speakers relates to their informant. The research has been of help as a comparison to my own findings and is frequently mentioned in the analysis chapter.

Sini Rasmus and Pia Lane (2021) have written an article based on Rasmus´s previous master work (Rasmus, 2019). The topic of the article is the learning process of adults who wish to learn to speak North Sámi in Gáivuotna and Unjárga. Through the data, they have identified three different *stages of reclaiming Sámi*: 1) speaks Sámi in language courses only, 2) developing strategies for speaking Sámi and 3) speaks Sámi where it is possible. These stages have been relevant in my thesis as well. Yet, I zoom in on the two last stages by examining what have made my informants go from passive to active, and thereby move from stage two to three of the stages identified by Rasmus and Lane (2021). The article concludes that transmission of Sámi to their children is the biggest reason for their informants becoming new speakers of Sámi (Rasmus & Lane, 2021). These findings will be further discussed in coherence with my own data.

There have also been several master theses written about the topic of language revitalization efforts (Ghiorghilas, 2021; Mustonen, 2017; Steinfjell, 2014). These have been of interest and inspiration, because they contain similarities to the topic of this thesis. Nevertheless, there are differences between my thesis and the thesis's listed above. As their main focuses are directed towards aspects such as the learning process of Sámi language, education and language within families, while my topic focuses on the individual processes of going from passive language carrier into active language user, as well as what factors have been important during these processes.

1.3 Research questions

The main research question for this thesis is:

- *How have previous passive language carriers in the Márka Sámi areas succeeded in becoming active users of the Sámi language?*

In addition, I have formulated two sub-questions. The first being a descriptive and empirical question, whilst the second an analytical question:

- *What factors can explain the shift from passive to active Sámi language users?*

- *How are these factors connected within the framework of language revitalization and the concept of new speakers?*

1.4 Relevance

My thesis aims to contribute to the Sámi community and other indigenous or minority communities where language revitalization is an issue. I chose a geographical area where the minority of the population speaks Sámi. Hence, the research can be relatable to several other areas where revitalization of minority languages is topical, both in communities within Sápmi as well as other minority communities.

As seen in the previous research section, there is quite a lot of research done within the field of language revitalization. However, I have been unable to find a lot from specifically the Márka Sámi areas. I note that Ardis Eriksen (2009) has written about the dialect used in the areas (which has been useful in this thesis). Yet, there is a different focus as my thesis discuss the process of individuals who have activated their Sámi language, rather than go deep into the Márka Sámi dialect.

Additionally, individuals who are in the process of learning, seem to be a topic that is often researched. This is a process that the informants in this thesis have already been through before activating their Sámi language, and thus, not the main focus for this thesis.

1.5 Theory

Here I will give a short presentation of the theoretical framework of this thesis. However, I provide a more detailed explanation in the theory chapter.

As a theoretical framework for discussing the findings in my research, I use a list of factors created by Kenneth Hyltenstam, Christopher Stroud and Mikael Svonni (1999). The list

contains 18 factors that have been identified as influencing language revitalization of minority languages. These factors are divided into society, group and individual scale.

As an addition to this list of factors, I have added three factors created by Jon Todal (2007) to my theory. Todal has through his work within social linguistics, found inspiration in Hyltenstam's, Stroud's and Svonni's work to create an additional list of factors that he argues to be lacking from their list. The additional factors Todal identifies as 1) The language barrier, 2) Who has the ownership to the language, and 3) Inclusion and exclusion from the language community. (Todal, 2007, pp. 204-208). These factors he has divided into local community, family and individual scale. I use the lists to connect the factors found in this thesis to the different scales and levels on the lists. Hence, both the lists of factors are used as a analytical tool for discussing and placing my own findings.

Additionally, the concept of new speakers is explored through a report written by John Walsh and Pia Lane (2014) and an article by O'Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo (2015). The report is based on the experiences of a working group that was established to discuss the field of new speakers. It states that it has identified core elements and characteristics of new speakers of a minority or indigenous language. Whilst the article by O'Rourke et al. focuses on the role that the concept of new speakers has developed within research. Thus, both publications are used as theoretical framing for discussing how my informants relate and whether they fit within the concept.

1.6 Methods and data

The fieldwork for this thesis was carried out in the Márka Sámi areas in Dielddanuorri municipality and Evenášši municipality in the counties Troms and Finnmark and Nordland. I used two methods to collect data during this fieldwork. The main method used was the qualitative method of interviewing. This was to help me gain detailed information about how each informant had gone from passive carriers to active users of the North Sámi language (Hennink et al., 2011). The interviews had a semi-structured approach and felt more as informal conversations than formal interviews.

As a secondary method I used observation during my visits to the language center at Várdobáiki. The main purpose behind this choice, was to examine the Sámi language use at the center. Thus, I observed and listened to language use of both workers and visitors at the center and observed written language choices in the exhibition at the center.

As for finding informants who would participate, I used my personal network and was able to find eight suitable informants who had connections to the Márka Sámi areas. These have contributed with their experiences form a personal point of view. Additionally, one informant is participating on behalf of the language center, to provide information on the center's language strategies and experiences.

The fieldwork left me with empirical data such as recordings from the interviews that later have been transcribed into documents, notes from the interviews and notes from observing situations at the language center. These will be handled further in the data chapter.

I elaborate more in detail about methods and methodologies in a separate chapter further below.

1.7 Ethics

Connected to my choice of methods and data gathering I realize that it follows an ethical responsibility. Talking about language may seem easy to many. However, for some it can be a sensitive and personal topic, especially when the topical language is one with historical scars that are still healing. Additionally, when one is doing research within an indigenous community it is especially important to remember the historical interactions between indigenous communities and Western research (Smith, 2021). Hence, in addition to complying with formal ethical requirements, such as applying to Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (NSD) and storing my data in a responsible way, I have chosen to include aspects of indigenous methodologies in this research. I will elaborate more on the ethical considerations in the methods and methodology chapter.

1.8 Reflexivity

I consider myself to be both an insider and an outsider within the field I am doing research in. I am an insider in the sense of being Sámi myself, rooted in the Sámi village of Olmmáivággi. This is also an area outside of the core Sámi language area, and much like the Márka Sámi areas, Olmmáivággi has gone through a shift of language from Sámi to Norwegian. Even though the Sámi dialect in Olmmáivággi belongs under the North Sámi language, it is a distinct dialect in the area that consists of the northernmost Torne Sámi dialect. This dialect is the same as in the Márka Sámi areas, however they speak the southernmost (on Norwegian side) Torne Sámi dialect. I elaborate more on the Torne Sámi dialect in the background chapter.

I also consider myself to be an insider in regard to take back a language. I grew up without the language as a home language. Yet, it has been a familiar language since childhood because relatives have spoken it, as well as Sámi as a school subject being part of my education during primary and secondary school. However, this did not make me into an active speaker of the language. Thus, I continued attending several Sámi languages courses as an adult. Even though I felt that I was progressing in the classes and courses, outside of the classroom I became very familiar with the language barrier that will be frequently mentioned throughout this thesis. I only started to activate my language when I began studying my bachelor's degree at the Sámi University of Applied Sciences in Guovdageaidnu. At the Sámi University the North Sámi language is mandatory and the main language of communication. Hence, I know how much time and resources it takes to learn a language that is strongly connected to a person's identity. This is of course individual, but I believe it is a demanding process for most people. Thus, I can relate to both passive language carriers and active language users. Still, I do not to this day consider myself as a fully active speaker since I am selective with whom I speak Sámi with, and I am not comfortable speaking Sámi in all possible settings. However, I believe that having knowledge and firsthand experiences in the field has made it easier to form a connection with my informants.

Nonetheless, since I grew up in Oslo, which is outside of Sápmi and the largest city in Norway, I consider myself to be an outsider. I am unfamiliar with growing up in a rural area such as the Márka Sámi areas, and I do not know the area well. Although, it is worth mentioning that I have had previous, shorter visits to the area during the festival, Márkomeannu, and that I have friends from the area. This has been beneficial in my work of finding informants, but I am aware that it is likely that some may interpret me as a complete outsider.

When I was considering in which area to do fieldwork, I made a conscious choice of choosing an area that I am not too familiar with. I see it as a strength being an outsider in this context since the data gathering consists of interviewing. If I were to pick an area where I have a lot of close relatives and relations, I believe it would be more challenging to keep a critical distance and not make biased conclusions (Johnson, 2014, p. 300).

Another aspect is that I am visiting the Márka Sámi areas in the role as a researcher. The history between indigenous communities and Western research is rather dark (Smith, 2021). This has also been the case in Sápmi, where Sámi people were seen as primitive and simple creatures, who were stuck in time rather than joining the industrial movement (Evjen, 1997).

Despite this, the world of research has come a long way since this was the common view, and I hope that the topic of my thesis is one that can contribute in a positive way for both Sámi communities and others. In this context I should also mention that I felt welcomed by my informants and that this was a topic that they seemed eager to talk about. I am very grateful for the trust and openness that I met during my fieldwork, that is not something I take for granted.

2   Background

The Márka Sámi areas are found all around South Troms and North Norland. Thus, the Márka Sámi villages are separated by the county border of Troms and Finnmark County and Nordland County. The core Márka Sámi areas are divided between Evenášši municipality in Nordland, and Dielddanuorri municipality in Troms and Finnmark. As an additional note, the municipality used to be named Skánik before it was merged with Dielddanuorri municipality in 2020.

Figure 1: Map over the Márka Sámi areas where the fieldwork was conducted. Retrieved from
https://norgeskart.no/#!?project=norgeskart&layers=1002&zoom=9&lat=7605933.68&lon=574501.77

The Márka Sámi is a term that is commonly used to describe the Sámi population in the region. The area has a diverse history with connection to both reindeer herding and coastal Sámi society. Several of the reindeer herding Sámis who moved across the border of Norway and Sweden settled in the Márka Sámi areas, which resulted in a lasting bond and kinship between the Márka Sámi and Sámi from the Swedish side of the border (Andersen, 2005, pp. 7-10). This has also had an impact in the areas distinct dialect that is placed under the Torne Sámi dialect group, which is a dialect used in large parts of the Swedish side of the border as well as some areas on the Norwegian side. The dialect belongs to the North Sámi language and the Márka Sámi areas are the southernmost area on Norwegian side where North Sámi is used. If one where to compare the North Sámi spoken in the Márka Sámi areas to other North Sámi areas such as Kárašjohka and Guovdageaidnu, one would find many differences in both meaning of words and grammar (Eriksen, 2009). The dialects in Kárašjohka and Guovdageaidnu are much closer to the written North Sámi standard and are the variants which are mostly used in Sámi media and thus, referred to as standard North Sámi dialect throughout this thesis. Additionally, due to the close contact between the Márka Sámi areas and the Lule Sámi area of Divtasvuodna (Tysfjord) throughout history, the Márka Sámi dialect also has influences from the Lule Sámi language (Eriksen, 2009).

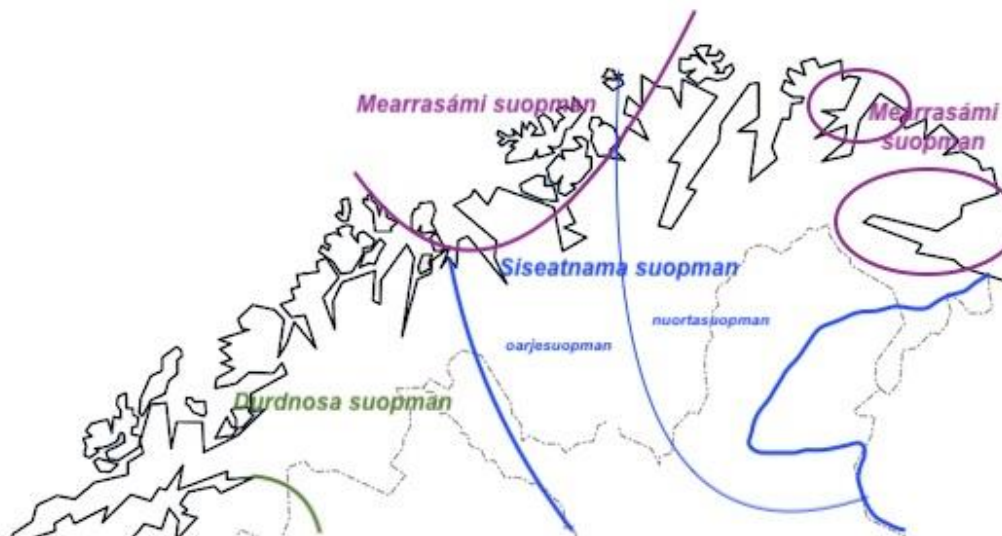
*Figure 2: Map of the North-Sámi language area. The Marka Sámi dialect belongs to the area of "Durdnosa suopmanjoavku" (Torne Sámi dialect group).*The other dialect groups are Mearrasámi (sea Sámi) and Siseatnama (Inland Sámi) dialects, the last is divided into oarji (south) and nuorta (east) variations of the inland dialect. *Retrieved from https://kursa.oahpa.no/2014/11/17/34-10-suopmanat/.*

The overall language situation for the Sámi language in the region is strongly affected by the Norwegianization process that the Norwegian government led towards the Sámi for more than a hundred years, and that some would describe as still ongoing (Minde, 2003). The aim was to make the Sámi people in Norway a part of the back then, ongoing nationalistic wave. Norway was to consist of one people with shared values and way of life. This meant that to stand out in such a way as the Sámi people did, was not seen as a good thing at the time. For this reason, it was strictly forbidden in Sámi areas to speak Sámi in both existing schools and in the boarding schools, even though this was the only language many of the children knew. The consequences of the policies were severe. In many areas parents stopped teaching their children Sámi because of the shame and the stigma that was connected to being Sámi. As a result, the language is about to, or has already disappeared in several areas where it used to be a majority language (Minde, 2003).[2]

Historically the geographical location of the Márka Sámi villages, in addition to the knowledge about most of the inhabitants being Sámi has through the years contributed to an ethnic divide between the inhabitants of the Márka villages and the rest of the community (Nymo, 2005, pp. 1-2). The divide led to mystification and stereotyping of the Márka Sámi areas and the belonging to these areas was not viewed as something positive (Nymo, 2005).

However, during the last 40 years there has been a revitalization of Sámi language within the local Sámi communities. These revitalization efforts, such as the establishment of a Sámi kindergarten and implementing Sámi as a school subject in the local schools is the topic of the next section (Grenersen, 2009; Skåden, 1996, 2011).

2.1 Actions and consequences

The period after the Second World War between 1950–1980 is described as the liquidation phase, this was a period where the Norwegianization process was to be phased out (Minde, 2005). As a result, the Norwegian Parliament unanimously decided in 1963 that Sámi had the right to learn and use their own language in both schools and in higher education. In the following two decades a dawning Sámi institutionalization is taking place. Due to the Alta conflict[3], a legal and political change resulted in the adoption of the Sámi Act in 1987 and in the establishment of the Sámi Parliament in 1989 as the most prominent (Broderstad, 2022;

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[2] For further readings on the Norwegianization, see "*When Ethnic Identity Is a Social Stigma*" by Harald Eidheim (1969) and "*Assimilation of the Sami – Implementation and Consequences*" by Henry Minde (2003).
[3] https://snl.no/Alta-saken

Jernsletten, 2009). This has had significant effect in the Sámi communities across Sápmi. Thus, in this section I will elaborate on some of the most crucial actions and efforts towards language revitalization and their consequences in the Márka Sámi areas. The driving forces behind these efforts have been local individuals such as parents, teachers and activists for Sámi rights. In many of the cases the individuals fits into all categories at once, and as a sidenote, a majority of them were women (Grenersen, 2009).

2.1.1 Actions during the 1980s

The beginning of the 1980s was characterized by local individuals becoming more concerned with the preservation of the Márka Sámi language and culture. The first signs of specific efforts being made was when these individuals managed to implement Sámi as an elective subject for a few students in 1981. However, the solution became short lived as it only lasted for one year (Balto, 2019). The next event was the establishment of the Sámi kindergarten, Sárahká Sámemánák in 1986. The establishment was frequently debated in the local community. For many living in the Márka Sámi areas, the Sámi identity was strongly influenced by the Norwegianization. This may explain that even though there was a general positive attitude towards the establishment of a kindergarten in Márka, there were many who were against it being a Sámi kindergarten (Dalbakk & Skåden, 2009; Grenersen, 2009). In 1987 Sámi language was once more implemented in the schools, this time as a second language. It is noteworthy that Evenášši implemented Sámi as a school subject much later than the municipality of Skánik (now Dielddanuorri) (Skåden, 2011).

The introduction of Sámi as a second language within the school system was a process that caused tension in the Márka Sámi areas. Resistance was shown from both teachers and other parents. Yet, thanks to the parents who pushed for a Sámi language offer, the Sámi teachers (in many cases these were the same individuals), the pupils themselves who expressed a wish to have Sámi at school and external supporters, Sámi as a second language became a permanent offer in the Márka Sámi areas (Skåden, 1996, 2011).

2.1.2 Actions during the 1990s and early 2000s

Many belonging to the generation who were the first to have Sámi as a school subject took part in the establishment of Stuornjárga Sámenuorak in 1997. This was a Sámi youth association who proceeded to arrange the Márka Sámi festival, Márkomeannu for the first time in 1999. It is noteworthy that many of the youngsters who were active in the youth association are the children of the same people who started the revitalization process during

the 1980s (Balto, 2019). Nonetheless, in the same year that Márkomeannu was established, a Sámi langauge center in Evenášši was also established. The language center was named Várdobáiki, and in 2003 the center took over the ownership of the Sámi kindergarten and renamed it Márkomának Sámi mánáidgárdi (Balto, 2019).

2.1.3 The language centers

Even though there are 13 municipalities in Norway that are within the administrative area for Sámi language, there are few areas where Sámi is spoken by the majority of the population and, thus, few arenas to practice the language. For such areas the language centers play an important role for learning and revitalization of the language by providing Sámi language courses. However, the language centers also often function as arenas and workplaces where one can maintain and develop the language. There are 19 Sámi language centers spread in different municipalities all over Norway. The centers are responsible in making the language visible and initiate language measures that they consider needed within their area (Antonsen, 2015).

2.1.4 The current actions of the language center and Várdobáiki

Today the institution of Várdobáiki runs the Sámi kindergarten, a museum and the language center. The language center was first established in Evenášši in 1999, but moved to Skánik in 2018, and is currently funded mostly by the Sámi Parliament (Balto, 2019).

During the interview done for this thesis, the center leader explained that the institution of Várdobáiki and the language center are directly involved with the daily activities of the kindergarten, as well as other measures directed towards children and families, and school children who have Sámi as a school subject. The content for these groups consists of arenas such as a Sámi speaking play-arena and language baths[4] which are focused on a different topic each time. The aim is to give the children and families a positive and social experience of a Sámi speaking environment.

The language center also works to re-establish the youth concept named Nuoraid Siida. This was a Sámi meeting place for youth, that was very successful when it first was established in the beginning of the 2000s. However, there have been few participants and they are still

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[4] Language baths is an intensive language arena where one meets to practice Sámi. Everything is communicated in Sámi by the resource persons and the teachers.

struggling to reach the same commitment among young people, as the first time the arrangement was introduced.

As an aim directed to the adult-users of the language center, Sámi language courses are central. The courses are developed at three levels: beginner course, advanced beginner course and advanced course. In addition, one course has focused on the oral use, so that the course participants can practice what they have learned at the courses. The center also arranges Sámi meeting places for adults and elders where the meetings focus on one specific topic where the main goal is to motivate conversation about the topic in Sámi.

The institution of Várdobáiki also collaborate with the municipality of Dielddanuorri to create awareness of the close Sámi history within the community. Thus, each year they invite pupils in primary school and preschool children in the kindergarten who belong to the municipality to learn more about the local Sámi customs and history of the area.

2.1.5 Indications of change on a society level

Although the establishment of the Sámi kindergarten and introducing Sámi language as a school subject had a turbulent start, increasingly more people are choosing these venues for their children's education. Additionally, the collaboration between Dielddanuorri municipality and Várdobáiki to create awareness about the Sámi history of the area among the school children in the municipality, stands in great contrast to the startup period of implementing Sámi in the education during the 1980s. During that period, the teachers in the Sámi education used what Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005) describes as indigenous knowledge systems. This included *cross-generational learning* and *place-based education* (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005, p. 19) to teach the children about not only the Sámi language, but also the culture. The implementation of Sámi traditional knowledge as well as moving the Sámi lessons outside of the school environments was at that time regarded as inappropriate and unserious by many (Nymo, 2005; Skåden, 1996, 2011). This is interesting, as the leader of the language center explained that these are the same methods they use to teach the school children within the municipality about the Sámi history today. They often bring the children outside for language baths and using individuals from the Sámi community as resources. Thus, what once was regarded as inappropriate is now accepted by the municipality.

Dielddanuorri municipality was included in Sámi language administrative area in 2020. Thus, the municipality is obliged to arrange for the Sámi language to be equal to the Norwegian language in all the public bodies within the municipality. The municipality of Evenášši has

not yet agreed to enter the administrative areas, although implementation has been regularly discussed within the municipality.[5] Still, this does not exclude them from offering Sámi education for Sámi children in the municipality, as the Education act from 1998 state that all Sámi pupils have the right to Sámi language education wherever they live (Broderstad, 2022).

The rights to Sámi language education is rested in the Sámi act, which determined Norwegian and Sámi as equal languages in 1990 (Broderstad, 2022). The language revisions of the Sámi act also established the Sámi language administrative area in Norway, which was implemented in 1992. This implies that all pupils living within a municipality of the administrative areas have rights such as receiving education in and on Sámi, hearing and using Sámi in kindergartens and communicating in Sámi in healthcare (Broderstad, 2022; Duolljá et al., 2023; Kommunal- og distriktsdepartementet, 2022).

Lastly, in recent years, several workplaces in the area have appeared where the Sámi language is central. In addition to workplaces at Várdobáiki, the Márkomeannu festival has office spaces at Várdobáiki, the Sámi Parliament has offices in Skánik and the Sámi media institution, NRK Sápmi has a local office in Hárstták (Balto, 2019). Thus, this may attract people with Sámi linguistic competence, which again could influence the society as it increases the visibility of the Sámi language in the area.

2.2 The development of the language situation

Torkel Rasmussen (2005) has presented in his master thesis, an overview of the language situation between the years 1860–2000 in the South of Troms and Nordland counties. His work is based on previous censuses, demographic maps, language surveys, number of children in Sami kindergartens and number of pupils with Sami as a school subject.

His comparison of figures shows that the number of Sámi speakers within the area decreased drastically during the years. In 1930 74% of the Sámi population in Skánik had Sámi as a home language (Jahn, 1933, in Rasmussen, 2005) whilst there were 57% who had Sámi as **first language** in the same area in 1970 which was 12% of the total population (Aubert, 1978, in Rasmussen, 2005). A phone survey from 2000 shows that there were 12% in Skánik and 0% in Evenášši who **had knowledge** of the Sámi language (Sámi Ealáhus ja Guorahallanguovddáš, 2000, in Eriksen, 2009). The survey shows that these were not only native Sámi speakers and many of them were elderly belonging to the grandparent generation

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[5] https://www.sagat.no/beklager-utsettelse/19.37717

(OPINION, 2000, in Rasmussen, 2005). However, it should be noted that Ardis Eriksen writes in her research of the Márka Sámi dialect, that these numbers may have been affected by that the individuals interviewed from the Márka Sámi areas have a different Sámi dialect than the interviewers, and thereby there could have been misunderstandings (Eriksen, 2009, p. 28). Yet, there was indications of revitalization efforts being made as the number of children in Sámi kindergartens and having Sámi as a school subject increased in the year 2000 (Rasmussen, 2005, pp. 110-115).

3 Theory

This research aims to explore *how previous passive carriers of the Sámi language, has succeeded in becoming active users of the language*.

Thus, the experiences of each informant are the core data for this thesis and have been the foundation in formatting my own themes of factors that have contributed to the process of going from a passive to active Sámi language user. Hence, as help for discussion and framing my own findings I will connect them to Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni´s (1999) and Todal´s (2007) lists of factors that influence language revitalization of minority languages as well as the different scales on the lists. The factors are presented in the next section.

Additionally, I will present the concept of *new speakers* in the following section*,* which is a term used to describe new speakers of a minority or indigenous language, in this case new Sámi speakers. By the end of this chapter, I will present six categories that have appeared from my data - data about the informants' processes of going from passive language carriers to active language users of the Sámi language. The categories from the data I argue to be coherent with several of the factors and scales listed in the next section.

3.1 New speakers

As an addition to the factors mentioned above, as a framework to define my own informants I have used a report written by John Walsh and Pia Lane (2014) and an article by O'Rourke, Pujolar & Ramallo (2015). The report explores the concept of new speakers and aims to be an analytical tool to both researchers and others who have interest for the topic. As the wording suggest, the concept of new speakers relates to new speakers of a language, in this case, minority and indigenous languages. The report discusses what a new speaker is, and who could be categorized as a new speaker. It follows with a list of what they have identified as

core elements and characteristics of new speakers. Yet, the report points out that there is not one way to become a new speaker but rather a variety of ways. Therefore, the concept of new speakers is a concept without clear boundaries and is described in the report as having *fuzzy borders* (Walsh & Lane, 2014, p. 2).

O'Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo (2015) argue that there in some research environments, especially within sociolinguistics, has been less attention towards the new speakers compared to the native speakers[6]. The language of new speakers has been seen as less authentic and pure and, therefore, the focus has revolved around the language of native speakers. However, as several of the minority languages are in risk of disappearing, the revitalization efforts of new speakers are no longer ignored.

These publications are the framework and point of departure for discussing how the concept of new speakers relates to the informants in this thesis. In the next sections I will present the theoretical factors that affects the revitalization of minority languages.

3.2   Factors on society, group and individual level

As previously introduced, the list created by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999) is a detailed list of factors that affects change and preservation of language, placed in the context of minority languages. The list is well known and frequently used as an analytical tool in several linguistic academic works. Among those who have made use of the list is Jon Todal (which is also included in the theory of this thesis) who uses the list in his doctoral work (Todal, 2002).

The list consists of 18 different factors that affects the process of language revitalization on: I. a society level, II. group level, and III. individual level. The factors that address the relation between the minority and majority population are placed under the first category (I). This includes aspects such as how the minority population is regarded and treated by the majority population. What may affect language revitalization are aspects like; whether the minorities are included in political decisions that concerns themselves and the quality of the minority's education compared to the majorities.

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[6] The term native speakers are used about individuals who master Sámi language fluently throughout the thesis.

The next category is on group level (II). This includes the internal relations within the minority group, such as geographical placement; if the minority group lives across land borders, dialects within the group and livelihood and industries.

The last category relates to individual belonging to the minority (III). This category points to how individuals may influence their own use of the language. This includes; what language one speaks with other bilinguals, and which language choice one makes with family and children (Hyltenstam et al., 1999, pp. 46-50).

The complete list of factors is listed in table 1.

I. Factors on a society level	II. Factors on a group level	III. Factors on an individual level
A) Political-legal relations	H) Demography: Size, Core area, Migration, Age distribution, Gender distribution, Marriage patterns	Q) Language choice
B) The ideology of the majority society	I) Language conditions: Official language, Official language in another country, Spoken in more than one country, Dialect or language fragmentation, Standardization and modernization, The relationship between speech and writing, Bilingualism, Language proficiency, Language vision	R) Socialization
C) Language legislation	J) Heterogeneity/homogeneity	
D) Implementations	K) Industry	
E) Economic factors: Industrialization – urbanization, Majority industries, Communications, Labor market	L) Type of ethnicity	
F) Sociocultural norms	M) Internal organization	
G) Education	N) Institutions: Education, The church, Language planning and language maintenance, Research and culture	
	O) The media	
	P) Cultural expressions	

Table 1: List over the factors that affects language revitalization. The list is originally in Swedish and therefore translated to English by me.(Hyltenstam et al., 1999, p. 48).

Based on my own data I find several of the factors on the list recognizable. Worth mentioning is whether and how the relationship between the Sámi as a minority and the majority population in the area has changed; and how the role of education regarding Sámi education

in the Márka Sámi areas has developed; how the distinct dialect in the area has affected the informants both positively and negatively; and each informant's choice of language.

I will explore these aspects in the analysis of my data in light of the list of factors that influence language revitalization of minority languages.

3.3 Language barrier, ownership, inclusion and exclusion

As previously mentioned, Jon Todal is among those who have found the list above to be useful. Nevertheless, he argues that the list made by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni mostly includes factors on a society- and group level, rather than on an individual level, which has only two factors listed (Todal, 2007, p. 204). Therefore, he has added three additional factors: the language barrier, ownership to the language and the inclusion and exclusion in the language community. Todal places these factors within an individual, family and local community level (Todal, 2007). Thus, it seems that the factors on Todals list are factors that affect the revitalization process on a more internal scale, whilst the list by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni covers a broader set of factors that affects the revitalization process in several and broader levels. Still, I have chosen to emphasize Todal´s three additional factors to connect and discuss the findings in the data of this thesis, since this thesis relies on data gathered from the experiences of individuals, these additional factors too are relevant and recognizable. Hence, they will serve as the theoretical concepts in coherence with the factors listed above.

The first factor created by Todal is the language barrier, in Norwegian "sperra". This is a concept that Todal became familiar with when he did research in a small Sámi community. Many of his informants pointed out that even though they had heard a lot of Sámi being spoken at home when they grew up, in addition to learning Sámi in school, they experienced what can be described as a language barrier. By this they meant that they had a blockade stopping them from speaking Sámi. Todal adds that many of the informants did not have the same blockade when speaking English, even though they were not fluent in that language either. Todal explains that this is a phenomenon that he has heard about from several other Sámi communities and thereby a concept that is applicable to other areas and communities as well (Todal, 2007, pp. 204-206). The next factor is described as ownership to the language, "Kven eig språget". This is about how the power dynamics regarding language in a small community can have an impact on the language revitalization. Todal discusses that fear of lacking ownership to a language may cause harm to the language revitalization process. He points to this fear consisting of a variety of thoughts. One may be that the ownership to the

language belongs to the elders in the community because they speak it fluently and correctly. Another is a fear of ruining the language by speaking it incorrectly or that if one does try to use the language it will result in saying a word wrongly and offend somebody, for example by using the wrong dialect. Additionally, it may be a fear that one's ethnical belonging implies that one should be able to speak the language correctly (Todal, 2007, pp. 206-208). The third factor is the inclusion and exclusion in the language community, "inkludering og ekskludering frå språkfelleskapen". As an example of this factor, Todal paints a picture of a multi ethnical family living outside of the Sámi core areas. One parent is ethnically Sámi, whilst the other is ethnically Norwegian. In this situation the core family becomes crucial in making the children of the family bilingual. However, he explains that it may become problematic if one of the parents who is not ethnically Sámi begins to question why he/she is struggling to make the children learn Sámi. This may occur by for example not being able to voice their opinion in regard to Sámi issues because of their ethnicity and thus making he/she not feeling "ethnically approved" as Sámi (Todal, 2007, p. 208).

Based on the three factors presented here, the following questions arise: how present is the language barrier in my own data and to what extent does it impact the informants? How has the local dialect impacted the revitalization among the informants? And what is the relevance of the factor inclusion and exclusion in my own data?

4 Methodology and Methods

A brief sketch of my methods is presented in the introduction chapter. In this chapter I will elaborate more in detail on how I recruited informants and gathered the data. As mentioned in the introduction, I have approached the topic using a qualitative method by interviewing individual informants. This is to secure that I get the individual experiences and gain detailed information related to the topic, rather than measurements and quantity (Hennink et al., 2011). Hence, it is the experiences around the process that each informant has had in going from passive to active that is emphasized.

4.1 Methodology

The concept of giving back to the community that this thesis involves is central for this thesis. Hence, the thesis will be published online to make it available for everyone who has internet access. Additionally, I will send copies to the language center and report back about my findings to the community. All the same, the concept of giving back has been equally

important for choosing a topic that aims to make a positive contribution within language revitalization in the Márka Sámi areas (Keskitalo et al., 2021, p. 77). Hopefully the thesis and the experiences shared by the informants in it, can be of help and inspiration to others who wish to become active Sámi speakers. Still, I need to emphasize that even though I have been inspired by indigenous research methodologies such as participant research, which opens for a collaboration between the society where the research is carried out and the researcher (Chilisa, 2020). I acknowledge that both my topic and research questions were developed by me as a researcher, prior to my fieldwork. Thus, I have chosen to use the wording informants, rather than research participants.

As touched upon in the introduction, the issue of written language and availability of the thesis should also be addressed. As it is demanded by the study program that I write the thesis in English, it will hopefully make the research available to a bigger audience. However, I have reflected that I might make the research unavailable to readers who do not master English well enough to start reading an academic text like this. Additionally, I must admit that I have found it difficult to write about a topic that lies close to the heart, in a distant language.

4.2 Semi-structured interviews

As mentioned in the introduction, during my fieldwork in the Márka Sámi areas, I interviewed eight individuals about their language experiences, and one individual who spoke on behalf of the language center. I chose to do semi-structured interviews, which means that I prepared an interview guide to help me focus on getting similar data from all the informants. The guide contained mainly open questions to provide more detailed answers, rather than short yes/no answers that does not provide the detailed information I hoped to gain. This method also allowed me to ask follow-up questions and opened up for conversation (Chilisa, 2020, p. 250; Hennink et al., 2011, pp. 118-120). During the interviews I aimed for letting the informant talk without interrupting too much. Although this occasionally resulted in quite long interviews, it also provided valuable information. Before ending the interviews, I went through the interview guide to secure that all the questions were answered. In most cases the informant had answered most of the questions without me even asking all the questions listed in the guide.

I emphasize that interviewing as a method has helped me to provide in-depth knowledge about the experiences of the informants, or as Hennink, Hutter and Bailey describes it: *a meaning-making partnership* between researcher and informant (2011, p. 109). Thus, the

method did not provide any knowledge about the quanta of persons who have made a shift from passive language carriers to active language users in the Márka Sámi areas. However, I argue that to answer the problem statements of this thesis, there is a need for data that only a qualitative approach can provide.

As for choice of language, all the interviews were in Norwegian, except the interview with the leader of the language center. Here small parts of the interview were in Sámi. Nevertheless, the conversations before and after the interviews were in Sámi with some of the informants, while with others the only language of communication was Norwegian throughout the whole meeting. I am unsure of how and why this happened. It may be that since all prior written communication was in Norwegian, it created an expectation that everything would happen in Norwegian. Speaking on my own behalf, my choice of language with other bilingual individuals depends on aspects such as daily mood, situation, whether I feel stressed or calm in the situation and what language the other person initiates the conversation in.

4.3   Choosing area and informants

I chose to focus on the Márka Sámi region because I was unable to find a lot of previous research connected to the topic of linguistic and language revitalization within the region, compared to other areas such as Gáivuotna and Unjárga. Additionally, I find the region interesting, due to previous visits to the area, which have given me the impression that the area and its inhabitants are eager to preserve their distinct Márka Sámi culture and language. It seems to me that it is an important marker for the Sámi population in Márka, that they are not only Sámi, but Márka Sámi.

This thesis defines passive language to be the language of someone who has acquired an understanding of the North Sámi language, either through listening to relatives at home, through education or by attending language courses. Although they understand a lot of the language, they do not use it actively by speaking it themselves. The thesis definition of an active user of North Sámi is someone who is comfortable using the language and actively seeks out or creates situations and places where it is possible to use the language.

Thus, in the search for possible informants for this thesis, I discovered that I had to form some criteria to secure that these would be informants who suited this specific thesis and its problem statements. The research demands that the informant at some point in life has been a passive carrier of the Sámi language, who later has shifted to an active user of the language.

Therefor the criteria were as followed:

- That they previously have had North Sámi language as a passive language.
- That they now use the North Sámi language actively in their daily life.
- That they are comfortable using North Sámi language in most settings.

In addition to the criteria above, I tried to include informants of different ages, gender and occupation. However, fitting the criteria became the most crucial in the search for informants. I used my personal network to find the informants. I had some persons in mind from the beginning of the project, whilst others I found through asking acquaintances who were familiar in the area. Often the same names of persons who could fit as informants were mentioned by several of those I asked. Hence, I proceeded to contact the individuals through the Facebook messenger app. After a brief introduction of the topic, they all agreed to contribute as informants. However, two of the informants were unable to attend the interviews during the period of my fieldwork. Yet, I anticipated that I would be able to gather enough data from the eight persons who were able to attend, and I did not wish to pester the two who were unable to meet me. Therefore, I ended up with interviewing eight anonymous informants.

As for the informant representing the language center, I found it natural to ask the leader of the language center if she would like to act as an informant on behalf of the center. I could have chosen to ask one of the language teachers or other workers at the center. However, the leader was the most natural choice since she had knowledge of the language strategies on every level within the institution. I established contact with her through e-mail, where she received a letter of information about the topic of the thesis. We agreed to talk more on the phone to discuss the topic and which questions I would ask. She agreed to attend as an informant on behalf of the center and we made the decision that I would send her the questions in advance, so that she could prepare before my visit.

4.4   During the interviews

I scheduled meetings beforehand with most of the informants and tried to comply with their timetable in the best way possible. Some I planned in detail, whilst with others I made more "loose" agreements. All the interviews took place during my fieldwork in the Márka Sámi areas except from one, which took place outside Márka. The interviews in Márka took place during the week before the festival, Márkomeannu. This was due to practical reasons as many

of the informants were in the area to attend the festival. During my fieldwork I brought a caravan to stay in. This was parked close to the festival area of Márkomeannu. Several of the interviews were arranged in the caravan because it was easy for the informants to "pop by" when it suited them, since many of the informants either worked or visited the festival. Others were scheduled at the language center at Várdobáiki, in Skánik. I was very pleased that all the informants were able to meet in person, since I believe it made it easier to form a personal connection. Additionally, I experienced that many of the informants made relevant comments about the topic after the official interview had ended. This made it possible to note down additional information, that I most likely would have missed if the interviews were conducted digitally.

4.5 Observation

Although my main method in this thesis is interviewing, I also gained data from observation during the two days that I visited the language center at Várdobáiki. I conducted non-participant observation by observing the setup of the exhibition in the center and the interaction between the visitors and the workers, without taking an active part in the situations (Hennink et al., 2011, pp. 185-187). The language center was informed that observation was going to be used as a method in the information letter and in the letter of consent signed by the leader of the language center. Additionally, I initially planned to observe the language use at the Márkomeannu festival. However, this plan was withdrawn as it was not as relevant to my thesis as first thought.

Nonetheless, the method has not been of great importance for this thesis, and it would be possible to conduct the research without the additional method. Yet, it provided an insight in how the language center deals with daily use of language.

4.6 Ethical considerations

Firstly, I need to address the formal ethical evaluations that was taken prior to the data gathering. The first thing I did when my project proposal was ready, was send an application to the Norsk senter for forskningsdata (NSD). At the same time as I was waiting for the NSD application to be approved, I prepared short information letters about the topic of my thesis and letters of consent to respectively the informants speaking on their own behalf, and for the language center. In these letters I informed the informants about anonymity, how I planned to deal with data such as recordings and notes and that it is possible to withdraw from the project at any time. In addition, I e-mailed the leaders of the festival, Márkomeannu, to let them know

that I was visiting the area in the role as a researcher and that I would attend the festival. However, I did not perform any interviews at the festival, and the arena of the language center was more central to my research. Still, I wished to be open about the intention of my visit.

Additionally, I had to make sure that I complied with the requirements of the NSD on how to handle the data that was gathered from the interviews. The NSD demands that researchers preform all recordings in the Teams app for security reasons. Hence, I recorded through the Teams-app, as well as storing both notes and files in the same app. This is regarded as the most secure way of handling and storing data by the NSD, and therefore, I considered it as the most ethical and safest option.

I have elaborated broadly on positioning and reflexivity in the introduction chapter. Yet, I emphasize that I belong to a Sámi environment myself, and therefore have access to other Sámi individuals that belong to the same environments as me. Thus, I have reflected on that I may have missed possible informants who are not a part of the same environments as myself. These could be informants who differ from the informants that I have found through my network, and thereby could have given a broader representation. Hence, using my personal network to find informants involved that I was familiar with almost all my informants beforehand. Some I know relatively well, whilst others I mainly knew of. I can see that this may seem challenging to some. However, I argue that the choice is justified since there are only a limited number of possible informants who fit the criteria of the thesis and come from the specific area where the research was performed, as well as it being the same names on possible informants that appeared each time I asked around.

In order to not violate the ethical practice of anonymity, I made sure to not write the informants names when I saved the recordings and files with data collected from the anonymous informants to the Teams app (Hennink et al., 2011, p. 76). To be able to identify the informants, without revealing their names in my own files and documents, I divided them into numbers, before giving them fictive names in the thesis. I do not believe it will be possible for individuals who are not familiar with the Márka Sámi areas and its inhabitants to identify my informants. However, the Sámi community is small, and in that sense, it may be difficult to completely anonymize informants. Yet, I have done my best. Rather than revealing the informants exact ages, I have divided them into two different age groups, one consists of informants in the age between 20-39 years and the other of informants between 40-65 years. I have also anonymized many of the individuals that the informants have spoken about in the interviews, by not reviling gender, familial connection, placenames etc. Additionally,

although there in reality is a reasonably equal gender distribution among the informants, I have been inspired by an article written by Geir Grenersen (2009) to give all the informants fictive female names as an effort to further anonymize the informants. Grenersen writes that a lot of the work to preserve the Márka Sámi language and culture have been the work of the women in the Márka Sámi community (Grenersen, 2009, pp. 11-15). Hence, to name all the informants with female names is done as a tribute to these women.

I did not interpret anonymity as a particular concern of the informants. Still, by keeping them anonymous, it hopefully contributes to that the focus is on their experiences, rather than who they are as private persons. The only informant who will be recognizable is the leader of the language center. We agreed early on that she was going to be contributing as an open informant. This was also stated in the letter of consent. Additionally, I point out that her position is one of power, as well as that her position gives her a high-profile role within the Sámi community.

4.7 Processing the data

After the fieldwork I had many recordings gathered from the interviews. I proceeded to transcribe these and store them in a Teams folder. Before I transcribed the interviews, it was a concern that some of them would be too short to provide enough data. However, this was not a problem. Even though some of the interviews were shorter in text, they still contained a lot of valuable information.

I then proceeded to look for similar patterns in the transcribed texts. I had already picked up on possible patterns and codes while listening to the recordings while I transcribed. In this part of the process, I had a strictly inductive approach towards the data. I had been evaluating some theory at the time. Still, it was the information that appeared from the interviews that became the foundation for both the codes and themes that later appeared. Hence, my work was not theory driven (Hennink et al., 2011, p. 218).

I then read through the texts several times, to examine which of the patterns and topics most frequently appeared in the interviews. I proceeded to mark these distinctive patterns in different colors. Hence, an inductive form of coding, which was a process of open coding that allowed for the data to "speak for itself" (Hennink et al., 2011, p. 218). When I was done coding each interview, I was left with 12 different codes. The next step was to divide these into different themes. Some of the codes were quite effective and easy to place and connect, others were not. Therefore, I lingered and discussed the placement with my supervisors,

before ending up with five different themes that possess success factors that have contributed to the informants' processes of shifting from passive language carriers into active language users:

1. Identity reinforcement in the Márka Sámi areas
2. Dialect
3. Maintenance
4. Become a part of the larger Sámi community
5. Family relations

In addition to the five themes that are defined as success factors, my data revealed an additional theme. I noticed that my data contained five additional codes. These did however not contain positive factors, but rather factors that had influenced the informants' processes from passive to active language users negatively. This resulted in an additional theme which is named:

6. Disturbances and restrictions

These themes will be applied in the next chapter as a structure of the presentation of the data. Additionally, to the data gathered from the language center. The list of the eight anonymous informants and the informant from the language center will also be presented in the next chapter.

5 Data

In this chapter I will present the informants and the data gathered from the interviews. The chapter is structured by firstly, presenting the eight anonymous informants and the open informant representing the language center. Secondly, I present the data gathered from the leader of the language center. Thirdly, I will give a detailed elaboration of the content of the themes mentioned in the previous chapter, which is the main data gathered from the anonymous informants.

5.1 The informants

As mentioned, I have interviewed eight informants about their experiences of going from passive Sámi language carriers, into active Sámi language users.

Table 2 gives an overview of the eight anonymous informants and relevant information about them that is used for analyzing the data in the next chapter.

Informants	Age group	Went to a Sámi kindergarten	Sámi as a subject in primary school
Marja	40-65 years	No	No
Liva	40-65 years	No	Yes
Inger	40-65 yeas	No	No
Paula	40-65 years	Yes	Yes
Ida	20-39 years	Yes	Yes
Siri	20-39 years	Yes	Yes
Astrid	20-39 years	Yes	Yes
Janne	20-39 years	Yes	Yes

Table 2: List of informants. In reality the informants consist of 5 female individuals and 3 male individuals. An explanation to why all the informants have female names is provided in the method chapter.

The informant from the language center

Additionally, I have interviewed one informant who is speaking on behalf of the language center, which is a part of the institution of Várdobáiki. This is the leader of the language center, Ann-Mari Thomassen. She is herself from the Márka Sámi area and has been the leader of the language center since 2018. Thus, she is well familiar with the area and the language strategies of the language center, that works to provide several initiatives aimed at different focus groups such as children, families, youth and adults. The center also functions as a language arena where the Sámi language is heard and made visible and as a Sámi speaking workplace within the municipality. The role of the language center is elaborated further on through the interview with Ann-Mari Thomassen, presented in the next section.

5.2 The aims and efforts of the language center

As mentioned in the background chapter, the language center runs several language courses to give adult learners a linguistic foundation, but also as a language arena where they can practice Sámi. Ann-Mari Thomassen explains that they use time in the beginning of the courses to map out the needs of the participants in the specific course group.

> *«Some dare to use Sámi more, but then they often have a small foundation from before. Many dare more and more after they have taken part in several courses. So, the courses really function as language arenas. They know that on Wednesday at 17-18 you must speak Sámi. Then they activate the head, so some only speak Sámi then»[7]*

Thomassen sees it as important to give people with a passive language awareness of that even though they have a passive language, and only use a few words in Sámi, they are still Sámi speaking. *«All Sámi being spoken is good Sámi. If you use Sámi words, then you have spoken Sámi. Even if you must use Norwegian words in between you have still spoken Sámi»[8]*

The language workers at the center have however not identified any common breaking point in going from passive language carrier to active user of the language. Their experiences are that individuals have different types of motivation for learning Sámi. The individual motivation is also a part of their mapping of the course participants. Thomassen says that they often share their own experiences to motivate the participants.

«We tell about our own language situation, that almost all of us working at the language center have chosen to take the Sámi language back. And that it is a job that we still work with in the daily life. So it is kind of a life´s work»[9]

Thus, it is important to prioritize time to learn and visit arenas where it is possible to practice the language if one wants to take back the language.

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[7] All the quotes are translated into English by me.

Noen tør å bruke samisk mer, men da har de gjerne et lite grunnlag fra før. Mange tør mer og mer etter dem har deltatt på flere kurs. Så de kursene fungerer jo egentlig som språkarenaer. De vet at onsdag kl 17-18 så skal man snakke samisk. Da aktiverer de hodet, så noen snakker kun samisk da.

[8] *All samisk er god samisk. Alle samiske ord du bruker, da har du snakket samisk. Selv om du må bruke norske ord innimellom så har du allikevel snakket samisk.*

[9] *Vi forteller om vår egen språksituasjon, at med unntak av noen få, så har vi alle på språksenteret valgt å ta samisk tilbake. Og at det er en jobb som vi fremdeles jobber med i det daglige. Så det er liksom et livsverk.*

Additionally, Thomassen uses Sámi language on a general basis to everyone she knows that either understands or speaks Sámi. This also includes other workers at the whole institution of Várdobáiki.

«When the language centers linguistic resource persons are present, we only speak Sámi among ourselves. When we have a break and such with others it is also in Norwegian of course. But we try to motivate to use Sámi»[10]

During my visits to the language center, I observed that individuals who first entered the center first were greeted in Sámi. If it appeared that the person entering the building did not understand any Sámi, the conversation shifted to Norwegian or English. However, if it appeared that the person either knew Sámi or understood some Sámi, the conversation continued in Sámi or partly in Sámi. Thomassen explains that this is a conscious decision.

«Then they get a choice, whether to answer in Sámi or Norwegian. Then it is up to them how it continues. And like (name) *answered in Sámi. And then there are some who don´t, then I go over to Norwegian, since I realize that they may not understand that much.»*[11]

Another noteworthy observation made was in the exhibition in the locals of Várdobáiki. The exhibition consisted of several images linked to the Sámi history of the area. Beside each picture it was a caption in both Sámi, Norwegian and English. Here the Sámi caption was not written in the standard North Sámi dialect. Rather, it was written in the local Márka Sámi dialect.

«Our dialect is in my heart, and we have made it very clear that we have a responsibility to lift our dialect, and that we are going to do. Even if it is not correct according to the written language»[12]

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[10] *Når giellaguovddáš sine språklige ressurspersoner er til stede så snakker vi bare samisk oss imellom. Når vi har pause og sånt sammen med andre, så går det jo også på norsk selvfølgelig. Men vi prøver å motivere til å bruke samisk.*

[11] *Da får dem en valgmulighet, om dem skal svare på tilbake på samisk eller norsk. Så da er det opp til dem hvordan det blir videre. Og sånn som* (navn) *fortsatte jo på samisk. Også er det noen som ikke gjør det, og da går jeg over til norsk. Da skjønner jeg at de kanskje ikke skjønner så mye.*

[12] *Min suopman lea mu váimmu mielde, ja mii leat rádjan hui čielgasit ahte mis lea ovddasvástádus loktet min suopmana, ja dan galget min dahkat. Vaikko ii leat čállingiela mielde.*

Hence, Várdobáiki could be described as an arena where it is possible to acquire a linguistic foundation of Sámi and a Sámi speaking arena for both individuals who are in the process of learning Sámi, the workers at the center and for guests visiting the center.

In the next section I move further on to the data based on the individual experiences of the individual informants. Some of these informants have been, or still are users of the language center. Yet, that is not what is most emphasized in the next section, as the themes provide an overall overview of all the most important factors that have contributed to the informants activating their passive language.

5.3   The themes identified

In this section I will present the themes that are identified based on my informant's experiences of going from passive Sámi language carriers to active Sámi language users. The five first themes contain factors that motivated the informants to activate their passive language, whilst the last shows factors that have caused challenges throughout the process.

Through the process of coding and developing themes, I have selected the answers from the informants that seemed most suitable to answer the problem statement of this thesis. Each theme is structured with sub-headings. These sub-headings are the codes that were identified prior in the search of the themes.

5.3.1   Identity reinforcements in the Márka Sámi areas

The first theme identified relates to the informants feeling safe within their home area. Here I have included aspects that have contributed to building a secure sense of Sámi identity in the Márka Sámi areas. These are identified and coded as positive environment in the school classroom, support from family members at home and unity in the Márka Sámi areas. These three aspects have contributed to strengthening the Sámi identity among the informants and are therefore positive instigators in the process of becoming active users of the North Sámi language.

Sámi speaking relatives in the home environment and support from home

All the eight informants have had Sámi speaking parents or grandparents. Yet, for most of them it was not a language that was spoken directly to them. The exception among the informants is Marja, who had grandparents who occasionally spoke Sámi directly to her as a child, and Astrid who had a parent who spoke Sámi to her as a child. Although many of the parents and grandparents did not transmit Sámi to their children, they still acted as supporters

for many of the informants. Liva was able to find a linguistic foundation at school since her parents decided that she was to have Sámi as a school subject, as one of the first in the region. She says that this was not an exclusively positive experience (this will be elaborated on later in the chapter), but still, something she would not be without. *«I have received a gift that many of my fellow citizens did not receive, as their parents made a different choice for them»[13]*

The support of the home is also very representative for Paula´s case. She is raised in a family with Sámi activism and politics was a part of the daily life. This has contributed to a strong Sámi identity from an early age. *«My grandfather used to say that it is much you can bend your neck for, but not for being Sámi. To say that in the 1950-1960s was pretty hardcore»[14]*

Yet, as a child and youngster she was at times affected by outside forces. When she was to start secondary school in Skánik, she told one of her parents that she did not want to continue to have Sámi as a school subject anymore. The reason was that she had heard that Sámi pupils used to be bullied at the school in Skánik. Still, her parent refused her to quit. The reason for this was that the parent thought Paula would regret it and that there always would be someone who opposes the Sámi and wants it gone. Thus, she had to continue with Sámi as a school subject. *«I am so happy for that, and so angry I would have been if* (s)he *would have actually let me quit»[15]*

Positive experiences in kindergarten and the school environment

As elaborated on in the background chapter, the Sámi kindergarten in the Márka Sámi areas was established in 1986 and it was possible to get Sámi as a school subject from 1987. Hence, this was not an offer that was available for all the informants because of the age differences. Nonetheless, for the five informants who were able to attend Sámi kindergarten and the six who have had Sámi as a school subject, it is a common feature that they did not necessarily acquire sufficient language skills to use it outside of the school setting. It has however had a strengthening effect on their Sámi identity. Ida tells:

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[13] *Jeg har fått en gave som mange av mine sambygninger ikke fikk, fordi deres foreldre tok et annet valg for dem.*
[14] *Bestefar brukte å si at du kan bøye nakken for mye, men ikke for at du er same. Å si det på 50-,60-tallet var ganske hardcore.*

[15] *Så glad jeg er for det, og så sint jeg hadde vært på* hen *om* hen *faktisk hadde latt meg slutte.*

«I don't think the language was so strong in those arenas, but it was very identity-building. It is like, if you don't have the identity, then maybe you don't have the will to learn Sámi either»[16]

This thought is partly shared by Inger. Even though there was no Sámi kindergarten or Sámi school subjects accessible when she grew up, she has seen the effect of these kinds of efforts. She sees that arenas and institutions such as the Sámi kindergarten and local schools have become natural Sámi enviroments. Going to a Sámi kindergarten causes a chain reaction – in such way that it becomes natural to continue with Sámi when one starts going to school and so on.

«Even if it is the case that the children may not be Sámi-speaking after they left the kindergarten, and perhaps not even when they left the school, still they got a foothold within the Sámi culture and the knowlede that Sámi language is actually spoken here»[17]

Therefore, she feels it is important to speak Sámi to the children in the Sámi kindergarten in every setting, even though they may not be able to understand everything that is said. *«It is important that they don't believe that Sámi is a language that only exists in the kindergarten, but also outside in the shops at or in the rivers where they bathe»[18]*

Astrid has gone to the Sámi kindergarten and had Sámi as a school subject. She describes the building of identity that these venues provided as crucial in her process of activating her passive language. Even though she did not start actively speaking Sámi until after her school years. *«I have had very good Sámi teachers. I am also very happy that I went to the Márka Sámi kindergarten and the Marka[19] school because it was a safe place to go to Sámi lessons»[20]*

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[16] *Jeg tror ikke språket stod så sterkt på de arenaene, men det ble veldig identitetsbyggende. Det er liksom sånn at hvis man ikke har identiteten, så har er kanskje ikke viljen til å lære samisk heller til stedet.*

[17] *Selv om det er sånn at ungene kanskje ikke prata samisk når de kom ut av barnehagen, og kanskje ikke når de kom ut av skolen heller, men de fikk allikevel et fotfest i samisk kultur, og den kunnskapen om at det prates faktisk samisk her.*

[18] *Det er viktig at de ikke tror at samisk eksistere kun i barnehagen, men også ute på butikken eller i elvene hvor en bader.*

[19] When the informants talk about the Márka Sámi areas in Norwegian, I have intentionally written Marka without the Sámi letter "á".

[20] *Jeg har hatt veldig gode samisklærere. Jeg er også veldig glad for at jeg gikk i marka barnehagen og på markaskolen fordi det var et trygt sted å gå til samisk undervisning.*

For Janne it provided a valuable linguistic foundation to have Sámi as a school subject. She describes the class environment as safe and adds that they had a talented teacher. Thus, the classes were a positive experience and helped her to form an understanding of the language.

> *«I have reflected on that afterwards, that it was probably very positive because in the class below us there was only one who spoke Sámi, and in the class above us there was also only one. So, when they left their classes to have Sámi, it was alone. We also had to be at school for an extra two hours to have the Sámi lessons. But the fact that we were a group of five in my class meant that we had a good sense of unity, and we were not alone»[21]*

Unity in the Márka Sámi villages

This code evolves around the Sámi arenas in the region, such as the Márka Sámi festival, Márkomeannu, and the language center at Várdobáiki. These have served as important contributors to strengthening the Sámi unity in the Márka Sámi areas, which have contributed positively in many of the informant's language processes. Astrid has been growing up with the festival, Márkomeannu. She remembers how she used to admire the youngsters from her home area that established the festival.

> *«It was our concerts, our home place and our festival. Suddenly the whole of Sápmi came to us. We got to see the young people from Marka that succeeded. They were in the politics and managed to make a festival. They were so cool! Something happened to me when I witnessed that»[22]*

The pride of being from the Márka Sámi areas is recognizable from the interview with Siri. For her too, the festival and the generation who established it had a positive effect on how she felt about her Sámi identity growing up. Additionally, the connection between the Márka Sámi areas and the more central area of Skánik has made her reflect.

> *«I've always felt that I'm not quite at home at Evenskjer* (Skánik)*, but up here in the village is like my home place. Because at Evenskjer they have not been completely open towards*

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[21] *Det har jeg reflektert på i ettertid, at det var nok veldig positivt fordi i klassen under oss var det bare én som hadde samisk, og i klassen over oss var det også bare én. Så når de gikk ut av klassene sine for å ha samisk så var det alene. Også måtte vi jo være to timer ekstra på skolen for å ha de samiske timene. Men det at vi var ei gruppe på fem i min klasse gjorde at vi hadde et fint samhold og vi var ikke alene.*

[22] *Det var våre konserter, vår hjemplass og vår festival, plutselig kom hele Sápmi til oss. Vi fikk se marka ungdommen som lyktes. De var i politikken og fikk til å lage festival. De var liksom så kule. Så det skjedde noe med meg av å se det*

Sámi culture and language, although things have started to improve. So, it has given me an even stronger push to want to take care of our culture»[23]

For Paula too, it has been important to create an awareness about the Sámi history of the area, especially in Skánik. One example of that, was when the informant and her friend were working at the municipality hall in Skánik. Even though they both know Sámi, they usually communicate in Norwegian together. Nevertheless, when they got to the break room during the lunch hour, the informant said to her friend in Sámi that they should converse in Sámi so that the language is heard within the walls of the municipality hall.

«It was a political act that awakened the ČSV[24] attitude within us. But when we got to his/her office, we spoke Norwegian again. It is almost the opposite of what one did before, when one spoke Sami in secret and Norwegian in public»[25]

For Janne the language arenas provided by the language center at Várdobáiki has been a valuable place to practice her language among other community members. She often attended language baths at the center, and even though the topics that they learnt was not always relevant for her daily life back then, it still helped her feel more self-confident.

«It often gave me an enormous boost to be in the language baths. There were people there who were both better and worse than me. Many talked about what it meant to them to participate and to actually open their mouths and speak Sámi. Several were moved by this»[26]

In addition, she mentions that the workers from the language center have been important in her language process. No matter what language stage she was on, they kept speaking Sámi to her. *«It didn't matter if I stuttered and had to jump over to Norwegian for a while, they still kept the conversation in Sámi. That made it easy for me to shift back into Sámi again»[27]*

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[23] *Jeg har alltid følt at jeg ikke er helt hjemme på Evenskjær, men oppe her i bygda er liksom min hjemplass. Fordi på Evenskjær har de ikke vært helt åpne for samisk kultur og språk, selv om det har begynt å bli bedre. Så det har gitt meg et enda sterkere push til å ville ta vare på vår kultur.*

[24] A Sámi cultural, political and language movement: https://site.uit.no/aigecala/sda-1-2013-johan-klemet-haetta-kalstad/

[25] *Det var en politisk handling hvor ČSV´erne i oss våkna. Men når vi kom på kontoret hens så snakka vi norsk igjen. Det er nesten litt det motsatte av det man gjorde før, når man snakka samisk i det skjulte og norsk i det offentlige.*

[26] *Ofte ga det en enorm boost å være på språkbadene. Der var det folk som var både bedre og dårligere enn meg. Mange snakket om hva det betydde for dem å delta på disse, og faktisk åpne munnen og snakke samisk og det var flere som vart rørt.*

[27] *Uansett om jeg har stotra og måtte hoppe litt over til norsk så har de fortsatt samtalen på samisk. Det gjorde at vipps så var jeg tilbake på samisk jeg og.*

Even though Inger has lived in several areas within Sápmi, she explains that the Márka Sámi environment has served as a safe area that has shaped her choices. Choices that eventually led her into going from a passive to an active Sámi language user.

«It wasn't like we had to move to Tromsø or Karasjok to be introduced to a place where Sámi was in use. However, I think that the fact that it existed in the environment in our home place was very important»[28]

She explains that although they did not receive any Sámi education at school, they were a part of a time when a Sámi awakening was starting to form. She knows several other people in the Márka Sámi areas that have been through a similar language process as her and those individual persons she has found to be important allies in the language revitalization process. *«It just happens that when you see those persons, one simply must speak Sámi. That may have been the most important»[29]*

5.3.2 Dialect

This theme includes the local Márka Sámi dialect as a motivator in becoming an active user of the North Sámi language. To some of the informants it has been an important motivation to be able to take part in the Sámi dialect community in the Márka Sámi villages and to preserve this distinct dialect to try to save it from disappearing.

Sámi dialect community in the Márka Sámi villages

For a few of the informants, learning the local Sámi dialect has been one of the main motivations in their process of going from passive to active. This is the case for Liva. The teaching materials at her school were mainly in the standard North Sámi dialect rather than the Torne Sámi dialect (see chapter two) spoken in her home area. Thus, the standard dialect became the dialect she learned during her schoolyears. *«It wasn't just to come home and get help with the Sámi homework from my grandparents, as they did not recognize that language»[30]*

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[28] *Det var ikke sånn at vi flytta bort til Tromsø eller Karasjok og der først ble introdusert for at samisk ble brukt. Men at det fantes i i miljøet i nærområdet tror jeg var veldig viktig.*

[29] *Det bare blir sånn at når man ser de personene, så må man bare prate samisk. Det har kanskje vært det viktigste.*

[30] *Så det var jo ikke bare-bare å komme hjem for å få hjelp hos besteforeldrene mine, til samiskleksene. For dem kjente jo ikke igjen det språket.*

Thus, to be able to get the native speakers in the Márka Sámi villages to understand and recognize her language as belonging to their area, became a motivation for her to try to get her own language as close as possible to the local Sámi dialect. Therefore, she started to gather dialect words by listening and mimicking the native speakers. She explains that this led to an increased acceptance within the community of the native speakers, and that they eventually began to speak more Sámi to her than they previously had done.

Janne also strives to acquire the local dialect. She listens to both dialect words and grammar from others who know the dialect, in order to apply them into her own language. She says that dialect may be the reason to why she has been able to shift language with certain persons, and not with others. As an example, she explains that she has two close friends from the Márka Sámi areas who both are North Sámi speakers – one has the Márka Sámi dialect, the other has a standard version of the North Sámi dialect.

> «I don't quite know why it has become like that with some of them. It could be that (name) use a lot of dialect from here, and (name) have more of the (placename) dialect, it could be something like that. Otherwise, it could be personality, that it was only natural to continue in Norwegian»[31]

Yet, she points out that she is unsure if the dialect is the main reason for the shift, but that it may have had an impact.

Preserving the distinct Márka Sámi dialect

Additionally, to becoming a part of the Márka Sámi dialect community, it has been a motivation for Liva to become a helper in preserving the dialect. Since many of the native speakers of the dialect have already passed away, she hopes to help preserve the dialect by learning and using it herself. *«It is a very vulnerable dialect, which is very much in danger of extinction. For every first language speaker who dies, they take a lot of language with them to the grave»[32]*

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[31] *Jeg vet ikke helt hvorfor det er blitt sånn med noen av dem. Det kan jo være at* (navn) *bruker mye dialekt herfra, og* (navn) *har mer* (stedsnavn) *dialekten, det kan være en sånn ting. Ellers så kan det være personlighet, at det ble bare naturlig å fortsette på norsk.*

[32] *Det er en veldig sårbar dialekt, som er veldig utrydningstruet. For hver førstespråkstaler som dør så tar dem med seg veldig mye språk i grava.*

This has also been a motivation for Janne, who strives to transmit both language and dialect to the next generation in her family. *«I try to talk a lot in this dialect, even if it becomes a mix of here and there, I try to pick up words where it is possible to do so»[33]*

Several of the informants have mentioned in the interviews that they would like to learn the distinct local Sámi dialect with time. Still, it has been most important to learn the North Sámi language overall. Astrid explains that she understands the Márka Sámi dialect but does not speak it herself. She believes that the first step to succeed with language revitalization in the area is to learn the standard North Sámi dialect. This is simply since it is more accessible, and that it will be easier to transfer over to the Márka Sámi dialect after one has learned the language itself.

> *«I think more and more will turn their passive language into active, and that many will have to do it in the standard North Sámi dialect. We must have a common attitude about that that is the easiest to learn, and then we can pick up on the dialect words as we go. A great job has been done with the documentation of the Márka Sámi dialect, so I believe it is possible to get there»* [34]

Paula shares the opinion of Astrid. She grew up with several close relatives who were eager to preserve the local Sámi dialect and she strives to use as many of the dialect words in her own language. However, she fears that some people from the Márka Sámi areas uses the lack of Sámi teachers who can teach in the local Sámi dialect, as an excuse to not learn Sámi language overall and that she sees nothing wrong with speaking the standard North Sámi dialect even though one comes from the Márka Sámi areas.

«It is easier to acquire the dialect when you have the standard North Sámi dialect as a basis. We learn the standard Norwegian dialect but speak with our dialect. Sometimes you got to work hard to keep a dialect, even in Norwegian»[35]

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[33] *Jeg prøver å prate mye på den her dialekta, selv om det blir litt blanding av her og der, så prøver jeg å plukke opp ord der det finnes.*

[34] *Jeg tror flere og flere kommer til å gjøre sitt passive språk om til aktivt, og at mange kommer til å måtte gjøre det på `bokmålssamisk`. Så må vi bare ha en felles innstilling om at det er det som er lett å lære, også får vi plukke tilbake dialektordene underveis. Det er gjort en kjempejobb med dokumentering av markasamisken, så jeg tror det er mulig å komme dit.*

[35] *Det er lettere å tilegne seg dialekta når man har bokmålet i grunn. Vi lærer jo bokmål på norsk, men vi snakker vår dialekt, noen ganger må man også jobbe hardt for å holde på norsk dialekt også.*

5.3.3 Maintenance

The category of maintenance explores how the informants have been able to preserve and maintain the North Sámi language in their daily lives. From my interviews I identified codes like inner motivation, to dare to speak Sámi in situations that may seem frightening, seeking out Sámi environments after they have moved away from the Márka Sámi areas and becoming a "helper" in revitalizing the Sámi language.

Inner drive to step out of the comfort zone

Many of the informants have at some point in their process of going from passive to active Sámi speaker, made a conscious choice to start speaking Sámi in certain situations. For Paula this choice came when she had applied for a job in a Sámi speaking workplace. She made sure to speak Sámi already during her job interview and quickly established Sámi as her preferred language when she later got the job.

«I quite quickly informed at the workplace that we can speak Sámi and that I have no problems with Sámi being the working language, and that I ask if there is something I don't understand, but I don't want you to speak Norwegian to me»[36]

Hence, the workplace became a central language arena to help her maintain the language. It led her Sámi vocabulary to increase, and she gained the confidence to use the language in places where she previously had struggled using it. *«Something let go then. I thought that I don't need to know it perfectly. Because that is a challenge, that you think you have to know it perfectly before you can start speaking it»*[37]

Janne made the same conscious choice, but in a different context. She and her previous partner decided that they would only speak Sámi with each other certain days of the week. In the beginning they decided on one day, before they after a while expanded to three days a week. *«Then I decided not to care if I spoke incorrectly. If I were to care about it, it wasn't going to work, then it was going to standstill»*[38]

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[36] *Jeg sa ganske raskt i fra der at vi snakker samisk og jeg har ingen problemer med at samisk er arbeidsspråk. Jeg spør hvis det er noe jeg ikke forstår, men jeg vil ikke at dere skal snakke norsk til meg.*

[37] *Det var et eller annet som slapp da. Jeg tenkte at jeg ikke trenger å kunne det perfekt allikevel. For det er en utfordring, at man tror man må kunne det perfekt før man kan begynne å snakke det.*

[38] *Da bestemte jeg meg for at ikke skulle bry meg om jeg snakket feil. Om jeg skulle bry meg om det så kom det ikke til å gå, da kom det til å stoppe opp.*

Both informants above agree that the maintenance of the language is a lifelong project. Janne reads and listens to Sámi to maintain and add new words to her vocabulary. For her process, inner motivation and prioritizing has been crucial.

«One actually has to choose to go when a language bath is arranged, even if one doesn't have time. One must make the active choices to improve the situation. It feels very good, it feels like you are doing something right by speaking Sámi»[39]

Siri explains that she was able to make the shift partly because of her strong willpower and by not being afraid of asking "stupid" questions to learn more of the language.

To be able to control the fear has been important for Ida. She feels that the fear is easier to control once one is safe in ones Sámi identity.

«I think it feels much scarier to start speaking Sámi than it really is. You feel that there are many people who are language police and such, and there are some. But you always meet misogynists and racists too, but you don't let them rule your life anyway»[40]

Seeking out Sámi environments outside of the Márka Sámi areas

Another method many of the informants have used to maintain their Sámi language is to seek out Sámi environments outside of their home community. For several, this has included moving to another Sámi area where the language is more prominent. Siri moved to a Sámi area where Sámi is used to a larger extent. There she went to a Sámi course and describes the classroom as a safe place where she felt comfortable speaking Sámi.

«After the first day of school, I realized that I knew much more Sámi than I thought myself. So, it was just getting help to get rid of the language barrier, that was the hardest step for me»[41]

This was also the case for Astrid and Janne. Astrid moved to one of the Sámi language core areas for one year. There she too experienced that her language advanced. *«That is perhaps*

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[39] *Man må faktisk velge å dra når det arrangeres språkbad selv om man eventuelt ikke har tid. Man må gjøre de her aktive valgene for å bedre situasjonen. Det kjennes ihvertfall veldig bra, det kjennes ut som en gjør noe riktig med å snakke samisk.*

[40] *Jeg tror det føles mye skumlere ut å begynne å snakke samisk enn det egentlig er. Man føler at det er mange som er sånn språkpoliti og sånt, og det er jo noen. Men du møter jo alltids kvinnehatere og rasister også. Men man lar jo ikke dem styre livet sitt allikevel.*

[41] *Etter første skoledag så innså jeg at jeg kunne mye mer samisk enn jeg trodde selv. Så det var bare det å få hjelp til å få bort den språksperra, det var det hardeste steget for min del.*

what has had the greatest effect. I was forced into slightly more difficult language than just "bread slice"»[42]

Janne also moved to an area where she felt her practice of the Sámi language improved a lot. All the other pupils in her class at the school were Sámi speaking, some had it as a first language, others (like Janne) had learned it at school.

«I made friends whose first language was Sámi, so we just started speaking Sámi to each other from day one. Eventually it became natural, and it sort of came automatically. It was an interesting and positive experience for me»[43]

Moving to a new area became important for Liva as well, although her case differs slightly from the ones above. She moved to a larger city and became active in a Sámi student association. She decided to start speaking Sámi in this environment right away. Liva says that although her language was not flawless, she had to accept it for what it was. Once she had done that, it became easier for her to use the language.

«When the two of us sit and talk now (in Norwegian), *I speak incorrectly all the time. There are no correct endings or grammar for everything that comes out of the mouth. But it is part of oral language not to be correct in the manner of speaking»[44]*

To find a home within Sámi environments outside of the Márka Sámi villages has also been important for Ida and Inger. Ida became a part of a Sámi political environment early in her youth. Meeting other youth from other Sámi areas on festivals and other events became a motivation to shift from passive to active. Today she both speaks and writes a lot in North Sámi due to her work. *«You don't even notice it, but it gets better. I don't use that many Norwegian words in my language either when I speak Sámi»[45]*

Inger formed a better understanding of the North Sámi language with the help of Sámi environments. Through her work in a Sámi village outside of the Márka Sámi areas, she got

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[42] *Det er kanskje det som har gitt størst effekt. Jeg ble tvunget inn i litt vanskeligere språk enn "brødskiva" liksom.*

[43] *Jeg fikk venner som hadde samisk som førstespråk, så begynte vi bare å snakke samisk med hverandre fra dag én. Etter hvert ble det naturlig og det kom liksom automatisk. Det var en interessant og positiv opplevelse for min del.*

[44] *Når vi to sitter og prater nå* (på norsk) *så sier jeg jo feil hele tiden. Det er ikke rette endelser eller grammatikk på alt som kommer ut av munnen. Men det er jo en del av et muntlig språk å ikke være korrekt i talemåten.*

[45] *Man merker det ikke selv en gang, men det blir bedre. Jeg bruker ikke så mye norske ord heller i språket mitt når jeg snakker samisk.*

to attend several language baths. She describes this as a turning point, where she got past her language barrier and stopped caring if she said something wrong in Sámi. *«For me, that was the key, then I started using Sámi. When I returned to work, I spoke Sámi straight away»*[46]

Become a "helper" in revitalization of the Sámi language

The maintenance of the language is not only a personal project, but a collective one. Hence, one has to find collaboration partners to speak Sámi with. For Liva this means that she speaks Sámi with everyone who speaks it with her. After she became a parent, the preservation of the North Sámi language and the Márka Sámi dialect within the family became relevant. Due to her living situation, she became the only generator for the North Sámi language for her children in their daily life. Thus, it has been helpful for her to bring her children to language arenas such as events at the language center, Sámi festivals and visiting people who speak Sámi as often as possible. Additionally, she explains that it has been important to her that she too uses Sámi language with other children belonging to the Sámi community. *«Then I know that I will get in return that other adults speak Sámi to my children. In a way, it becomes a collaborative project, you have a joint project together with other Sámi parents»*[47]

Inger too considers the language use towards children as important. She strives to be consistent with her choice of language when she speaks with children who belong to the Sámi community. Additionally, she tries to use Sámi as much as possible at her workplace and with acquaintances who also have "taken back the language".

For Marja the revitalization of the Sámi language in Márka is a driving force. She explains that to preserve the language, one must work every day, and that she feels a personal responsibility to ensure that the language is not lost. *«It is so important. Language is linked to the whole existence as a people, so we just must keep on working»*[48]

This also relates to the next section of being integrated into the Sámi community beyond the Márka Sámi areas.

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[46] *For meg var det nøkkelen, da begynte jeg å bruke samisk. Så når jeg kom tilbake på jobb så prata jeg samisk med en gang.*

[47] *Da vet jeg at jeg vil få tilbake at andre voksne prater samisk til mine barn igjen. Det blir på en måte et samarbeidsprosjekt, man har et fellesprosjekt sammen med andre samiske foreldre.*

[48] *Det er så viktig. Språket er knyttet opp til hele eksistensen som folk så vi må bare jobba på.*

5.3.4 Becoming a part of the larger Sámi community

To become a part of the larger Sámi community, relates to the need and wish to be a part of Sápmi beyond the Márka Sámi areas. This may include seeking out environments where Sámi is the natural language to use, such as Sámi social arenas, workplaces, organizations and politics. Secondly, positive reinforcement from people outside of the Márka Sámi areas have been a valuable contribution that have led the informants to keep going in their language processes.

Sámi unity beyond Márka

The urge to belong to the Sámi unity beyond the Márka Sámi areas have been a motivation to start using the Sámi language for many of the informants. Since Sápmi is spread over an area across borders, it can be an identifying feature to be able to communicate in one of the Sámi languages. For Janne this became especially important in meetings with other Sámi from the Finnish side of the border. Since there is such a difference between the Norwegian and Finnish language, it often creates situations where Sámi who do not know the Sámi language have to turn to English to be able to communicate with each other. Thus, when Janne no longer had to turn to English, but rather managed to hold a conversation in Sámi with someone from the Finnish side, it was a confidence building experience.

> *«In a way, it becomes a key to the great unity ... There are also occasionally people who have given feedback that when they have come to Márkomeannu, they have been greeted in Sámi. It is not certain that it is me they have met either, but it may be something they did not expect. So, it has been very positive»[49]*

For several of the informants who grew up with the Márkomeannu festival, it became a ticket into the larger Sámi society. The festival attracted Sámi from other areas, to come visit the Márka Sámi areas for a weekend each year. For Astrid, the festival has been where she got to know other Sámi youth and became familiar with other Sámi arenas than the ones she already knew in the Márka Sámi areas. *«Together with other Sámi youngsters who had also learned*

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[49] *Det blir på en måte en nøkkel til det store samholdet ... Også er det av og til noen som har gitt tilbakemelding om at når de har kommet til Márkomeannu, så har de blitt møtt på samisk. Det er ikke sikkert det er meg de har møtt heller, men det kan hende at de ikke hadde forventet det. Så det har vært veldig positivt.*

Sámi, we went to other Sámi festivals and made new Sámi friends, and then the language of friendship became Sámi»[50]

This was also the case for Ida, whose teenage years contained both festival visits and engaging in Sámi youth organizations. For her, to travel outside of the Márka Sámi areas became one of the biggest contributions in her process from passive to active. Through the organizations she got to travel across borders and meet other Sámi youth.

«I think it was a bit boring when one sits as one out of four people with Sámi as a school subject. Then it's not so motivating. But when you get out and meet more Sámi, one starts to think that this is a bit cool»[51]

She shows to one example, when she attended a youth camp at the indigenous festival, Riddu Riđđu in the North of Troms.

> *«There people spoke so many different languages. Some spoke Russian, some spoke Sámi, some could not speak English and there were some who came from the Finnish side who could only speak Finnish and Sámi. So, people switched so much between the languages that the language barrier almost disappeared»[52]*

Inger has also engaged in Sámi organizations. However, this was in another time period than the generation who grew up with the Márkomeannu festival. Still, she too found it very motivating to become a part of the collective Sámi unity. She started to involve herself in Sámi environments during the Sámi awakening-era in the 1970s-1980s.

«The language came gradually from when I was a youngster, from the age of eighteen - nineteen, when we entered the Sámi environment with many others who spoke Sámi ... We wanted to be part of the big whole»[53]

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[50] *Sammen med andre samisk ungdom som også hadde lært seg samisk så dro vi på andre samiske festivaler og fikk nye samiske venner, og da ble liksom det vennskapsspråket samisk.*

[51] *Jeg tror det er litt kjedelig når man sitter som én ut av fire stykker som har samisk. Da er det ikke så motiverende. Men når man kommer ut og møter litt andre samer, så tenker man at det her er jo litt kult.*

[52] *Der snakka folk så mange forskjellige språk. Noen snakka russisk, noen snakka samisk, noen kunne ikke engelsk og det var noen som kom fra finsk side som bare kunne snakke finsk og samisk. Så man switcha så mye mellom språkene at da forsvant nesten den her språkbarrieren.*

[53] *Språket kom gradvis fra jeg var ungdom da, i fra atten-nitten årsalderen, hvor at vi kom inn i det samiske miljøet med mange andre som prata samisk ... vi ville være en del av den store helheten.*

Positive reinforcement

Although positive reinforcement from others may not have been the main factor to why the informants have gone from passive to active, it has had a positive effect which has motivated the informants to keep speaking Sámi. The informants describe situations where typically it has been a person from a Sámi environment who is a native Sámi speaker who has given a positive comment about their language use – or in some cases refrained from commenting on their language. When Astrid started to actively use the Sámi language with acquaintances, she found it to be very beneficial to her language process that people did not make a big deal about it. *«No one ever embarrassed you because of it. They just switched back or continued to use Sami back»[54]*

For Liva however, it was a motivation if she received positive comments about her language. She also welcomed language corrections if it was done in a discrete way. For instance, by repeating a word in the correct way if she had mispronounced it. *«It worked very well for me. Instead of correcting it, they just repeated it. The language took another step forward there»[55]*

For Siri it has been strengthening to her Sámi identity to learn the Sámi language. She feels that knowing the language has caused an increased acceptance by others belonging to the Sámi community. This feeling may be connected to that she has had previous encounters where people have talked about her in Sámi without knowing that she understood. Nonetheless, after she started to actively use Sámi, she has mainly gotten positive feedback from others. This has inspired her to keep going in her process from passive to active.

5.3.5 Family relations

For some of the informants it was a turning point in their life to get children. For others, the shift of language in other relations have demanded a clear choice of language. This theme includes aspects as to strive to transmit Sámi to the next generation, to communicate in Sámi with a partner and being able to speak Sámi with other family relations such as grandparents and in-laws as motivations to activate one's passive language.

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[54] *Det var aldri noen som gjorde deg forlegen på grunn av det. Dem bare slo over tilbake, eller fortsatte å bruke samisk tilbake.*

[55] *Det funka veldig godt for meg. I stedet for å rette så sa man det bare på nytt igjen. Språket tok nok et steg videre der.*

Transmitting the language

Striving to pass on the language to their children has been one of the main motivational factors for most of the informants who have children. A common feature in this factor is that the informants' experiences of learning the Sámi language and then later turning it into a language they use actively, causes them to aim for an easier language route for their own children. Thus, when Liva got her first child, it became a triggering factor in her own language process, which caused her to make a decision.

«From the moment (s)he *came out, I thought that now I will only speak Sámi with* him/her. *So, then I did, and I've been doing it now for 14 years. I have also had* (number) *more children since, to whom I also speak Sámi»*[56]

Even though she has chosen to speak Sámi with her children and has arranged for them to have Sámi as a school subject, she does not wish to pressure them. The process of teaching her children Sámi has been varying. Some periods have been successful, and they have spoken a lot of Sámi together, whilst at times less.

«My goal is not to make them first-language speakers, but to give them a good foundation to be able to take a lot of language with them, so that their path will be a little easier than what mine was»[57]

This became a prominent decision for Janne as well. Although she and her current partner do not speak Sámi with each other, they have decided to do so with their children. *«The other day I said to my partner imagine that Sámi is what our children hear from us at home»*[58]

They use the network around them as help to provide a Sámi speaking environment around their children. Her in-laws and her close family member that knows a lot of the Márka Sámi dialect also speaks Sámi to her children. *«It's also nice for me, because then I learn some dialect words that I didn't learn at school»*[59]

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[56] *Fra* hen *kom ut tenkte jeg at nå skal jeg bare snakke samisk med* hen. *Så da gjorde jeg det, og det har jeg gjort nå i 14 år. Også har jeg fått* (tall) *barn til som jeg også prater samisk til.*

[57] *Mitt mål er ikke å gjøre de til førstespråkstalere, men at de skal få et godt grunnlag til å kunne ha med seg mye språk, så veien deres blir litt lettere enn hva min var.*

[58] *Her om dagen sa jeg til partneren min at tenk at samisk er det språket barna våre får høre her hjemme.*
[59] *Det er også fint for meg, for da får jeg inn litt dialektord som jeg ikke lærte på skolen.*

Having children became an important mark in the language process of Marja as well. She had built a solid passive understanding of the Sámi language from her childhood. However, it was when she got her first child that she increased her active use of the Sámi language.

«They couldn't get a Sámi teacher for him/her*, so then I had to be the teacher myself. It was probably from that time that I became more active around it»*[60]

She continued to speak Sámi to all her children, and although some of them answer in Norwegian she tries to find ways to motivate them to use Sámi. She has created a Sámi speaking group chat for her family, where she encourages her children to write in Sámi.

«I motivate by encouraging them to use the words they know, it doesn't matter if one uses Norwegian words too. Then I reply with how one could have written or if there are words that are missing or something like that»[61]

Speaking Sámi in other relations

In addition to the language between parent and child, there have been other family relations mentioned as important by the informants.

For Astrid, the Sámi language became more prominent due to her moving away from home. The distance forced her and a close family member to communicate more through the phone, rather than face to face. Life circumstances that previously had affected their choice of language, were now removed.

> *«Suddenly we were in a position where we had to talk a lot in private. I think the first time I shifted to Sámi with* him/her *I had been drinking and partying.* (S)he *called, and it was quite early in the evening. After that it happened more and more times...* (S)he *let me stammer on without correcting me. I think* (s)he *understood that I needed to take the time I needed to figure it out»*[62]

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[60] *De fikk ikke tak i samisklærer til* hen*, så da måtte jeg selv være lærer. Så det var vel kanskje fra den tiden jeg ble mer aktiv rundt det.*

[61] *Jeg bruker å motivere med å oppfordre til å bruke de ordene en kan, og det gjør ingenting om man bruker norske ord også. Så sender jeg tilbake hvordan man kunne ha skrevet eller hvis det er ord som mangler eller sånt.*

[62] *Plutselig var vi i en posisjon hvor vi skulle prate mye på to-mannshånd. Jeg tror at første gang jeg slo over med* hen *så hadde jeg drukket og vært på fest.* Hen *ringte og det var jo ganske tidlig på kvelden, men da slo jeg over. Også skjedde det flere og flere ganger ...* Hen *lot meg stotre i vei uten å rette på meg. Jeg tror* hen *skjønte at jeg måtte få bruke den tida jeg trengte til å finne ut av det.*

In Marja´s case, she and a close family member have increased their use of Sámi because the family member´s Norwegian language has gotten weaker through the years, and therefore their language of communication has become Sámi.

For several of the other informants, Sámi speaking partners and in-laws have had roles as supporters and helpers in their language processes. Siri says that to have a partner and in-laws with Sámi as their native language has motivated her to start using it actively herself and thereby opened the door for her to use it as a first language in her daily life - and hopefully with her future children.

«The reason why I took the step and started speaking Sámi was that I got a partner whose mother tongue was Sámi. It made me feel that I really wanted to take the language back to our family»[63]

Yet, she still faces some challenges in her language use with her in-laws. Since their relation initially was established in Norwegian, she must work hard in order to preserve that their conversation stays in Sámi.

«Every time someone started talking to me in Norwegian, I answered in Sámi. I still have to do so, even though we have lived here for two years. There are still some people who forget that I speak Sámi, since they have gotten to know me in Norwegian»[64]

The establishment of language in new relations, is relevant in Paula´s case. For her it has been an important measure of language maintenance to establish Sámi language as spoken language with new Sámi speaking relations in her life. This became evident when she met her partner.

> *«I thought when we started to talk, that here we will only get to know each other in Sámi. It is so important that we do so. Therefore, it became completely natural for us. I see that in situations when we have people visiting, or places where Norwegian is spoken, because I still always address him/her in Sámi»[65]*

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[63] *Grunnen til at jeg tok steget og begynte å prate samisk var at jeg fikk en samboer som hadde samisk som morsmål. Det gjorde at jeg kjente at jeg hadde veldig lyst til å ta språket tilbake til våres familie.*

[64] *Hver gang noen begynte å prate norsk til meg, så svarte jeg på samisk. Jeg må gjøre det enda, selv om vi har bodd her i to år. Så er det enda noen som glemmer at jeg prater samisk, siden de har blitt kjent med meg på norsk.*

[65] *Jeg tenkte når vi begynte å holde på, at her skal vi altså bare bli kjent på samisk. Det er så viktig at vi blir det. Dermed ble det helt naturlig for oss. Det ser jeg i situasjoner hvis vi har folk på besøk, eller er noen plasser hvor det snakkes norsk, for jeg henvender meg allikevel alltid til* hen *på samisk.*

Inger has a partner who has North Sámi as his first language. He communicated with their children in Sámi, and after a while he spoke it to her as well. This caused her to understand more of the Sámi language. Additionally, another family member from the Finnish side of Sápmi made it more natural for Inger to communicate in Sámi. The response from the family member boosted her self-esteem.

> *«In that case, I was probably motivated by positive feedback. Because* (s)he *once said that she had difficulties hearing and that when people talk fast,* (s)he *couldn't understand what they were saying. Then* (s)he *said, "I understand you the best out of everyone". It was because I pronounced the words very clearly, the way you do when you learn»* [66]

5.3.6 Disturbances and restrictions

The five themes mentioned above contains positive and motivational factors that affect the process of becoming an active user of the Sámi language. This sixth and last theme differs from these. It includes elements that have disturbed and restricted the informants' processes of going from passive language carrier to active language user. Codes within this theme include the language barrier and fear of the language police, to speak a dialect that differs from the Márka Sámi dialect, difficulties with shifting language in close relations that have been established in Norwegian, limited Sámi vocabulary in certain situations and structural and political restrictions.

The language barrier and fear of the language police

Many of the informants explained that they are familiar with the language barrier. This is a factor that Jon Todal (2007) also includes on his list of factors that affect language revitalization. Within the group of informants in this thesis the barrier has had a varied presence. However, what is common for the group is that they have not let the language barrier overrule their decision to become active Sámi speakers.

Liva describes the feeling of the language barrier as getting an increase in heart rate and a feeling of something tying up.

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[66] *I det tilfellet ble jeg nok motivert av positiv tilbakemelding. For* hen *sa en gang at hun hørte dårlig og at når folk prater fort så klarte* hen *ikke å oppfatte hva de sa. Så en gang sa* hen*: Mun ádden du buoremus buohkain. Det var fordi jeg uttalte ordene veldig tydelig, sånn som man gjør når man lærer.*

«You don't want to talk and look for strategies to be able to get the conversation into Norwegian. You think that if I say this or that, then maybe the person will switch to Norwegian»[67]

She still gets this feeling from time to time. However, it does not influence her to not continue a conversation in Sámi anymore.

This is recognizable in the cases of Astrid and Marja as well. Astrid uses the example of how she felt the first times she tried to shift language with a close relation in her life.

«The tongue did not strike. I knew what I wanted to say but I couldn't find the words, couldn't say the words right and I felt stupid…. That's why I think it happened when I had been drinking the first few times. Because it was so very difficult»[68]

Marja also recounted one specific incident from her childhood, that had a negative effect on her language process. She had a Sámi speaking friend whom she once tried to speak Sámi with. However, the friend started to laugh when she spoke. *«The fact that* (s)he *was grinning made me not do it anymore»*[69]

For Inger the language barrier consisted of a fear that people would misunderstand or not understand her when she spoke Sámi. Hence, she refrained from speaking. *«I didn't speak Sámi to my children either. But in recent times it has been okay to talk to grandchildren and grown-up children»*[70]

Whilst Janne experienced that her own expectations to herself may have affected her process in becoming an active user of the Sámi language. *«I am very like that as a person, that I want to do everything very well and perfectionistic. So, it was more that I hear, or have heard, that it become wrong»*[71]

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[67] *Man har ikke lyst til å prate, også leter man etter strategier for å kunne få samtalen over på norsk. Man tenker at hvis jeg sier det eller det så kanskje vil personen slå over til norsk.*

[68] *Altså tunga slo ikke. Jeg visste hva jeg ville si, men jeg fant ikke ordene, klarte ikke si ordene og jeg følte meg dum …. Det er derfor jeg tror det skjedde når jeg hadde drukket de første gangene. For det var så sykt vanskelig.*

[69] *Akkurat det at* hen *flirte gjorde at jeg ikke gjorde det mer.*

[70] *Jeg prata jo ikke samisk til ungene mine heller. Men i senere tid har det vært greit å prate til barnebarn og voksne barn.*

[71] *Jeg er veldig sånn som person, at jeg vil gjøre alt veldig bra og perfeksjonistisk. Så det var mer det at jeg hører, eller har hørt at det blir feil.*

Yet, she managed to put away these thoughts when she made the decision to start using the language.

Siri explains about what she describes as a collective language barrier in the Márka Sámi areas. She thinks that the collective language barrier is so high that it prevents the Sámi language from being used actively in the daily life in the Márka Sámi areas.

> *«In the public sector here in Marka, it is actually very difficult to practice Sámi because it is so rarely used. There are many people who know Sámi, who do not use it. There are also many people who feel that they do not know enough to use it. In these areas I think it's a little more difficult... The fear of not being good enough in the language to use it has probably destroyed a lot»[72]*

Paula´s case differs slightly, as the language barrier has not been as prominent in her language process. However, she feared that people who were fluent in Sámi would mock her language. She describes these people as the language police.

> *«I have experienced more of language policing than language barriers. I have not been so afraid to speak at home, for example. Or with friends who have been at the same level as me. So, I have not felt so much about the language barrier, but perhaps more about being ridiculed by the language police»[73]*

Nonetheless, she says that she overcome the fear by deciding to use Sámi actively and thereby also constantly improving her language.

«To a large extent, it is about the fact that I have much more self-confidence when it comes to the language, because I have worked so hard on it. It's not perfect, I know. But now it's to the point that I can parry a language police in Sámi if I want to»[74]

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[72] *I det offentlige her i Marka så er det jo veldig vanskelig egentlig å praktisere samisk fordi det er såpass lite brukt. Det er jo veldig mange som kan samisk, som ikke bruker det. Også er det jo veldig mange som føler at de ikke kan nok til å bruke det. Så i de her områdene så synes jeg det er litt vanskeligere ... Den redselen for å ikke være god nok i språket til å bruke det har nok ødelagt veldig mye.*

[73] *Jeg har mer kjent på språkpoliti enn språksperre. Jeg har ikke vært så redd for å snakke hjemme for eksempel. Eller med kompiser som har vært på samme nivå som meg. Så jeg har ikke kjent så på språksperra, men kanskje mer på å bli latterliggjort av språkpolitiet.*

[74] *I stor grad handler det om at jeg har mye mer selvtillit når det kommer til språket, fordi jeg har jobba såpass med det. Det er ikke perfekt, det vet jeg. Men nå er det såpass at jeg kan parere en språkpoliti på samisk hvis jeg vil.*

To speak in the "wrong" dialect

The Márka Sámi dialect has been previously mentioned in this chapter as a motivating factor. Despite that it has motivated some of the informants to become active users of Sámi, it has also had a challenging affect. As several of the informants speak or have at some point spoken mostly the standard North Sámi dialect, it has prevented them from being able to communicate in Sámi with the grandparent-generation. This is the case for both Astrid and Siri. Even though Astrid and her grandmother know Sámi, they still communicate in Norwegian. Likewise in Siri´s situation. However, she thinks that there may be another underlying reason to why her grandmother will not speak Sámi with her.

«I think she only says that because it is too difficult for her to speak Sámi. Because the last time she spoke Sámi was with my grandfather, and it has been well over 40 years since he died»[75]

Liva says that the lack of teaching aids in their own local Sámi dialect at school resulted in them mostly learning the standard version of North Sámi. She experienced that some of the native Sámi speaking elders from the Márka Sámi areas critiqued the dialect that they were thought at school. Hence, it created a remoteness towards the language she learned at school. *«I noticed myself that we did not get the linguistic community with those who actually had it as their mother tongue here in Marka»[76]*

Ida has struggled to understand the local dialect. Although, she has learned to understand it with the years, she is still selective with whom she chooses to speak Sámi with in the Márka Sámi areas.

> *«There are old people here in the village who may not have had an active Sámi identity, but who can speak Sámi. I don't speak Sámi with them, simply because I think they have difficulties understanding me in terms of dialect... But those here who have been active as teachers, worked at Várdobáiki or at the festival, I can happily speak Sami with»[77]*

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[75] *Jeg tror hun bare sier det fordi det er for tungt for henne å prate samisk. For sist hun prata samisk var med morfar, og det er jo godt over 40 år siden han døde.*

[76] *Jeg kjente selv at vi ikke fikk det språklige felleskapet med de som faktisk hadde det som morsmål her i marka.*

[77] *Det finnes jo gamle folk her i bygda som kanskje ikke har hatt en aktiv samisk identitet, men som kan snakke samisk. De bruker jeg ikke å snakke samisk med, rett og slett fordi jeg tror de har vanskeligheter med å skjønne meg dialektmessig ... Men de her som har vært aktive som lærere, jobbet på Várdobáiki eller på festivalen kan jeg gjerne snakke samisk med.*

The difficulty of shifting language in relations established in Norwegian

To shift language from Norwegian to Sámi in close relations has been a challenge that many of the informants have met. Unlike the previously mentioned language barrier and language police, this is still a current challenge for all the informants.

Astrid explains that she has several Sámi speaking friends who she has been unable to shift language from Norwegian to Sámi with, since they got to know each other in Norwegian. Marja still finds it difficult to actively use Sámi consistently with her partner for many years, even though the partner too knows Sámi.

«Sometimes I can speak Sámi with her/him*, maybe two or three times in the course of one day, but then it turns to Norwegian because we have become used to it. We have not quite succeeded there, to turn it around»*[78]

Likewise, Janne finds it difficult to make a shift of language with close relations that have been established in another language than Sámi. This is a current situation that she too faces together with her partner.

«Much is probably about the fact that the language in which you get to know people in, is what you often continue with. But also, the fact that it is not a first language for any of us, so we have a somewhat limited vocabulary and such»[79]

Siri has a close Sámi speaking relation in her life who she has known from childhood. However, they have not been able to turn their common language completely into Sámi.

«It's probably because they've been very close to me... Since I was a child, I've been with them a lot. Then it is a bit difficult to shift. But if my partner is with us and we start talking the three of us, we talk Sámi. But if the two of us are alone, then it will be in Norwegian»[80]

Paula also finds language shifts within close and long-lasting relations established in Norwegian difficult. She uses the example of the relation she has with two Sámi speaking

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[78] *Noen ganger kan jeg snakke samisk med* hen*, i løpet av én dag så blir det kanskje to-tre ganger, også blir det på norsk fordi vi er blitt vandt til det. Vi har ikke helt lyktes der og snu det.*

[79] *Mye handler vel om at det språket man bekjenner personer på, er liksom det som man ofte fortsetter med. Men også det at det ikke er førstespråk til noen av oss, så vi har litt begrensa ordforråd og sånt.*

[80] *Det er sikkert fordi de har vært meg veldig nær ... Siden jeg var barn, har jeg vært ekstremt mye hos dem. Da er det litt vanskelig å legge over. Men hvis samboeren min er med og vi begynner å prate i lag vi tre så prater vi samisk. Men hvis vi to er alene, da blir det på norsk.*

siblings. The oldest sibling is close to her in age, and they speak mostly Norwegian with each other, whilst with the younger sibling she speaks mainly Sámi. The reason for this is that she and the oldest sibling are so close in age and have had a sibling-like relationship since childhood.

> *«It is natural for us to speak Norwegian, even though we both know that we could just as well have had the conversation in Sámi. But it just doesn't become like that, and we can't turn it around either. Maybe because it's too close, and we're talking about very close things, and it doesn't come naturally to us to change languages»[81]*

Limited Sámi vocabulary in certain situations

Some of the informants have linked their use of Sámi to certain situations, and thereby may struggle to speak Sámi in unfamiliar situations. In some of these situations they tend to have a limited vocabulary for the specific setting.

Liva feels that her Sámi language skills are limited to concrete tasks in her daily life. Hence, the academic and "the meeting-language" becomes too complicated for her to follow in Sámi. This also appears when she needs to express raw emotions. If she is angry, stressed or feeling ill it is easier for her to voice herself in her mother tongue – Norwegian.

«In a way, I have understood how first language speakers like grandma have felt. When emotions in the body are connected to language, it is one's first language that is the easiest to communicate in, and for me it is Norwegian»[82]

This is applicable in Astrid´s case, as she is not comfortable speaking Sámi when she talks about emotions and intimacy. *«I only know the simplest words for feelings in Sámi, and for intimacy, there just aren't any. I am almost most comfortable in somewhat formal language in Sámi»[83]*

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[81] *Det er naturlig for oss å snakke norsk, selv om vi begge vet at vi kunne godt ha hatt samtalen på samisk. Men det blir bare ikke sånn, og vi klarer ikke å snu det heller. Kanskje fordi det er for nært, og vi snakker om veldig nære ting og det blir ikke naturlig for oss å skifte språk.*

[82] *Jeg har på en måte skjønt hvordan førstespråkstalere sånn som bestemor har hatt det. Når emosjoner i kroppen blir koblet til språk, så er det ens førstespråk som er enklest å kommunisere på, og det er jo norsk for meg.*

[83] *Jeg kan bare de enkleste ordene for følelser på samisk, og for intimitet, det finnes bare ikke. Jeg er nesten mest komfortabel i litt sånn formelt språk på samisk.*

Ida has faced the challenge of choosing between Norwegian and Sámi when she is going to speak publicly in her work. She explains that aspects such as time limitation and that she must be very precise when she speaks in work settings are challenging.

«You don't really want to speak Sámi in that setting. But at the same time, if you don't speak Sámi, you feel the shame of not doing so. You feel a double pressure, everything you do can go wrong»[84]

Nevertheless, although she still feels the pressure at times, she has gotten used to speaking Sámi at her work. Another situation she finds challenging is to participate in interviews on TV or radio in Sámi. However, she has solved the challenge by asking for the questions in advance so that she can prepare properly. *«I justify it with the fact that I am a second language user and that I simply just need a little more extra time to find the right words, so that I don't start mumbling»*[85]

Interview settings in Sámi is a situation that is challenging for Inger as well.

«It happens very often that when the Sámi media needs someone, they come, and then I feel uncomfortable. Because I can't say everything I wanted to say and must have thought it through very carefully»[86]

Additionally, Sámi language is one of the communication languages Inger too uses at her workplace. However, she acknowledges that there are days where they use more Norwegian than Sámi.

> *«When it comes to being really comfortable, it's probably about being just as fine with communicating in both Norwegian and Sámi, and that's not the case. But what I think, is that it's not the language barrier that prevents me from talking, but more that when you have to talk quickly and a lot, it become in Norwegian»*[87]

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[84] *Man har egentlig ikke lyst til å snakke samisk i den settingen. Men samtidig, hvis man ikke snakker samisk så føler man på den skammen av at man ikke gjør det. En føler et dobbelt press, alt du gjør kan bli feil.*

[85] *Jeg bruker å begrunne det med at jeg er andrespråklig og si at jeg rett tog slett bare trenger litt mer ekstra tid på å finne riktig ord, slik at jeg ikke begynner å mumle.*

[86] *Det skjer veldig ofte når Sameradioen skal ha noen så kommer dem, og da blir jeg ukomfortabel. For jeg får ikke sagt alt jeg hadde ønsket å si, og må ha tenkt igjennom det så nøye.*

[87] *Når det gjelder å være ordentlig komfortabel, handler det vel om at det går like greit å kommunisere både på norsk og samisk, og sånn er det jo ikke. Men det jeg tenker er at det er ikke den språksperra som gjør at jeg ikke får til å prate, men mer på at når man skal prate fort og mye så går det på norsk.*

Structural and political restrictions

Many of the informants have faced challenges linked to school systems, Sámi environments, politics and language arenas in the Márka Sámi areas.

It is previously mentioned in this chapter that Liva valued having Sámi as a school subject. Yet, at the same time it was controversial to have Sámi as a subject at school when she was a child. In that time, it was more than a language subject, it was connected to both politics and activism. Her family was involved in Sámi politics and eager in the fight for Sámi rights. Although she expresses gratitude for her upbringing, she describes it as being difficult at times.

«It was a choice our parents made for us. In a way, it made us front-line soldiers in the school yard, without us having made that choice ourselves. So, it wasn't just pleasant to have Sámi at school»[88]

Additionally, she thinks it is challenging that there are few natural language arenas available in her local environment.

> *«If you are going to engage in language stimulation with children, then you must make arrangements. For example, that within this room and at this time we will speak Sami. But in a way it becomes a constructed space for language stimulation. It does not happen in the same way as before, that you talk Sámi in the shop or wherever you meet people»[89]*

Inger has noticed that there have been some collective challenges appearing in the Márka Sámi areas. One is that the Sámi environments, such as the Sámi associations or the environment of the youth who created the Márkomeannu festival have become more absent.

«To join the Márkomeannu staff now, it is so established already. So, they just get into something and don't have to help develop it ... What we see is that of those who helped establish the festival from the start, there are many of them who can speak Sámi today»[90]

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[88] *Det var et valg foreldrene våre tok for oss. Det gjorde på en måte oss til frontsoldater i skolegården, uten at vi hadde tatt det valget selv. Så det var jo ikke bare trivelig å ha samiskundervisning.*

[89] *Hvis man skal drive på med språkstimulering med unger så man tilrettelegge. For eksempel at innenfor dette rommet og dette tidspunktet så skal vi prate samisk. Men det blir jo på en måte et oppkonstruert rom for språkstimulering. Det skjer ikke på den måten som før, at en prater samisk på butikken eller hvor enn en traff folk.*

[90] *For det å komme inn i Márkomeannu-staben nå, så er den så etablert allerede. Så de kommer bare inn i noe og trenger ikke være med å utvikle det ... Det vi ser i dag er at av dem som var med å etablere festivalen fra start, så er det mange av dem som kan prate samisk i dag.*

Thus, she feels that the festival environment has changed over the years. Additionally, she worries that the Sámi political changes that have appeared lately may affect the Sámi language revitalization negatively.

> *«In the New Year's speech by the president of the Sámi Parliament in 2017, it was about language, and that we are good enough Sámi even if we don't know Sámi, and it was in a way negative to know Sámi. It immediately became the case that you who know Sámi, think you are better than the others»[91]*

During the childhood years of Astrid, she was challenged by the stigma related to being from the Márka Sámi areas. This is linked to the times she has gone to schools outside of the Márka Sámi villages. She went to a local primary school in Márka where most of the pupils had Sámi as a school subject. However, the difficulties began when she had to change schools as she started secondary school in Skánik.

> *«At the school in Skånland it was always the case that if we were to play football or whatever, it was always Marka against the rest. We were always separated as a separate group. We were bullied and all sorts of things, it was sort of a negative thing to be from Marka»[92]*

Nevertheless, for high school she once again got to start a school where the majority of the pupils came from the Márka Sámi areas. Thus, her first high school year was a positive experience. However, the happiness was short-lived due to the school closing after she had attended it for only a year. *«The closure of Elvemo was perhaps the biggest linguistic disaster for this area»[93]*

The stigma of being from Márka is also addressed by Siri, who has had bad experiences related to this growing up. She explains that she and her sports team from the Márka villages used to get less playtime when they played games in Skánik. However, she has started to notice tendencies of a more positive attitude towards the Sámi culture and language after the municipality became a part of the Sámi language administrative area (see chapter 2).

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[91] *I nyttårstalen til sametingspresidenten i 2017, så gikk det på det her med språk, og at vi er gode nok samer selv om vi ikke kan samisk, og det ble på en måte negativt å kunne samisk. Det ble med en gang sånn at du som kan samisk, du tror du er bedre enn de andre.*

[92] *På Skånlandsskolen var det alltid sånn at hvis vi skulle spille fotball eller whatever, så var det alltid marka mot resten. Vi var alltid skilt ut som en egen gruppe. Vi ble mobba og alt mulig, det var liksom en negativ greie å være fra marka.*

[93] *At Elvemo ble lagt ned var kanskje den største språkmessige katastrofen for det her området.*

Ida moved to the Márka Sámi areas as a child. She felt that the Sámi language was more absent in the Márka Sámi villages compared to the area she had moved away from. This became visible when she did not have anyone around her of her age who spoke Sámi, as well as there being few fellow pupils who had Sámi as a subject.

«We were probably only two or three people who had Sámi at the start. So very few in the whole school and there were different levels and stuff. So, it wasn't very effective language learning lessons, it wasn't»[94]

Thus, these are the experiences and factors that have impacted the informants possesses of going from passive Sámi language carriers to active language users. I will analyze these with the help of my theoretical framework and other relevant literature in the next chapter.

6   Analysis

Through the data presented in the last chapter, I have identified my main findings as consisting of five main parts: 1) the safeness and competence the informants have had about their Márka Sámi identity and belonging have provided them with a solid starting point, 2) that they have had a personal motivation that gave them willpower and determination, 3) their motivation led them to decide to start using North Sámi actively, 4) after they had started to use Sámi actively they began their lifelong journey to develop and maintain the language, 5) these steps led the informants to be integrated into the Sámi language community.

I will discuss these findings in the light of the factors and scales by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999) and Todal (2007). Additionally, I open the chapter by discussing the concept of new speakers and how the concept relates to the informants in this thesis, with the report by Walsh and Lane (2014) and the article by O'Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo (2015) as a framework.

6.1   New speakers

In connection with minority languages the concept of new speakers is frequently described as individuals who have acquired language in an institutional setting rather than at home or

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[94] *Vi var vel bare to-tre personer som hadde samisk i starten. Så veldig få på hele skolen, og det var forskjellige nivåer og sånt. Så det var ikke så veldig effektive språklæringstimer, det var det ikke.*

through the relevant minority community (O'Rourke et al., 2015; Walsh & Lane, 2014). Yet, the concept may also be applicable for those who have been passively bilingual since childhood, before turning it into an active language as adults. Hence, Walsh and Lane (2014) describe it as a concept with rather "*fuzzy borders*". They have identified a list of core characteristics, to varying degrees shared by the new speakers, some of these are relatable to the informants in this thesis. For example, even if they have been exposed for Sámi in their childhood, the language was not passed on to them as it was not spoken directly to them. Hence, they made an active decision to acquire competence in Sámi for identity reasons and they experience a learning trajectory continuing and changing through the life cycle (Walsh & Lane, 2014, p. 3).

Another aspect of the term new speaker in a Sámi context is that it may cause an accidental distance between the individual who is starting to speak the language, and the language. In the case study by Jonsson and Rosenfors (2017) their informant does not regard becoming a new speaker as getting a new language but rather "taking back" something that she describes as stolen (Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017, p. 67). Still, the concept attempts to replace terms such as non-native or second language-speakers which I argue to be more stigmatizing terms. As non-native speaker may be related to one's identity rather than only language, and the wording of second language sounds like it is a language that is placed in second row, when it is really (as described by Marja) a language close to the heart. Therefore I, like several of the authors I refer to in this section, have concluded that the concept of new speakers is the most suitable as an analytical tool for this thesis. As the wording of *new* does not have to indicate that you are new to the language, it simply means that you are new to speaking it.

In the case of the informant in Jonsson and Rosenfors (2017) research, the informant reflects that although she has a strong sense of Sámi identity, she feels that it would be even stronger if she had been a native Sámi speaker. Jonsson and Rosenfors argue that although the Sámi language is important to their informant's identity, she has always identified as Sámi, even before she started using the language actively (2017, pp. 59-62). With this as a point of departure, I will discuss the coherence between language and identity in the next section.

6.2 Identity and competence

All eight informants interviewed for this thesis are Sámi and are well aware of their ethnical background. This could be portrayed as a contrast to other assimilated Sámi areas, as described by Minde (2003, 2005) where it often occurs that people discover their Sámi

background as adults. Although the language does not stand as strong as before due to the Norwegianization process, there is still a strong sense of Sámi identity in the Márka Sámi areas (Skåden, 1996). The sense of strong Sámi identity is reflected in the data of this thesis. All five informants who had access to the Sámi kindergarten and all six who had access to Sámi as a school subject, attended these arenas. Thus, this indicates that at least one of their parents have made a choice for them. Many of the informants have parents who could be described with the term *the lost generation* (Olthuis et al., 2013; Pasanen, 2022b). This term refers to the first generation were the language shifted (in this case) from Sámi to Norwegian, meaning that they experienced that their parents stopped using Sámi and started to use Norwegian. Hence, many in this generation understand, or partly understand the language, without speaking it themselves. Since these parents belong to a time where Sámi was not yet integrated in the schools and kindergartens, they did not receive any Sámi language education. However, they supported their own children to learn the language through the kindergartens and school systems (Skåden, 1996).

A few of the informants in this thesis belong to *the lost generation* themselves. They grew up with Sámi speaking or partly Sámi speaking parents and relatives. However, they did not become native speakers of Sámi due to the reasons described above. Yet, Inger describes that she during her late teen years became part of a Sámi awakening period during the 1970s and 1980s. After she moved out of the Márka Sámi areas, she became active in Sámi associations, which she describes as meaningful environments functioning as a home wherever she went. Still, she points out that the first meeting with a Sámi environment was in her own home areas, and that has been important. Hence, she found a *"safe space"* in the Márka Sámi areas where she could develop her Sámi identity, despite Norwegian cultures dominating in her surroundings during that time.

Thus, identity and competence are factors that fits under group level on the list by Hyltensam, Stroud and Svonni (1999) and on the local community scale by Todal (2007), as it is the safeness that the population within the local community in the Márka Sámi areas have that have influenced the informants' prerequisites to become new speakers of the North Sámi.

6.2.1 Minority vs Majority

How the majority societies view the Márka Sámi areas, and its inhabitants is a factor that relates to the society scale on the list of Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999). The setting is viewed in the context of the relation between the Márka Sámi community as a minority, and

the community outside of the Márka Sámi areas as the majority within the municipalities. Several of the informants have pointed out that the unity in the Márka Sámi areas have been a safe haven. However, some of the informants have felt a stigma when they had to move to school or work in the larger areas of their local environments, such as in Skánik. The informants talk about aspects such as not feeling at home in Skánik and being bullied at central school there. Whilst for Paula, it gave her an extra urge to speak Sámi there to create an awareness about the Sámi culture still being a part of the area.

However, as elaborated on in the background chapter, there have been indications of a change after Dielddanuorri municipality got incorporated into Sámi language administrative area, and thus, covered by the language rules of the Sámi Act. This corresponds to the work of Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni, as legislation and implementation are listed as a factors on society scale. The change within the majority community is noted by Siri. She explains that she has experienced a more positive attitude towards the Sámi culture and language after the municipality became a part of the Sámi language administrative area. Thus, as the information mentioned in the second chapter of this thesis and some of the factors within the data suggest, there has been a change in the relationship between the Sámi as a minority and the majority population in the area with a more positive attitude towards Sámi language and culture.

6.2.2 The role of education

Hyltensam, Stroud and Svonni (1999, pp. 65-69) list education as another factor on the society level. They argue that during the first half of the 1900s, education for Sámi children was used as an assimilation tool. Although they write from the perspective of the Swedish side of the border, the school system on the Norwegian side also supported the school as a venue for Norwegianization of Sámi children (Minde, 2005). Thus, Sámi language revitalization in the areas where these kinds of politics struck hardest have been challenging. This links to the Márka Sámi areas where the integration of Sámi language in the kindergarten and the school system has been an important step towards language revitalization. As pointed out in the background chapter, the establishment of the first Sámi kindergarten, Sáráhká Sámemánák, and Sámi as a school subject was also disputed in the beginning.

The data in this thesis indicates that there have been some developments in the Sámi education. Liva had Sámi as a second language from the early years it was offered. She describes it as becoming a frontline soldier in the school yard. It was more than "just" having a language as a school subject; the Sámi children became symbols of a Sámi heritage that

many of the people in the Márka Sámi areas were trying to move away from. This is also reflected in the descriptions of the period that Sámi education was introduced to the schools in the Márka Sámi areas, by Asbjørg Skåden (2011, pp. 3-7). She tells about sabotaging comments about the children learning the wrong kind of Sámi, and frequent negative reading post in the local newspapers. Yet, as the years went by, she noticed a positive development as the number of pupils who chose Sámi as a school subject increased with the years and during the 1990s, they got their first pupil who had Sámi as a first language at school. This development is visible in the data from the interview with Astrid. She belongs to a younger generation than Liva and thus she got the opportunity to go to both the Sámi kindergarten and have Sámi as a school subject. She describes the years in the kindergarten and primary school as a pleasant experience. They were quite a lot of pupils who had Sámi as a subject together. Thus, it created a unity within the Márka Sámi youth, and it was not until she had to go to a school outside of the Márka Sámi areas, that it became more uncomfortable to have Sámi at school. Hence, it is a notable difference in how the two informants relate to their Sámi education. Nonetheless, both have expressed an overall gratitude for their parents' choice of including Sámi in their education as it has strengthened their identity and equipped them with a linguistic foundation.

Yet, the development regarding the pupils becoming active Sámi speakers through these venues has been rather slow. During the years there have been difficulties finding staff who could maintain a Sámi speaking environment in for instance the Sámi kindergarten (Dalbakk & Skåden, 2009, p. 9). This is addressed by Ida, who explains that she does not feel that the Sámi language had a strong presence in the kindergarten and school system, rather that it provides a strong sense of identity, and without a strong identity it is hard to find the willpower to become an active speaker at a later point.

6.2.3 The impacts of dialect

As presented in the data chapter, the distinct Márka Sámi dialect has affected the informants´ processes both as a motivational factor and as a restraining factor. For some of them, it became a motivation to learn the Márka Sámi dialect to preserve the dialect and be able to communicate with the native speakers. I will discuss having dialect as a motivation further in the next section. However, the point about being able to communicate with Márka Sámi native speakers has been pointed out as rather challenging, as many of the native speakers did not welcome the new speakers as they "had the wrong dialect". Asbjørg Skåden (2011) refers to the people behind such statements as the language police. She regarded the actions of the

language police as leading to a language death if their attitudes continue to flourish in the Márka Sámi areas (pp.2-4). "The language police" is also mentioned within the data from Paula, who used to have a fear of the language police correcting or mocking her language before she became a new speaker.

Jon Todal (2007) has placed this aspect under the factor *who has the ownership to the language* (Todal, 2007, pp. 206-208). He distinguishes between individual, family and local community levels, with which I agree. The ownership to the language is most prominent on a local community level, although it may slide over in the family level as well since kinship has a strong presence in the local Sámi communities. The factor is recognizable in both the statement from Skåden (2011) and Paula´s experience. As it discusses what happens due to a local language police occurs: it may cause potential new speakers to think that the language belongs to the elders who can speak it correctly, create a fear of ruining the language if one tries to speak and based on the fact that one ethnically belongs to the Sámi community one should be able to speak flawlessly (Todal, 2007, p. 207). With this in mind, I would like to emphasize that the individuals described as "the language police" belongs to a generation who has been told that their language and culture did not have any value. Thus, it may be painful when the younger generation is working to restore something that they have worked very hard to hide away.

Nevertheless, this is an issue that can be seen in the light of *linguistic purism* (Trosterud, 2003). With Norwegian as the common majority language and North Sámi as the minority language, the Márka Sámi areas are a multilingual community. Still, there are differences between the Sámi speakers in the community, as one group is categorized as native speakers, whilst the other group as new speakers who have adopted the Sámi language through efforts of language revitalization. Thus, the "language police" belongs to the first group. This can be described as a dialect split within the Márka Sámi community. Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni describe the split within Sámi dialects as a factor on the group level that has a negative effect on language revitalization, since the different Sámi dialects also split the Sámi as a people into different identity groups, one group being the native speakers and the other the new speakers (Hyltenstam et al., 1999, p. 71).

Seen in the light of Todal´s (2007) factor of inclusion and exclusion to the language community, this may lead to that individuals who do not master the correct dialect are excluded from the language community. As an example, Liva explains that she failed to communicate with the native speakers in Márka before she mastered their dialect. This may

also be linked to the concept of *silencing* (Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017, pp. 65-66), as it is the native speakers who had the power of the language and did not let the informant into the language community with the level of language skills that she had at the time. In the worst-case scenario, this could potentially stop new speakers from using the minority language by making them feel that their language is not good enough (Trosterud, 2003). This is a phenomenon that becomes even more prominent the smaller the language is. Trosterud (2003, p.208) explains that the majority language in a society often is treated as joint ownership, whilst the smaller minority language is private property. These sorts of attitudes may have frightened several potential new speakers from appearing.

After all, a language that is constantly changing is a sign that it is in use and adapting to the society in which it is used. Hence, not in danger of dying (Todal, 2007; Trosterud, 2003). These are the aspects that have been problematic and challenging in relation to the local Márka Sámi dialect. I will elaborate more on how dialect has contributed positively as a motivation for some of my informant's choice of becoming new speakers of the North Sámi language in the next section.

6.3 Motivations to make the decision

A common feature found in the data is that every informant has had an inner drive and motivation to become a new speaker. The motivational factors have differed among the informants. Still, some of the most prominent factors have been dialect, transmitting the language to the next generation, moving to a Sámi speaking environment or activating and re-activating Sámi as a language in both new and old relations. Hence, there often has been a change in life situation involved.

For many of the informants, this also involves breaking a language barrier. As mentioned in the previous sections, Todal (2007) has listed the language barrier as an additional factor that effects the language process of new speakers. Although it may be both external and internal forces that influence the barrier, I place the language barrier on an individual level, as it exists in the thoughts of the informants. Thus, they themselves are the ones who have the power to do something about it. The language barrier is mentioned in several other linguistic works (Johansen, 2007; Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017; Juuso, 2021; Rasmus & Lane, 2021). The explanation of the barrier is similar within my data as to several other research. Astrid spoke about how her tongue did not obey her the first times she tried to use Sámi in a new setting. This is coherent to how one of the informants in Rasmus and Lane (2021, p.13) explains his

experiences the first times he spoke Sámi, as he too mentions that his tongue would not make the sounds he wanted. For Inger the barrier took form in fear that people would not understand her and that would cause misunderstandings. Whilst Liva explains that she at a point in her process tried to find strategies to get out of Sámi speaking situations because of the language barrier. This is corresponding well with the description by Jane Juuso (2021) of how individuals deal with the barrier. As the barrier is such a well-known phenomenon in the Sámi context, she has created a method for defeating the barrier by building safe arenas and relations, where individuals with a passive language feel safe enough to activate their passive language (Juuso, 2021).

Hence, the language barrier is a familiar subject when discussing new speakers. Yet, it should be noted that not all the informants contributing to this thesis have been strongly affected by the barrier, but for those who have, they had to find a motivation strong enough to pass it.

6.3.1 Dialect as a motivation

The wish to preserve the Márka Sámi dialect is prominent in the data from some of the informants. This differs from the section "The impact of dialect", as having dialect as a motivation relates to language choice on an individual scale on the list of Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999). Liva has pointed out that learning the Márka Sámi dialect has been one of her biggest motivations to become a new speaker. She actively listened to and mimicked the way native speakers talked. By doing this she experienced that the native speakers started to speak more Sámi with her, and eventually some of them spoke only Sámi with her. This has had a positive effect on her process and motivated her to speak more Sámi.

The aspect of dialect is prominent in the work of Pasanen (2019) as well. During her fieldwork she interviewed a Sámi teacher about her reflections regarding the North Sámi language use. The teacher indicated that since the Anaar Sámi and Skolt Sámi languages are in such a clear crisis, it is easier to welcome new speakers. Whilst the North Sámi language is still transmitted from native speakers to new generations, and therefore it is not yet noticed that the crisis is imminent (Pasanen, 2019, pp. 64-65). Even though the North Sámi language is not in crisis in areas where it is spoken the most, it appears that the Márka Sámi dialect is in danger of disappearing as a dialect despite being categorized as a dialect belonging under the North Sámi language. The reason for this is that the native speakers are decreasing in the areas and since there has been a lack of teaching materials in the Márka Sámi dialect it has

been difficult for the generation who received Sámi as a school subject, to get access to the local dialect (Eriksen, 2009; Skåden, 1996).

Nevertheless, what appears in the data of this thesis, is that the dialect has been a motivation to become a new speaker to preserve the Márka Sámi dialect and to establish a linguistic common community in the Márka Sámi areas. In the data, dialect as a motivational factor often combines with the factor of transmitting the language to one's children. I will elaborate more on this in the next section.

Janne has heard stories about native speakers correcting new speakers' language. However, she has not experienced this herself and therefore she has not been negatively affected in that sense. She tries to pick up on dialect words as well as listening the distinctness's within the Márka Sámi grammar, before she adopts it into her own language. At one point she had to decide not to care if she mispronounced or inflected words wrong.

Thus, to secure that both the dialect and the language overall survives, one must accept the not native-like language of new speakers (Pasanen, 2022b, p. 31). Acceptance of the language of new speakers may be linked to the Márka Sámi dialect as well. Since a mixture of dialect words from both the Márka Sámi and the standard North Sámi language will occur at times among new speakers. However, as pointed out by some of the informants in the data chapter, this must be tolerated as a language is only available for a revitalization process if it is accepted that it is spoken imperfectly as well. This aspect has been important for Inger. During a Sámi language bath her teacher told her that he would always hear that she may not be a native Sámi speaker, in the same way that she probably could hear that he was not a native speaker of Norwegian, but he still continues to speak Norwegian. This made her realize that her Sámi language was accepted and pushed her towards becoming a new speaker.

6.3.2 Transmitting North Sámi to the next generation

For almost all the informants who have children, becoming parents is mentioned as decisive. three out of four of the informants with children decided to become active speakers when they had their first child. Additionally, one of the informants without children was motivated by the thought of being able to speak Sámi with her future children. The choice of transmission of language belongs on an individual scale on the list of Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999) as it relates to each informant's choice of language.

For Liva, the process of securing that her children grow up in a Sámi speaking environment expands beyond her own language use. She explains that she consistently speaks Sámi with

other children who she knows are Sámi speaking or have Sámi speaking relatives. This is to establish a reciprocal bond with other parents so that they speak Sámi to her children. Janne has also created a language environment for her children to ensure that her children hear as much Sámi as possible, as it is pointed out by Pasanen, that striving to bring up Sámi speaking children in an environment where the majority language is constantly on display compared to the minority language is a challenge (Pasanen, 2022a, p. 437). Therefore, she uses her in-laws and her own close relative as allies in bringing up her children in a Sámi speaking home. This has been useful as she worries that she may run out of vocabulary as the children get older and more talkative. Hence her own Sámi language is also developing through the Sámi speaking environment that she has created for her children.

Both examples can be connected to creating one's own Sámi speaking environment. When they as parents make the decision to speak Sámi to their children, it opens the door for other individuals who are in the close environment of the child to speak Sámi as well. Thus, a Sámi speaking *micro community* (Johansen, 2007, p. 151) is created, not only for the child's benefit, but also for the parent (Johansen, 2007, pp. 148-151; Pasanen, 2022a, pp. 140-141).

Rasmus and Lane´s (2021) findings in interviews with new speakers, show that entering parenthood has been the most decisive for their informants in becoming new speakers. They argue that the new speakers are an important part of the survival of the language in the future (Rasmus & Lane, 2021, p. 20). The importance of new speakers and transmission is also addressed by Pasanen (2018, p. 367) in her research of revitalization of Aanar Sámi language where she identifies that transmission of the Aanar Sámi language is heavily dependent on new speakers, as the number of native speakers is decreasing. I would say this is the case in the Márka Sámi areas as well. As previously mentioned, there are few native speakers left in the area. However, there are signs that there is an increasing desire to learn Sámi and as the informants with children indicate in this section, the wish to transmit the language to the next generation in the Márka Sámi areas are strong. Hence, also in Márka the norm is that it is the new speakers who are transmitting the language to the next generation.

Pasanen argues that the new speakers need acceptance and support from both their internal community and the external community in Sápmi overall (Pasanen, 2022a, p. 442). I agree with her. Thus, If the Sámi language is going to survive in the Márka Sámi areas, it is demanded that the new speakers are taken as serious as the native speakers in the transmission process.

6.3.3 Activating and re-activating Sámi with family and friends

For all the informants without children, as well as several with children, other Sámi speaking relations have motivated the informants to activate their passive Sámi language. For some it has been in already existing relations, whilst for others in new relations. Nonetheless, just like transmission of language, activating Sámi as a language of communication in a relation is an individual choice that each informant has made as a step towards becoming a new speaker.

For Astrid the first step towards becoming a new speaker was to re-activate Sámi language with a close family member with whom she used to speak Sámi in her early childhood. Still, the most frequent relation, except form the parent-child relationship (elaborated on in the previous section) was a Sámi speaking partner. This has been central for three of the informants. However, the establishment of Sámi language within the partner relationship has varied among the three. Paula established Sámi as the main language with her partner at the very beginning of the relationship, Siri had to perform a shift of language in the already established relationship, whilst Janne collaborated with her previous partner about partly shifting language from Norwegian to Sámi. Thus, for Janne it was an agreement between she and her previous partner that they were going to speak Sámi with each other certain days during the week. For those days they had both decided and were prepared to speak Sámi. For Paula it was a conscious decision to speak Sámi with her partner right away, as she felt that it would secure that Sámi became the natural language of communication between them. For Siri it was when she started a Sámi language course that she noticed that she knew more Sámi than she initially thought. For her the course became a safe arena where she got help to remove the language barrier. This gave her willpower to shift language with her partner at home as well. She describes the process as heavy since in the beginning it was always her that had to initiate conversations in Sámi and the partner often answered in Norwegian. Yet, after some time she managed to shift language with both her partner and in-laws. The difficulties that Siri experienced when she first tried to make a shift of language could be related to that one often links certain people to certain languages, especially those people who are closest to one. Therefore, it may feel uncomfortable and unnatural to change language in close relations.

This phenomena is recognizable from the data in the article by Rasmus and Lane, where one of her informants elaborates on how difficult it is to change language in relations established in Norwegian (Rasmus & Lane, 2021, pp. 10-11). This is a frequent experience shared by many of my informants in this thesis as well. Five out of eight have mentioned specific relations in which they have been unable to change language in. Two mention that they have

found it difficult to completely change language in their relationship with their partner, and for one of the two it is specifically mentioned that Sámi is not the first language of either of them. Hence, it becomes difficult finding the right vocabulary in demanding every-day situations. Several of the other informants have not been able to shift language with family members and friends because they have had a pre-existing relation in Norwegian with these individuals that have made it feel unnatural to speak Sámi with each other. A common feature is that these are individuals who the informants have a close connection to.

Taking this into consideration, it is possible to see the choices that the informants have made in their relations in the light of linguistic *mudes* (Pujolar & Puigdevall, 2015). Meeting a new partner is something that often causes a change in one's life. For Paula, the Sámi speaking partner caused her to make a language decision in her new relation at an early stage. Although meeting a Sámi speaking partner was not her main motivation to become a new speaker, as she already categorized as a new speaker at the point she met her partner, her choice definitely affects the development and maintenance of her language. For Siri the decision of attending a Sámi course after moving to a new area sparked a motivation to take the Sámi language with her out of the classroom and into her private life. Compared to Paula and her partner who established Sámi as "their" language right away, it seems that the route towards establishing Sámi as the main language in the relationship between Siri and her partner was more demanding, and it appears that the reason for this is that their first language together was Norwegian. This is recognizable from an article by Pujoar and Puigdevall (2015) where they describe it to be most natural for many to stick to the language one first started a relation off with and many will not even be open to shifting language in relations that already have been linguistically established as it may feel uncomfortable (Pujolar & Puigdevall, 2015, pp. 182-183).

Nevertheless, to find people in Sámi environments whom one may practice Sámi with, could be difficult. Jonsson and Rosenfors (2017) have through interviews with a new speaker of North Sámi, found that their informant has found it difficult to find native speakers who are willing to speak Sámi with her. The same phenomenon appears in a study of the students of a one year intensive language education program (Pasanen, 2019). The program is available in Anaar Sámi, Skolt Sámi and North Sámi. One of the students within the North Sámi program explains that she has encountered few who have been willing to shift language with her, and those who have, have often been people who have experience with language revitalization themselves. This could be relatable to the data found in this thesis as well, like Janne, who

talks about her two friends who both are North Sámi speakers. One has the standard North Sámi dialect whilst the other is closer to the Márka Sámi dialect. Since there are few native speakers with the Márka Sámi dialect, it is highly possible that her friend with the distinct Márka Sámi dialect, himself has worked to revitalize his language. Thus, this may explain why she has been able to shift language with him.

Thus, another issue is whether one is in an environment where Sámi is in active use and made available for one to take part in. For some of the informants a change of environment was a motivation to decide to become a new speaker, which is the topic of discussion in the next section.

6.3.4 Finding safe spaces

A noteworthy detail within the data is that six out of the eight informants have found arenas outside of the Márka Sámi areas to practice Sámi in.

For Inger the key to activating her passive Sámi language was when she through her work in another Sámi area went to a language bath. Here she got positive confirmation, that made her feel safe enough to practice Sámi. For Ida it was involving herself in the Sámi youth organizations that was crucial. To meet other young people with varied Sámi backgrounds and language knowledge made her feel safe enough to cross the language barrier and start talking. This is similar to what Liva encountered when she became active in the Sámi student organization at her university. Here she experienced an environment where she felt safe enough to try and fail when she activated her language. Moving to another Sámi area and attend a Sámi course gave Siri the confidence to activate her language both inside and outside the classroom. Whilst Paula did not have to cross a barrier, she did however get more conscious of her language use in the meeting with Sámi speaking individuals when she moved to a larger city, and later at her Sámi speaking workplace. The case of Astrid differs slightly to the others, she moved to an area where she did not have a Sámi environment nearby that made her activate her Sámi language. Yet, she too moved away from Márka and by that a change in her life situation occurred. When she phoned home to a close family member, she began to do it in Sámi, rather than Norwegian, because she missed being in a Sámi environment and thus activating her passive language became her way of creating her own Sámi environment far away from home.

Nevertheless, all the informants mentioned above found safe spaces outside of the Márka Sámi areas where they felt confident enough to try and fail. Yet, this does not mean that it is

not possible to do the same in the Márka Sámi areas, as several started activating their language there as well. Like Paula, who had partly started to speak Sámi in her home area before she moved away, and Janne, who first became a new speaker at home by the assistance of her previous partner and at the language baths arranged by the language center. The language center and the workers there created an arena where Janne felt supported enough to practice Sámi at an early stage in her process. Thus, what motivated the informants in becoming new speakers was to find individuals and arenas where they had room to try speaking Sámi without being afraid of saying something wrong. Hence, the informants started to develop strategies to use Sámi in certain arenas, which is recognizable within the *stages of reclaiming Sámi* in the research by Rasmus and Lane (2021, pp. 17-19) as well as linguistic *mudes* and life events (Pujolar & Puigdevall, 2015), such as moving to an area where Sámi is the majority language or become active in Sámi organizations, which motivated the informants in this thesis to make a decision to become new speakers.

I have identified that the matter of finding safe spaces within Sámi environments is relatable to language choice on an individual scale on the list by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999). Even though the environments felt safe enough for the informants to activate their Sámi language in them, they still had to decide to do so, and they would still be able to attend these environments without speaking Sámi. However, it seems that the informants are motivated by the availability or accessibility of these safe places to practice Sámi in. Thereby it also relates to the local community scale on the list by Todal (2007), or as I would name it in this setting, a local environment scale. Hence, the mixture of the individual decision made by the informants and the inclusive Sámi environments has resulted in positive experiences for the informants.

6.4 Making the decision

The sections above elaborate on the most prominent motivations for the informants to decide to become new speakers of North Sámi. In this section I elaborate on the decision itself. Although, the informant's decisions have been influenced by life situations and changes, it is the informants themselves who have made the final choice to activate their language in settings where it has been possible. The informants may have been influenced by others to make the decision; However, this factor remains strictly on an individual scale, as outside forces may motivate as much as possible, yet that does not help if the individual themselves does not make the decision to start speaking.

As touched upon, Pujolar and Puigdevall (2015) point to linguistic *mudes* being contributors to their informants navigating between the Catalonian and Spanish languages. This is highly relatable to how the informants have found and created areas where they have decided to practice Sámi. Yet, they still have relations where they speak mainly Norwegian. However, I argue that this does not mean that they are not active Sámi speakers, they simply navigate between Norwegian and Sámi depending on the situation, and they all have found their venues where they use Sámi daily or weekly. These are venues such as home environments, workplaces or social settings. The common feature is that the informants have at some point decided to be Sámi speaking in these venues. This is also recognizable from the previously mentioned, three *stages of reclaiming Sámi* (Rasmus & Lane, 2021, pp. 17-19). At the last stage their informants had come to a point where they did not care if they said something wrong anymore and spoke Sámi where it suited them. This is coherent with my data as well, as all the informants have at some point let go or ignored their concerns connected to grammar and saying something wrong before choosing to become new speakers of Sámi. Many of the informants mention that they had to stop caring before they started speaking Sámi. Such as Janne, who explains that she is the sort of person who could be categorized as a perfectionist, but she had to accept that she would speak incorrectly and stop caring when she and her partner agreed to start speaking Sámi. In Inger´s case it was a positive experience with her teacher at a language bath that made her stop caring if she spoke incorrectly and decide to speak Sámi. Whilst Liva realized that it did not matter if she spoke incorrectly by surrounding herself in a Sámi environment that was positive and supportive towards her use of Sámi language. This was the case for Ida as well. She crossed the language barrier through attending social events in her youth. The meeting with other young people from all over Sápmi and the mix of languages spoken at these events made her take the leap and activate her passive language.

For Siri, the classroom of her language course became a safe place that she needed to decide to become a new speaker outside of the classroom as well. She decided that she would make a language shift from Norwegian to Sámi with her partner and in-laws, this was however not something that came easy. She was the one to take the initiative to speak Sámi within the home environment. In the beginning she explains that this was a demanding process as both her partner and in-laws were used to speaking only Norwegian with her. Thus, it took time to adapt and every time they spoke Norwegian with her, she answered in Sámi. After some time, her determination was eventually rewarded with a shift of language from Norwegian to Sámi.

The process of Siri can be seen in the light of argumentations made by Joshua A. Fishman (1991). He argues that the determination and opinion about the language being fundamental to identity and continuity, have helped individuals who he refers to as *reversing language shifters* to form a clear direction and goal which makes it easier to succeed (Fishman, 1991, p. 389). The difficulties that Siri first encountered when she started to speak Sámi to her partner and in-laws may relate to what Fishman articulates about how *reversing language shift* demands much more prework and continual work than for those who acquired the language through mother tongue transmission, and therefore the language shift may feel unnatural to those involved (Fishman, 1991, p. 67). Yet, since Siri had made a clear decision that she was going to activate her passive Sámi language, it gave her a clear goal to work towards, which resulted in her becoming a new speaker.

To draw on a comparison, two of the characteristics that Walsh and Lane (2014) have listed as descriptive for types of new speakers are that one group becomes new speakers by making an active decision to become new speakers due to identity or political reasons. Whilst others become new speakers out of necessity (Walsh & Lane, 2014, p. 3). It is clear that the informants contributing to this thesis belong to the first group. As it has not been demanded by them that they need to change language into Sámi. Becoming new speakers is not caused by outside forces such as moving to an area or wanting a job where it is demanded that you know Sámi. Although in some of the cases, their parents may have hoped that they would speak Sámi. Regardless, they have themselves had the will and determination to make a decision to speak Sámi. Each informant has taken the responsibility to overcome their personal obstacles and fears in order to become new speakers. As Marja words it, the Sámi language is linked to the whole existence of the Sámi as a people and therefore one feels a personal responsibility to make sure that the language is not dying.

Seen in the light of language revitalization the effort made by each of my informants, are efforts that may save the Sámi language from dying in the Márka Sámi areas. This has also been the case for Aanar Sámi language, as pointed out by Pasanen (2018) it has not been the Finnish political decisions that have increased the use of Aanar Sámi, rather it has been the efforts by individuals using the language that has caused the increment (Pasanen, 2018, p. 369). Likewise, I argue that the Sámi language revitalization in the Márka Sámi areas depend on people such as my informants, to make individual decisions to become new speakers.

6.5 Maintenance and development – a lifelong project

Up until now I have discussed the process of becoming a new speaker. However, the work of maintaining and developing one's language seems to be a lifelong work, as one risks not getting enough linguistic stimuli if one does not keep maintaining and developing a language. Hence, we remain on individual scale in this section as well (Hyltenstam et al., 1999), since the informants themselves have made a language choice in arenas where they either have created or found space to maintain and develop their Sámi language use.

Marja experiences that taking back Sámi language, is something one must work with every day for the rest of one's life. This is a thought shared by Paula. She explains that it is not enough to have Sámi as a school subject and think that one is fully trained, one must work hard to develop and maintain the language to be fully Sámi speaking and for that you need to find venues to practice Sámi in. The issue of maintenance and development is addressed in the research by Jonsson and Rosenfors as well, as learning Sámi and becoming a new speaker is described as a life investment by their informant (Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017, p. 63).

Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni argue that Sámi institutions have a very big impact on both culture and maintenance of language (Hyltenstam et al., 1999, p. 78). Although this is partly relatable to the data of this thesis, I argue that the institutional arenas such as the Sámi kindergarten, schools and the language center are most important for the informants to strengthen their identity, motivation and acquire a linguistic foundation. This is evident in data from Janne, who describes the language workers at the center as very motivational towards her use of Sámi, despite her limited language skills at that time.

However, there are other arenas that have become more central for maintenance and further developing their language after the informants have become new speakers. Many of the informants have found these arenas after they have moved away from the Márka Sámi areas by for instant attending Sámi speaking education or being active in Sámi organizations. Still, there are two venues that stand out of the data as being arenas where one may form lifelong environments where the informants can develop and maintain their language: the home environment and workplaces.

All the informants have created a Sámi speaking home environment with either children, partners or other family members. To what extent and with whom they use Sámi in their home environments varies. For some, Sámi is the main communication language, whilst others shift between Norwegian and Sámi and speak Sámi mostly with children. Still, they

have all made it as a part of their daily life by including it in their most private sphere. The second prominent aspect of the data is that all eight of the informants have found a workplace where it is possible to use Sámi and taken the possibility that a workplace provides to use Sámi at work, some partly and others fully. These workplaces vary from Sámi institutions to private companies where Sámi is used by the staff. Like for Paula who explains that if she would not have taken the conscious choice of speaking Sámi right away at her workplace, she doubts that she would have been able to develop the language skills that she possesses today.

I have identified a difference between the two venues. Re-linguization of the home has demanded that the informants themselves have had to create the environment by making efforts such as transmission between parent and child and establishing, re-activating or shifting language with their partner and other family members. Whilst the workplace often has been an already established institution or firm where it is possible to use either Norwegian or Sámi. Still, all the informants have decided to use Sámi, fully or partly, when faced with this language decision. As mentioned in the last section, the informants have not had a demand of managing Sámi from their workplace as a motivation to become new speakers. Nevertheless, both the workplace and the home have to some degree become important arenas of maintenance and development of language for all the eight informants. This means that for some of the informants who use mostly Sámi both at home and at their workplace, Sámi has become their main language of communication in their daily life. This is the case for Siri, who because of her surroundings and the choices she has made in these surroundings today speaks more Sámi than Norwegian on a daily basis.

This leads me to the next section where I will elaborate on how the efforts the informants have made to become new speakers are rewarded.

6.6 Taking part of the Sámi language society

Becoming new speakers of North Sámi opens a door into another dimension of the North Sámi community. Hence, this section correspondents well with what Todal (2007) explain as inclusion and exclusion to the language community. Since the informants, by becoming new speakers, have mostly experienced inclusion in the Sámi environments, where the language is used, after they have activated their passive language.

I argue that the aspect of becoming a part of the language society fits under the scale of local community on Todals charter. However, it also relates to the group level on Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonnis (1999) list. As the informants have learned to master the language it has

given them access to the North Sámi language community. Yet, the factor of language mastery is listed as a negative factor by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni. This does not apply to the data in this thesis. On the contrary, most of the informants have mainly positive experiences and have felt included in the Sámi speaking communities that they have entered. Even if their language has not been perfect, it has not been an obstacle. As a reflection on this, it is notable that the list of Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni is made well over 20 years ago, I am curious too if this may indicate changes and more openness within the Sámi speaking environments. Yet, as they have written from the point of view of the Swedish side of the border, it is possible that the Sámi speaking environments there act differently than on the Norwegian side of the border.

For Janne, becoming a new speaker has given her the possibility to speak Sámi to her children and this has made her feel like she is doing something right. Additionally, it has been valuable to her that the rest of Sápmi experiences that it is possible to speak Sámi in the Márka Sámi areas. As an example, she mentions being able to greet Sámi speaking guests at the Márkomeannu festival in Sámi as a uniting key to the overall Sámi speaking community. For Liva, one of the biggest rewards was when the native speakers from her own community started to use Sámi with her as a result of her work to adopt the Márka Sámi dialect. Thus, to manage the North Sámi language has strengthened the connection to both the Márka Sámi areas and to Sápmi in general.

A common feature for all the informants, is that they have knowingly or unknowingly taken advantage of combining language maintenance and developing with the choice of workplace. Although their professions and workplaces vary, all informants work within a Sámi community and in Sámi speaking environments. Astrid experiences that being able to activate her passive language has provided a positive advantage for her career both within organizations and workplaces. This may be related to the concept of workplace *muda,* in the sense that the informants Sámi language skills provide an "added value" as workers in places where North Sámi is one of the main communication languages (Pujolar & Puigdevall, 2015, pp. 177-180). Thus, becoming new speakers has not only unlocked a new dimension of the Sámi speaking social and family environments, but it also makes them attractive on the labor market within Sámi societies.

Hence, the most prominent rewards of becoming new speakers for the informants in this thesis are that they secure that their children become fully or partly Sámi speaking, that they get to take part in the Sámi speaking language community both in their home areas and other

areas where North Sámi is spoken, and that it provides them an "added value" within the Sámi labor market.

7 Conclusion

As concluding remarks, the factors that explain the informants shift from passive to active North Sámi speakers are that they have all been aware of their ethnic background and therefore they have built a Sámi identity from an early stage. For those informants who were some of the first to have Sámi as a school subject it has been a varied experience. Having Sámi as a school subject in the late 1980s meant being a front soldier in the school yard, while having Sámi as a school subject in the late 1990s was a positive experience. Yet, the common feature between both generations is that they did not become new speakers because of their Sámi education at school. It did however provide them with a linguistic foundation to keep learning.

A positive factor that has influenced the informant's language processes is the indicators of a more positive attitude towards both Sámi language and culture within the Dielddanuorri municipality. The sign of a more positive attitude is reflected in aspects such as the foundation of the institution of Várdobáiki, collaborative projects between the municipality and Várdobáiki and that the municipality was incorporated in the Sámi language administrative area in 2020.

Dialect has been a double-edged sword. For some of the informants, not being able to speak the Márka Sámi dialect have hindered them from communicating with native Sámi speakers in the Márka Sámi areas. Hence, it built an additional language barrier. However, to learn the Márka Sámi dialect also was a motivation in order to communicate with the native Sámi speakers in Sámi and to preserve the Márka Sámi dialect as it is in danger of disappearing. Most of the informants found Sámi speaking environments such as Sámi youth organizations and language courses, where they felt safe enough to first practice their language. Here the language center has played an important role in providing a Sámi speaking arena, such as the language baths and other events where they motivate use of Sámi. However, in many of the cases the informants also found such arenas after they moved away from the Márka Sámi areas. Thus, many of their motivations were ignited by life changes such as moving to new areas where Sámi was more accessible or having children. For almost all the informants who have children, transmitting Sámi to the next generation has been one of the strongest

motivations to become new speakers. For the informants without children, it has been important to find relations in their daily lives, with whom they could speak Sámi, such as partners, family members or friends. Yet, most of the informants also have a close relation in which they have been unable to change language. This is not caused by a fear of speaking Sámi, it simply feels unnatural to change language in very close lifelong relations.

Nevertheless, every informant has made a conscious decision to become a new speaker. The decision may have been sparked by different motivations or life changes, but in the end, it is the informant that has decided to cross their barriers and activate their passive Sámi language. Once the informants have taken the leap to become new speakers, they enter a new dimension where the main work consists of maintaining and developing their language. This is described to be a lifelong work by several of the informants. All the informants have found or created arenas to develop and maintain their language. The most prominent two arenas are the home environment and Sámi speaking workplaces.

Thus, as a reward for their efforts to becoming new speakers, they are able to gift their children the Sámi language, they have been integrated into the Sámi speaking community both within the Márka Sámi areas and in the rest of Sápmi and their Sámi language skills make them attractive within the Sámi labor market – which again provides an arena of maintenance and development.

These factors connect well within the framework of language revitalization as they navigate between the scales of society, local community, group, family and individual scale (Hyltenstam et al., 1999; Todal, 2007). The identity and competence relate to the group and local community scale, whilst the minority versus the majority society and the role of education relates to the society scale. The negative impact of dialect acts mostly as a factor on the local community scale but may also be connected to the group and family scale. The concept of the language barrier and the other motivational factors as well as decision, maintenance and development of language all belong on the individual scale. The only exception in the motivational factors is finding safe spaces, which could, in addition to belonging to the individual scale, be partly placed as a factor related to local community, or to the new term that appeared in the discussion, local environment. As for the concept of new speakers, although it is described as a concept with *fuzzy borders* (Walsh & Lane, 2014, p. 2), it connects well to the informants in this thesis. As it does not imply that they are new to the Sámi language, but rather they were new to speaking it at the point they started to activate their passive language.

All these factors considered, the main answer to how the previous passive languages carriers who have contributed to this thesis, have succeeded in becoming active users of North Sámi is because they made the conscious and individual decision to do so. This may appear as a banal answer. However, they all took advantage of their motivations and life changes that gave them a possibility to become new speakers and decided to seize the opportunity. It was not demanded by the informants to do so, and although they have had supporters and assistance from others, they have all made a personal decision to stop letting their restrictions and disturbances distract them and start speaking Sámi. Nevertheless, the decision to become new speakers that all the informants have made, has been an important contribution to Sámi language revitalization in the Márka Sámi areas.

As all the informants who have contributed to this thesis are affiliated with Sámi environments, such as Sámi politics, festivals or other organizations, I believe that the outcome of this research may have differed if the data would have been gathered from new speakers who do not involve themselves in these kinds of environments.

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Appendix

1. Interview guide in Norwegian:

Intervjuguide

Spørsmål til språkbrukere:

- Hvordan har du lært samisk? Kurs? Partner? Slekt? Eller lignende?
- Har det vært støttespillere som har vært ekstra viktig for deg i prosessen fra å gå fra passiv til aktiv språkbruker?
- Har du opplevd den såkalte språksperren? Hva skulle i så fall til for å overkomme den?
- Opplevde du på noen tidspunkt et slags «breakingpoint» i løpet av språkskiftet ditt? I så fall hva var det?
- I hvilke sammenheng bruker du samisk, og i hvilke bruker du norsk?
- Er du komfortabel med å kommunisere på samisk i alle settinger? Hvis ikke, hvilke settinger gjør deg ukomfortabel? Og hva gjør deg komfortabel?
- Opplever du at det er vanskeligere/enklere å prate samisk noen steder? Eks. Hjemme i marka vs i Tromsø?
- Hvilke språkarenaer er viktig for deg?

Tileggspørsmål:

- (Er det lettere å snakke utenfor «hjembygda»?)
-

Spørsmål til språksenteret:

- Hvordan jobber dere med samisk språkopplæring?
- Opplever dere at kurselever blir aktive språkbrukere etter endt språkkurs?
- Har dere erfaringer med den såkalte språksperren? Hva ser dere som viktig for å komme over den?
- Har dere identifisert det man kan kalle et «breakingpoint» i at folk går fra passiv til aktive språkbrukere?
- Har dere identifisert noen fellesfaktorer til at folk lykkes i å bli aktive samiskspråklige?
- Hvordan tilrettelegger dere for å være en aktiv språkarena?

2. Information letter to the informants and the language center in Norwegian:

"Nord samisk språkrevitalisering: å bytte fra passiv språkbærer til aktiv språkbruker"

Dette skrivet har som hensikt å gi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva eventuell deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Formålet til denne masteroppgaven er å forsøke å finne fellesfaktorer hos personer fra det markasamiske området, som har gått fra passive til aktive språkbrukere. I tillegg til hva slags rolle samiske språkarenaer har i denne prosessen. Informasjonen og dataen som samles inn i til dette prosjektet vil kun bli brukt i sammenheng med denne masteroppgaven.

Mitt forskningsspørsmål er:

"Hvordan har tidligere passive språkbærere i markasamiske områder lykkes med å bli aktive språkbrukere av samisk?"

Samt tilleggsspørsmålene:

"Hvordan arbeider de forskjellige samiskspråklige arenaene for å fremme samisk språkbruk i regionen?"

"Finnes det noen fellesfaktorer til hvorfor informantene har gått fra å være passiv til aktiv språkbruker av samisk?"

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

UiT Norges arktiske universitet er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

I dette prosjektet ønsker jeg å finne 8-10 informanter som har gått fra å være passive bærere av samisk språk til å bli aktive brukere som bruker språket nok så ofte. I tillegg ønsker jeg å intervjue et par informanter fra språksenteret Várdobáiki, gjerne leder og/eller samisk språkkurslærer.

Med en passiv språkbruker menes en som har kjennskap til samisk fra før, for eksempel hjemmefra og/eller gjennom opplæring, men som ikke bruker språket i hverdagen.

Med en aktiv språkbruker menes en som er komfortabel med å bruke språket i de fleste sammenhenger og som bruker språket aktivt i hverdagen.

Det er foretrukket med informanter som har tilknytning til de markasamiske områdene da dette er mitt fokusområde.

3. Information letter to the Márkomeannu festival in Norwegian:

Informasjonsbrev om forskningsprosjektet

"Nord samisk språkrevitalisering: å bytte fra passiv språkbærer til aktiv språkbruker"

Dette er et informasjonsbrev for et forskningsprosjekt hvor hensikten er å *identifisere suksessfaktorer hos personer som har gjort et språkskifte fra passiv til aktiv bruker av samisk språk og i sammenheng med dette analysere hvilken rolle de forskjellige språkarenaene i markasamisk område har i denne prosessen.* I dette skrivet gir vi dere informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hvordan Márkomeannu festivalen er relevant for prosjektet.

Formål

Formålet til denne masteroppgaven er å forsøke å finne fellesfaktorer hos personer fra det markasamiske området, som har gått fra passive til aktive språkbrukere. I tillegg til hva slags rolle samiske språkarenaer har i denne prosessen. Informasjonen og dataen som samles inn i til dette prosjektet vil kun bli brukt i sammenheng med denne masteroppgaven.

Forskningsspørsmålet er:

"Hvordan har tidligere passive språkbærere i markasamiske områder lykkes med å bli aktive språkbrukere av samisk?"

Samt tilleggsspørsmålene:

"Hvordan arbeider de forskjellige samiskspråklige arenaene for å fremme samisk språkbruk i regionen?"

"Finnes det noen fellesfaktorer til hvorfor informantene har gått fra å være passiv til aktiv språkbruker av samisk?"

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

UiT Norges arktiske universitet er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hensikten med å besøke Márkomeannu festivalen

Min hensikt med å besøke festivalen er å observere i hvor stor grad festivalen fungerer som en samiskspråklig arena. Márkomeannu er en viktig arena å undersøke da dette er en arena hvor folk må aktivt velge om de vil kommunisere på samisk, norsk og/eller engelsk. Observasjonen på festivalen kommer kun til å skje på dagtid og ingen personer vil bli identifisert i prosjektet.

Det kan allikevel nevnes at jeg skal intervjue informanter fra området, men disse er informerte og har gitt sitt samtykke til å være med i prosjektet.

4. Letter of consent to the language center in Norwegian:

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

"Nord samisk språkrevitalisering: å bytte fra passiv språkbærer til aktiv språkbruker"

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å *identifisere suksessfaktorer hos personer som har gjort språkskifte fra passiv til aktiv bruker av samisk språk og i sammenheng med dette analysere hvilken rolle de forskjellige språkarenaene i regionen har i denne prosessen.* I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Formålet til denne masteroppgaven er å forsøke å finne fellesfaktorer hos personer fra det markasamiske området, som har gått fra passive til aktive språkbrukere. I tillegg til hva slags rolle samiske språkarenaer har i denne prosessen. Informasjonen og dataen som samles inn i til dette prosjektet vil kun bli brukt i sammenheng med denne masteroppgaven.

Mitt forskningsspørsmål er:

"Hvordan har tidligere passive språkbærere i markasamiske områder lykkes med å bli aktive språkbrukere av samisk?"

Samt tilleggsspørsmålene:

"Hvordan arbeider de forskjellige samiskspråklige arenaene for å fremme samisk språkbruk i regionen?"

"Finnes det noen fellesfaktorer til hvorfor informantene har gått fra å være passiv til aktiv språkbruker av samisk?"

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

UiT Norges arktiske universitet er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

I dette prosjektet ønsker jeg å finne 6-8 informanter som har gått fra å være passive bærere av samisk språk til å bli aktive brukere som bruker språket nok så ofte. Det er foretrukket med informanter som har tilknytning til de markasamiske områdene da dette er mitt fokusområde.

I tillegg ønsker jeg et par informanter fra språksenteret Várdobáiki, gjerne leder og/eller samisk språkkurslærer.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Metoder som vil bli brukt i prosjektet er intervju og observasjon.

5. Letter of consent to the informants in Norwegian:

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

"Nord samisk språkrevitalisering: å bytte fra passiv språkbærer til aktiv språkbruker"

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å *identifisere suksessfaktorer hos personer som har gjort språkskifte fra passiv til aktiv bruker av samisk språk og i sammenheng med dette analysere hvilken rolle de forskjellige språkarenaene i regionen har i denne prosessen.* I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Formålet til denne masteroppgaven er å forsøke å finne fellesfaktorer hos personer fra det markasamiske området, som har gått fra passive til aktive språkbrukere. I tillegg til hva slags rolle samiske språkarenaer har i denne prosessen. Informasjonen og dataen som samles inn i til dette prosjektet vil kun bli brukt i sammenheng med denne masteroppgaven.

Mitt forskningsspørsmål er:

"Hvordan har tidligere passive språkbærere i markasamiske områder lykkes med å bli aktive språkbrukere av samisk?"

Samt tilleggsspørsmålene:

"Hvordan arbeider de forskjellige samiskspråklige arenaene for å fremme samisk språkbruk i regionen?"

"Finnes det noen fellesfaktorer til hvorfor informantene har gått fra å være passiv til aktiv språkbruker av samisk?"

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

UiT Norges arktiske universitet er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

I dette prosjektet ønsker jeg å finne 6-8 informanter som har gått fra å være passive bærere av samisk språk til å bli aktive brukere som bruker språket nok så ofte. Det er foretrukket med informanter som har tilknytning til de markasamiske områdene da dette er mitt fokusområde.

I tillegg ønsker jeg et par informanter fra språksenteret Várdobáiki, gjerne leder og/eller samisk språkkurslærer.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Metoder som vil bli brukt i prosjektet er intervju og observasjon.

6. NSD approval in Norwegian:

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

🖨 Skriv ut   ☰ 21.06.2022 ▾

Referansenummer	**Vurderingstype**	**Dato**
809628	Standard	21.06.2022

Prosjekttittel
North Sámi language revitalisation: shifting from passive language carrier into active language user

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
UiT Norges Arktiske Universitet / Fakultet for humaniora, samfunnsvitenskap og lærerutdanning / Senter for samiske studier

Prosjektansvarlig
Lene Antonsen

Student
Lea Olavsdotter Nilsen Marakat

Prosjektperiode
01.07.2022 - 01.08.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger
Alminnelige
Særlige

Lovlig grunnlag
Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)
Uttrykkelig samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 9 nr. 2 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 01.08.2023.

Meldeskjema 🔗

Kommentar
OM VURDERINGEN
Personverntjenester har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

Personverntjenester har nå vurdert den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at behandlingen er lovlig, hvis den gjennomføres slik den er beskrevet i meldeskjemaet med dialog og vedlegg.

VIKTIG INFORMASJON TIL DEG
Du må lagre, sende og sikre dataene i tråd med retningslinjene til din institusjon. Dette betyr at du må bruke leverandører for spørreskjema, skylagring, videosamtale o.l. som institusjonen din har avtale med. Vi gir generelle råd rundt dette, men det er institusjonens egne retningslinjer for informasjonssikkerhet som gjelder.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige personopplysninger og særlige kategorier av personopplysninger om rasemessig eller etnisk opprinnelse frem til 01.08.2023.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 nr. 11 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse, som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

For alminnelige personopplysninger vil lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a.

Behandlingen av særlige kategorier av personopplysninger er basert på uttrykkelig samtykke fra den registrerte, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a og art. 9 nr. 2 a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
Personverntjenester vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen:

- om lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet.

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Vi vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18) og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
Personverntjenester legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1 f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

Ved bruk av databehandler (spørreskjemaleverandør, skylagring, videosamtale o.l.) må behandlingen oppfylle kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29. Bruk leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med.

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må prosjektansvarlig følge interne retningslinjer/rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilken type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:
https://www.nsd.no/personverntjenester/fylle-ut-meldeskjema-for-personopplysninger/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema

Du må vente på svar fra oss før endringen gjennomføres.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
Vi vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Kontaktperson hos oss: Line Raknes Hjellvik

Lykke til med prosjektet!

b6515db63

Chat med oss på
hverdager fra 12-14