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Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, Centre for Sámi Studies

## **Sámi new speakers**

A case study of the North Sámi language beginner program at UiT

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*Cover photo taken by my friend and photographer, Daniel John Benton, on Sámi national day outside Tromsø Kunstforening (TKF), in Tromsø, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2021.*

*To the students, for their will to learn and use Sámi*



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## Abstract

The present thesis focuses on students enrolled at UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) during the 2020/2021 academic year in the *Nordsamisk som fremmedspråk*, North Sámi beginner language program. The study explores the process of becoming a Sámi new speaker through an educational program and the factors that motivate, promote, or prevent new speakers' learning path. New speakers can contribute to maintaining, and hopefully, increasing the number of Sami speakers. What are students' experiences and challenges in using Sámi language outside the Sámi administrative areas, in an urban environment such as Tromsø? And what is the role of the language program in this process?

The beginner North Sámi language program at UiT accommodates students who have a direct link to Sámi language and culture, and students who have not. Yet, both groups represent agency in learning and supporting the Sámi language. Students are not categorized as successful or unsuccessful in this study, as learning a language is a multifaceted experience influenced by individual, community, and societal factors. The research discusses how all factors have an impact on the use of Sámi language outside the classroom. A personal interest in learning the language as well as a professional aim, represent high motivational factors for learners to enrol in the program. What are the opportunities then for students to use Sámi after the one-year language program?

The empirical case study of the North Sámi language learners at UiT offers a ground of analysis and discussion on the topics of education, language revitalization and Sámi language status within the Norwegian society. It discusses challenges, demanding learning processes, but overall, it addresses the possibility of becoming a Sámi new speaker through education.

Keywords: *New speakers, North Sámi, adult language program, UiT, Sámi language revitalization*



## **Abbreviations**

Q – Question

N – Number of participants

## **Quotations**

*'italics'* for participants' comments



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## 1. Introduction

'*New speakers*' is far from being a new phenomenon within linguistics studies, however in the case of indigenous minority languages, '*new speakers*' is a transformative addition to the traditional concept (Atkinson, 2018). The present project aims to illustrate the path of becoming an indigenous minority language new speaker through an educational program, by focusing on North Sámi language within the Norwegian context. It presents the case study of North Sámi adult beginner language program (*Nordsamisk som fremmedspråk*) at the UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) during the 2020/2021 academic year. The literal translation of the Norwegian name of the program *Nordsamisk som fremmedspråk* is *North Sámi as a foreign language*. For ideological and practical reasons, I will use the English translation of *North Sámi beginner language program* to refer to the case study program; a title that illustrates better the context, content and aim of the program.

Three Sámi languages are officially recognized in the Norwegian constitution: Lule Sámi, South Sámi and North Sámi. All three languages cohabit with the dominant national language, Norwegian and its two official orthographies: Bokmål and Nynorsk. North Sámi is the Sámi language with most speakers in both Norway and in general, while South and Lule Sámi are in a more critical situation (Mæhlum, 2019). Although there is an acknowledged need on working and supporting Lule and South Sámi, this thesis focuses on North Sámi language. The choice of this is motivated by a strong empirical and practical reason: as a student at UiT, I live and study in an area where North Sámi language is taught, learnt, and used. The UiT beginners Sámi language program teaches North Sámi. Because the language program is the empirical ground of study, the focus on North Sámi does not arise from a deliberate choice but from an empirical and practical consideration. The choice of spelling *Sámi* instead of *Saami* or *Sami* is motivated by the idea that the acute accent on the root vowel illustrates better the North Sámi spelling (see Vangnes, in press). Furthermore, because this thesis aims to support Sámi language, I will use the Sámi names for the municipalities inside the Sámi administrative areas to give more presence to the Sámi language itself.

Independently of their status and number of speakers, all Sámi languages are gathered under the umbrella of Sámi language. Sámi is one of the official languages of Norway and it has an equal status to Norwegian language in thirteen municipalities known as Sámi administrative areas, spread across the northernmost regions of Norway and Trøndelag (see Figure 1<sup>1</sup>).

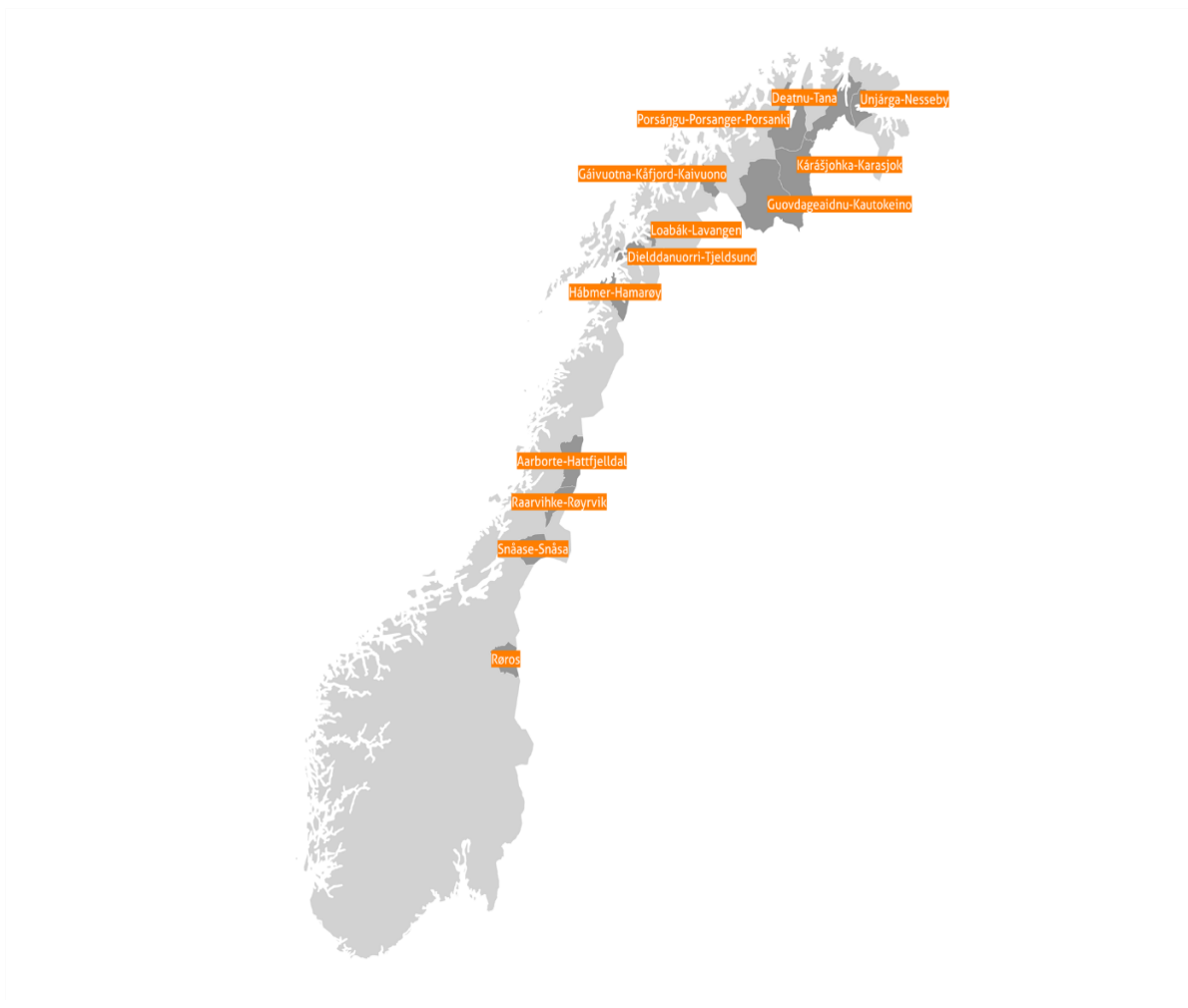


Figure 1. Sámi administrative areas

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sametinget.no/sprak/forvaltningsomradet-for-Samiske-sprak/> (last accessed 11/02/2021).

From the Norwegian government perspective, Sámi administrative areas are aimed to be Sámi-Norwegian bilingual areas where Sámi language has a strong visibility and use – in public administration as well as in education – and extensive opportunities to learn and speak Sámi. However, not all Sámi people live in these areas. Therefore, what does it happen outside the administrative areas, and what are the possibilities to learn and use Sámi? This research addresses the process of becoming a Sámi new speaker through an educational program, outside the Sámi language administrative areas, and the factors that motivate, promote, or prevent new speakers' learning path. New speakers can contribute to maintaining, and hopefully, increasing the number of Sami speakers. Therefore, who are the students and what are their backgrounds and motivation to enrol in the North Sámi beginner program? Or, what are students' experiences and challenges in using Sámi language outside the Sámi administrative areas, in an urban environment such as Tromsø? And what is the role of the UiT beginner language program in this process?

This thesis is divided into seven chapters: the present introduction chapter corresponds to the first chapter; the second chapter focuses on the concept of new speakers and its importance within language revitalization; the third chapter concentrates on Sámi language; the fourth chapter discusses the methods and methodology; and chapter five and six are a dialogue between data results, plausible reasons for those results and possible suggestions for future improvements. The seventh and last chapter is a brief conclusion on the findings, limitations, and ideas for future research.

The thesis illustrates two different profiles of students taking the North Sámi language program: students with a direct link to the Sámi community and students without. The individual interest in the Sámi language and culture is a high motivational factor, complemented by a professional aim, to learn and use Sámi language. Tromsø, the context where students live and study, influences students' path in becoming new speakers and the opportunities to use the language outside the classroom. The present thesis' results share

similarities with two other projects on Sámi new speakers and it places itself at the cross of an ideological and functional language revitalization approach.

The importance of the thesis resides not only in the pioneering aspect of being the first research on one of the North Sámi language programs offered at UiT<sup>2</sup>, but also in portraying a clear picture of the process of becoming a Sámi New Speaker at an adult stage through education, in Tromsø. It gives voice to students' experiences in learning the language – their motivation and challenges – and gathers useful information for the education program on students' backgrounds and expectations that will hopefully lead each to an auto-evaluation by, and therefore, further improvement of, the program itself. Moreover, the present project aims to illustrate a new case of Sami new speakers' agency in learning and using Sámi language, and participate in the discussion on Sámi language revitalization process overall. As a 'narrator' I will endeavour to be clear, concise, and loyal to my data. In most parts, I will use the first personal pronoun *I* to explain choices, considerations, interpretations of the data and viable improvements.

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<sup>2</sup> UiT offers two Sámi language programs: a native and a beginner program. Further explanation will be given in the methodology part.

## 2. New speakers and language revitalization

This chapter is a general view on the concept of ‘new speakers’; the role of institutions in creating new speakers; and more crucially, the importance of new speakers within the revitalization process of indigenous and minority languages.

### 2.1. New speakers of indigenous languages

‘New speakers’ is far from being a ‘new’ phenomenon as it has always existed as soon as there has been contact and interaction of speakers of different languages. In academia, the term was often described as ‘second language’ or ‘non-native’ in opposition to ‘first language’ or ‘native’, pointing to a binary classification of the speaker (Murchadha, et al., 2018). In the case of minority and indigenous languages, however, ‘new speakers’ corresponds to a recently ‘new’ concept. Beyond the discussion of the ‘native’ versus ‘non-native’ dichotomy and its implication in the language legitimacy and practices, new speakers’ experience entails learning a language at a later stage in life, outside the family nest, and in most cases through instruction. As minority and indigenous languages were marginalized and excluded from education, ‘new speakers’ is a concept that arose in recent years as a result of engagement in revitalization movements in many parts of the world (Lantto, 2018).

‘New speakers’ encloses a diversity, complexity and heterogeneity of contexts, practices and ideologies. However, a common characteristic is shared by all speakers’ profiles that is most of the times they have acquired the minority or indigenous language through education and

in an institutional setting (Walsh & Lane, 2014). During the COST ACTION IS1306<sup>3</sup> meeting hold in Edinburgh, March, 2014 the Working Group 1 in the ‘Report of conceptualizations of new speakerness in the case of indigenous minority languages’ identified some of the following core elements or characteristics of new speakers<sup>4</sup>:

- Acquisition of the minority language outside the home, through education semi-formal learning situation
- Passive (understanding) or active (speaking) competence in a minority language through informal language socialization (at home for example) and usually in a setting where the minority language is not dominant
- Speakers coming from a traditional speaker background, with parents or close family speaking the language at home but who did not pass it on during the new speakers’ childhood
- New speakers acquiring a significant degree of competence in the minority language (B2, independent user according to the Common European Framework) and make active use of the language in their lives
- The experience of new speakers learning trajectory evolves and changes through life cycle
- Many new speakers learn the language motivated by reasons that are either political or identity based
- Other speakers may acquire the language for instrumental reasons or practical necessities (employment or for studies, for example)

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.nspk.org.uk/about/> (last accessed 17/11/2020).

<sup>4</sup>For complete list please refer to Walsh, John & Lane, Pia 2014: New speakers in a multilingual Europe: Opportunities and challenges. ISCH Cost Action IS1306. Activity of working group 1: Report on conceptualisations of new speakerness in the case of indigenous minority languages. National University of Ireland. University of Oslo.

- There is no clear dichotomy between ‘new’ and ‘traditional’ speakers as the situation of the people raised with a minority language is strictly different from previous generations.

In a broader arena, the ‘new speaker’ concept is an umbrella term used not only for regional minorities or indigenous language but also for immigrant groups, transnational workers or students, language learners or transnational online communities (O’Rourke et al., 2015). What differentiate the regional minorities and indigenous language learners from other groups, is the fact that many of the ‘new speakers’ are not totally ‘new’ but may have a previous contact or cultural tie to the language and culture. Annika Pasanen in her article *Becoming a New Speaker of a Saami Language Through Intensive Adult Education* (2021) presents the background and motivation of adult learners of Inari Sámi, North Sámi and Skolt Saami in an immersive language course in Finland. The adult learners were both Sámi and non-Sámi but the main motivation for language learning was the reclamation of one’s own language or heritage language follow by a general interest in the language and the wish to support Sámi speaking communities (Pasanen, 2020). A different example is the case study of Gaelic medium education (GME)<sup>5</sup> of Gaelic language learners in Scotland, where only four of the forty six participants in the research were totally ‘new’ speakers of Gaelic, having been raised without Gaelic at home who had acquired the language through the program. The rest had previous knowledge of the language from their family nest (Dunmore, 2017).

If the previous contact with the language and culture is high among the indigenous languages’ new speakers, why then not define them as heritage language speakers? There is

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<sup>5</sup> Gaelic-medium education (GME) is a form of education in Scotland that allows pupils to be taught primarily in Scottish Gaelic, with English being taught as the secondary language.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/my-school/choosing-a-school/gaelic-medium-education/gaelic-medium-education-foghlam-tro-mheadhan-na-gaidhlig/> (last accessed 03/04/2021).

not an agreed precise definition on heritage language learners (HL) and in USA the term is mostly used to describe individual of immigrant families as well as ancestral or indigenous communities that want to learn and reconnect with their language and culture (Weiyun He, 2010). It is based on Fishman (2001) categories of heritage languages in USA: (1) the immigrant languages which moved to the USA after the independence; (2) the indigenous languages of the native people and (3) the colonial heritage languages (i.e. Dutch, Swedish or Finnish language) spoken by various Europeans groups that first colonised what is now United States (Fishman, 2001 in *Developing Minority Language Resources*, 2006: 12–23). I deliberately chose not to use the term heritage language for the Sámi language students on account of various reasons. First, as a student in Indigenous Master studies, I am aware that definitions and political decisions go hand in hand and are crucial for indigenous peoples' rights and claims. Therefore, would it be fair to define and therefore understand the indigenous languages' situation on par with immigrant languages? Many immigrant languages (as it is the case of Mexican immigrants in USA with Spanish as heritage language, or Turkish in Germany) benefits of a bigger speakers community outside the immigrant country and most of the times, they are the majority language, official in one territory; while many indigenous languages do not have a bigger speaking community outside their own community, and in most cases, they correspond to minority languages, officially non recognised as the language of a specific territory. Reflecting on the idea of the territory, indigenous languages are then not just the language of family ties and generations but also the language of territories that have been assimilated. This territorial assimilation and 'colonization' translated into a forced language shift and therefore, a language lost.

On the other hand, the participants of the present project are divided between students who have Sámi background and those who have not. Using the term heritage language learners will then automatically exclude the second group of students, with a non-Sámi background. Therefore, I use the concept of 'new speakers' to describe *new users* of Sámi that acquired most of their language skills through an educational program, with diverse backgrounds,



motivations and interests in learning the language. For this, ‘new speakers’ is seen as a diversity of *language users* that contribute to Sámi language vitality and transmission.

## 2.2. The role of institutions in the language revitalization process

From the early 1990s a strong movement of Indigenous languages revitalization began, and it translated into different educational and social organizations to assist Indigenous communities in their efforts to maintain and revitalize their languages. For example, Cultural Survival (founded in 1972<sup>6</sup>) plays an important role in promoting indigenous peoples rights and culture, with a specific focus on language; or the Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL, founded in 1996<sup>7</sup>) works with endangered languages documentation (Gessner et al., 2018). Different programs, outside and inside the institutional education, have been created to teach indigenous languages, to prepare new specialists in the instruction of the languages or design new learning programs and technological tools to help the revitalization process. Increasingly, universities all around the globe – for instance, universities in Canada, USA, Australia, Norway with the example of UiT or the Sámi university of Applied Sciences in Guovdageaidnu (Sámi allaskuvla) – are offering courses on indigenous languages and cultures with the aim to produce new speakers and/or increase proficiency and knowledge in the language. The University of Victoria itself, in British Columbia, is trying to incorporate over thirty indigenous languages in their curriculum (Wilson, 2018). In 2011, the Consortium on World Indigenous Nations Higher Education established five main purposes in teaching indigenous languages (Wilson, 2018):

- Revitalize/maintain use as a marker to outsiders
- Revitalize/maintain internal ritual use

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/search/node?keys=Sámi> (last accessed 12/04/2021).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ogmios.org/> (last accessed 12/04/2021).

- Revitalize/maintain home and community use
- Revitalize/maintain internal official Indigenous government use
- Revitalize/maintain indigenous language use with non-indigenous peoples living on indigenous land

The five goals are divided between individuals' knowledge of the language and community use. In the case of adults' learners, the first two goals could be easily reached by learning the language to a certain extent. Mastering it, however, and making it a community daily use language, is more challenging to be accomplished through an institutional program (Wilson, 2018). Educational programs can be also used for learners living outside the speaking community (for example North Sámi speakers in Oslo) to maintain or strengthen their language skills. Furthermore, in many cases, where the generational transmission of the language ceases, the educational system remains the most important tool for language maintenance and transmission (Todal, 2018, referring to South Sámi language). Considering this, a main challenge of language education programs is understanding how much time (hours of teaching) a program needs to allocate for the learners to move from basic use of words and sentences to a proficiency in the language (Wilson, 2018). I will also add the acknowledgement of what kind of skills one wants to provide in the course, professional skills or academic for example. This, of course, implies a strategic design and funds to implement the program and depends very much on the wider socio-political and economic contexts (Hornberger & De Korne, 2018). In all cases, several factors must be considered while measuring the possible competence one can acquire through an educational program:

- Is the indigenous language program meant to teach all students or only indigenous students?
- Is the indigenous language taught through monolingual immersion or through the main language?
- Who are the teachers and how did they acquire the language?

- What varieties of the indigenous language is presented in class?  
(See Hornberger & De Korne, 2018 for the complete list).

The afore mentioned factors lead to questions of how indigenous languages should be taught, to whom and by who? (Kroskrity & Field, 2009 in Hornberger & De Korne, 2018). In any case, as Huss (2008: 134) indicates: “revitalization is . . . a struggle—sometimes onerous and frustrating, often healing and empowering—but still a struggle, without an end in sight”. This struggle is however, crucial in indigenous peoples’ fights for their rights, one of them being the maintenance and strengthening of their language. Costa James (2015), while presenting the Occitan language revitalization case, argues that language revitalization process is not about language *per se*, but it belongs to a larger social movement that uses language as a discursive tool in order to redefine power relationships among groups

“Language revitalization is best understood as a form of collective action aiming to impose new categorizations of the world through the mobilization of language as a discursive category and through a number of actions seeking the recognition and establishment of a new “language” where another (deemed foreign) is becoming or has become dominant”  
(Costa, 2015).

On the other hand, Huss (2008) defines revitalization as “the emancipation of minorities and their cultures on their own terms rather than on the terms of the larger society as has long been the case” (Huss, 2008: 133). In my understanding, language revitalization process is both: it is truly part of a larger social movement, but it turns on individual choice to join the ‘group<sup>8</sup>’ or not. It is not just a social movement organised by an elite agenda where the individuals participating make unconscious choices. In many cases, the minority language

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<sup>8</sup> Here I refer to Kroskrity’s idea (2000: 8) on the ‘*perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group*’ to create individual or group identity (Kroskrity & Field, 2009 in Hornberger & De Korne, 2018).

or indigenous language is the language inside doors, the language that links one to the families' stories and to the understanding of who one is and where one comes from, and individuals have undisputed agency in evaluating how important the language is for oneself. As a Quichua teacher, Victor, said once to me: *'linguists or teachers may want to revitalize the language (speaking about Quichua) but the final choice resides in the speakers' will to use the language once they walk out of this door (pointing to the classroom exit)*<sup>9</sup>.

Based on this idea, evaluation students' profiles could also be a part of creating successful revitalization programs. The CASLE project<sup>10</sup>, seen as a successful tool in revitalizing Inari language in Finland, defined a general selection criteria to choose the students that enrolled for the one year adults' intensive language program: the selection was based on age, professional occupation, their capacity in keeping up with one intensive learning year experience, students' motivation as well as their commitment in learning the language and most importantly, using it after the program, in society (Olthuis et al., 2013:114). The selection of the right students was crucial for the main aim of the revitalization program that was recreation a lost generation of speakers of Inari Sámi that could use the language in society and in professional arenas. This bottom up perspective adds an extra layer on the evaluation of a 'good' language program and successful revitalization tools.

I believe that the key for a successful revitalization process then, might be a constant dialogue between the top-down and the bottom-up perspectives, where the educational offer and the students 'fit' and commitment, walk hand in hand. Hence, assessing program

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<sup>9</sup> From a conversation about Quichua language revitalization with Victor, the Quichua teacher of the village school in Bandera Bajada, during my field work in Argentina in 2015. Quichua is the name of Quechua language variety spoken in Santiago del Estero, in the North of Argentina.

<sup>10</sup>CASLE project stands for the complementary Inari Sámi language education program developed in Finland, for revitalizing Inari language and most importantly recreating a lost generation of Inari speakers, young adults.

outcomes, such as the present project on UiT beginners' course, can provide new insights, knowledge base and hopefully; improve dialogue.

### 2.3. The importance of 'new speakers' in language revitalization and transmission

Following on the idea that language revitalization is – beyond social movements, institutions, and national curriculums among others – also an individual choice to learn (if needed), use and transmit the language; new speakers constitute then, a group that consciously choose to dedicate time and efforts in learning the language. They are active participants in the revitalization and maintenance of the language, and in most cases, acquire it through an artificial channel (instruction). Contrary to the idea – to be done by others –<sup>11</sup>, in the case of new speakers, this is done all by themselves, putting their energy and motivation in acquiring the language and offering a very optimistic side in the minority and indigenous language movements.

Jonsson & Rosenfors' (2017) case study of the adolescent – Elle<sup>12</sup> – and her process in becoming a Sámi new speaker in Sweden, is a great example of new speakers' commitment. It illustrates Elle's agency in the language revitalization process by learning and actively using Sámi in writing and speaking. Elle's agency in using the language is beneficial for her own language learning process but also contribute in giving example of the importance of individual agency in language revitalization, and motivating, as well as empowering other speakers/ learners to use Sámi (Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017). The concept of 'agency', based

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<sup>11</sup> Here I refer to Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer (1998) idea of *avoidance* strategies when one usually looks for others to solve the problem, with the idea that '*preserving the language is and culture is good, but not for me*'.

<sup>12</sup> 'Elle' is the pseudonym chosen by the participant herself (Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017).

on Giddens' theories (1984)<sup>13</sup>, is used by different researchers to underline the possibilities of modifying social and institutional order by exercising individual agency (Saxena & Martin-Jones, 2013: 290 in Jonsson & Rosenfors, 2017). Individual agency, however, is not exclusive to new speakers but also to traditional speakers who decide to take action in reinforcing, maintaining and transmitting the language. Hiss (2015) illustrates the engagement of Odd, a Sámi-Norwegian bilingual inhabitant of a Coastal Sámi village in Northern Norway, who one day deliberately decides to use Sámi as his main language in the village. In the article, Hiss (2015) presents Odd's testimony about his reasons for taking action in speaking and therefore reinforcing Sámi language within his own context. In Odd's own words: *'...yes what we can do that the language can live, we could do one thing. I knew the language. So use it, and I said this to myself, yes'*<sup>14</sup> (Hiss, 2015: 30).

In Finland, the Inari Sámi language program is yet another example yet of the important role of new speakers in the revitalization process. By the 1990s, the Inari Sámi had only a couple of younger speakers, being considered an endangered language (Pasanen, 2018). Through language nests, inspired in the Maori example, and complemented later on by an intensive year-long Inari Sámi language program for adults (CASLE), the Inari Sámi language revitalization process is seen today as a success. The adults' intensive program was extremely important in this process, as adult learners started to use Inari Sámi in different social domains, including professional arenas. It illustrates the possibility of reversing language shift by forming new speakers (Pasanen, 2018). As Pasanen (2018) indicates, for Inari Sámi language, "transmission is widely dependent on new speakers ... While the total number of native first-language speakers is diminishing, the proportion of young and middle-aged speakers has increased remarkably" (Pasanen, 2018).

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<sup>13</sup> Giddens (1984) developed the *structuration* theory arguing that an individual's autonomy is influenced by structure and structures are maintained and adopted through the exercise of agency (for more information, check <https://www.britannica.com/topic/structuration-theory>, last accessed 12/04/2021).

<sup>14</sup> Original English translation in the article.

As the case of Inari Sámi suggests, the role allocated to new speakers is not only the one of maintenance of the language but also the transmission of it. The success of Inari project relies not on a single method or program but on different strategies to create speakers, transmit the language and most importantly design different social spaces where the Inari Sámi can be used. Inari Sámi is transmitted in language nests; used in schools as the main language of instruction for different subjects; taught in different educational programs; incorporated in new technological tools; used in radio, TV or newspapers; and it is present in different official domains, in the church, and in the cultural and social life (Pasanen, 2018). As Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer (1998) say “languages can be learnt by individuals, but they are transmitted by groups” and therefore, the creation of opportunities and social spaces where one can use the language is crucial for the revitalization of it.

The importance of new speakers in the revitalization process is clearly illustrated in Pasanen’s (2018) words: “it was not Finnish politics that saved Inari Sámi. It was the people—speakers and their descendants—who wanted to speak Inari Sámi, who did it”. Not all responsibility, however, should be put on individuals’ shoulders to revive the language; national policies and educational programs have the responsibility yet to create favorable circumstances and possibilities for the speakers to learn, use and transmit the language.

### 3. Sámi languages

This chapter focuses on Sámi language, starting by an overview on the linguistics features of the language itself; it continues with a presentation on Sámi language education in Norway and the presence of Sámi language in Tromsø; and it ends with a brief résumé on specific previous research on Sámi language that constitute the backbone of this thesis.

#### 3.1. A linguistic overview on Sámi languages

Sámi languages belong to the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic family<sup>15</sup>, generally closely related to the Finnish, Estonian and Karelian languages. It is not a unified language but it englobes ten distinct linguistic varieties – languages – presently spoken in the geographical area called Sapmi<sup>16</sup>, which stretches from Northern Scandinavia (the present day countries of Norway, Sweden and Finland) to Kola peninsula in Russia. The degree of difference and comprehension between these Sámi languages depend very much on the geographical distance. Overall, all ten Sámi languages<sup>17</sup> present the characteristics of a typical Uralic language that is: rich morphological and derivational system (i.e. seven nominal cases, four verbal moods, depending on the Sámi variety), the dual form of pronouns and verbs among others (Sammallahti, 1998: 61–65) The list is extensive but the goal of this chapter is not to

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<sup>15</sup> Uralic family englobes 38 different languages spoken in Northern Eurasia, Hungarian, Finnish and Estonian being the languages with most speakers.

<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935345.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935345-e-6> (last accessed 27/01/2021).

<sup>16</sup> Sápmi is the North Sámi name use by Sámi people themselves while referring to the geographical area.

<sup>17</sup> (1) South Sámi, (2) Ume Sámi, (3) Pite Sámi, (4) Lule Sámi, (5) North Sámi, (6) Inari Sámi, (7) Skolt Sámi, (8) Akkala Sámi, (9) Kildin Sámi, (10) Ter Sámi. In original source Sámi is Saami (Sammallahti, 1998).



give an exhaustive linguistics description of Sámi language as such but to raise awareness of the complexity and difference among Sámi and other languages, such as Norwegian or English (which have no nominal cases derivation system, for example). This is something to consider in the case of learners of Sámi language whose first language is in most cases Norwegian, as for many participants in the present study.

The main difference among Sámi languages is the number of speakers. North Sámi has by far the largest number of speakers with around 20,000 speakers, most of them in Norway (about 10,000) and the rest in Sweden (5,000) and Finland (2,000) (Sammallahti, 1998: 1). In Norway three Sámi languages – North Sámi, Lule Sámi and South Sámi – are officially recognized by the Norwegian state under the European Charter for regional or Minority languages and gathered under the umbrella of Sámi language (Vangsnes, in press). As mentioned in the introductory chapter, North Sámi has the largest number of speakers while Lule Sámi and South are in a more challenging situation (Mæhlum, 2019).

Modern North Sámi is divided into two main dialect areas – Western North Sámi<sup>18</sup> and Eastern North Sámi – although there exist other varieties (i.e. the Sea Sámi all along the coast from of Fisher Peninsula to Troms – except the Porsangerfjord – or the Torne Sámi in north-east Gällivare in Sweden, the western part of Enontekiö municipality in Finland and from Ofotfjord to Lyngen and Nordreisa in Norway (Sammallahti, 1998: 8). It has, however an unified writing system since 1979 (revised in 1985) based primarily on the Western dialect, that serves as standard orthography for North Sámi in all three Nordic countries (Magga, 1994). This is a key point in the education programs, as students and teachers may come from different dialectal areas but they share a common written system.

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<sup>18</sup> Mainly spoken in the town of Guovdageaidnu in Finnmark and the municipalities of Alta, Enontekiö, and parts of Sodankylä and Inari (Sammallahti, 1998: 8).

### 3.2. Sámi language education in Norway

Having the possibility to study and learn Sámi language in schools is crucial in maintaining and revitalizing it. However, the daily practices in schools are not directly decided by teachers and the educational curriculum is influenced by the politics (Hornberger et al., 2008). The Norwegian Constitution guarantees the right of Sámi people to maintain and develop their language and culture. The Sámi Language Act of 1990 gives an equal status to Sámi and Norwegian language and states that “each person has the right to Sámi education”, aiming to create the possibility for everyone who is interested to follow instruction in Sámi language in schools (Sámi Act, sections 3 – 8)<sup>19</sup>.

But this was not always the case. Until the 1970s the educational system in Norway was one of colonization and assimilation of Sámi people into the Norwegian society (Olsen, 2019). The first part of the chapter gives a brief overview on the assimilation and Norwegianization process of Sámi people and therefore loss of their language and more important, language transmission. The second part describes the current educational system of Sámi language in Norway. Contradictorily, while the school used to be a tool of assimilation, nowadays the education system aims to be a tool of revitalization and promotion of Sámi language.

*Why a need for revitalization?*

According to Linkola-Aikio (2019), the history of Sámi language in Norway can be divided into five main periods: (1) the missionary period which extended from the eighteenth to the late nineteenth century; (2) the period of Norwegianization and prohibition of Sámi

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<sup>19</sup> [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fad/vedlegg/Sámi/hp\\_2009\\_Samisk\\_sprak\\_engelsk.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fad/vedlegg/Sámi/hp_2009_Samisk_sprak_engelsk.pdf)  
(last accessed on 25/01/2021).

language, from the nineteenth century to the late 1960s; (3) the use of Sámi language as a secondary language from the Second World War to the 1980s; (4) the period when Sámi language becomes a subject in the education program in the 1980s; and (5) Sámi language becomes an official language in the Norwegian Constitution in 1990s (Linkola-Aikio, 2019). Therefore, for more than a century the school was a tool to assimilate Sámi people into the Norwegian society and force them to abandon their culture, identity, and language. There were indeed forces in the Sámi community fighting against the assimilation process (i.e. the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Council in 1956), however the pressure of Norwegianization was such that many people abandon their culture and most important, language (Minde, 2003). This meant that in many cases parents might have spoken the language, but they did not transmit it to their children. It is here where it resides the very first challenge of indigenous languages and the need for a revitalization process: the lack of transmission of the language in a natural way, from generation to generation. When this occurs, languages turn to an artificial transmission that is through educational programs outside the family sphere.

*Sámi language educational programs for whom, where and how?*

The opportunities for a child to learn Sámi language at school depends very much on place of residence and age. In 1989 Norway ratified the ILO's Indigenous Peoples convention NO. 169 that ensures the rights of Sámi people to preserve and develop their culture, livelihood and language. Sámi language is recognized as official language and it has equal status to Norwegian within the Sámi administrative areas<sup>20</sup>. Sámi administrative areas are not territories administered by Sámis or the Sámi government, but they refer only to areas

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<sup>20</sup> Gáivuotna/Kåfjord, Loabák/Lavangen, Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino, Kárášjohka/Karasjok, Deatnu/Tana, Unjárga/Nesseby, Porsáŋgu/Porsanger, Dielddanuorri/Tjeldsund, Hábmmer/Hamarøy, Aarborte/Hattfjelldal, Snåase/Snåsa, Raarvihke/Røyrvik, Røros. Source <https://sametinget.no/sprak/forvaltningsomradet-for-Samiske-sprak/> (last accessed 15/04/2021).

with specific rules and rights for the Sámi language. The main goal of the Sámi administrative areas is to create Sámi Norwegian bilingual communities where Sámi language has a strong visibility and use (Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2019<sup>21</sup>). Outside the administrative areas, Sámi children have the right to have Sámi education (Education Act, article 2-6), however kindergartens for instance, are not obliged to have Sámi speaking employees, and the possibility to follow instruction in Sámi in school depends on the number of students demanding it – a minimum of 10 Sámi students in a municipality – (Rasmussen, 2015). This refers to the instruction of different subjects in Sámi language. As for the language itself, Sámi pupils have individual rights to learn Sámi in schools. In conclusion, Sámi education outside the administrative areas must be demanded by Sámi students.<sup>22</sup>

Here I present an overview of the possibility to learn Sámi languages in Norway (South Sámi, Lule Sámi and North Sámi). There are two main categories within Sámi language education: Sámi language in kindergartens and in schools for children and youngsters, and Sámi language programs for adults. I will present first the opportunities for children to learn Sámi language, followed second by the adult language programs.

Young children have three types of Sámi language offers in kindergartens: (1) Sámi kindergartens – childcare centres in Sámi language mostly<sup>23</sup> located in the Northern areas and within Sámi administrative areas – ; (2) kindergartens with a Sámi department – most of them located outside the administrative areas in cities such as Tromsø, Sør-Varanger, Nordreisa and Alta – ; and (3) kindergartens offering Sámi language as co-learning courses

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<sup>21</sup> [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fad/vedlegg/Sámi/hp\\_2009\\_Samisk\\_sprak\\_engelsk.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fad/vedlegg/Sámi/hp_2009_Samisk_sprak_engelsk.pdf) (last accessed 04/05/2021).

<sup>22</sup> More information on [https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/1998-07-17-61#KAPITTEL\\_7](https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/1998-07-17-61#KAPITTEL_7) (last accessed 04/05/2021).

<sup>23</sup> There are also Sámi kindergartens in Oslo, Tromsø and Alta.

for small children groups who have an interest in Sámi language and culture. This type of kindergarten does not usually have a Sámi speaker employee but can apply for funds to bring in Sámi speakers to teach a specific course (NOU, 2016: 103)<sup>24</sup>. After the kindergarten, the Norwegian school system offers three different types of curriculum for Sámi languages education: Sámi (1) for pupils who have Sámi as a first language and therefore the main literacy training is done in Sámi language (in Sámi language and other subjects such as mathematics or history) Sámi (2) for those who Sámi is a second language and follow the instruction in Norwegian language; and Sámi (3) for the students with no previous knowledge on Sámi language (Vangsnes, in press)<sup>25</sup>. In upper secondary education there is also Sámi (4) as a second language for students who have not had Sámi in primary school (Rasmussen, 2015).

At a later stage in life, adults have the possibility to learn Sámi through different language courses offered by Sámi allaskuvla (Sámi university of Applied Sciences) or the Sámi language centres as well as educational institution such as universities, as it is the case of UiT. The courses offered can differ considerably (some are designed for total beginners, others are for people who already have a good knowledge of Sámi but they want to learn to write and read, for example) but all of them aim to strengthen the use of Sámi language locally or in municipal activities (Antonsen, 2015). The language centres have an important role in Sámi language education as they are present in many municipalities (see the Sámi Parliament's strategies 2015 and the language centres' reports for the complete list of municipalities) and they are freer than the school system to use Sámi speakers who have no formal education in Sámi. From 2003, UiT and Sámi allaskuvla, from 2008, offered the possibility to take a qualifying examination in North Sámi at an advanced or beginner level. This opened more opportunities of collaboration between the three institutions as the Sámi

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<sup>24</sup> Norway's public reports 2016: 18

<sup>25</sup> Sámi (1) offers five hours instruction in Sámi per week , Sámi (2) offers three to four hours of per week and Sámi (3) offers two hours per week from grade 1 to 10 (Vangsnes, in press).

centres could adapt their courses for their participants to be able to take official language examinations in one of the two institutions (Antonsen, 2015).

In conclusion, understanding the possibilities one has to learn and study (in) Sámi is crucial for the revitalization process of Sámi language. Is Sámi language revitalization an issue of Sámi people? Is it a regional concern? Or is it a national goal? According to Albury (2015), Sámi language revitalization in Norway is understood as a responsibility of Sámi people. It comes from neo traditionalist ideologies that imply that indigenous knowledge and language are for indigenous peoples only (Albury, 2015). I believe however that the main goal of education is knowledge transmission, valorisation and the beginners' course at UiT is an example of this, as it gathers a diversity of students united by their motivation to learn Sámi language, regardless their background and previous knowledge of the language. These students represent new speakers of the language and most probably they are “building a future for the Sámi languages” (Pasanen, 2020<sup>26</sup>).

### 3.3. Sámi language in Tromsø

Tromsø is an urban area outside the Sámi core areas and officially not recognized as a Sámi administrative district. However, Tromsø is among the municipalities with the most registered Sámis (Hiss, 2013). The number of children in Sámi kindergartens (93) is higher than in seven of the nine municipalities of the Sámi administrative area, according to Slaastad (2012) in Hiss (2013).

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<sup>26</sup> [51. New speakers are building a future for the Sámi languages | Càtedra Unesco de Diversitat Lingüística i Cultural \(iec.cat\)](#), (last accessed 6/05/2021).

The presence of Sámi in Tromsø was extremely visible in the 2010–2011 political debates where it was argued that Tromsø joins the administrative Sámi area. However, the Tromsø application for membership in the Sámi administrative area was withdrawn in September 2011 with the success of the right party in the local elections (Hiss, 2013). In the NOU 2016: 18 report, the committee proposes that larger cities such as Tromsø (together with Trondheim, Bodø and Oslo) have specific responsibilities for Sámi language by facilitating the access to Sámi language by its inhabitants. Furthermore, the Sámi parliament has a cooperation agreement with the city of Tromsø to work together for the Sámi language.

In Tromsø there is a Sámi kindergarten; a Sámi department at two other kindergartens; and a Sámi language center (Gáisi språksenter<sup>27</sup>). The University of Tromsø has been given responsibility for Sámi research and education in Norway and proposes two Sámi language programs. The Centre for Sámi Studies has the task to promote research about Sámi people and culture within the indigenous studies field. Sámi language is visible in different public institutions, such as the UNN hospital, which serves the whole North Norway, and where there have been signs in Sámi since the new building was open in 1991 (Johansen & Tove, 2013). There are also signs in Sámi at UiT and the municipality puts up signs in new buildings, like the newest middle schools (ungdomsskole) and watersports recreational park (bandeland).

As many Sámis move from traditional settlements or villages to cities for education and jobs, the city of Tromsø represents a diversity of Sámi people coming from different areas, with different needs and interests. This translates into an increased need for public services in Sámi language such as health, justice court, education among others, and therefore, the need for qualified staff in Sámi language to fill in these professional positions.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://spraakcenter.no/tromso/> (last accessed 5/05/2021).

### 3.4. Previous research on Sámi new speakers

In this section I will briefly introduce the previous research I use to elaborate my research questions and data analysis. It also helped me understand different contexts and situations of Sámi language new speakers and consequently the needs and aims that the present project should address. Therefore, it is not an exhaustive list of all previous research on Sámi language revitalization but precise works that will be re addressed later on in the discussion of the data.

Aikio-Puoskari (2018) presents an overview on the situation of Sámi language revitalization process in Norway, Sweden and Finland and the different methods adopted from other parts of the world to meet the needs of Sámi language. This work is based on a previous report (from 2016) of the best practices of revitalization measures taken by the three Nordic countries. This report is analysed from three perspectives: (1) the individual perspective focusing on the barriers to speaking one's language or transmitting it to the children; (2) the generational perspective that highlights the generational gap of working age Sámi speakers and the need to create this generation in order to secure the language use in families, social spheres and public life; and (3) the social perspective that underlines the status of Sámi as a minority language in most of the North Sámi areas<sup>28</sup>, which translated into a low use of Sámi language in one's daily life (Aikio-Puoskari, 2018).

These three perspectives – individual, group and social – are also used in dividing factors that prevent and promote language use and therefore language revitalization. Todal (2007) presents an extended version of the factors list that Hyltenstam, Stroud & Svonni (1999:

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<sup>28</sup> Sámi is minority in most of the North Sámi areas with the exception of Guovdageaidnu (Kautokeino) and Kárášjohka (Karasjok) where Sámi speakers are majority.



48<sup>29</sup>) have prepared (I will illustrate the full list later on in the data description) by adding three new factors: (1) the ‘barrier’ factor, (2) the ownership of the language and (3) inclusion/exclusion factor. The *barrier factor* applies to the parents’ generation who have heard some Sámi while growing up or learnt Sámi in primary school and have knowledge of the language, but they experience a ‘barrier’ in speaking Sámi. Todal (2007) mentioned that these situations are not specific to Sámi communities but also to other indigenous minority languages. In my previous research with Quichua language in the North of Argentina, this was also the case. First, as for Sámi, there was a generational gap between grandparents, native speakers of the language, and grandchildren willing to learn and reconnect with the language. In between, there were the parents’ generation, whose barrier was created by insecurity and often by the negative image associated to using the language<sup>30</sup> and the feeling that their language knowledge was not enough or not the correct one. This points to consequences of the assimilation process that many indigenous and minority languages experienced. The second factor Todal (2007) mentions, is the *ownership of the language*, linked in many ways to the previous factor, raising the question of – who owns the language? – and it consequently links to the third factor that is *inclusion/exclusion* from the language community (Todal, 2007). I will retake the three factors in my data presentation to explain the choice of the questions in the second survey related to *language use* outside the classroom.

For particular case studies of Sámi new speakers, I took as reference, on one hand, the CASLE<sup>31</sup> project of Inari language revitalization in Finland and its adult immersion program that I previously briefly described. CASLE project has taken a functional approach and its

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<sup>29</sup> (Hilstenstam, 1999: 48 in Todal, 2007).

<sup>30</sup> This negative image of the language was usually related to social discrimination or with the idea that the language was not ‘useful’, that one could not use it for professional reasons etc.

<sup>31</sup> [CASLE.fi - Complementary Aanaar Saami Language Education - Revitalising Indigenous Languages](#) (last accessed 12/05/2021).

main goal has been inserting Inari Sámi language within the society by creating new speakers regardless of their background (Sámi or not Sámi for example). The main goal of the project has been creating a new generation of speakers that are active professionals and can use Sámi language at the workplace (Olthuis et al., 2013). On the other hand, Rasmus & Lane (in press) project on Sámi new speakers, presents an individual perspective on language learning and motivation connected to identity and emotions towards Sámi language and culture. It presents several cases of Sámi new speakers from two small Sea Sámi areas in Northern Norway (Gáivuotna and Unjárga) who acquired Sámi through educational programs, revitalization projects or as adult learners. Both cases will be taken in the discussion part as points of comparison.

Finally, I understood the importance of creating Sámi new speakers in order to maintain Sámi language vitality by reading Rasmussen's (2015) article on the teaching of Sámi languages in Norwegian primary and secondary schools – focusing on the school years from 2010/11 to 2014/15 – and Vangsnes' (in press) prognosis for the future numbers of Sámi language users in Norway. Rasmussen (2015) presents an overview on Sámi languages in schools, mentioning that there is a decrease – both in primary and secondary school – on the number of students receiving training in Sámi language. It also presents some of the challenges schools face such as shortcomings in teaching materials in Sámi and educational supervision. By taking into account the number of pupils taking Sámi education in schools and considering them as future generations of Sámi language users, Vangsnes (in press) makes three different prognosis for the number of Sámi speakers in Norway: (1) taking Sámi 1 as the only curriculum that produces Sámi speakers, the prognostic is sober, meaning that numbers of North Sámi speakers will drastically decrease (about 50% decrease in number of North Sámi users) while Lule and South Sámi will experience a slight decrease; (2) taking Sámi 1 and 2 as curriculums that produce Sámi speakers; a moderate prognosis then is viable, where North Sámi will have a slight decrease with Lule and South Sámi experimenting a noticeable increase; and (3) an optimist prognosis where all three language will experience an increase, if all three curricula (Sámi 1, Sámi 2, Sámi 3) serve to produce new speakers.

North Sámi then will experience a slight increase, while Lule and South Sámi will have a pronounced increases in the numbers of speakers. The optimistic prognostic is not a realistic expectation while the two other prognoses suggest a decrease in the number of North Sámi speakers. The conclusion is then that in the case of North Sámi the school system is not enough to maintain or increase the numbers of North Sámi users. In this case, creating new speakers via different programs outside school – such as adults’ language programs for instance – it is important and necessary to stabilise the number of North Sámi users. New speakers then become an alternative addition in maintaining the vitality of North Sámi language.

## 4. Methods and methodology

This chapter aims to give a clear and transparent account on the ‘backstage’ of the research and the methods and methodology used in the data collection.

### 4.1. Who am I?

How I came to do this project, and the experience of carrying it out, is a combination of multiple ‘lucky’ circumstances. I was advised to write my research ethics at the beginning of the project; I did so, knowing full well that I would almost certainly change it by the end of my thesis writing process. And that was the case, as this process was both an academic and a personal ongoing learning experience. First, one of the so called ‘lucky’ circumstances was that despite the current pandemic and the restrictions that it implies, I was able to carry out physical data collection with the students at UiT, meet them formally – when for instance doing the surveys, the game or presenting the results – but also informally for coffees or just ‘bumping into each other’ in the library. Therefore, I was in a close relationship with the environment I was studying as well as my supervisor and other teachers involved in the Sámi language project.

Secondly, the project allowed me to use my own personal experience – as a language teacher and student – but also the experience of growing up in between languages, in a context where my native language (Romanian) was the ‘indoors’ language of an immigrant family living in Spain. I saw while growing up how my use of Romanian became thinner and thinner and how the shift to the Spanish language was inevitable, even among our family members. The heritage language concepts are part of my identity and it gives me insightful knowledge on the challenges of minority language speakers and the efforts in learning and maintaining the language when it is not present in one’s daily social or professional life. Furthermore, as an

Indigenous master student, I am aware of indigenous peoples' fights, and the maintenance of their language being a crucial one. I would not describe myself as a researcher nor as a bare student writing an obligatory thesis, but as an active participant in the advocacy of the importance of diversity and peoples' space to create and decide their own future.

#### 4.2. Methodology, data and methods

This research addresses Sámi language revitalization focusing on one of the main tools serving language revitalization, that is education. It aims to present a clear picture of what in practice is happening in the Sámi language revitalization process, beyond curriculum framework and national education laws, by focusing on a specific Sámi language program offered at the Arctic University in Tromsø (UiT) during the academic year 2020/2021.

UiT University proposes two different Sámi language programs: a native and a beginner language program. For the beginner program, thirty-nine students enrolled for the autumn semester in 2020, a number considerably larger compared to previous years (23 students).

“North Sámi as a foreign language” is a one-year study for Sámi language beginners. It consists of 4 individual subjects with a total scope of 60 credits (ECTS) primarily focused on Sámi language and culture. The study starts in autumn and lasts for two semesters. Students can enroll for specific courses or for the entire program. The courses focus on North Sámi lexicon, grammar, orthographic system and cultural insights. It also touches upon the dialectical variety of North Sámi as well as other Sámi languages.<sup>32</sup> The main goal of the research is to follow, observe and analyze the language learning process of the students during the 2020/2021 academic year. The main question is what it takes for an individual to

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<sup>32</sup>[https://uit.no/utdanning/program/280836/nordSamisk\\_som\\_fremmedsprak\\_-\\_arsstudium](https://uit.no/utdanning/program/280836/nordSamisk_som_fremmedsprak_-_arsstudium) (last accessed 14/05/2021).

become a Sámi new speaker through education and crucially, how the present university program can help students to progress beyond beginner level and become new speakers and users of Sámi language. For this, anonymous surveys have been chosen as a data collection method: one survey in September whose aim is to gather background information about the students and their motivation to enroll in the program; a second survey in February focusing on the use and practice of Sámi language outside the classroom.

The survey consists of anonymous questionnaires carried out physically by myself, with the permission and great support of the Sámi language teachers, during several lectures. The choice of anonymous questionnaire, instead of interviews for instance, is motivated by the aim of the research to focus on both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data identifies the characteristics, backgrounds and motivation of Sámi students as a group; while the qualitative data gives the diachronic analysis of the individual learner experience and the process to become a Sámi new speaker during the academic year. In order to gather qualitative data, a number is given to each student by their teacher, which is to be indicated in both surveys. This number allows the researcher to identify the evolution of the student learning process in an anonymous way. The teacher has the numbers in the personal notebook, and these are deleted immediately after the survey. The teacher has no access to the survey, and I have no access to the personal numbers given to students. For the second survey I use a pilot study with a student from the previous Sámi beginner course, before passing the survey to the students. This was not done, however, for the first survey due to time limitations as I wanted to have the students' first impressions as early as possible after they had started the program.

Questionnaires are widely used in different types of social research, however in linguistics, the structuring and the choice of questions can be more challenging given the linguistics diversity of the respondents (Pauwels, 2016). In the present project the sampling frame was relatively straightforward: all students enrolled in the Sámi language beginner level at UiT.

However, the choice of language in which the questionnaires were to be presented was a crucial consideration. Given the fact that not all students were proficient in Norwegian, as some of them come from different places such as Finland, an English version of the questionnaire was created. The English version was constructed taking into account not only linguistics diversity but also socio-political and sociocultural factors, as Norwegian is the dominant language. It was decided that having two language version questionnaires was the best way to deal with the diversity of respondents. However, all participants chose the Norwegian version in the first survey as well as in the second one. Twenty-seven students out of thirty-nine officially enrolled in the program, answered the first survey. Seventeenth answered the second one.

I had the pleasure to meet the students several weeks before the first survey. I was invited by Katarzyna Zofia Dominczak – one of the main teachers of the program – to introduce myself and present my project to the students during one of the very first lessons of the program. It was a very enriching exchange where students were able to ask questions and further explanations about the research and my interest in the project. I believe the success of many students participating in the survey, and especially the additional information they provided in the comments box, was partly due to this first encounter.

Another interactive encounter with the students was in the middle of February (2021), when UiT allowed for several weeks presential lessons. This time, it was for playing a game that I specifically designed for the students as a language activity integrated into the classroom. The game aimed to complement the surveys' data and elaborate, within an indigenous research paradigm (Chilisa, 2012), a participatory map of knowledge that gives voice to students' thoughts and views on the experience of using Sámi language outside the classroom. The game tells the story of Niis. *Niis is a 25 years old student at UiT who lives in Tromsø and is in the process of becoming a Sámi new speaker. He is very motivated and passionate about Sámi language.* The game is divided into two part: a first part discussing

Niis' life in 2021 and a second part about Niis' life in 2031, ten years after. The first part of the game has three different tasks. The first task consists in discussing the possible reasons why learning Sámi language is so important for Niis and writing them into specific boxes provided for that (7 boxes in total). *However, despite Niis' motivation to use and improve Sámi language, in his daily life, Niis finds many situations where he cannot use Sámi language.* Second task is to think of possible situations where Niis cannot use Sámi in his daily life in Tromsø and again write them in the boxes provided (10 in total). Each of the ten boxes is connected to another box (cloud shape). This is to be used for the third task that consists in finding possible solutions to these challenges. At the end of the first part of the game, students had to write three adjectives to describe Niis, bellow Niis picture.

The second part of the game presents Niis' life ten years later: *Niis became a Sámi new speaker, he works, has a family, he still lives in Tromsø and he uses Sámi in his everyday life.* Therefore, the fifth and last task is to guess what Niis probable has done during all these years and all the opportunities and situations he may have experienced after becoming Sámi speaker. This task aims to elicit long term perspectives for Sámi language speakers. The story was told in Sámi and students had the choice to write their answers in Sámi or Norwegian. They all chose to write in Sámi and asked Katarzyna (the Sámi teacher) about any grammar structures or words they were unsure of. The groups' discussion was held in Sámi and Norwegian.

The game unfolded as follows: students from each classroom<sup>33</sup> (Group A and Group B) were divided, in turn, into two subgroups (Group A1 and A2; Group B1 and B2). Each of the subgroups had a A3 printed version of the game (see appendix). Six people were present in Group A, so they were divided into two groups Subgroup A1 and A2 (each with three

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<sup>33</sup> The North Sámi beginner group was official split into two presential classrooms by UiT on Tuesday (Group A) and Wednesday (Group B); classroom running from 12:15 to 3pm. I met the students on the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2021.



students per group). For Group B five students attended and they also divided into Subgroup B1 and B2 (B1 formed by three student and a B2 with two students). The dynamic was the same for the two groups: the two subgroups worked separately for the first part of the game, more specifically for the first and second task where they had to discuss and write the reasons why Sámi language was so important for Niis (task one) and the challenging situations to use Sámi language in Tromsø (task two). Most of the students did not find it easy to come up with difficult daily situations and almost half of the allotted time was used for this part of the game (approximately 25 minutes). After this, the two subgroups exchanged worksheets and they had to give possible solutions to the challenging situations proposed by the other subgroup. The students found this part of the game surprisingly fun and they seemed to be very motivated to discuss conceivable solutions. And at the end of it, each subgroup chose three adjectives to describe Niis. The first part of the game took approximately one hour. For the second, both subgroups came together and worked on the fifth task that consisted in imagining Niis' life in 2031, and all the opportunities and changes he may have experienced after becoming a Sámi speaker.

The game was an extremely fun way to have participants' thoughts and future perspective on the path of a Sámi new speaker. It was also an opportunity for them to collectively reflect on the practical daily challenges to use Sámi in Tromsø but most importantly, think of possible solutions to it.

#### 4.3. Data analysis

Questionnaires have been one of the preferred tools in linguistics to gather information about language use and language attitudes in language maintenance (LM) and language shift (LS) projects and studies related to minority and indigenous languages (Pauwels, 2016). Joshua Fishman (1965) introduced the question '*Who speaks what language to whom and when?*' as a guiding question in the design of the questionnaires exploring LM and LS issues. Over

the years this basic question has been extended to '*Who speaks/uses what language/variety/code to whom, when, where and to what end/for which purpose?*' (Pauwels, 2016).

The questionnaires (see appendix) consist of twelve to seventeenth questions where respondents were asked to answer multiple choice questions. For each question, a comment box was designed for the participants to give extra information or clarification if desired. The data is manually transcribed and then analyzed in the Excel program, using frequency and percentage tables as well as cross tabulations to compare the results and correlations among different pre-defined variables. The first questionnaire has multiple choice type questions, while the second questionnaire mixes questions with rated answers based on Likert scale (1932) and multiple-choice questions as well as open questions (i.e. *How did this course help you use Sámi more?*). No information about age or sex was gathered and therefore the analysis of the data does not consider these variables. One of the main reasons for age being omitted as a variable of interest was to avoid the dichotomy between 'new speakers' and 'traditional speaker' based on age variable. As Smith-Christmas and Murchandha in "Reflection on New Speakers Research and Future Trajectories" indicate '*efforts to revitalize the language mean that younger speakers often have access to the language through education, whereas older speakers usually did not. Thus, on an abstract level, whether someone is a 'new' speaker, or a 'traditional' speaker is, in some cases, predicated on when a particular speaker was born*'. (Smith-Christmas & Murchandha, 2018). Gender is also omitted as it does not represent a differential factor for the present study.

The questionnaire gives insights into *reported behavior* and not into the *actual behavior* and sometimes the gap between the two can be considerable (Pauwels, 2016). As a partial solution to closing the gap between *reported* and *actual* behavior is the implementation of a game that aims to create a map of co-production of knowledge together with the respondents

of the questionnaire and the *student researcher*<sup>34</sup>. The game aims to be a more detailed discussion about language importance and language use where learners can explore relevant language issues such as the factors and the situations that prevent Sámi language use and the possible solutions to them. The present project focuses on the process of North Sámi language learners to become Sámi new speakers. In the data analysis and discussion, the term – *Sámi language* – refers to the *North Sámi*. The process of becoming Sámi new speaker is analyzed in terms of *reported use* of Sámi language outside the classroom. For this, several axes of analysis were designed.

Firstly, I dealt with a description of the results from a classroom perspective: 1) students' background and motivation; 2) students' reported use of language and 3) the relevant factors that prevent and promote language use outside the classroom. Considering these main lines of analysis and division of the data, the research would describe the interactions of the different factors by cross-tabulating two or more independent variables. For example, are speakers more successful and dedicated to using the language, and therefore improving speaking outcomes, depending on their learning motivation? Second, is there a correlation between learners' background – understood as previous knowledge and contact with Sámi language and culture- and the use of Sámi language and success in becoming a new Sámi language user? Are learners using more Sámi after the start of the course? What are the factors that promote and prevent this use? And the list continues.

Cross tabulations will be graphed through multiple contingency tables containing the independent variable (i.e. motivation, background etc.) and the dependent variable (use of language). The subcategories of independent variables do not present an equal number of samples. Therefore, the relationship between the subcategories and the reported use of

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<sup>34</sup> I personally prefer to use the term - *student researcher* - as I consider myself to be a student learning how to do research and more importantly, learning from my participants, my data and my supervisor.

language cannot be compared by numbers but by calculating percentages (the number of times a variant is used by the subcategory divided by the total numbers of samples of that group). The percentage will identify general tendencies within the subcategories (Meyerhoff et al., 2015: 126).

These axes of analysis are integrated within the main questions of the research: who are the students? How is the program? And finally, is it possible to become a Sámi new speaker through education programs such as the one proposed by UiT? The present work aims to draw tendencies on the path of new speakers learning process and therefore, contribute to a more general understanding of the possibilities and challenges to become a new speaker of Sámi through an education program. It also aims to give space to students' voice by presenting the thoughts, ideas and background information the students shared in the comment boxes provided for each question in the surveys, their description of their experience in the program (See appendix second survey, Q18) as well as the game (see methodology chapter). It is in line with indigenous research methodology (Chilisa, 2012).

*Table 1: Main axes of analysis within the research*

*A- Classroom perspective (quantitative description)*

- 1- Who are the participants: background and motivation?*
- 2- Reported use of language*
- 3- Factors that prevent and promote the use of language*

*B- Cross- tabulation of variables*

- 1- Background -use of language*
- 2- Motivation- use of language*
- 3- Factors -use of language*

Language learning experience lies on a continuum and individuals are not categorized as successful or unsuccessful new speakers. At first, I considered to also integrate the exam results of the students into the data analysis. However, after much consideration, I tend to believe that the ‘success’ of becoming a new speaker is not straightly correlated to how much knowledge one has of the language but to how much one uses or try to use the language, and consequently improve their knowledge of it. In this case “using the language” stands for a variety of actions (reading, listening to the radio, speaking...etc.) that implies actively searching for contexts and situations that allows one to be in contact with the language. Therefore, the present research does not aim to assess learner’s proficiency in Sámi language<sup>35</sup> but the experience of becoming a new speaker by examining the correlation between individual background, motivation, external factors, and language use. In this case, the process of becoming a new speaker is understood as a multifaced experience shaped by individual, group, and social factors.

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<sup>35</sup> Note that different questions related to grammatical or lexical knowledge of Sámi language were presented in the second survey as a factor that can prevent or promote the Sámi language use.

## 5. Data presentation

This chapter presents the data gathered by answering to four main questions: (1) who are the students and what are their background and motivation to enrol in the program?; (2) are students on the path of becoming new speakers and what is students' reported language use outside the classroom?; (3) what are the factors that prevent and promote Sámi language use?; and (4) is there any correlation between students background or motivation and the language learning process?

### 5.1. Who are the students?

The very first chapter is dedicated to introducing the participants: their background, understood as contact and exposure to the Sámi language and culture, and secondly their motivation to learn Sámi. The data discussed comes from the first survey done at the beginning of the course (September 2020).

#### 5.1.1. Background

New speakers can be a misleading term in case studies of adult indigenous languages learners as it could give a sense of a total beginner in the language terrain without any previous experience or contact. As debated in the literature chapter, for indigenous languages, the term *new speaker* invokes a multitude of experiences and a great diversity of learners that in some cases are far from being new in the language and culture. For the present analysis, three background variables were defined: 1) previous knowledge of the language; 2) contact with Sámi culture and therefore exposure to the language 3) use of the

Sámi language before starting the program. For each variable, the relevant data results will be presented both in written form and through visual figures.

### 1) Previous knowledge of the language

Two questions are asked about previous knowledge of Sámi language before entering the course: Q3 *Have you studied<sup>36</sup> Sámi before* and Q5 *Do you have any knowledge of the Sámi language*. For Q3 *Have you studied Sámi before* twelve students replied *yes* and fourteen students said *no* (Figure 1). To Q5. *Do you have any knowledge of the Sámi language*, sixteen out of twenty-six declared having a minimum knowledge of Sámi language – *Yes, some words* –, five affirmed that they understand a lot but they cannot speak; one student reported that they can understand and speak quite a lot and only four of the total participants expressed not having any knowledge of Sámi language. Therefore, most students (22 out of 26) reported having a minimum knowledge of Sámi (Figure 2 and 3).

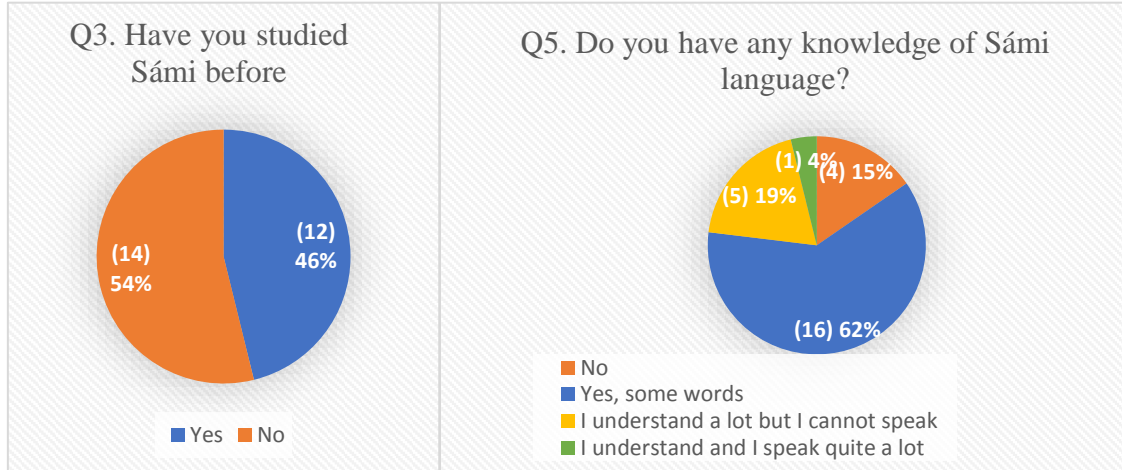


Figure 2. Previous study of Sámi language (Q3. N=26)

Figure 3. Previous knowledge of Sámi language (Q5. N=26)

<sup>36</sup> Here 'studies' is understood as learning or attending lessons. In Norwegian 'å lære'.

## 2) Contact with Sámi culture and exposure to the Sámi language

This section seeks to explore the contact students may have with Sámi culture and therefore exposure to the language. Several questions were included: Q6. *Do you have family or friends who speak Sámi? Who?*; Q10. *Do you have a Sámi Gákti?* and Q11. *Do you participate in any Sámi celebrations where Sámi language is used?*

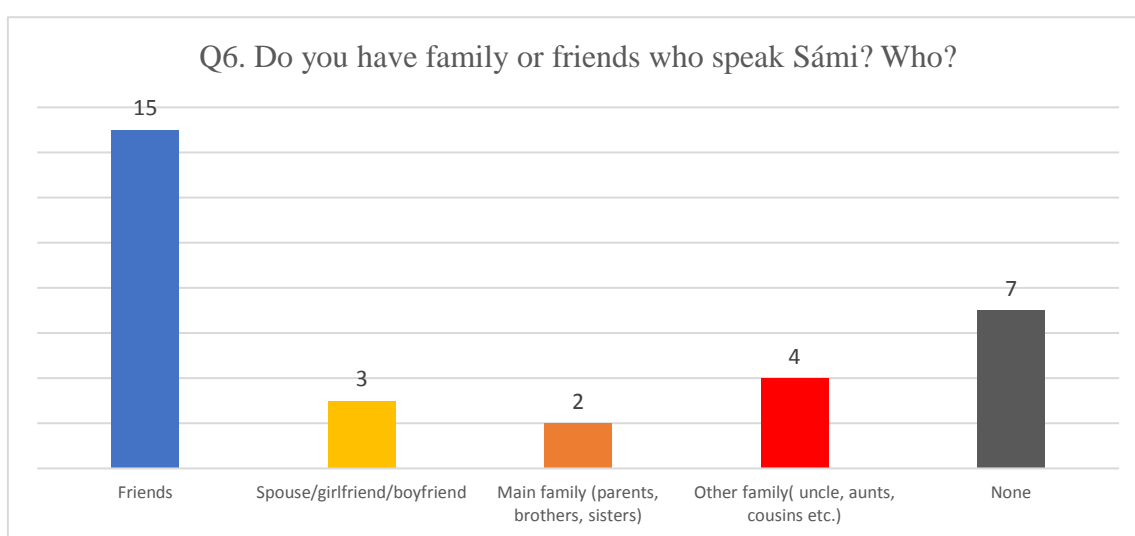


Figure 4. Contact with Sámi speakers (Q6. N=26)

For Q6 (Figure 4) most students reported having Sámi speaking friends, three having a Sámi speaking partner; only two students have main family (understood as parents and sisters or brothers); four have other families; and seven reported not to have any close person who speak Sámi. In the comment box students indicated that they have main family (dad/ mam) who speaks Sámi: *'Dad could speak Sámi and he also has some relatives that do not live that near who can speak Sámi'*<sup>37</sup>; some students referred to their grandparents and their

<sup>37</sup> 'Pappa kunne samisk, har også slekt som ikke er så nær som kan samisk'.



generation who speaks Sámi ‘Grandad was Sámi and spoke Sámi’<sup>38</sup>; ‘I have some friends and my grandpa and his generation’<sup>39</sup>; some said not to have a close family speaking Sámi but their boyfriend or girlfriend and their family ‘I have two friends, boyfriend/girlfriend and their family’<sup>40</sup>; or another student wrote that ‘My man is Sámi and speaks Sámi with his parents, his relatives and children. I want to learn Sámi to be able to participate in – familiespråket –. I am from Oslo and I did not have any Sámi affiliation earlier, but I moved to Tromsø five years ago and I would like to live here and have the Northern areas as my field of work. I work with culture and I wish to understand more about the culture of the region’<sup>41</sup>; and other referred to their Sámi speaking friends ‘I have a friend who only speaks Sámi at home’<sup>42</sup>; or colleagues ‘Previous classmates’<sup>43</sup>.

Q10. *Do you have a Sámi Gákti?* could be a debatable sensitive question as it points out to identity and to Sámi and non-Sámi categories. This was acknowledged while constructing the survey. Starting from the idea that language is the communicative tool of a particular community, the degree of ties you have with the specific community can influence the degree of the use of language. Consequently, the more contact you have with that specific community, the more opportunities you have for using the language. In this case, Q10 aims to explore the connection to the Sámi culture and community and therefore possibilities to use Sámi language. It also hints to the motivational aspect. During informal conversations, students were describing their language concerns while wearing a Gákti as other Sámi

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<sup>38</sup> ‘Bestefar var same og snakket samisk’.

<sup>39</sup> ‘Noen venner + bestefar og hans generasjon’.

<sup>40</sup> ‘2 venner, kjæreste og kjæresten sin slekt’.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Min mann er samisk og snakker samisk med sine foreldrene, sine slektninger og barn, Jeg vil lære samisk for å kunne delta i familiespråket. Jeg er fra Oslo har ingen samisk tilknytning fra tidligere, men flyttet til Tromsø for fem år siden og vil gjerne bo her og ha nordområdene som mitt arbeidsfelt. Jeg jobber med kultur, og ønsker å forstå mer av kulturene i regionen’.

<sup>42</sup> ‘Jeg har en venninne som bare snakker samisk i hjemmet’.

<sup>43</sup> ‘Tidligere klassekamerater’.

speakers may approach them and speak directly in Sámi. This can be a great external motivation to learn Sámi language and many occasions to practice it. On the other hand, students who do not have a direct link with the Sámi community is of an extremely importance as it addresses the idea that Sámi language is not Sámi people's concern only, but of a general interest of people living and working in Sapmi and have friends or siblings who speak Sámi language. Ten students said that they have a Sámi Gákti; three reported that they do not have a Gákti, but they could have one; and thirteen declared not having a Gákti. Nobody chooses the option – *I used to have but not anymore* – (Figure 5).

Q11. *Do you participate in any Sámi celebrations/festivals/community gatherings where Sámi language is used?* follows up on the same idea that the contact with Sámi culture brings possibilities to use Sámi language. Q11 (Figure 6) addressed both contact and exposure to Sámi language. Thirteen said that they do participate in Sámi celebrations, twelve – *no* – and one student did not reply to the question. In the comment box however, the student indicated that *'I never went there before but I will be at the Gákti day this year and Riddu Ridđu festival'*<sup>44</sup>.

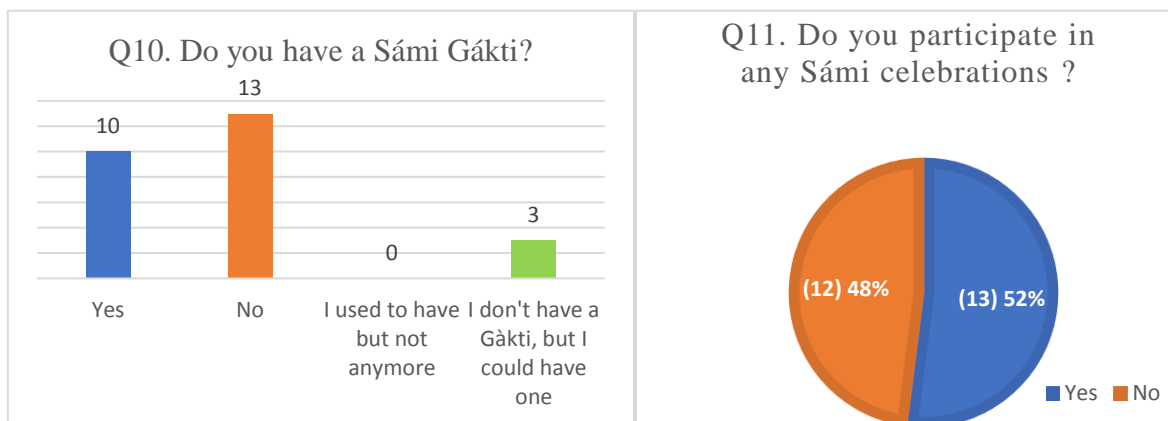


Figure 5. Use of Gákti (Q10. N=26)

Figure 6. Participation in Sámi cultural events (Q11. N=26)

<sup>44</sup> 'Har ikke gjort det tidligere men kommer til å være med på koftedagen i år + Riddu Ridđu'.

There is a straight correlation between Q3 and Q10, as most of the students who indicated having a Sámi Gákti also reported having studied Sámi before and vice versa (Figure 7). The option – *I do not have a Gákti, but I could have one* – is included in the – no – category. The correlation between Q3 and Q10 is around 80% (20 out of 26 matches of yes/yes and no /no categories for Q3 and Q10).

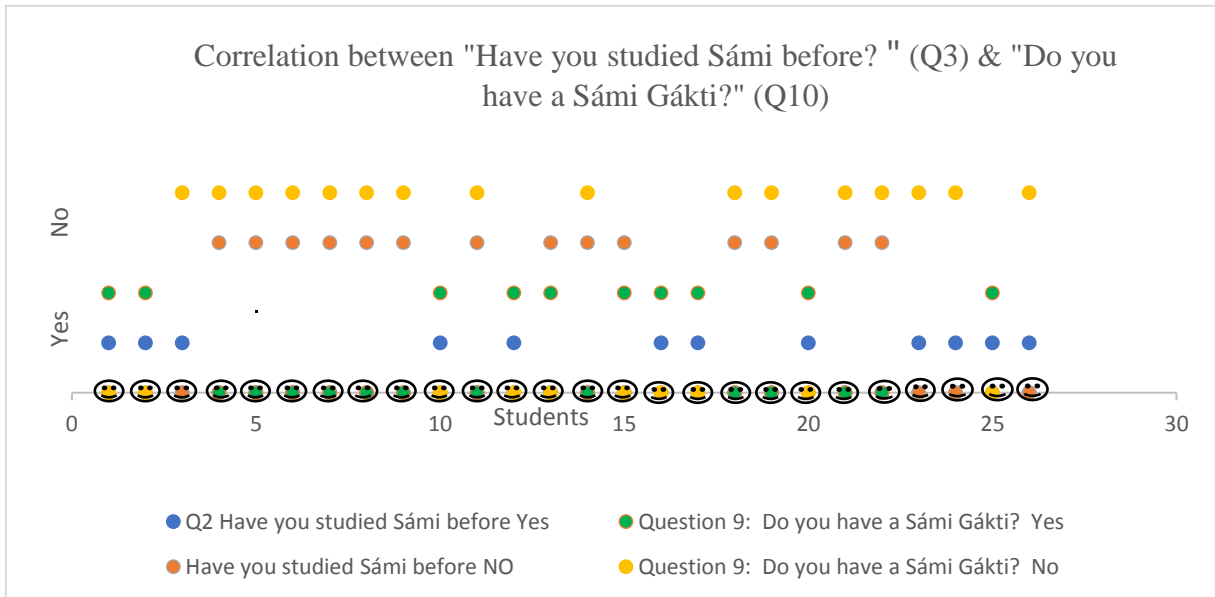


Figure 7. Correlation between previous Sámi studies and the use of Gákti (Q3. & Q10. N=26)

### 3) Use of language

As the main focus of this study is to present the experience and progress in becoming a Sámi new speaker based on students' *reported use* of language, three questions about the use of language previous to the start of the educational program, were included in the first survey: Q7. *Did you use Sámi language at home, before you started at this program?* and Q8. *Do you use Sámi outside your home?* follow by Q9. *If yes, in which context do you use Sámi language?* For Q7 nine students reported using *sometimes* Sámi at home, nineteen said *no* and only one student chose both options, *yes* and *sometimes* (Figure 8). A student who crossed the box *sometimes* indicated that they use 'small words, never spoke Sámi at

home<sup>45</sup>. Another student indicated that they did not use Sámi at home before entering the program but ‘As mentioned earlier, I have taken some lessons, and I also worked within Sámi context and was in –språkbad – (language bath) with my family in law for seven years<sup>46</sup>. Last comment touches upon an important distinction: *exposure* to the language versus *language use*. Although one may not use the language, one can be exposed to it and therefore have a possible passive knowledge of the language. However, in the process of becoming new speakers, a crucial step to take is to move from language exposure and passive language use to actively using the language. The second survey aims to picture this step and students ‘break out’ into Sámi language use.

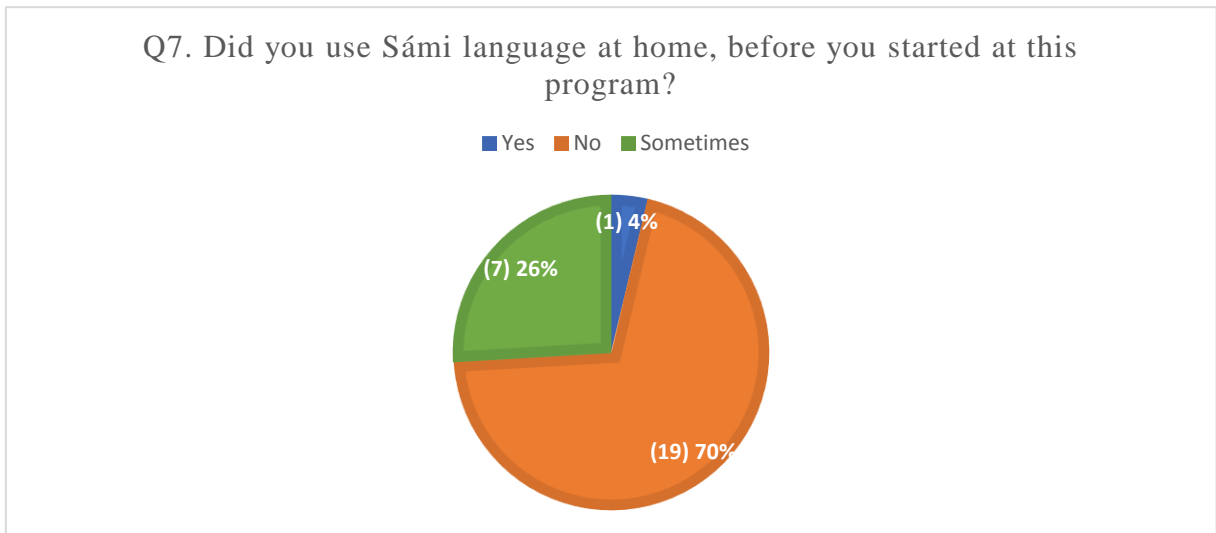


Figure 8. Use of Sámi language at home (Q7. N=26)

Q8. *Do you use Sámi outside your home* follows up the previous question (Q7) by, this time, referring to social or professional contexts outside the familiar nest. For this, almost half of

<sup>45</sup> ‘Småord, aldri snakket Samisk hjemme’.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Som nevnt tidligere så har jeg gått noen kurs, jeg har også jobbet innenfor samisk sammenheng og vært i språkbad hos min svigerfamilie i syv år’.

the students reported using *sometimes* Sámi outside their home (12 out of 14). Most of them declared using Sámi with friends and on social media (Q9, figure 9).

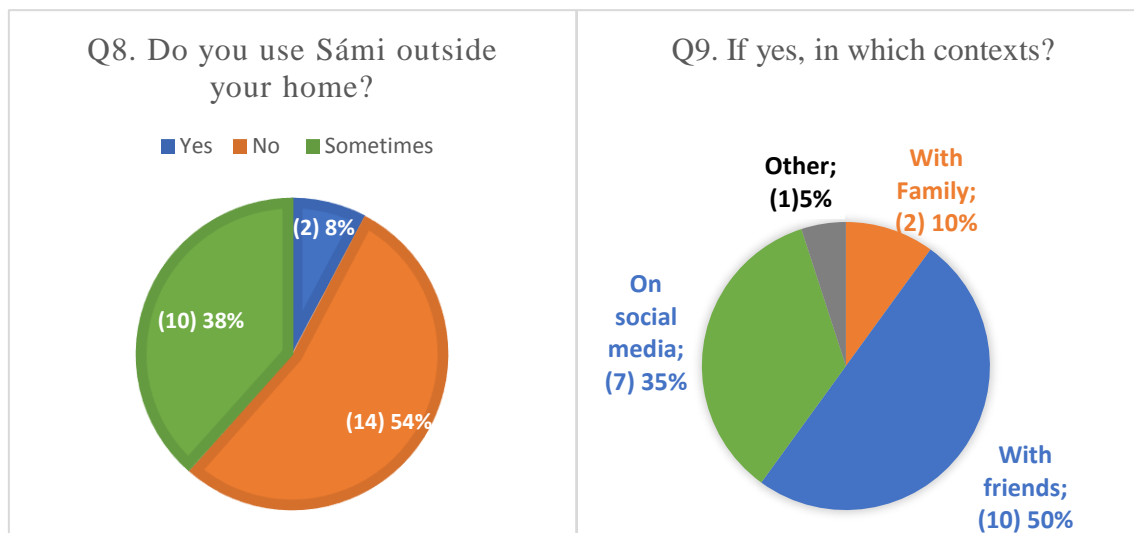


Figure 9. Use of Sámi language outside home (Q8. N=26) and (Q9. N=12)

Students' background is crucial for the latter analysis on the *reported use* of language and the progress of participants in becoming new speakers. Additionally, it is good source of information for the UiT beginner course itself as a second language teaching program. It offers an open window to students' background and exposure to Sámi language and culture before entering the program. The data suggests that the group is equally divided between students who studied Sámi previously and have a contact with Sámi language and culture, and students who do not have a direct link to the Sámi culture and never studied Sámi before. Therefore, first lessons of the UiT beginner course could represent for some a totally new introduction to the Sámi language and for some others, a merely revision. For this, the beginner language program has to adapt to both groups of students: explain basic knowledge for new students and at the same time, challenge the students with previous knowledge, for them not to find lessons too easy and consequently, loose motivation. Since learner's motivation has a significant impact on both learning and using the language, next chapter describes students' motivation to learn Sámi and join the beginner language program at UiT.

### 5.1.2. Motivation

It is a known result that language learner's motivation has a great impact on both the learner's attitude during their learning process as well as on their eventual proficiency in their language and success in becoming a new speaker. Language learning motivation is composed of several aspects: expectancy of success or failure, interest, perception of rewards, perception of relevance, overt decision to learn, persistent learning behaviour, and high involvement (Kimberly et al., 2000). In the present analysis, *internal motivation* (personal or professional interest) and *external motivation* (how much do the learners need the language or to what extent learning the language is important for the learner in their social context) are merged into the single variable of *motivation*. I am a language teacher and a student myself, and with time I came to understand that regardless of the diverse reasons one may want to learn a language, becoming a new speaker is a long-term commitment. For this, several questions in the first survey address not only students' reasons to enrolling in the program, but also their goals and their possible long-term intentions to continue learning Sámi: Q2 *Which co-course are you planning to take?* ; Q4 *Why do you want to learn Sámi*; Q12 *What are the main aims for learning the Sámi language*; and Q13 *Do you plan to continue learning Sámi after this year?*

Most of the students reported planning to take the four courses as part of the year unit (20 out of 26) and nearly half of them expressed intending to continue learning Sámi language after this year ( 12 out of 26) and the other half responded with *maybe* (14 out of 26). No one crossed the option *I will not continue*. In the comment box one student wrote '*always*'<sup>47</sup> and another one indicated that they '*Want to develop as much as I can*'<sup>48</sup>. A student who marked the option 'Maybe' indicated that '*I really want to, but I do not know where I could*

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<sup>47</sup> '*Alltid*'.

<sup>48</sup> Original comment in English.

*do that. But I will try to practice the language as much as I can, not to forget it*'.<sup>49</sup> The last comment forces me to stop my data presentation and explain two main points here. First, the course the participants are taking – North Sámi beginner program – does not give them direct access to the native program (a second program proposed at UiT whose target students are native Sámi speakers with different motivations: some intend to become Sámi teachers, some want to take bachelor in North Sámi language and literature, others may want to continue in the Master in Sámi language and literature). Therefore, many students may feel 'stuck' in their language learning process after this first year of studies. However, secondly, from the next academic year onwards (2021/2022), UiT offers a continuation of the beginner course during the autumn semester. It consists of two optional courses: an advanced North Sámi language course (a continuation on the content of the beginner course) and a North Sámi literature and cultural knowledge course that deals with the literacy and cultural history, with a main focus on recent cultural history. All lectures are in Sámi and it aims to expand vocabulary and knowledge on Sámi literature. A point that stood up to me while reviewing the literacy course description is one of its learning outcomes: *'understanding minority issues and the Sámi language and cultural situation in today's society'*<sup>50</sup>. Understanding minority languages' challenges, but also resilience, could be extremely determinant for students' motivation and long-term commitment with the language. It raises awareness but it could also provide tools for facing diverse challenging realities a minority language can involve; for example, the feeling of 'frustration' for not being able to hear and use Sámi language in all contexts or the feeling that the need of using Sámi language in society is limited. Having said this, figure 10 summaries students' plans to learn Sámi language.

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<sup>49</sup> 'Jeg har veldig lyst, men vet ikke hvor jeg skulle gjort det. Men vil prøve å praktisere språket så godt som jeg kan, for å ikke glemme det'.

<sup>50</sup> 'Forståelse for minoritetsproblematikk og samenes språk- og kultursituasjon i dagens samfunn'.

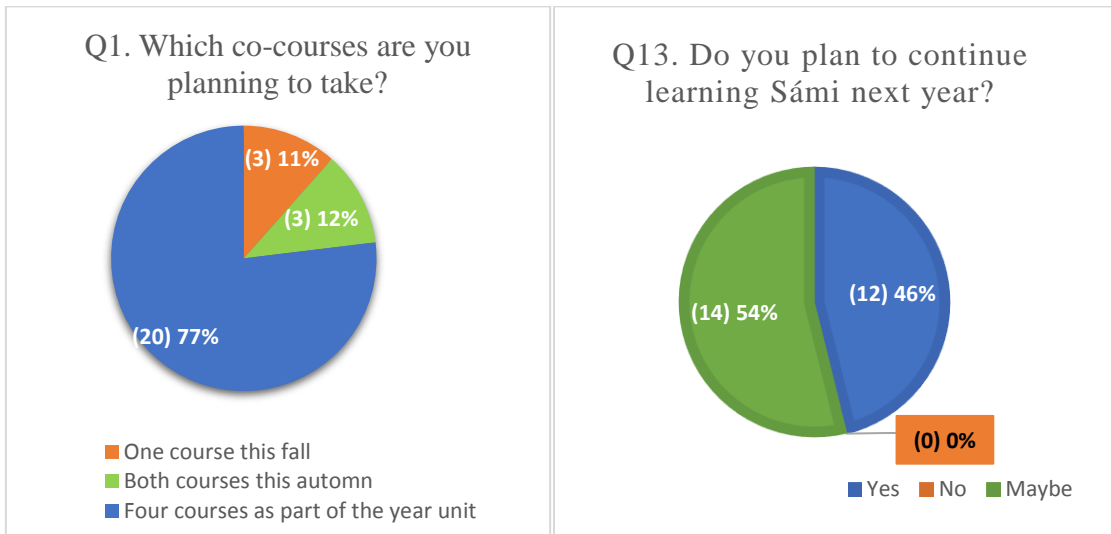


Figure 10. Future intentions for learning Sámi language (Q1. & Q10. N=26)

Q4. *Why do you want to learn Sámi* and Q12. *What are the main aims for learning the Sámi language*, addresses the personal reasons and aims students have for learning Sámi. For both question, participants could choose one or more options. For Q4 less than half of the students choose the option related to professional aims – *for work* – and only two students marked the option – *to facilitate the entrance to a closed study where Sámi knowledge counts* –. On the contrary, nearly all students (22 out of 26) crossed the option – *for my own needs* – and nearly half of them – *for individual use* – (see figure 11).

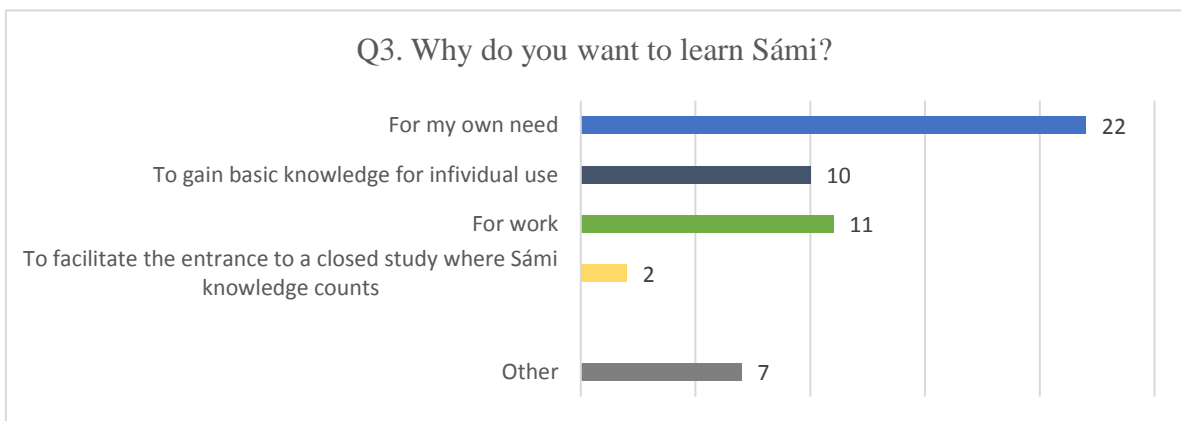


Figure 11. The reasons for learning Sámi (Q3. N=26)



For Q12. *What are the main aims for learning the Sámi language*, fourteen students indicate a personal interest in learning the language although they will not become active speakers, thirteen chose also the option of becoming active speakers with family and friends, and twelve indicated a professional aim of using Sámi at their workplace. Few indicated their aim to strengthen Sámi at home or help their children with the Sámi language, and other few chose the option for further studies (Figure 12). The low percentage of the aim to strengthen Sámi at home for children is comprehensible in the case of our participants, as most of them still in their early twenties.

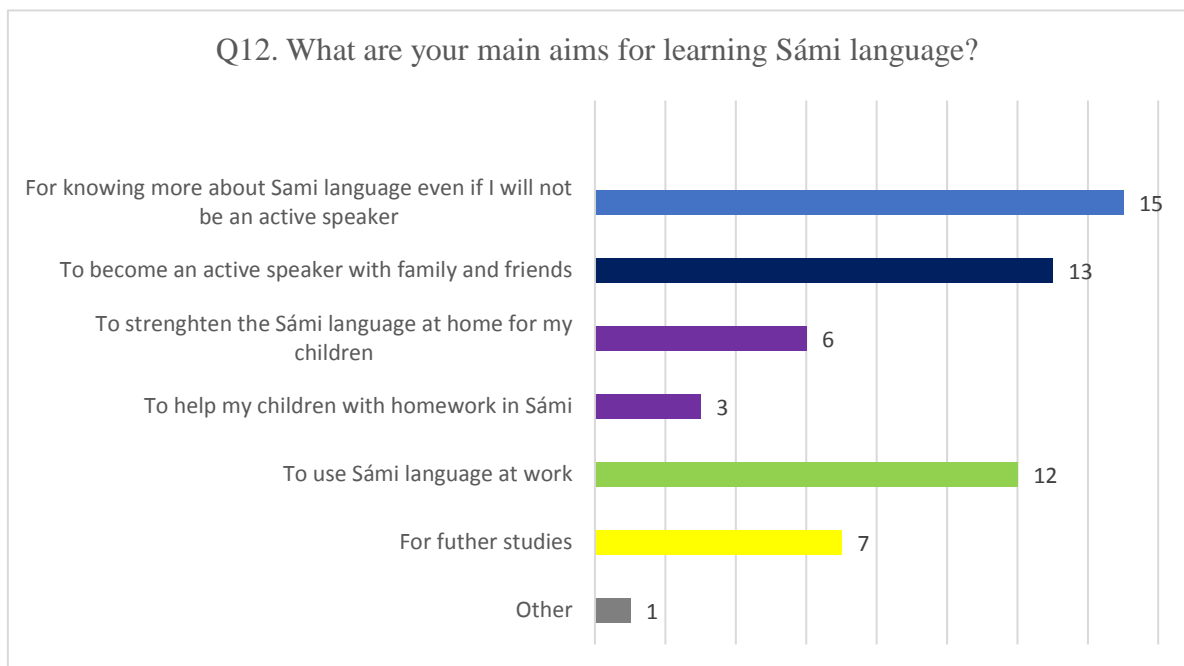


Figure 12. Aims for learning Sámi language (Q12. N=26)

According to the data, students seem to have a personal interest in learning Sámi language. Still Q4 and Q12 are limited to the few given options proposed in the questionnaire which does not cover all possible answers to the question ‘*why?*’. Why is it important for students to learn Sámi? What do ‘*my own needs*’, ‘*individual use*’ or ‘*for knowing more about the language*’ stand for? For this, I used the game to elicit more information about the possible reasons why learning Sámi language is important for one. The game (see methodology chapter) introduced the story of Niis for whom speaking Sámi language was extremely

important. Students were asked to think and write down reasons why Sámi language was important for Niis. The following table shows students' responses<sup>51</sup>:

Group A1	Group A2	Group B1	Group B2
The family is Sámi	He is Sámi	Sámi relatives	He wants to find a Sámi wife
He lives in Sápmi	He wants to take part in Sámi organizations	Interested in the language	He wants to preserve Sámi culture and language
He wants to preserve Sámi language alive	He wants to speak with his Sámi family	Tromsø is a Sámi town according to him	He thinks Sámi women are pretty
Language is an important part of the culture	He wants to sing songs	He has many Sámi friends	His family is Sámi
He likes to learn new languages	He has Sámi friends	He has Sámi girlfriend/boyfriend	He likes to go to Sámi festivals
His girlfriend is Sámi	He wants to read poems and books	He wants the children to know/speak Sámi	He wants to read Sámi books
He learnt some Sámi at school	He wants to understand Sámi radio and podcasts	He wants to work at the Sámi parliament	He needs Sámi places names at work and in nature

Table 1. Reasons why learning Sámi language is important: red colour illustrates interest in the language; orange stands for the interest in the culture and Sámi people; blue corresponds to the will to speak the language with family and friends; dark green refer to Sápmi and light green is for professional reasons

<sup>51</sup> Reminder from the methodology chapter: please note that due to the corona situation the beginner course was split into two lecturing classrooms. And for the game, each classroom was split into two groups, therefore we have four groups in total: Group A1, Group A2; Group B1, Group B2.

Students' responses combined both *internal* and *external* motivational factors. Truly, it is hard to draw the line between the two, as in many situations, personal motivation is created by a need or a concrete social or professional aim. Two concepts, however, seem to be present in all four groups: the importance of speaking the language with the family and the idea of the language as the door to Sámi culture and literature. Two groups mentioned Tromsø as a Sámi land and therefore the importance of the Sámi language; and two others referred to Sámi speaking friends.

Further down in the analysis, I will come back to the geographical context – Tromsø – where students are currently living and learning Sámi. By now, I want to focus on the idea of Sámi language as a communicative tool with family. This interrogates the role of the family in passing the language and language transmission overall. If the family speaks the language, why the participant does not? Here it lays some of the main challenges of indigenous and minority languages: lack of transmission of the language from generation to generation as a result of assimilation processes (Minde, 2003) or the minority language not being used at home because the family lives in areas where the majority language is present and consequently this leads to a shift to the majority language. To avoid this scenario, minority languages all over the world have implemented different solutions to prevent the language shift. In the case of the Sámi language, family language transmission is often complemented with language nests. Although students may not speak Sámi at home, they can become Sámi speakers through immersion programs in Sámi language in kindergarten and schools. Nevertheless, according to Vangsnes (in press) the number of children taking instruction in Sámi language is not enough to maintain the future number of North Sámi speakers. Consequently, new speakers have a crucial role in maintaining or, even better, increasing the number of North Sámi speakers in a long-term perspective.

### *Conclusion of the chapter*

This chapter is a presentation of students' backgrounds and motivations at the start of the program in September 2020. It is important for further analysis regarding their process of becoming Sámi new speakers. The beginners' group seems to be divided into two relatively equal categories: students who have had previous contact with the Sámi language and culture and students who have not. All are, however, gathered under the umbrella of Sámi new speakers living in Tromsø with a personal, and for some, professional interest in learning the language. There is a straight correlation between contact with Sámi culture and previous studies of Sámi language. The next chapter will analyse the students' *reported use* of Sámi language outside the classroom.

### 5.2. On the path to becoming Sámi new speakers? Students' reported use of language outside the classroom

The second part of data analysis focuses on students' *reported language use* elicited in the second survey, in February 2021. Seventeenth students participate in the survey. Fifteen of them from the first survey and two new participants. The survey used Likert scale (Likert, 1932) based on five scale criteria (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). For the present analysis I will use only three categories: – *agree* – (for the scales of strongly agree and agree), – *neutral* – and – *disagree* – (for the scales of disagree and strongly disagree) to measure students' acceptance of statements; and the categories of *high* (including the scales of always and frequently) *neutral* (sometimes) and *low* (seldom and never) for the reported language use outside the classroom.

I will start by presenting the results of the two general statements Q1. *I use Sámi everyday (by reading, writing, listening, speaking)* and Q17. *I use Sámi more after these studies*

(Figure 13). The data gathered illustrates a very positive start in the analysis, as most students highly rated both statements: almost all students agreed that they use Sámi language more after starting the program (except one student who chose the scale *neutral*) and approximately three quarters of the participants reported using Sámi everyday (11 agreed, 5 students chose the option *neutral* and only 1 student disagreed). I was interested to check the profile of the two students who chose the option *disagree* in Q1 and *neutral* in Q17. The student who disagreed (Q1), in using Sámi daily, indicated in the first survey having Sámi speaking family ‘*Some on my father side*’<sup>52</sup> and having studied Sámi before. The main aim for learning Sámi is to become active with family and friends. On the other hand, the student who indicated a *neutral* agreement with the statement of using Sámi more after the course (Q17), their main aim for learning Sámi is for professional reasons. In the comments box in the first survey the student indicated ‘*I want to become a Sámi teacher because it is very difficult to find graduated teacher who can teach Sámi and in Sámi and Sámi is a minority language*’<sup>53</sup>.

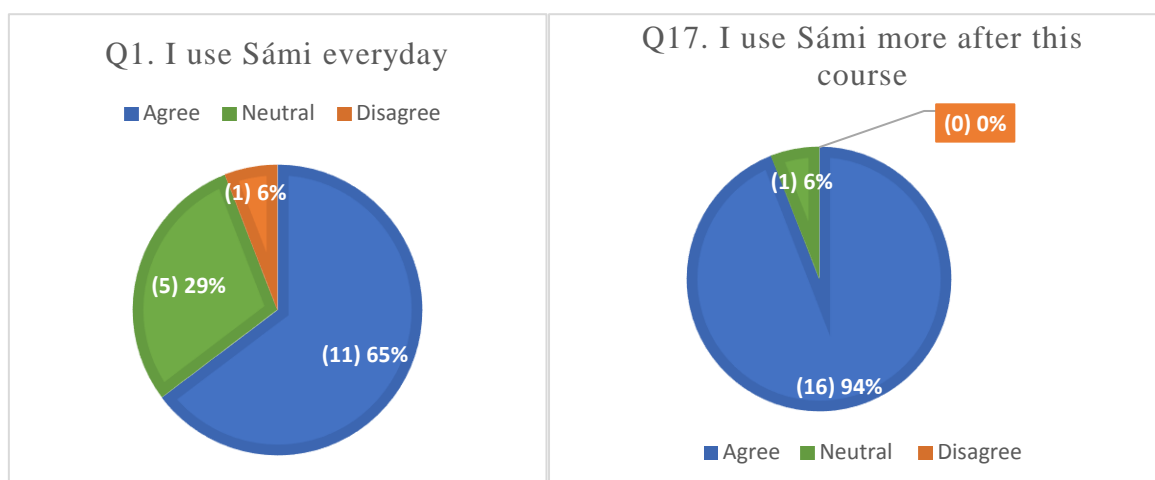


Figure 13. Sámi language use – general statements (Q1. & Q17. N=17)

<sup>52</sup> ‘Noen på fars side’.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Jeg vil bli samisklærer (sic) fordi det er vanskelig å finne uteksaminert lærer som kan lær (sic) samisk og på samisk og samisk er minoritetspråk’.

The process of becoming new speaker englobes a variety of efforts, challenges but also rewards. A crucial point in the process, however, is consistency: being constant in the learning process and therefore, use of the language, is the key to becoming new speaker. Starting from this idea, the data shows thus that most of the participants can be categorized as ‘successful’ language learners and considered to be on the path of becoming new speakers of Sámi language. Students indicated that they use Sámi language *‘Most often in the school context but also a little bit in the free time’*<sup>54</sup>, with their partner *‘I hear Sámi every day at home as my husband is Sámi and I write and use Sámi almost every day in the studies’*<sup>55</sup> or while communicating with other students from the course *‘I use Sámi in contact with other students in their Facebook group or Snapchat or in class at the university’*<sup>56</sup>. Both data results and students’ comments indicate that the ‘success’ in the process of becoming new speaker come from both students’ dedication to actively use the language but also from the Sámi beginner course itself, and the opportunity for them to learn and practice the language inside the classroom and be in contact with other students. As one of the main goals of the project is understanding whether is possible for an individual to become a Sámi speaker through an education program such as the one offered by UiT, the last question of the survey asked students to explain their experience in the course and how much the course helped them use Sámi language more (Q18- *Did what you learned at this course helped you use Sámi language more? Why and how?*). As it was an open question, students were free to express their feelings about the program as well as highlight any other aspect of their learning path. Let us read some of the students’ experiences:

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<sup>54</sup> ‘Oftest i skolesammenheng, men også litt på fritiden’.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Jeg hører samisk nesten hver dag hjemme...min men er Samisk, jeg skriver og leser Samisk nesten hver dag i studiene’.

<sup>56</sup> ‘Bruker Samisk i kontakt med andre studenter i gruppa på Facebook og Snapchat og i timene på universitetet’.

*‘Before the course I could not speak Sámi. I have acquired a lot of vocabulary and learnt a lot of grammar. Additionally, I have met people who either know Sámi or who are learning Sámi. Because of this, the Sámi course helped me use Sámi more’<sup>57</sup>.*

*‘I did not know Sámi at all before. Therefore, the studies helped me use Sámi more. It’s fun to learn a new language and challenge oneself’<sup>58</sup>.*

*‘I now have a basic knowledge that allows me to progress in Sámi in the future’<sup>59</sup>.*

*‘The studies helped me to access the language, I met multiple people with whom I can practice the language. Even though I knew some Sámi before it is nice to learn from others and in other ways’<sup>60</sup>.*

*‘The studies make it easier to use Sámi in daily life, in addition to also better understanding Sámi social media posts. I understand better because we have practiced situations where we use Sámi in addition to using the language actively in class’<sup>61</sup>.*

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<sup>57</sup> ‘Før kurset kunne jeg ikke noe samisk. Jeg har fått mye større ordforråd og har lært mye grammatikk. I tillegg har jeg blitt kjent med mange som kan samisk eller holder på å lære seg samisk. På grunn av disse tingene har samiskkurset hjulpet meg til å bruke samisk’.

<sup>58</sup> ‘Kunne ingenting samisk fra før av. Derfor hjalp studiet meg til å bruke samisk mer. Det er gøy å lære nytt språk, og kunne utfordre seg selv’.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Jeg har ni grunnleggende kunnskaper som gjør at jeg kan bygge videre på språket i fremtiden’.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Studiet har hjulpet ved å gi meg tilgang til språket, og jeg har møtt flere jeg kan praktisere språket med. Selv om jeg kunne en del fra før et det fint å lære fra andre og på andre måter’.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Studiet gjør det enklere å bruke samisk i hverdagen, samt at man forstår bedre det som publiseres på sosiale medier av samisk innhold. Jeg forstår det bedre fordi vi har øvd på situasjoner hvor vi bruker samisk i tillegg til at vi bruker språket aktivt i timen’.

*‘Yes, because I have learnt words and situations where they can be used. Plus, I have practiced in school, so the chances to speak are increased, it’s easier to use it in practice’<sup>62</sup>.*

Students feedback can be divided into two categories: students who did not have any knowledge of Sámi language before entering the programme and consequently the program helped them acquire basic knowledge; and students who already knew some Sámi but the program helped them expand their vocabulary, grammar and practice more the language. This points to a viable positive answer to the initial question of *is it possible to become new speaker to an education program such as the one offered at UiT?* It is, of course, too soon and limited to draw conclusions on the role of education programs in creating new speakers, yet it is an extremely positive outlook on Sámi language learners’ path and the role of the university beginner program in this process.

Secondly, I will focus on students’ *reported language use* based on specific language competences that is – speaking, writing, listening, or reading – and try to understand which specific language skills are predominantly used outside the classroom. Why is this distinction important? Anyone who has a computer and an internet connection can easily access Sámi resources such as listening to the radio or reading news in Sámi language. The student can develop the competence of listening or reading in an individual manner. It is also referred as passive knowledge of language. Writing or speaking still imply a minimum of interaction and an active knowledge of the language. In the case of writing, technology offers platforms to interact (anonymously or not) to wider communities as well as the possibility to write direct message to particular receptors and many students evocate the use of Sámi language on platforms such as Facebook or Snapchat. Speaking however, remains in many

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<sup>62</sup> ‘Ja, fordi jeg fikk ord og situasjoner å bruke de i. Pluss jeg får øvd på skolen, slik at sjansen er større/det er lettere å bruke i praksis’.



ways dependable on the interaction with other speakers and attached to a given space and time<sup>63</sup>. On that account, the *reported language use* based on different language competences can be linked posteriorly to the factors that prevent and promote language use and most importantly, lead to a discussion on possible solutions to instigate students' use of all four linguistic competences outside the classroom.

The data illustrates that many students read Sámi texts or newspapers (10 students of 17 reported a *high* use of writing competence) and use Sámi language on social media by writing, listening, reading, or speaking (9 *high* and 5 *neutral*). Almost half of the participants chose a *high* use of Sámi language while texting other people who understand Sámi (7 *high*, 8 *neutral* and 2 *low*). Most of the students indicated a *neutral* use of watching movies or TV programs in Sámi (4 *high*, 10 *neutral* and 3 *low*) and they reported a very *low* use of listening to the Sámi radio (4 *high*, 6 *neutral* and 7 *low*). Regarding speaking, more than half of the students indicate not having a Sámi speaking family (10 out of 17) therefore for the question Q7. *I try to speak Sámi with my family*, the answers were limited to two students who indicated a *high* use, three who chose the option *neutral* and two marked a *low* use. On the contrary, for the question Q8. *I try to speak Sámi with my friends*, only two students reported not having Sámi speaking friends; five indicated a *high* use, five a *neutral* and five others *low* use of the language with their friends. What can be observed is that the reported Sámi language use outside the classroom is very high in the reading and writing skills, and very present in written interaction on social media or messages. Surprisingly, the listening is very *low* and speaking appears to be subject to the possibilities of knowing people to whom to speak the language to.

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<sup>63</sup> Of course, one can write and speak to oneself, but from a communicative approach, language is the means of communicating a message to others.

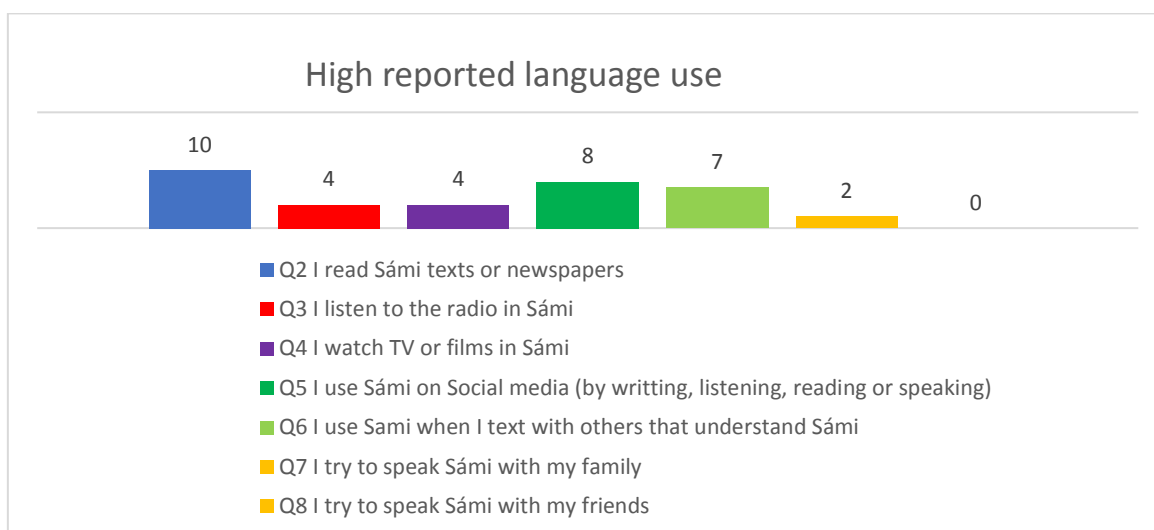


Figure 14. High reported use of Sámi language outside the classroom (N=17)

The present project aims to describe students' learning experience of Sámi language including all four linguistics skills but as the title *Sámi new speakers* indicates, it has a central focus on the speaking competence. Becoming a Sámi new speaker involves actively using the language while being part of the Sámi speaking community and consequently, transmitting the Sámi language to future generations. As speaking implies interaction, to assess learners' experience and possible 'step' in using the language, complementary questions were asked. First, Q9. *I spend time with people that speak Sámi, even though most of the times I do not use Sámi myself* and Q10. *I try to be in contact where I can use Sámi*, aim to elicit information about how much students try to expose themselves to the language and search for contexts where Sámi language is used. I merged both questions and the total results (a total of 34 answers; 2 times 17, the number of participants) illustrate a slightly high reported exposure to the language (see figure 15):

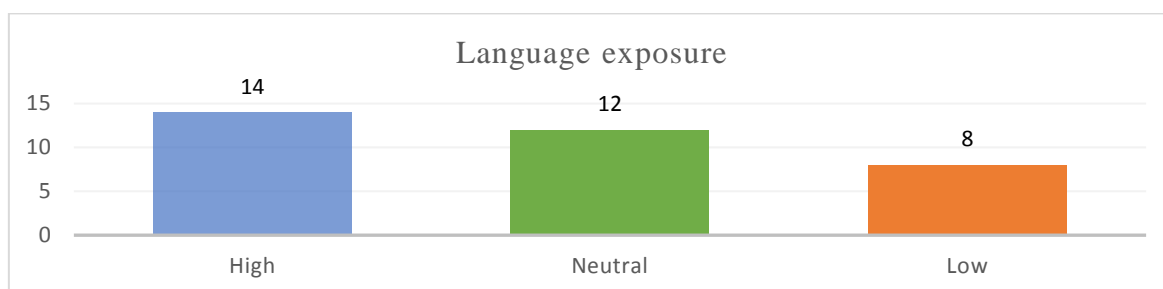


Figure 15. Language exposure outside the classroom (N=17)

Trying to be in a context where Sámi language is present is the first step in using the language. The second step is actually using it, by interacting in Sámi. This may sound easy at first but acquiring a language at an adult age implies underlying challenges that one may deal with, most of the time, in silent ways. One may be feeling shy or uncomfortable to start a conversation in Sámi language or more often, feel unnatural to change to Sámi language with people that one knows from before. Q12. *Starting a conversation in Sámi is not easy* and Q13. *Changing the language of communication with people that we already know, to Sámi, is not easy*, concretely approach these challenges. Many students agreed that it is not easy to start a conversation in Sámi language (9 agree, 5 neutral and only 3 disagree) and most of the students agreed that is challenging to change to Sámi language with people they used to speak a different language previously (13 agree, 3 neutral and 1 disagree). In most cases, this previous language is the majority language (in this case Norwegian) and this implies an underlying challenge that is, the possibility to change to the majority language every time one finds it difficult to use Sámi, to find the right word, to describe a particular situation or when one is in a hurry etc. As a student indicated *'it is easy to start a conversation (in Sámi) but not to keep it going'*<sup>64</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Den et lett å starte, men ikke å holde den gående.

Becoming a new speaker is also about deciding to use Sámi as the main language of interaction with other Sámi speakers in all situations. This is a conscious choice one has to make and persevere with it, principally in the case of minority languages which use can be shadowed by the “easiness” of using the majority language. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge students’ perspective on their future use and skills in Sámi language. Are they willing to take this perseverance and become new speakers? Do they see themselves as future new speakers? Q11. *I am confident that one day I will speak Sámi well* aims to address this very point. More than half of the students marked *agree* (9 out of 17) and the other half is equally divided between students who reported a *neutral* agreement (4) and students who *disagreed* (4). Students who chose the option *agree* said that it is possible to become Sámi new speakers ‘*If I study more. I have good circumstances to become very good (fluent)*’<sup>65</sup> or ‘*As long as I can keep it the same (at the same level) and have people around me who can speak the language*’<sup>66</sup>. One student who marked the option *neutral* indicated that ‘*I do not know if that is my goal. I wish to be able to communicate with my mother’s family and work in Sámi – but I do not know if I have the capacity to keep studying and learning at the same rhythm as now (meaning the rhythm of the beginner Sámi course)*’<sup>67</sup> and students who selected the scale *disagree* mentioned that ‘*I don’t feel that I am right there in relation to vocabulary and sentence construction*’<sup>68</sup>, ‘*I will know the basics but not good*’<sup>69</sup> or ‘*Speaking Sámi is very difficult*’<sup>70</sup>. Comments coming from students who graded becoming Sámi speakers with a *neutral* or *disagree* scale, points to a common idea: the difficulty of Sámi language. As previously mentioned in the literature chapter, Sámi language could be extremely complex for students whose main language is Norwegian. For this reason, some

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<sup>65</sup> ‘Hvis jeg bare studerer mer. Jeg har gode forhold til å bli veldig god’.

<sup>66</sup> ‘Så lenge jeg klarer å holde det ved like og har folk rundt meg som kan snakke det’.

<sup>67</sup> ‘Vet ikke om det er mitt mål. Jeg ønsker å kunne kommunisere med min mors familie og jobbe delvis på Samisk -men vet ikke om jeg har kapasitet til å fortsette å studere og lære meg i samme takt som nå’.

<sup>68</sup> ‘Føler ikke at jeg er helt der i forhold til ordforråd og setningsbygning’.

<sup>69</sup> ‘Vil kunne grunnleggende men ikke svært god’.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Muntlig samisk er veldig vanskelig’.

students may feel demotivated and see themselves not being able to become new speakers in the future. This may not happen in the Finnish Sápmi side, where new speakers may find it easier to learn and use Sámi as Finnish language shares more similarities with the Sámi language. On the other hand, the comments of students who expressed confidence in becoming new speakers, reveal the inseparable relationship between Sámi contexts or speaking community and language use.

The initial hypothesis was that Tromsø city might be a challenging context for students to use Sámi language and consequently the second survey integrates Q14. *It is hard to be in contact with Sámi languages in Tromsø*, to test it. Surprisingly, the data contradicts the initial prediction as almost half of the participants disagreed with the Q14 statement (7 out of 17), six students were neutral to it and barely four students agreed. The hypothesis was built on the idea that Tromsø is not a Sámi administrative area and the access to Sámi language is limited, from the educational perspective (where one can have education in Sámi language) to the social perspective (hearing Sámi on ones' daily life in social contexts, like for example going to the shop). Nevertheless, several students commented that *'There are more people in Tromsø who speak Sámi than one thinks or knows'*<sup>71</sup> and *'it exists many social media groups and associations one can become a member of'*<sup>72</sup>. Another student explained however, that *'I think one has to know the Sámi environment ('milieu') then it becomes easier to be in contact with the Sámi language in Tromsø'*<sup>73</sup>.

What can be observed is that using the Sámi language in Tromsø is restricted to specific contexts and moreover, it needs students' active search for being in contact with Sámi language and people to whom they can speak Sámi. This observation is directly connected

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<sup>71</sup> 'Det er flere i Tromsø som snakker samisk enn man tror og vet'.

<sup>72</sup> 'Det finnes mange sosiale mediegrupper og foreninger man kan bli medlem i'.

<sup>73</sup> 'Tror at man må kjenne miljøet i Tromsø (samisk), da vil det bli lettere å være i kontakt med samisk språk i Tromsø'.

to the factors that can promote or prevent language use outside the classroom that I will present in the following chapter. By now, the conclusion of the present chapter is that overall, the sum of the reported use of language outside the classroom is *neutral* (43 answers), followed very closely by a *high* report (40 answers) and happily completed by a short number of *low* use (23 answers), (Figure 16). It is a very optimistic result considering the very challenging situation of the current COVID pandemic as many students, on different occasions outside and inside the classroom, reflected on the difficulties to gather, meet new people and maintain a lively social life and therefore find opportunities to use Sámi language. As one student commented ‘*It is difficult to use Sámi when one cannot meet physically*’<sup>74</sup>.

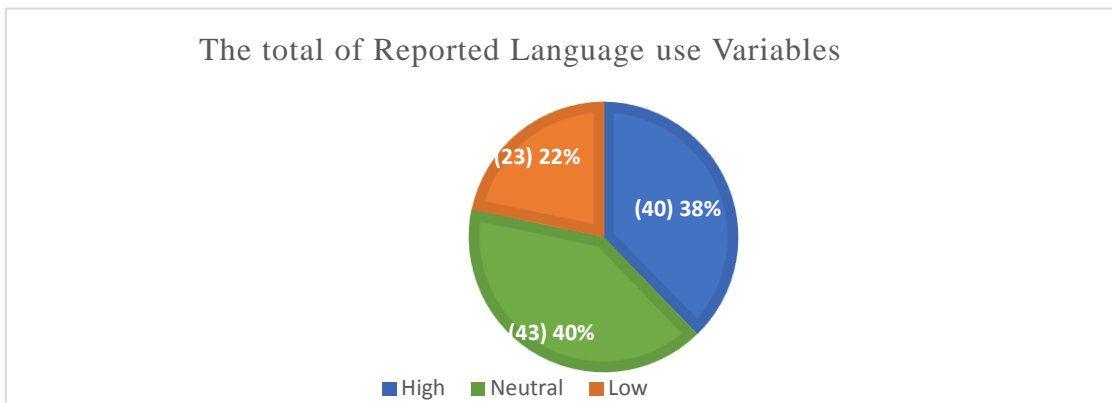


Figure 16. Total score of reported use of language outside the classroom (N=17)

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<sup>74</sup> ‘Det er vanskelig å bruke samisk når man ikke kan møtes fysisk’.

### 5.3. Factors that prevent and promote language use outside the classroom

Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999) created an exhaustive list with predeterminate factors that influence the language revitalization process and the formation of new speakers. They distinguish three levels: societal level, group level and individual level. The table below enumerates all factors (Todal, 2007).

Societal level	Group level	Individual level
	<b>h) Demographics</b> Size Core area Migration Age distribution Gender distribution Marriage patterns	
<b>a) Political-legal conditions</b> <b>b) The ideology of the majority society</b> <b>c) Language legislation</b> <b>d) Implementation</b> <b>e) Economic factors</b> Industrialization-urbanization Majority industries Communications Labor market	<b>i) Language conditions</b> Official language Official language of 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 view	<b>q) Language selection</b> <b>r) Socialization</b>
<b>f) Socio-cultural norms</b> <b>g) Education</b>	<b>j) Heterogeneity / homogeneity</b> <b>k) Nutrition</b> <b>l) Type of ethnicity</b> <b>m) Internal organization</b> <b>n) Institutions</b> Education Church Language planning and language care Research and culture <b>o) Media</b> <b>p) Cultural expressions</b>	

Table 2. Factors by Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni (1999) in Todal (2007)

The list above contains eighteen factors and together with the unnumbered subordinate factors, the number becomes forty-one. According to Todal (2007), Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni's model (1999) is better developed for the societal and group level than for the individual level (Todal, 2007). Todal (2007) suggests three new factors that have impact on Sámi language revitalization: a first factor called *barrier*, a second factor that focuses on the question of the *ownership of the language* and a third factor on the question of *integration vs. exclusion* (Todal, 2007). All these factors must be placed at the individual, family and community level. According to Todal (2007) these three factors are never discussed in the research in Sámi context. During his research with several Sámi communities, most pants

presented a keen interest in their children learning Sámi, but they expressed having a personal barrier in speaking the language themselves. The parents' generation have a certain Sámi vocabulary and knowledge of Sámi grammar and syntax but there is a barrier in speaking or using Sámi themselves. However, most of them do not experience such barriers while speaking English although they know they might not perfectly speak it (Todal, 2007). In the second survey, in the section of factors that prevent and promote *language use* outside the classroom, I test this possible barrier by presenting statements such as *I am not in situations where I feel it natural to speak Sámi* or *Using Sámi scares me, it is too difficult*.

The second factor proposed by Todal (2007) is *ownership of the language*. This is a relevant factor in the present study in order to understand the situation of new speakers within the broader Sámi community. Does language belong to the ones who masters it? To the native speakers? What about new speakers or what about people that do not belong to the Sámi community, but who have learnt the language? Todal (2007) mentions the difficulties new speakers may encounter in the language learning process such as the idea that the correct language is spoken by elderly people and the pressure of using the correct forms in the language not to 'destroy' it (Todal 2007). Considering this factor, I have included statements such as *I am afraid of ruining Sámi language by the negative effects of not being fluent in Sámi language* or *I am afraid of disrespecting people who master Sámi language because my language level* under the umbrella of factors that prevent the use of Sámi language.

The third factor is the question of *integration vs. exclusion*. Todal (2007) points out the importance of the ethnic background in the Sámi language community as specific linguistics rights are linked to being ethnic Sámi. The direct definition of who is Sámi in Norway – and indirectly who is not – creates a situation of integration and exclusion for Sámi new speakers (Todal, 2007). As far as we are concerned, Sámi new speakers include diverse profiles of Sámi language learners regardless of their ethnic background. How does this influence the possibility of a student to become a Sámi language user? Statements such as *I feel more*



*included socially by using Sámi or My family or friends encourages me to learn Sámi, address this third factor.*

As the present project also aims to assess the role of the beginner course in helping students become new speakers, different statements addressing language competence acquired during the course were included: *I learn more of the words I need in the Sámi course; I learnt much of the grammar I need in the Sámi course. On the contrary, I am not at the same level as others, therefore I avoid using Sámi; I make grammatical mistakes when I make sentences; It is not easy to find the correct words in Sámi or I am afraid not to be understood by others because of my language level* are statements that underlines the prevention factors in using Sámi language because of students' perceived lack of language knowledge. The list also includes factors related to motivation and specific goals for using the language such as *I try to speak with my children or friends; I try to use it at work or To speak with people that do not talk my first language very well.*

Figure 17 and 18 illustrate students' responses on the factors that prevent and promote language use. Students marked with an X the statements that were relevant and with XX the ones that were strongly relevant to their experience in using the language outside the classroom. The factors highly rated in promoting *language use* are first, the will to learn and preserve the language and secondly, the knowledge acquired in the beginner course that allows them to practice the language. Both are supported by the idea that using Sámi language is fun (Figure 17).

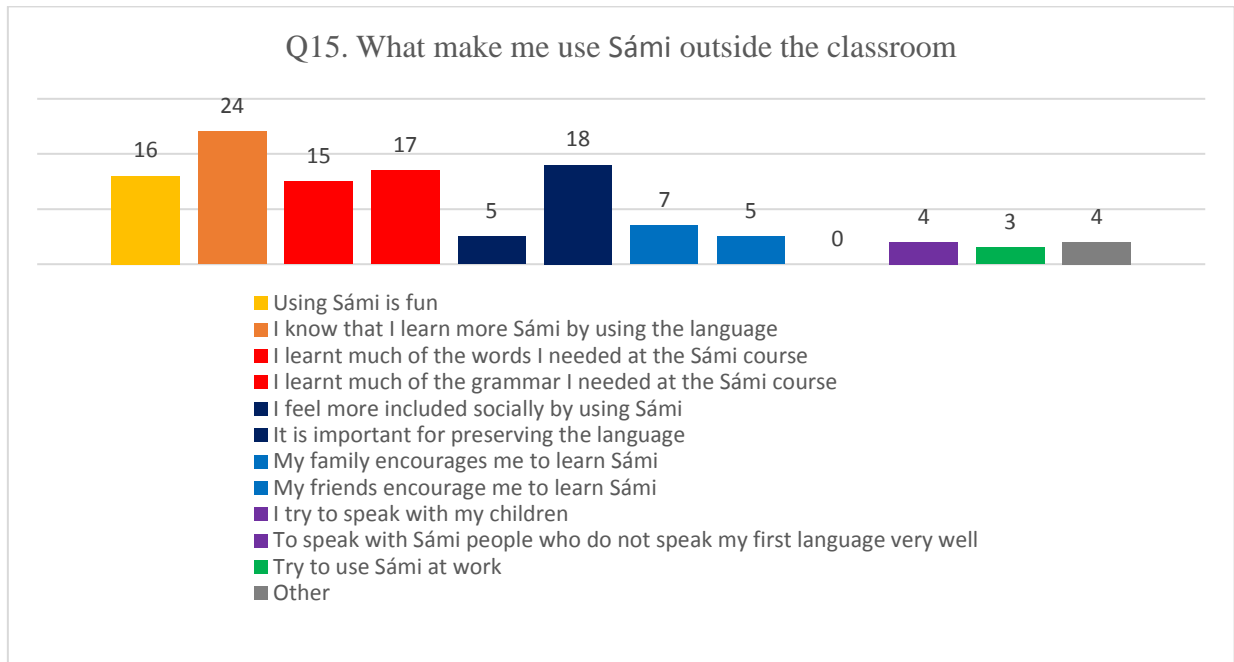


Figure 17. Factors that promote language use outside the classroom (N=17)

The highly rated prevention factors are related to the difficulty of finding the correct words in Sámi language and the fear of making mistakes. This is followed by the fear of not being understood or the challenge of not having the same language knowledge as the others and therefore avoiding using Sámi during a conversation (Figure 18). There is a correlation between the prevention factors and the *reported language use*. Participants reported a high language use in the reading and writing skills, stressing the importance of social media as a medium of communication. Reading and writing in social media or via messages / SMS gives one more time to understand the language, to correct mistakes, to check out words in the dictionary; and overall, one has more time ‘to prepare’ and use the language. Listening and speaking imply a higher knowledge and confidence in the language as it gives less time of ‘preparation’. One can listen to the radio for example (and maybe have the opportunity to repeat the audio if needed); yet if there is no transcription, one can never be sure to have understood the message correctly. For this, most of the time one needs the confirmation of other speakers to check the correctness of the understanding. Speaking implies both, using

the language but also understanding it, and the time of ‘preparation’ in interaction is very limited.

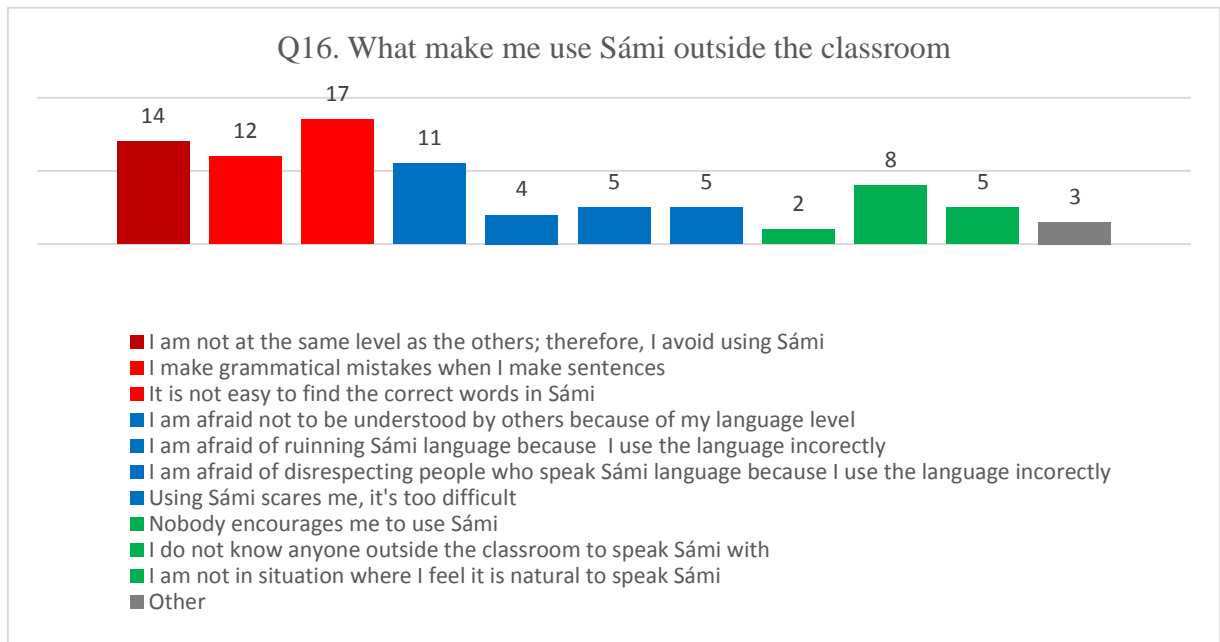


Figure 18. Factors that prevent language use outside the classroom (N=17)

Overall, both factors’ categories – *promotion* and *prevention* – refer to general components that mediate motivation, challenges, and the overall experience of using the language outside the classroom. To delve more into this, I used the game to portrait the daily experience of using Sámi language in Tromsø by asking students to come up with examples of situations and factors that may prevent the use of the language and secondly, and most importantly, reflect on possible solutions to that. Students’ responses are categorized into societal level, group level and individual level factors (Hyltenstam, Stroud and Svonni, 1999 in Todal, 2007). At the societal level, students portrayed daily life experiences in Tromsø where it is not possible to use Sámi language: for example in public services such as restaurant, sports hall, cinema, shops etc.; reading local news or communicating in Sámi with health services or with the university. They even mentioned the assimilation process – *Norwegianization* –

of Sámi language and the fact that Sámi language and culture are not visible in mainstream society, specifically referring to the limited presence of Sámi language and Sámi people on TV. In the group level – here mainly interpreted as the interaction among individuals sharing a geographical place –, students wrote about the challenge of interacting in Sámi as it can be difficult to find Sámi meeting places in Tromsø, or the difficulty to meet people to speak Sámi with, for the reason that many people would speak Norwegian because ‘it is easier’. Students also touched upon the fact that not all people like Sámi language in Tromsø<sup>75</sup>.

At the individual level, students reinforced the idea that one may be afraid of speaking Sámi, afraid of saying something wrong, and they even mentioned the difficulty of flirting in Sámi. They portrayed situations when one may be tired and therefore find it easier to switch to Norwegian. They also pointed to identity matters referring to the desire to travel to other places instead of staying in Sapmi and therefore practicing the language; the feeling of not being a *good Sámi person*<sup>76</sup>; to not having a Gákti; or to the fact that one may not want to be ‘just’ Sámi.

In the solutions part of the game, students found it very difficult to give alternatives to societal level factors that prevent language use. One of the few solutions was regarding viable communication in Sámi with institutions, where students indicated the possibility of getting a translator in hospitals and in the case of university, students mentioned the Sámi students’ association. For local news, participants recommended reading *Ávvir*<sup>77</sup> or NRK Sápmi. Apart from this, all the other solution gaps were left empty. As for the group level factors, they recommended individual solutions such as using a dictionary in one’s phone to

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<sup>75</sup> Here the students referred to the incident of a girl being insulted for speaking Sámi on the bus in December 2020 in Tromsø (iTromsø, 2020).

<sup>76</sup> Literary translation from the students’ comment ‘son ii dovdda iezas buorre sápmelaccan’.

<sup>77</sup> An almost daily newspaper in North Sámi, also available on internet: <https://www.avvir.no/> (last accessed 25/05/2021).

practice the language or again, the possibility of contacting the Sámi students' association for meeting Sámi speakers. The solution for not switching to Norwegian language included the advice to try speaking a little bit even if someone does not speak Sámi to them, followed by the imperative statement 'Be strong!'<sup>78</sup>. For the individual factors, students recommended practicing Sámi language with relatives; following others Sámi on social media or going to Sámi festivals. They also mentioned trusting friends and people as a prerequisite for not being afraid of speaking the language. Regarding Sámi identity, they proposed getting to know better the Sámi culture, making one's own Gákti, as well as practicing Sámi language while abroad, through online platforms. Further, they suggested that there was no need to choose between being Sámi or Norwegian, as one could be both.

#### *Conclusion of the chapter*

There is no one single factor that prevents or promotes language use but a diversity of individual, group and societal factors that interconnect. Students indicate having acquired sufficient knowledge in the program that allow them to use the language out of the classroom, although the main prevention factors are the difficulty of the Sámi language and the fear of making mistakes. The promotion and prevention factors reported by the participants focus on the individual level. Community or societal factors (such as *I feel more included socially by using Sámi* or *I am afraid of disrespecting people who speak good Sámi*) are not highly rated by students. I believe that the reason for this might be the fact that these students live outside the Sámi speaking communities, in an urban place such as Tromsø. Therefore, the participants are not faced with the challenges of having to speak Sámi daily and interact with other speakers with more experience in the language. Yet, in the comment

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<sup>78</sup> Originally in Sámi 'Leage gievrra'.

box one student indicated ‘*I do not want to force the conversation ‘down’ to my level when someone else is having a conversation in Sámi*’<sup>79</sup>.

#### 5.4. Cross tabulation of variables

The participants of the second survey were divided into two main categories: a group with a *high* reported use of Sámi language and those who reported a *neutral* or *low* use of the language. For the participants to be categorized as a *high* language user they must have responded with a *high* use of language or *agree* statements in more than half of the questions regarding language use, language exposure and confidence in becoming new speakers (out of 11 questions – Q1 to Q11 – they rated minimum six questions with *high* or *agree* scale). There are ten students in the first group, that I will call *high language users* and seven students in the second group, that will be the *low language users* group. In both groups, there is one participant who did not do the first survey and there is thus no information about their background or motivation; consequently, they cannot be considered for the background and motivation cross- tabulation analysis but can definitely be part of the analysis for the prevent and promote factors crossing.

Because of the limited number of students that participate in both surveys, it is relatively difficult to draw conclusions on main differences among the two groups, as the number of samples are very small. However, there are several variables that differ considerably from one group to another. In the background section, the variable addressing the contact one has with Sámi language and culture<sup>80</sup> is contrasting between *high language users* and *low*

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<sup>79</sup> ‘jeg vil ikke tvinge samtalen ‘ned’ til mitt nivå når andre har en samisk samtale’.

<sup>80</sup> To measure the contact with Sámi language and culture, I combined the results of Q 10 *Do you have a Sámi Gákti* and Q 11 *Do you participate in any Sámi festivals, celebrations, gatherings etc where Sámi language is used*.

*language users*: in the *high language users* group, 66.6% reported having contact with the Sámi culture while only 33.3% of the *low language users* indicated a linguistic or cultural contact. Figure (19) shows the correlation between the two variables. This follows up and bears out the correlation between the use of Gákti and previous language studies, illustrated in the students' background presentation. Here again, the crossing illustrates the interconnection between using the language and participating in Sámi cultural events. Both ties-up insist on the inseparable relationship between language and culture.

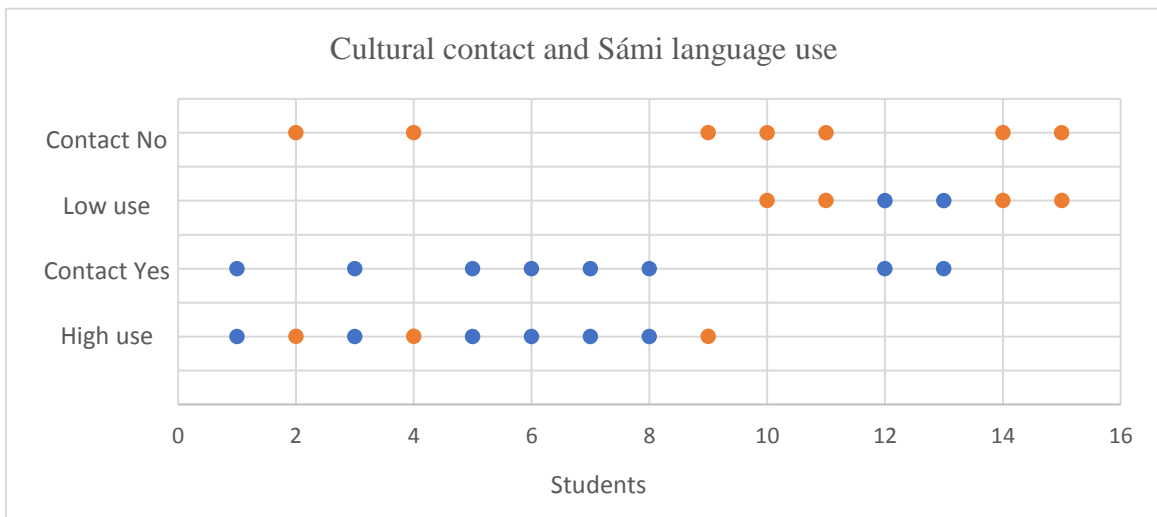


Figure 19. Correlation between language use and background (N=15). No contact with Sámi culture is orange and Yes contact with Sámi culture is blue

Within the motivation part, two variables seem to differ across the two groups. First, the aims for learning the language: while more than a half of the *high language users* (66.6%) reported the aim to use Sámi at work, only a third of the *low language users* (33.3%) expressed a professional interest in learning Sámi language. This is crucial in creating new speakers as the professional application implies a 'practical' need to learn Sámi and the use of it on a daily basis. I will return to this point in the discussion part, but by now the data indicates that the aim of using the language in the workplace is a considerable distinctive feature of the *high language users'* group. The second variable corresponds to students'

plans in continuing studying Sámi language in the future. Once again, more than half of the *high language users*' group (66.6%) affirmed wanting to continue learning Sámi after this course while only one person from the *low language users* (16.6%) expressed a will to pursue their studies. Most of the *low language users* responded with a *maybe* (83.3%). As the percentage of the *high language users* group is the same (66.6%) in the professional motivation to learn the language and the aim to continue studying Sámi, I was curious to see if the 66.6% percentage corresponded to the same participants and if there was a correlation among these two variables. The data shows that more than half of the *high language users* who intent to continue studying it after this course also aim to use Sámi at their workplace (4 out of 6 participants, figure 20). The remaining percentage of *high language users* indicated the motivation of strengthening the Sámi language at home or become active speakers with family or/and friends.

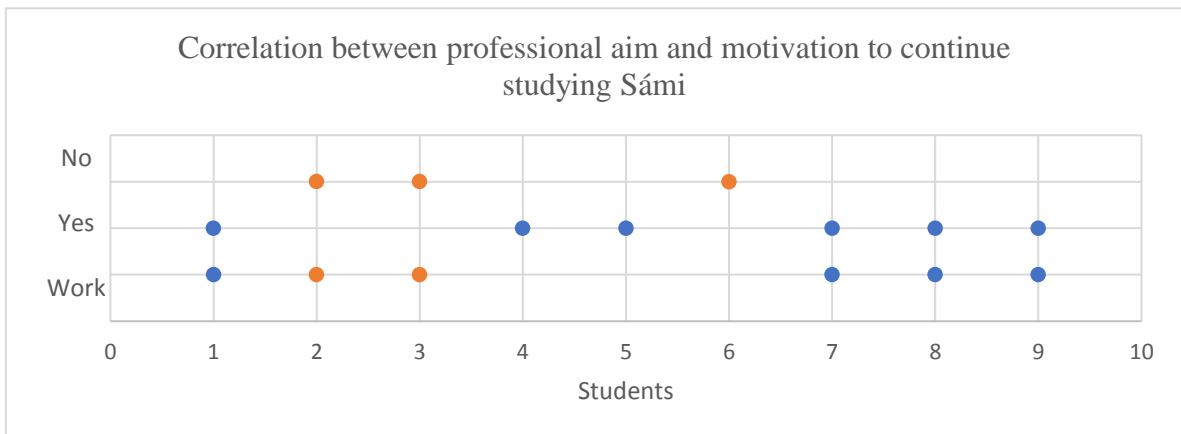


Figure 20. Correlation between professional aim and motivation to continuing learning Sámi. Yes (continuing studying) is blue colour and No is orange. Diagram shows all participants with professional aim – work – (N=9)

A third point in the cross-tabulation analysis focuses on the eventual difference of reported factors that prevent and promote language use among the *high* and *low language users*' groups. Both groups agreed that it is important to use the language outside the classroom



and therefore learn more and several *high language users* (4 X<sup>81</sup>) indicated that they feel more included socially (whereas only 1 X coming from the *low language users* group). The role of the family in encouraging students to learn the language offers a contrastive answer: surprisingly, in the *low language users* group we find six X contrasting with only one X in the *higher language users*. Another contrastive feature resides in the prevention factors, where the *low language users* indicated a slightly higher ‘fear’ in using the language due to their language knowledge (ten X for the difficulty to find the correct word in Sámi and seven X for being afraid not to be understood by the others in contrast to only seven X for the first factor and four X for the second one coming from the *high language users*). As the number of individuals per group is not equal, the percentage illustrates the contrast better: taking the maximum of two X per students, in the *low language users* (7 participants in total) there would be a maximum of fourteen X. Therefore, 71.4% of the *low language users* marked the prevention factor of the difficulty to find the right words in Sámi and 50% for the difficulty to make oneself understood. In the case of *high language users* (10 students therefore a maximum of 20 X), 35% reported finding it difficult to come up with the right words while speaking, and only 20% fearing to make oneself understood in a conversation with the others. The following table visualises the results (table 3).

Prevent & promote	Not finding the right word in Sámi	Afraid of not being understood by the others
High language users	35%	20%
Low language users	71%	50

Table 3. Comparison promotion and prevention factors among high and low users group

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<sup>81</sup> Please note that the participants could mark with an X the prevent and promote factors that were related to them and with double XX the ones that strongly related to them. In this analysis, the number of X does not stand for the number of participants.

### *Conclusion of the chapter*

The cross-variables analysis underlines several distinctive elements that characterise *high language users* and *low language users*. *High language users* seem to have a professional motivation and a long-term commitment to learn Sámi and a relatively close contact with the Sámi culture. Consequently, this makes it easier to overcome the ‘fear’ of using the language. Contrary to that, *low language users* present a ‘fear’ in using the language, with a ‘*maybe*’ intention in studying Sámi and a relatively loose link with the Sámi language and culture. In the following section, I will open the door to the discussion room to allow possible interpretations of the data collected and its general tendencies, as well as a dialogue with theoretical concepts around new speakers and language revitalization overall.

## 6. Discussion of the data and main findings

I will start discussing the data by walking into the shoes of two ‘fictional’ students. Through a metaphoric representation of two students with different backgrounds and contact with Sámi language, I will discuss the two main profiles of students illustrated by the data and their implication in the Sámi language learning path. From a classroom perspective, I will discuss the reported language use; the most common aims for learning Sámi; and most importantly, the space that the Sámi language has within the society in Norway, by concretely referring to an urban area such as Tromsø. I will also reflect on the UiT education program itself, and the opportunities of using Sámi after this year. The discussion aims to establish comparisons with two similar projects on Sámi new speakers: Inari language revitalization in Finland (CASLE project) and Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study of Sámi new speakers in Northern Norway. I will end by highlighting the importance of new speakers within the Sámi language revitalization process in Norway and overall, within the larger movement of indigenous and minority languages and their fights for maintaining and transmitting their language. The discussion does not aim to, and will not, offer all answers

to all questions. Yet, what it will certainly do, is raise many new inquiries and open windows to needs for future research and discussions.

### 6.1. Two groups of students

First task of the present thesis is to find out more about the students enrolled in the beginner Sámi language program at UiT during the 2020/2021 academic year; their background and most importantly motivation, to dedicate a year to study Sámi language. Knowing who the students are; is relevant to understanding students' language learning experience as well as expectations. Furthermore, it is an important piece of information for the UiT language program itself and an opportunity to reflect on its design, goals, and overall, possible improvements. In order to offer a clear realistic picture of students' experience in learning the Sámi language in Tromsø, I will introduce two fictional students – Risten and Elle (names chosen by the students after the presentation of the results)<sup>82</sup> – taking the beginner program offered at UiT during 2020/2021 academic year. Risten and Elle do not correspond to real participants from the program, but they are representative of two profiles of students taking the course illustrated by the data (surveys results, students' comments and the game).

Risten has studied Sámi before and has a basic knowledge of the language. She rarely speaks Sámi at home, even though she has Sámi speaking relatives. Nevertheless, she uses some Sámi outside home, mainly with friends in social media. Risten participates in Sámi celebrations and has a Sámi Gákti. Her main aim for learning Sámi is becoming an active speaker with family and friends and using Sámi language at her workplace. Contrarily, Elle is very new in the language, never studied Sámi before and has no direct connection to the Sámi community but has many Sámi speaking friends. Elle has no Gákti and seldom

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<sup>82</sup> The names of the fictional students were given by the students via their Facebook group, after the last meeting and the presentation of the results on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2021.

participates at Sámi gatherings or festivals, but she wants to study Sámi to know more about Sámi language and culture. She has a personal interest in Sámi language and culture as well as a possible goal in using Sámi in professional arenas. Both, Risten and Elle live in Tromsø, where they study and work, and both are fluent in Norwegian.

Risten and Elle enrol in the beginner program at UiT for the four subjects (2 semesters). The first weeks are very easy for Risten as she already studied some Sámi before. Even though she appreciates the revision, she is hoping to get sooner to learning something new. There is no other program at UiT in between the beginner and the native one; therefore, Risten knows that this is the only option she has to study Sámi language as she does not consider herself proficient enough to join the native Sámi program. On the contrary, Elle feels that the program is quite intense and that there is a lot of new information and knowledge that she has to study of a language she is not familiar with. Both, Risten and Elle need to adapt to the program schedule. The first challenge faced in the program then, is adapting to the diversity of students and their language levels. Therefore, when assessing the efficiency of the program this has to be taken into account. How many hours of teaching, what kind of activities, which Sámi variety is taught? As in many programs the variety taught is the teachers' own dialect. Maybe Risten has studied Sámi before in another area where a particular dialect is spoken, or wants to learn the dialect spoken by her relatives; therefore Risten has to get used to changes in pronunciation (mainly) or some in morphology, for example, without losing motivation. This is a first reflection on the beginner language program itself. Another point to be addressed is the educational offer and the possibilities to study Sámi at UiT.

On one hand, the two Sámi language programs proposed at UiT jump from beginner to native level. As Risten, many students report having a minimum knowledge of Sámi but do not consider themselves 'native' speakers. In the survey, some participants indicated *understanding a lot but not speaking*. One student crossed the option *I understand, and I*

*speak quite a lot*. However, all of them are enrolled in the beginner language program. Here, I would like to reflect on two different ideas. First, there is an enormous difference between the skills one requires to follow the native program and the beginner program and maybe a ‘something in between’ – such as an intermediate language program – is needed to facilitate the learning and using of Sámi language better. The *equality* concept among Norwegian and Sámi languages as stated in the Norwegian Constitution (and therefore Norwegian and Sámi both having native a language program and a foreign language program) is not the same as *equity*. *Equity* implies that the languages are assessed according to their needs and current situations. It is a fact that Sámi language is a minority language in Norway and there is a constant fight in maintaining and producing new speakers as the numbers of ‘native’ speakers are considerably lower compared to Norwegian language. Therefore, more resources for revitalization and maintenance are needed to support Sámi language teaching and learning. Secondly, the names of the programs themselves, ‘native’ and ‘North Sámi as a foreign language’<sup>83</sup>, can be a ‘drawback’ for many students. In the case of the ‘native’ program, factors such as *ownership of the language* and the *barrier* of speaking it (Todal, 2007) can lead one to being afraid of enrolling in such programs by considering not having the sufficient language knowledge. In the case of the beginner program’s name – North Sámi as foreign language – how does Risten feel about enrolling in such a program? Sámi is not a foreign language for her but the language of her family and the language of the territory she lives in.

On the other hand, students as Elle can enrol in the beginner program without previous knowledge of Sámi language but with an obligatory knowledge of Norwegian. For everyone willing to take Sámi language at UiT<sup>84</sup>, there is an imposed condition of having a minimum B2 Norwegian, especially for foreign students and most especially for the students outside Scandinavia. Therefore, the access to learning Sámi is constrained by the knowledge of

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<sup>83</sup> Nordsamisk som fremmedspråk.

<sup>84</sup> The same applies for the Language Center (Gáisi språksenter).

Norwegian language. Foreign students have the possibility however, to study Norwegian language through English. In the case of UiT this is a relevant factor as many programs are offered in English, a fact that attracts many international students. The online course on North Sámi (from April to July 2020) proposed by Sámi oahppolihttu (SOL, the Sámi Study Association) and Guovdageainnu Sámi Searvi (one of the oldest Sámi associations), both based in Guovdageaidnu <sup>85</sup>, attracted many students from different countries. The lessons are publicly available on YouTube and the last time I checked (21 May 2021), they have had more than four hundred visualizations<sup>86</sup>. It reaches an international community interest in learning Sámi not only because it is being made available in English but also by virtue of being online.

This points to the importance of technological tools in language revitalization. In the surveys, many students emphasized the importance of social media and technology for using and keeping in touch with the language in situations where one is physically outside the Sámi speaking community. This is extremely relevant in the case of young adults who may leave Tromsø, for work, travels, or new experiences. Perhaps an online version<sup>87</sup> of the present language programs can be an additional space in creating Sámi new speakers<sup>88</sup>.

To sum up, Risten represents the generational gap among Sámi speakers (Puoskari, 2018), with a Sámi speaking family but with no inter-generational transmission of Sámi from home.

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<sup>85</sup> Kautokeino in Norwegian.

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENunst3N1mg&t=1702s> (last accessed 21/05/2021).

<sup>87</sup>Please note that there exist already online Sámi courses provided by E-skuvla, a private company. However, the students must pay, and they don't get ETC points for doing the course. <https://www.e-skuvla.no/en/> (last accessed 22/05/2021).

<sup>88</sup> This idea came to my mind after taking an online course on Mohawk language at Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa where they propose pre-recorded online lectures, tasks, and teaching assistance for different Mohawk language level courses during a determinate period of time. Website: <https://onkwawenna.info/> (last accessed 22/05/2021).

She learnt Sámi at school, nevertheless she does not use Sámi in daily life except occasionally for communicating with friends. Elle is learning Sámi for the first time and joins the Sámi speaking community. Both decide to learn the language and become active speakers. A direct parallel can be observed between the present study and the intensive adult education in Finland (Pasanen, 2020) where the adults learning the language were also divided in students with direct link to Sámi community (Sámi) and students without (Non-Sámi), but both groups were motivated to learn the language due to a personal interest (heritage language reclamation and general interest in Sámi language and support for Sámi communities).

Both, Pasanen's (2020) study and the present study, are a clear representation of new speakers' agency. Elle underlines the idea that the strengthening of the Sámi language is not the sole responsibility of individuals with a Sámi background, but of everyone who wants to join in the language revitalization process and become agents in the maintenance and transmission of Sámi language. Consequently, beginner language programs and adult language programs in general, represent an important addition in creating Sámi language users. If we compare the numbers of students enrolled in the beginner course (39 students) to the native program (6 to 10 students at the year program), there is a clear picture of the big potential of the beginner course to create and insert new speakers into the Sámi speaking community.

In the classroom game about Niis and his process in becoming a new speaker, students were asked to write different adjectives for describing Niis. I will use students' adjectives to describe both Risten and Elle, that is *positive, fun, kind, hardworking, optimist* and sometimes a *little bit lazy*. Of course, the two categories do not fully represent all the diversity of students' backgrounds and motivations, but the main dual division of the group. Taking this into account, in the next section, I will return to a classroom perspective in order to discuss the *reported language use* outside the classroom.

## 6.2. Students' experience in learning and using Sámi language

The second task of the thesis is understanding students' experience in learning, and most importantly, using the Sámi language. For this, an overview on the *reported language use* outside the classroom is presented. Starting from the idea that students' learning process is highly influenced by individual, group, and societal factors, I will reflect subsequently on three main points: 1) the social context, Tromsø, where participants live and study; (2) the role of the program itself in instigating students to use Sámi language; and (3) the future possibilities for the students to continue using Sámi after the program.

To start with, I will discuss, from a classroom perspective, the data results of the students' *reported language use*. To avoid unnecessary repetition, I will not retake each of the percentage results of the survey previously described<sup>89</sup>, but the main lines that can be observed in the totality of the results. Students reported a *high language use* in reading and writing, mainly in social media. Listening is very low, and speaking is dependent on the possibility of knowing and meeting other Sámi speakers. In my data presentation I stressed the importance of *speaking the language*, which leads to an increased use and transmission of Sámi. Understanding however, is similarly important in order to avoid other Sámi speakers changing the language of conversation (from Sámi to Norwegian for example) because of others not understanding Sámi. By understanding the language, one can be exposed to the language and contribute to the use of Sámi language altogether. The listening is surprisingly low given the resources available (such as NRK Sápmi radio) for students to practice Sámi outside the classroom. A possible solution may be having transcriptions of podcasts in Sámi language to help double checking the comprehension. Technological tools are needed for doing that; however, it can be a great resource for practicing the language at anytime and anywhere, and a great resource for the Sámi language in general.

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<sup>89</sup> All details in the Description of the data chapter.



Overall, three fourths of the participants indicated using Sámi daily and almost everyone reported using it more after starting the beginner program. The program helped the students acquire basic knowledge, for those who are new; and for those who already studied Sámi before, the program offered them the opportunity to learn new vocabulary, grammar and practice the language more. Despite the current pandemic and the restriction of physical lessons on campus, students still emphasized the importance of their classmates to practice and use Sámi language among themselves. Therefore, the program plays an essential role in the path of becoming new speakers, as the program does not imply only following lessons – online or presential – but also finding a community, in this case a Sámi new speakers’ community. Given the fact that students live in Tromsø, where Sámi language is not present in ones’ daily life but in specific contexts, the idea of having a Sámi speaking community becomes essential for using the language. As Aikio-Puoskari (2018) suggests, the fact that Sámi language is a minority language in the Norwegian society has direct consequences in the use of it. In the case of Tromsø city, Sámi language is not present in the everyday life – there is no local newspaper in Sámi language, there is almost no public services in Sámi<sup>90</sup>; there are no public events in Sámi language; among others – and one has to look for specific contexts to be able to use the language. This consequence applies for both, new speakers, but also traditional speakers who move to Tromsø from a Sámi core area and start using Sámi less<sup>91</sup>.

In the survey, however, most of the students reported that it is not difficult to speak Sámi in Tromsø as there are many Sámi speakers living here. This is true and as Hiss (2013) indicated, Tromsø is the municipality with most Sámis registered in the electoral roll for

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<sup>90</sup> Except few possibilities in education and health service. Please see Sami in Tromsø chapter for more details.

<sup>91</sup> I have recently read Hufer’s (2021) master thesis on Sámi language use and identity. (‘Being Sámi in Norway’) presented at the university of Konstanz. In the thesis, several participants (mainly coming from Guovdageaidnu and Kárášjohka) declared using Sámi less (and Norwegian more), after moving to Tromsø.

Sámi parliament, but this does not directly correlate to a high use and presence of Sámi language. Tromsø has around 75.000 inhabitants<sup>92</sup>, and although Sámi speakers are numerous, the presence of the language is not as high as in typical Sámi municipalities with 2–3000 inhabitants, where even 500 to 1000 Sámi speakers represent a big percentage of the total population. That being the case, I believe that students' reflections on the possibilities to speak Sámi in Tromsø city were very much focused on the program context itself and their acquaintances to whom they can speak Sámi. This idea is supported by the game results, where students came up with many different situations where one could not use Sámi language in the public sphere of Tromsø, and many times, they could not find a solution to change it. I will retake for example the missing possibility to communicate in Sámi with the UiT, mentioned by participants in the game. Even though UiT is given responsibility as a higher educational institution to promote Sámi language, it has no Sámi speaking administrative personnel. In the case of hospitals and the possibility to have a translator, most of the times the translation is available through phone calls and therefore dependent on the quality of the call. Is it that easy then to use Sámi in Tromsø? Followed by, where can one use Sámi in Tromsø? This is a relevant question, as learning a language, and most importantly contributing to its maintenance and transmission, does not sum up to an intensive study year program but to what is next? Once finished the language program, in which contexts are students going to use Sámi? For what? Or furthermore, to which extend will they use Sámi in their everyday life?

The second part of the classroom game about Niis consisted in imagining Niis' life ten years after taking the language course and becoming a Sámi speaker. He still lives in Tromsø and uses Sámi every day. The game aimed to make students reflect on the future possibilities

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<sup>92</sup> <https://ugeo.urbistat.com/AdminStat/en/no/demografia/dati-sintesi/troms-/20485259/4> (last accessed 15/05/2021).

and contexts that allow one using Sámi language in one's daily life. The main possibilities that students proposed are the following<sup>93</sup>:

- a. *He works at the Sámi parliament, NRK, Sámi college or other schools.*
- b. *His children speak Sámi and Sámi is the language at home.*
- c. *He can read Sámi books and newspapers; he has written a children's book in Sámi and even won a price.*
- d. *He has started a Sámi meeting place and free time activities in Sámi and now he has more possibilities to join all Sámi events.*
- e. *He has got many more friends and he is not afraid of anything; he is not afraid of speaking with people anymore.*
- f. *He feels like Sámi and he has made his own Gákti.*
- g. *He is happier; Future is bright!*

I deliberately choose to illustrate students' answers in the discussion part, and not in the data presentation, to give voice to a future perspective and possibilities of using Sámi language after the program. The initial interpretation of the data was that many students had a personal interest in learning Sámi language (most of them choosing the option *for my own needs* or *individual use*). However, by combining the results of the motivations and aims for speaking Sámi (Q4 and Q12, first survey) and the possibilities to use Sámi after the program (illustrated in the game), it can be observed that the professional aim of using the language is highly present (almost half of the respondents, 12 out of 26, indicated wanting to learn Sámi for using it at the workplace). Moreover, there is a direct correlation between the professional aim for learning Sámi and the reported high language use outside the classroom and motivation to continue studying Sámi after this year (see figure 18). Therefore, learning Sámi for professional reasons can be considered a high variable although the surveys

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<sup>93</sup> Original comments in Sami. The translation in English was done by Katarzyna Dominczak, one of the beginner program teachers. Please see annexes for the original text and complete list.

addressed very little of this perspective. A setback of the surveys is the primary focus on the individual ideological perspective of learning Sámi, whereas the practical view was limited to two questions (Q4 and Q12). On the other hand, if the professional aim is considerable, is the beginner program teaching the necessary skills for a professional use? In the statement *I use Sámi more after these studies* (Q17), the one student who did not agree with the statement but indicated a neutral acceptance, clearly exposed their professional interest in learning the language and becoming a Sámi teacher. For that reason, a first step is an acknowledgement that the professional goal is a very high motivational factor for students to enrol into the beginner program. Second, this implies a need for future research to understand for what kind of professional roles Sámi language is needed; what kinds of language skills are demanded; and consequently, what type of language program it requires.

To sum up, from the definition of new speakers as '*speakers having acquired the language in an institution setting and through education*'; the answer to the initial question of this thesis *Is it possible to become Sámi new speaker through education?* is a highly potential *yes*. The total *reported use* of Sámi language outside the classroom illustrates 38% high use responses; 40% neutral use responses; and only 22% low use answers. I interpret it as positive results, with a big potential of future new speakers. Yet, the data cannot answer other crucial questions such as: is one-year study enough to acquire the skills to use Sámi in all contexts? What are the students' feelings about their language skills? Do they feel ready to change the language of conversation and use Sámi in everyday life with others Sámi speakers? Are the students going to stay in contact with the language once they finish the program? Will they have opportunities to ordinally use it? Most of the students taking the beginner program are young adults, with new personal and professional experiences to come. As Sámi is a minority language in Norway, the presence of the language is restricted to specific areas and social spheres; therefore, the use of Sámi language is not only defined by an individual choice but also by external circumstances.

### 6.3. UiT case study within Sámi new speakers' research

A third task of the thesis is acknowledging 'what is done' in other parts of Sápmi and ask what 'new' can this project bring to the table of discussion on Sámi new speakers. Comparing the present project with the CASLE project on Inari language revitalization (Olthuis et al., 2013) and with Rasmus & Lane (in press) project on Sámi New Speakers in Northern Norway; Sámi new speakers case study at UiT stands in between the two. It is not focused entirely on the functional perspective, as it is the case of CASLE project, yet it highlights the importance of professional use of the language, contrary to Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study whose main focus resides on the ideological aspects of learning and speaking Sámi. When reading the new speakers' testimony in Rasmus & Lane (in press) the use of Sámi at the workplace is mentioned multiple times by different interviewees. Nevertheless, it is not taken as a high factor into the main outcomes and conclusion of the study.

#### *A functional perspective*

Coming back to the previous question of how much the UiT beginner program is designed to prepare students to use Sámi in professional settings, the CASLE project is a good case of comparison. In the CASLE project students were selected depending on their professional background and motivation to learn and use the language after the program. In this case, the language program and the students had a unique aim: creating Inari Sámi speakers that can use the language in diverse social contexts and in different professional roles. In the case of Tromsø, there is clear need of Sámi speaking professionals due to the high number of Sámi living in the city. However, UiT language program is not designed on a clear functional goal to create professional language users for example; and this project is the first study on students' background, motivation and aims in taking the program. This is relevant while comparing the 'success' of the two programs in creating Sámi new speakers.

Another factor to be consider in the comparison of the two language programs, is students' first language. In the CASLE project, students had Finnish as their main language that shares linguistic characteristics with Sámi language. This is not the case with Norwegian and Sámi, consequently learning Sámi can be more challenging for Norwegian speakers than for Finnish. The prevention factors highly rated by students is the difficulty of finding the correct words and the fear of making mistakes, together with the fear of not being understood or not being at the same level as others and therefore avoiding using Sámi. All factors relate to language knowledge. Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study also shows speakers' challenges in using Sámi, described by one interviewee as *'mentally tough to produce sentences in Sámi language because the language differs so much from Norwegian'* Rasmus & Lane (in press: 21). Therefore, once more, the length of the program in creating new speakers in the Norwegian context is something to be discussed.

As previously mentioned, in autumn 2021, UiT proposes an extra semester as an extension of the Sámi beginner program. This is very good news and the third survey carried on in May, asks students about their plans in continue studying Sámi in fall<sup>94</sup>. Yet, what are the possibilities for students to continue after this third semester? Do students have the necessary skills to continue into the native program? Or other studies related to the Sámi language? The present project cannot answer these questions, yet it underlines the importance of further research on: first, the possibilities to continue studying Sámi in Tromsø or getting a job in Sámi language, after taking the adult language program; and second, the impact of these possibilities in the creation of active Sámi language users, in both, personal but also social and professional life.

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<sup>94</sup> The results of the third survey are to be published in a future article.

*An ideological perspective*

The present thesis shares characteristics with Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study of the ideological perspective, as both projects highlight the correlation between the connection to Sámi culture and motivation to learn and use the language. Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study focuses on the emotions and reflections of seven individuals along their experience in reclaiming Sámi language. In the present project, the data illustrates that students who indicate having a contact with Sámi culture (by crossing the option I have a Gákti, or I participate in Sámi gatherings, festivals for example) also report having studied Sámi before. Furthermore, in many students' comments, both in the surveys and in the game, personal reasons for learning the language are highly present. Niis' reasons for learning Sámi (first task of the game) were mainly focused on the importance of speaking the language with the family and having access to Sámi culture and literature. Furthermore, while describing Niis' life in 2031, students referred to the professional opportunities he might have had but also to his personal life, with comments such as *'He has got many more friends and he is not afraid of anything; He is happier; Future is bright!'*

Another point of comparison among the two studies is the focus on the factors that prevent and promote language use. Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study illustrates the *barrier* and the *legitimacy* factors (Todal, 2007) that new speakers face when using the language, as well as the difficulty of changing the language of communication with people they already know. Furthermore, the factor of *integration/exclusion* (Todal, 2007) is present in Rasmus & Lane (in press) case study and participants were aware of the negative and positive aspects of other people knowing their background. Because of the link to a specific Sámi community, new speakers want to learn their own dialect sooner than standardised Sámi. In the case of the present study, students agree that it is not easy to start a conversation in Sámi and most of the students indicated the difficulty of changing the language with people they knew from before. The participants' responses, however, did not emphasise the barrier or legitimacy

factors, mainly since they live in Tromsø, and the use of Sámi language is limited to specific contexts and speakers. Nevertheless, I believe participants may encounter these challenges outside the Tromsø area and inside speaking Sami communities.

To my mind, two elements could challenge the prevention factors such as legitimacy or mental barrier in speaking Sámi: first, online platforms offer possibilities to participative in the Sámi speaking community in new ways than what it is the ‘traditional’ ones as the legitimacy of ‘who speak what and how’ is constantly modified; and second, the barrier factor can be challenged by the integration of Sámi language into the professional arena, where speaking Sámi does not reside on an individual choice, but it is a professional requirement stated in one’s contract. Therefore, one is expected to speak Sámi, regardless their background and experience in using the language.

#### 6.4. The importance of Sámi new speakers

The last task of the present thesis is understanding and furthermore, underling the importance of Sámi new speakers within the wider picture of Sámi language revitalization. Regardless which perspective – functional or ideological – one uses to approach new speakers’ language learning process; the main role of new speakers is participating in the strengthening and maintenance of Sámi language by learning and using the language. The prognosis on the numbers of Sámi speakers<sup>95</sup> are rather sober, suggesting an important decrease in the future (Vagsnes, in press). On the other hand, approximately half of the participants indicated having learnt Sámi at school, which suggest that in some cases, the instruction of Sámi language in schools is not enough to form new speakers. Creating new speakers at a later age and outside schools becomes then a viable addition to strengthen the language and stabilise the future number of North Sámi speakers. Adult language programs also allow

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<sup>95</sup> Here I explicitly refer to North Sami speakers.



‘filling the generational gap’ by creating young professional Sámi speakers, who actively use and transmit the language.

Furthermore, creating active Sámi new speakers in the social and professional arenas, empowers the language with prestige, visibility, vitality, and transmission. Due to length and time limitations, the present thesis does not illustrate situations of other indigenous or minority languages. Yet, cases of minority languages such as Catalan or Basque for example, illustrates the importance of integrating the language into the professional arenas. There was an imposed need of having a basic knowledge of the minority language in order to access diverse professional positions or enter specific educational programs (such as public universities in Barcelona). Then, learning the language becomes a goal for everyone who wants to access these offers; and this translates into an increase on the number of speakers. The diversity of adult new speakers’ background and motivation can also promote and extend the use of Sámi language to other contexts that are not only academic (as is the case of pupils in school) or familiar (as could be the case for an elder generation). Students mention the possibility of Niis using the language by creating Sámi meeting places and free activities in Sámi language, in Tromsø. Furthermore, Sámi new speakers, and new speakers overall, underline two optimistic perspectives: first, a growing interest in the minority and indigenous languages which translates by a revitalization, valorisation and strengthening of the language. New speakers become agents in this process, by putting time, effort, and motivation in acquiring the language. Secondly, new speakers also imply having space and opportunity to learn the language (language programs), which translates into an increased presence of minority and indigenous languages within the education system.

## 7. Conclusion

The thesis presents a realistic picture of the experience in learning and using Sámi language at an adult stage in an urban place such as Tromsø. The data illustrates two groups of students with different backgrounds (Sami and non-Sami). Most of the participants have a personal interest in learning Sámi language and half of them expressed a professional aim. The project discusses the challenges to learn and use Sámi language when it is not present in everyday life and how the use of Sámi language in Tromsø is directly correlated to specific contexts and people. Therefore, the opportunity to use Sámi resides in the individual's will and effort to be in contact with the language. The beginner language program at UiT offers a ground for learning the language and most importantly for practicing it, as the program offers the students the opportunity not only to study about the language but also to find a Sámi speaking community with similar language skills, challenges, but overall, will to use the language. I focus on the professional factor motive to learn and use the language and how this could lead to a higher presence of the language in the society. Technology, as well, plays a part in the new speakers' experience as it gives access to alternative opportunities to learn and use the language. Both, the professional and technological elements, could challenge factors that prevent the use of Sámi language and facilitate the 'success' of becoming new speaker, and therefore maintain, or even better, increase the numbers of Sámi speakers in general.

The diversity of students' backgrounds and motivation requires further discussion on the language skills provided in the program, the hours of instruction or the title of the program itself. This project is limited to two surveys, without integrating students' experience and opportunities in using the language after the program. Research should not only underline issues but think of solutions. In the case of learning and using Sámi language in Tromsø, further discussion on practical solutions to instigate the use of Sámi languages in Tromsø is considerably needed. Just few days before submitting my thesis I read the great news about the new cooperation agreement between the Sami Parliament and Tromsø municipality, and

Tromsø's wish to join the Sámi language management scheme to support Sámi language in metropolitan areas<sup>96</sup>. I truly hope this thesis contributes to the discussion and the understanding of what is needed to facilitate conditions to increase the opportunities and space for using Sami languages in Tromsø.

To conclude, I throw down a question that has stayed with me all along the writing process, *What is the ideal place for Sámi language in the future?* I visualise language revitalization process as a bus journey. If the bus is chock full from the start, there would be no need to stop at other stations; however, if the bus is half empty, the goal becomes taking new passengers in at any stages as needed, if the final aim is to have a full bus by the end of the journey. Maybe the *ideal future place* stands then, for a full bus that guarantees the continuous journey of the Sámi language.

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<sup>96</sup> [https://nsr.no/nsr/god-samarbeidsavtale-for-romsa/?fbclid=IwAR15WGKDlkFqn\\_pfCKxQW4CR0wwugIaQX5B3BAI8-S7Dj6\\_D0oWuK-1p5I](https://nsr.no/nsr/god-samarbeidsavtale-for-romsa/?fbclid=IwAR15WGKDlkFqn_pfCKxQW4CR0wwugIaQX5B3BAI8-S7Dj6_D0oWuK-1p5I) (last accessed 27/05/2021).

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## Appendix

### 1. Information letter

#### **Do you want to participate in the research project?**

*“Sami new speakers: a case study on the Sami language learners at UiT”*

These are the tasks and goals for you to participate in a research project whose purpose is *to describe the motivations, background and use of Sami language from Sami new speakers’ perspectives*. In this letter, we give you information about the goals of the project and what participation will mean for you.

##### **The project:**

This is a research master project carried out at UiT within the Sami Center and the Institutt for språk og kultur. It focuses on the motivations, backgrounds and use of Sami language by Sami (new) speakers enrolled in the Sami language course at UiT. It is a diachronic study meaning that the survey will take place at different times during the academic year (September, December and May) in order to see the evolution of the language learning process, motivation and use of Sami language.

The information gathered will be very useful for the understanding of Sami new speakers’ motivation, background and use of language as well as for the prediction of the evolution of Sami speakers’ number. It is also extremely useful for the Sami course and Sami language in general.

##### **Who is responsible for the research project?**

UiT -Sami center and Institutt for språk og kultur- are responsible for the project.

##### **Why are you asked to participate?**

You are part of the 1<sup>st</sup> year Sami language learning programme. All students from the programme will be asked to collaborate with the survey during the present academic year.

##### **What does it mean for you to participate?**

If you chose to participate in the project, it will take you approx. **3 to 5 minutes** to fill out the questionnaire. Your answers from the questionnaire will be registered **anonymously** in the personal device of the researcher.

##### **It is voluntary to participate:**

It is voluntary to participate in the project. If you choose to participate, you can at any time withdraw the consent back without giving any reason. All your personal information will then be deleted. It will not have any negative consequences for you if you do not want to participate or later choose to withdraw. In case you decide not to take part at the survey, the five minutes of the classroom time will be leisure time.

##### **Your privacy - how we store is and use is your information**

We will only use the information about you for the purposes we have described in this article. We treat information confidential and in accordance with policy. The information given in the questionnaire will be accessed only by the student and supervisor. No name or other direct identifiable personal information is required but a number given by your professor. The professor does not have any kind of

access to the information given in the survey. In the thesis research, the information will be analysed from a group perspective, therefore no individual participant can be identified in the final publication.

**What happens to your information when we finish the research project?**

The information is anonymised when the project ends / the assignment is approved, which according to the plan is June 2021. Additionally, an article will be published focusing on the data gathered in May.

**Your rights**

As long as you can be identified in the material, you have the right to:

- access to which person information is registered about you , and to receive a copy of the information ,
- to have personal information about you corrected ,
- to get deleted person information about you , and
- to send a complaint to the Data Inspectorate about the processing of your personal data.

**Do you give us the right to treat your personal information?**

We process information about you based on your consent.

On behalf of UiT responsible for processing the present master thesis, NSD - Norwegian Center for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with the privacy regulations .

**Where can I find out more?**

If you have questions about the study, or want to exercise your rights, please contact:

Oana Maria Ghiorghilas , UiT –Sami center , [ogh002@uit.no](mailto:ogh002@uit.no) or Lene Antonsen, Institutt for språk og kultur, [lene.antonsen@uit.no](mailto:lene.antonsen@uit.no).

If you have questions related to NSD's assessment of the project , you can contact :

- NSD - Norwegian Center for Research Data AS by email ( [personvern@nsd.no](mailto:personvern@nsd.no) ) or by phone: 55 58 21 17.

With best regards

Oana Maria Ghiorghilas  
(Student Researcher)

**1<sup>st</sup> Survey – Questionnaire, September 2020 (English version)**

*This is an ANONYMOUS form. Please, be free to choose one or more options as well as writing any additional information in the comments box.*

1- What is your number (given by the teacher)?

- 2- Which co-course are you planning to take?
- Only one course this fall
  - Both courses this autumn
  - Four courses as part of the year unit

Comments.....  
.....

- 3- Have you studied Sami before?
- Yes
  - No

Comments:where/when?.....  
.....

- 4- Why do you want to learn Sami?
- For my own needs
  - For work
  - To facilitate the entrance to a closed study where Sami knowledge counts
  - In order to gain basic knowledge that I can use as an individual
  - Other

Comments.....  
.....

- 5- Do you have any knowledge of Sami language?
- No
  - Yes, some words
  - I understand a lot but I cannot speak
  - I understand and I speak quite a lot

Comments.....  
.....

- 6- Do you have family or friends who speak Sami? Who?
- Friends
  - Spouse / girlfriend, boyfriend
  - Own children
  - Main family (parents, brothers, sisters)
  - Other family (uncle, aunts, cousins etc.)
  - Nobody

Comments.....  
.....

- 7- Did you use some Sami language at home, before you started at this program?
- Yes
  - No
  - Sometimes

Comments.....  
.....

8- Do you use some Sami outside your home?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

Comments.....  
.....

9- If yes, in which context do you use Sami language?

- With family
- With friends
- On social media
- Other

Comments.....  
.....

10- Do you have a Sami Gákti?

- Yes
- No
- I used to have it but not anymore
- I don't have a Gákti, but I could have one

Comments.....  
.....

11- Do you participate in any Sami celebrations/ festivals/ community gatherings where Sami language is used?

- Yes
- No

Comments.....  
.....

12- What are your main aims for learning the Sami language?

- To help my children with homework in Sami
- To strengthen the Sami language at home for my children
- To become an active speaker with family and friends
- To use Sami language at work
- For further studies
- For knowing more about Sami language even if I will not be an active speaker
- Other

Comments.....  
.....

13-Do you plan to continue learning Sami after this year?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Comments.....  
.....

## 1<sup>st</sup> Survey – Questionnaire, September 2020 (Norwegian version)

*Dette er et ANONYMT spørreskjema. Du kan velge ett eller flere alternativer, og skriv gjerne ytterligere informasjon i kommentarfeltet.*

1-Hva er nummeret ditt (gitt av læreren)?

2-Hvilke samiskkurs planlegger du å ta :

- Bare ett kurs denne høsten
- Begge kursene denne høsten
- Alle fire kursene som inngår i årsenheten

Kommentarer.....  
.....

3-Har du hatt samiskundervisning tidligere

- Ja
- Nei

Kommentarer: hvor/når?.....  
.....

4-Hvorfor vil du lære samisk?

- For mitt eget behov
- For arbeid
- For lettere å komme inn på et lukket studium hvor samiskkunnskaper er tellende
- For å få grunnleggende samiskkunnskaper som jeg kan bruke i videre utdanning
- Annet

Kommentarer.....  
.....

5-Hadde du kunnskaper om samisk språk før du begynte på programmet?

- Nei
- Ja, noen ord
- Jeg forstår mye, men jeg kan ikke snakke
- Jeg forstår og snakker ganske mye

Kommentarer.....  
.....

6-Har du familie eller venner som snakker samisk? Hvem?

- Venner
- Ektefelle / kjæreste, egne barn
- Hovedfamilie (foreldre, brødre, søstre)
- Andre søsken (onkel, tante, søskenbarn osv.)
- Ingen

Kommentarer.....  
.....

7-Brukte dunoesamisk hjemme før du begynte på dette programmet?

- Ja
- Nei
- Noen ganger

Kommentarer.....  
.....

8-Bruker du samisk utenfor hjemmet ditt?

- Ja
- Nei
- Noen ganger

Kommentarer.....

9- Hvis ja, i hvilken sammenheng brukte du samisk språk?

- Med familien
- Med venner
- På sosiale medier
- Annet

Kommentarer.....

10-Har du en samisk gákti?

- Ja
- Nei
- Jeg pleide å ha det, men ikke nå lenger
- Jeg har ikke en Gákti, men jeg kan ha en

Kommentarer.....

11-Deltar du i noen samiske feiringer / festivaler / fellessamlinger hvor samisk språk brukes?

- Ja
- Nei

Kommentarer.....

12-Hva er dine viktigste mål ved å lære det samiske språket?

- Å hjelpe barna mine med lekser på samisk
- Å styrke samisk språk for barna mine
- Å snakke med familie og venner
- Å bruke samisk språk på jobben
- For videre studier
- For å vite mer om samisk, selv om jeg ikke vil bruke det ofte
- Annet

Kommentarer.....

13-Har du tenkt å fortsette å lære samisk etter dette året?

- Ja
- Nei
- Kanskje

Kommentarer.....

**2<sup>nd</sup> Survey – Questionnaire, February 2021 (English version)**

Questionnaire 2

***This survey is anonymous. Please circle ONE option for each question  
In order to follow up the evolution of the academic year please indicate the number given  
by your teacher in the first survey.***

My number given by the teacher is .....

1- I use Sámi everyday (by writing, reading, listening or speaking)  
*Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly disagree*

Comments.....  
.....

2- I read Sámi texts or newspapers  
*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
.....

3- I listen to the radio in Sámi  
*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
.....

4- I watch TV or films in Sámi  
*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
.....

5- I use Sámi on social media (by reading, writing, listening or speaking in Sámi)  
*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
.....

6- I use Sámi when I text with others that understand Sámi  
*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
.....

7- I try to speak Sámi with my family  
Please mark with X if you don't have any Sámi speaking family   
*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
.....

8- I try to speak Sámi with my friends  
Please mark with X if you don't have any Sámi speaking friends

*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*



Comments.....  
 .....

9- I spend time with people that speak Sámi, even though most of the times I do not use Sámi myself

*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
 .....

10- I try to be in context where I can use Sámi (by listening, writing, speaking or reading)

*Always      Frequently      Sometimes      Seldom      Never*

Comments.....  
 .....

11- I am confident that one day I will speak Sámi good

*Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly disagree*

Comments.....  
 .....

12- Starting a conversation in Sámi is not easy

*Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly disagree*

Comments.....  
 .....

13- It is hard to change the language to Sámi with people that we know from before

*Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly disagree*

Comments.....  
 .....

14- It's hard to be in contact with Sámi languages in Tromsø

*Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly disagree*

Comments.....  
 .....

**For question 13 and 14, mark with X at the statements that relate to you and XX at the ones that are strongly relevant to you**

15- What makes me use Sámi outside the classroom:

- Using Sámi is fun
- I know that I learn more Sámi by using the language
- I learnt much of the words I need in the Sámi course
- I learnt much of the grammar I need in the Sámi course
- I feel more included socially by using Sámi

- It is important for preserving the language
- My family encourages me to learn Sámi
- My friends encourage me to learn Sámi
- I try to speak Sámi to my children
- Talk to Sámi people who do not talk my first language very well
- I try to use Sámi at work
- Other

.....  
.....

16- What makes me not use Sámi:

- I am not at the same level as the others; therefore, I avoid using Sámi
- I make grammatical mistakes when I make sentences
- It's not easy to find the correct words in Sámi
- I am afraid not to be understood by others because of my language level
- I am afraid of ruining Sámi language because of my mistakes while using the language
- I am afraid of disrespecting people who master Sámi language because of my mistakes in Sámi language
- I don't know anyone outside the class to speak Sámi with
- I'm not in situations where I feel it natural to speak Sámi
- Using Sámi scares me, it's too difficult
- Nobody encourages me to use Sámi
- Other:

17- I use Sámi more after I started this program

*Strongly agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly disagree*

Comments.....  
.....

18- Did what you learned at this course help you use Sámi language more? Why and how?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2<sup>nd</sup> Survey – Questionnaire, February 2021 (Norwegian version)

**Denne undersøkelsen er anonym. Vennligst sette ring rundt et alternativ for hvert spørsmål**  
**For å følge opp utviklingen i studieåret, vennligst oppgi tallet gitt av læreren din i den første**  
**undersøkelsen.**

Mitt nummer gitt av læreren er

1- Jeg bruker samisk hver dag (ved å skrive, lese, lytte eller snakke)

*Helt enig    Enig    Nøytral    Uenig    Sterkt uenig*

Kommentarer.....

.....

2- Jeg leser samiske tekster eller aviser

*Alltid    Ofte    Noen ganger    Sjeldent    Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

3- Jeg hører på radio på samisk

*Alltid    Ofte    Noen ganger    Sjeldent    Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

4- Jeg ser på TV eller filmer på samisk

*Alltid    Ofte    Noen ganger    Sjeldent    Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

5- Jeg bruker samisk på sosiale medier (ved å lese, skrive, lytte eller snakke på samisk)

*Alltid    Ofte    Noen ganger    Sjeldent    Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

6- Jeg bruker samisk når jeg skriver meldinger og chat med andre som forstår samisk

*Alltid    Ofte    Noen ganger    Sjeldent    Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

.....

7- Jeg prøver å snakke samisk med familien min

Jeg har ingen samiskspåklige familiemedlemmer

*Alltid      Ofte      Noen ganger      Sjeldent      Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

8- Jeg prøver å snakke samisk med vennene mine

Jeg har ingen samiskspråklige venner

*Alltid      Ofte      Noen ganger      Sjeldent      Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

9- Jeg tilbringer tid med folk som snakker samisk, selv om jeg de fleste angene ikke bruker samisk selv

*Alltid      Ofte      Noen ganger      Sjeldent      Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

10- Jeg prøver å være i sammenhenger hvor jeg kan bruke samisk (ved å lytte, skrive, snakke eller lese)

*Alltid      Ofte      Noen ganger      Sjeldent      Aldri*

Kommentarer.....

.....

11- Jeg er sikker på at jeg en gang vil snakke samisk godt

*Helt enig      Enig      Nøytral      Uenig      Sterkt uenig*

Kommentarer.....

.....

12- Å starte en samtale på samisk er ikke lett

*Helt enig Enig Nøytral Uenig Sterkt uenig*

Kommentarer.....

.....

13- Det er vanskelig å endre språk til samisk med folk jeg kjenner fra før

*Helt enig Enig Nøytral Uenig Sterkt uenig*

Kommentarer.....

.....

14- Det er vanskelig å være i kontakt med samisk språk i Tromsø

*Helt enig Enig Nøytral Uenig Sterkt uenig*

Kommentarer.....

.....

**For spørsmål 15 og 16 merker du av med X på utsagnene som du er enig i og XX på de som du er sterkt enig i**

15- Hva får meg til å bruke samisk utenfor klasserommet:

- Å bruke samisk er morsomt
- Jeg vet at jeg lærer mer samisk ved å bruke språket
- Jeg lærte mange av ordene jeg trenger på samiskkurset
- Jeg lærte mye av grammatikken jeg trenger på samiskkurset
- Jeg føler meg mer inkludert sosialt ved å bruke samisk
- Det er viktig for meg å bevare språket
- Familien min oppfordrer meg til å lære samisk
- Mine venner oppfordrer meg til å lære samisk
- Jeg prøver å snakke samisk med barna mine
- Å snakke med samer som ikke snakker førstespråket mitt veldig bra
- Jeg prøver å bruke samisk på jobben
- Annet .....

16- Hva får meg til å ikke bruke samisk:

- Jeg er ikke på samme nivå som de andre; derfor unngår jeg å bruke samisk
- Jeg gjør grammatiske feil når jeg lager setninger
- Det er ikke lett å finne de riktige ordene på samisk
- Jeg er redd for å ikke bli forstått av andre på grunn av språknivået mitt
- Jeg er redd for å ødelegge samisk språk på grunn av at jeg bruker språket feil
- Jeg er redd for å ikke respektere mennesker som kan samisk fordi jeg bruker språket feil
- Jeg kjenner ingen utenfor klassen å snakke samisk med
- Jeg er ikke i situasjoner hvor jeg føler det er naturlig å snakke samisk
- Å bruke samisk skremmer meg, det er for vanskelig
- Ingen oppfordrer meg til å bruke samisk
- Annet

.....

17- Jeg bruker samisk mer siden jeg startet på dette studiet

*Helt enig    Enig    Nøytral    Uenig    Sterkt uenig*

Kommentarer.....

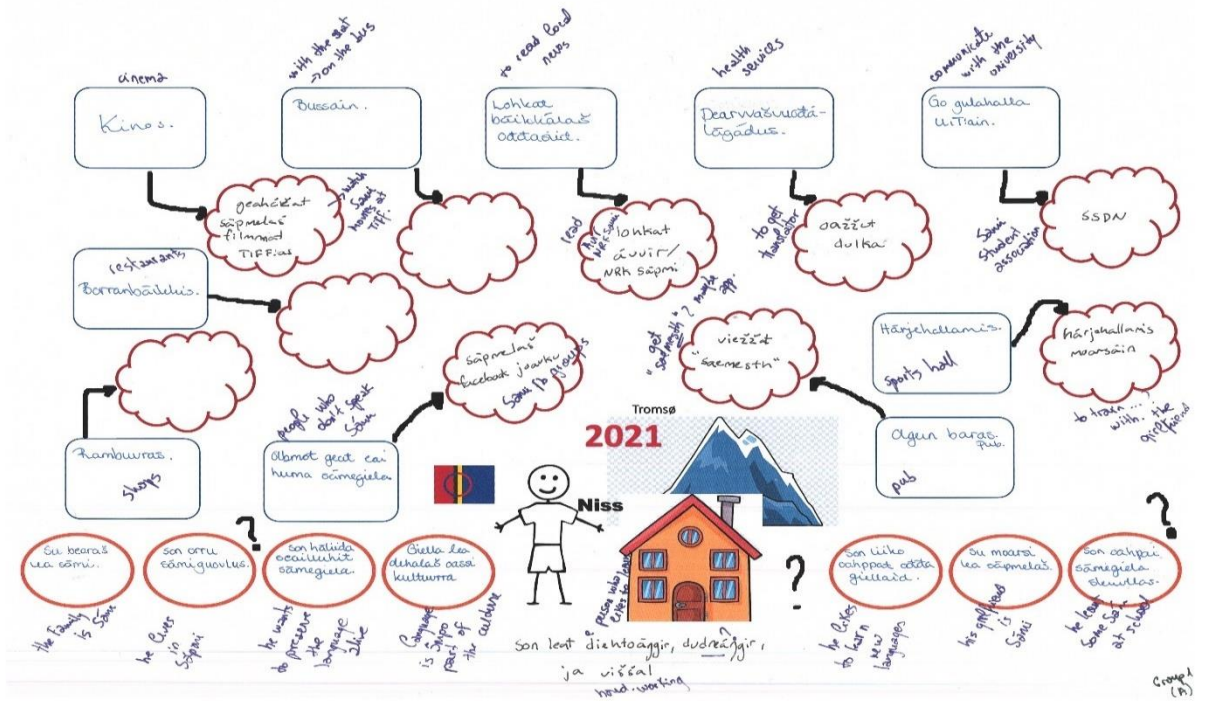
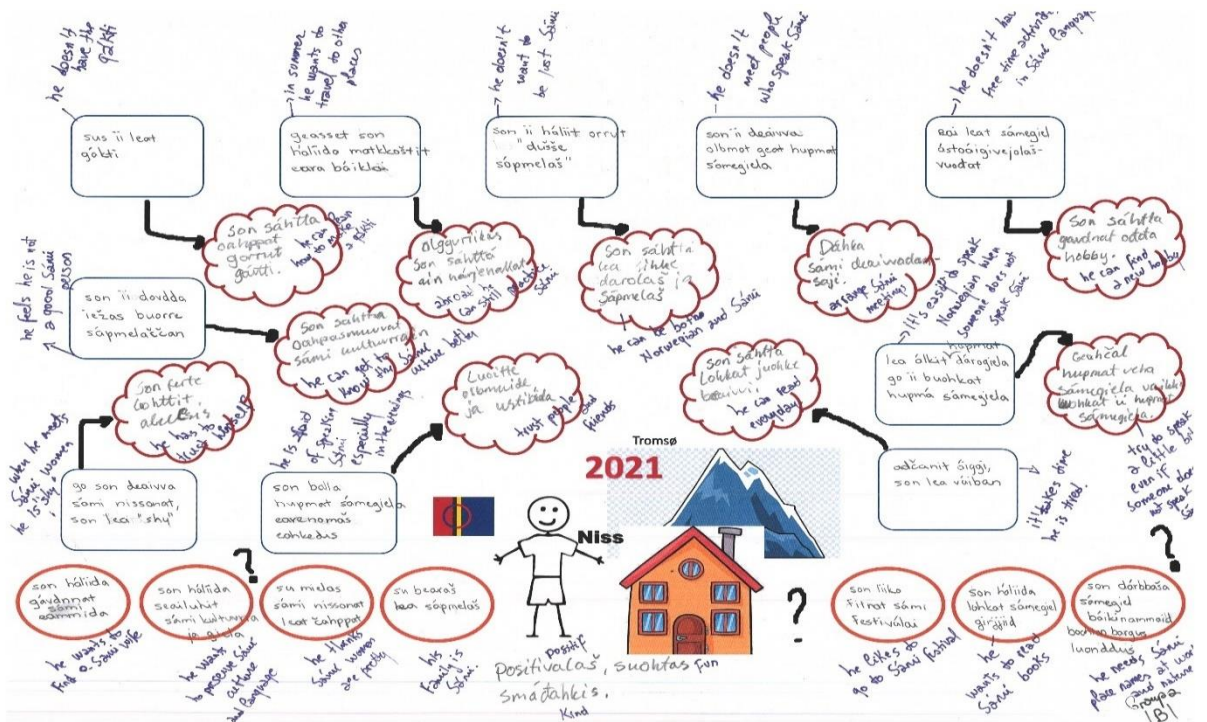
.....

18- Hjalp dette studiet deg til å bruke samisk mer? Hvorfor og hvordan?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

*Giitu :)*





Group 1 (A)



son lea ožžon earet uetšai.  
he has got many more friends.

son lea doaktar buorcterisea.  
he is a doctor at the hospital.

su manát mannet eami manáidgardiis iu stuovelas.  
the children are at Sámi Kárášjohka and school.

son lea eállán manáidgiid eamegiid.  
he has written a children book in Sámi.

son lea ožžon guovte báikkarášumi.

oamegiella lea oin nuorttugiella.  
Sámi is the language I use here. Sámi is a language.

su manát leat oamegiellat.  
his children speak Sámi.

son bargá oamedittilis.  
he works at the Sámi Parliament.

Group 4 (A+B)

son sáhttá lávliet festivallas.  
he can sing at festivals and sing N.G.P. songs (songs).

son sáhttá searvut M.G.P. Sámi.  
he is not afraid for anything to happen. He is not afraid of speaking to people.

son ii bála mástege.  
son ii bála hupmat olobmuiquin.  
he can read Sámi books and newspapers.

son sáhttá lohkat sámegiid, gihjiid ja avisa.  
he is happy.

son lea lohkoláziat.  
he is happy.

son dovdda iežas sápmeláziat.

son lea gorrut gávtti.  
he has made a song.

son sáhttá hupmat sámegiela.  
he can speak Sámi with the children.

son sáhttá hupmat sámegiela manáidgiin.  
he can speak Sámi with his family.

son sáhttá bargat sámegiid, NRK Sápmi, Sámi affearduvvot ja nu ain.  
he can work at the Sámi Parliament, NRK, Sámi culture or others.

son dovdda iežas sápmeláziat.  
he has made a song.

son lea gorrut gávtti.  
he has made a song.

son álggii Sámi deaivvadan, sáji ja ástoáigi-falddagaide.  
he started a Sámi meeting place with his friends.

suos leat eambo vejolašvuođat searvut Sámi deaivvot, Boalkevuohta ommu Euvagat.  
Future is bright. he has more possibilities to join all Sámi events.

Group 2 (A+B)



