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The focus of the journal is on numerous aspects of ethnic relations such as minority studies, migration, integration ethnic conflict. The topics are analysed from a variety of disciplinary perspectives in the humanities and social sciences, including history, linguistics, political science, sociology and anthropology.

Multiethnica is edited and published by the Hugo Valentin Centre, which is an inter-disciplinary research unit at the Department of History, Uppsala University.

HUGO VALENTIN CENTRUM
The Hugo Valentin Centre

multiethnica
ISSN: 0284-396X

multiethnica

Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre

41

ARTICLES:

UPPSALA UNIVERSITET

December 2021

multiethnica

Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre

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Multiethnica is edited at the Hugo Valentin Centre, Uppsala University, an interdisciplinary unit focusing on ethnic relations/minority studies and Holocaust and genocide studies. You can subscribe to the journal free of charge by submitting a subscription request to the associate editor. Journal back issues can be ordered through the University Libary (ub.uu.se), or downloaded as pdf versions (see valentin.uu.se for further information).

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multiethnica

Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre

No. 41, December 2021
Guest editor: Constanze Ackerman-Boström

HUGO VALENTIN CENTRUM
The Hugo Valentin Centre

multiethnica
ISSN: 0284-396X

multiethnica

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Guest Editor's Note

Constanze Ackerman Boström

January 2022 marks the beginning of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in order to "draw global attention on the critical situation of many indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their preservation, revitalization and promotion" (UNESCO). Aiming to ensure indigenous peoples' rights to preserve, revitalize and promote their languages in sustainable ways, the global initiative centres Indigenous, minoritised and/or endangered language communities and their specific needs which should be in the focus of language revitalisation efforts as it has been pointed out earlier (e.g. De Korne and Leonard 2017; Shulist and Rice 2019).

As language revitalisation is "not so much about bringing a language back; but rather, bringing it forward" (Hornberger and King 1996, 440), a key aspect of language revitalisation efforts is to break the process of the intergenerational language shift and make sure that the Indigenous, minoritised and/or endangered languages are actively used within the upcoming generation(s) of the respective language community in order to achieve a sustainable language maintenance.

Linguistic practices and ideologies of young people in multilingual settings have been the focus of much sociolinguistic research during the past decades (see e.g. Nortier and Svendsen 2015). However, children and youth belonging to Indigenous, minoritised and/or endangered communities, their language practices and language attitudes remain yet a relatively unexplored area of sociolinguistic interest, especially in the field of language revitalisation and language documentation. Instead, the research focus has often been on older generations who have been described as both language experts and traditional knowledge-bearers (Hinton 2014).

This special issue of *Multiethnica* is dedicated to language revitalisation, focusing on children and youth perspectives. Bringing together five different examples from varying global contexts of language revitalisation in action, this issue aims to position children and youth of Indigenous, minoritised and/or endangered language communities as "central stakeholders in their communities' linguistic and cultural futures" (Wyman et al. 2014, xv).

In the first paper, Øystein Vangsnes and Hanna-Máret Outakoski focus on urban language revitalisation in the two Scandinavian cities of Tromsø (Norway) and Umeå (Sweden), exploring a new domain for language use among Sámi children and youth called *Giellariššu* (Language Shower). In contrast to traditional immersion programmes (often called *språkbad*, 'language bath', in the Nordic countries), the *Giellariššu* is directed to younger Sámi learners of various backgrounds and offers short but intensive sessions of Sámi language learning. Aiming to provide an additional arena for Sámi language use beyond school and home among younger Sámi learners, the *Giellariššu* is oriented towards a variety of children and youth activities such as games, arts, drama but also traditional Sámi cultural activities.

Drawing on participant narratives and evaluations provided by pupils and their parents as well as involved teachers/leaders, the paper discusses the *Giellariššu* as a strategic programme for Sámi language revitalisation in urban spaces.

The second paper by Mirjana Mirić explores various local initiatives such as language classes, workshops and publishing activities addressed to primary school-age children to promote and preserve Gurbet Romani in the East Serbian town of Knjaževac using both observations and semi-structured interviews with pupils and school staff. Although Gurbet Romani seems to be a vital language variety in the area as it is still transmitted to younger generations within Romani families, the paper shows how the use of Gurbet Romani is limited to private domains and intergroup communications. Thus, the projects discussed in the paper aim not only to empower Romani children and motivate them to use Romani also in more public arenas, but they also contribute to making Romani Gurbet more visible in the linguistic landscape of Knjaževac.

In the third paper, Madoka Hammine explores how experiences of Indigenous language learning and emotions are connected. Drawing upon interviews with young new speakers of Yeayaman, one of the Indigenous languages of the Ryukyuan islands (Japan), the paper argues that the emotional needs of the Indigenous language learners must be in the centre of language revitalisation and proposes the notion of compassionate listening practices as a suitable strategy.

The fourth paper by Jasmine R. Jimerson looks at *Ionkwahronkha'onhátie'* (we are becoming fluent), a grassroots Kanien'kéha (Mohawk Language) initiative that has been created by L2-speakers who had earlier graduated from adult Kanien'kéha immersion programs. Drawing on qualitative interviews with five children who are all family members living together with adult Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants, the paper explores how children perceive adult Indigenous language learning practices and speaking relationships, giving insight from a children and youth perspective in how language immersion programmes affect the participants' family members.

In the fifth and final paper, Gunta Kļava focuses on language revitalisation in online spaces highlighting two projects created by the Livonian Institute at the University of Latvia in order to promote Livonian language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper discusses how online Livonian language lessons and a series of songs written by Livonian authors intended for children and young people can contribute to strengthening the linguistic situation of the Livonian language both inside and outside the community.

Although all five papers describe different contexts of language revitalisation, certain similarities can be recognised regarding theoretical and practical implications of language revitalisation focussing on children and youth. It becomes clear that young members of Indigenous, minoritised and/or endangered language communities are affected by local and global challenges such as for example increased mobility, varying access to language learning programmes and language policies on local and national levels. Not to mention that many Indigenous and minoritised communities are stigmatised and/or face discrimination, which contributes further to their marginalisation and vulnerability (for further information, see United Nations n.d.).

Another global challenge is, of course, the COVID19-pandemic that has had and still has a, in many cases, devastating impact on Indigenous and minoritised language communities as they often are in a vulnerable situation due to the lack of

access to essential services and facilities for example within the health sector as well as important information in their respective language(s). The papers in this special issue also consider the ongoing COVID19-pandemic in explicit and implicit ways as it has affected both concrete language revitalisation activities. In addition, the pandemic had an immense impact on the research questions and methods presented in the papers.

For example, Vangnes and Outakoski describe how the pandemic has had a damaging effect bringing the *Giellariššu* activities more or less to an end as physical meetings were allowed neither in Sweden nor in Norway, and the format of the activities wasn't designed for online language learning. But even if the restrictions are lowered or taken away, it is not certain if the Language Shower-project can continue due to the uncertainty of local prerequisites and resources.

In other cases, the COVID19-pandemic has had a more positive effect on Indigenous and minoritised language learning. Mirić states, for example, that the children were more eager to participate in the Romani classes and showed more interest when they were organised online compared to the regular ones before the pandemic. Additionally, Kļava describes how the pandemic and the sudden need to develop digital learning solutions for Livonian had a beneficial impact. The revitalisation efforts now are accessible for both Livonians and other people interested in learning the language and the Livonian culture. Through language revitalisation activities online, it is also possible, as Kļava points out, to reach Livonians living in the diaspora and who usually couldn't access the more traditional language learning resources.

The COVID19-pandemic, further, also opened the floor for new research questions within the field of language revitalisation. As Jimerson illustrates, the focus of her article came first to light when the immersion classes moved online, and the children of the participants joined their family members 'in the background' as families were forced to stay at home together in accordance with the lockdown restrictions. In addition, local restrictions due to the pandemic have also impacted research methodologies. This is exemplified by Hammine, who was forced to interview her research participants via Zoom instead of meeting them in person.

Altogether, the contributions in this special issue underline the importance of a continuing focus on the children and youth perspective in the field of language revitalisation, raising exciting and new perspectives that invite further examination and discussion on a global scale. The International Decade of Indigenous Languages provides a prosperous context to increase collaborations to preserve, revitalise, and promote Indigenous, minoritised and endangered languages around the world.

Finally, the impact of the COVID19-pandemic has also had significant, and in many cases, dreadful consequences on the working conditions and routines within the academic community. We want to thank all peer-reviewers who dedicated their time to review the contributions, and without their valuable feedback, this special issue would not have been possible.

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Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre
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Home page: www.valentin.uu.se
Email: multiethnica@valentin.uu.se
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Giellariššu: Indigenous language revitalisation in the city*

HANNA-MÁRET OUTAKOSKI, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Umeå University and Sámi University of Applied Sciences

ØYSTEIN A. VANGSNES, UiT The Arctic University of Norway and Western Norway University of Applied Sciences

About 10% of all pupils in grades 1–10 who learn Sámi in Norwegian schools live in the city of Tromsø in Northern Norway. This group totalled 232 pupils in the school year 2020/2021, and the pupils went to over twenty different schools. All but one were pupils of North Sámi, and a handful also received instruction in South Sámi. In Umeå in Sweden, 42 pupils attended mother tongue classes in Sámi in the winter of 2021, divided among four different varieties of Sámi, reflecting the diverse composition of the Sámi population in the area. In neither city, the Sámi pupils exceed three percent of their municipal peer group and they are embedded in local communities fully dominated by the Norwegian and Swedish majority language, respectively. We discuss the challenges and opportunities that Sámi children who grow up in two urban environments face when reclaiming, maintaining, and developing their indigenous heritage language, and we report from piloted language (re)vitalisation activities. *Giellariššu* gathers pupils from different schools regularly for activities in Sámi, led by adult proficient speakers with the goal to strengthen the pupils' language skills and the social bonds between children who otherwise do not meet on a regular basis.

Sámi[i] children and their parents in the cities of the Nordic countries live and experience a very different and diverse world than their grandparents and earlier generations did. In some cities, such as Tromsø in Norway, there exists a continuum of Sámi presence (e.g. Todal 2002, 103–5) that has the potential to support linguistic and cultural maintenance within the Sámi population in the area. When we look at the linguistic background of most of the Sámi children who attend Sámi instruction in Tromsø schools today, the Sámi population appears quite homogenous as the great majority belongs to the North Sámi speaking group. In the school year 2020/2021, 232 children in grades 1–10 received some form of instruction in North Sámi whereas only a handful received instruction in South or Lule Sámi.

* We want to thank Umeå and Tromsø municipalities, KCF (Kompetenscentrum för flerspråkighet) in Umeå, the minority coordinator at Umeå municipality, teachers at Umeå municipality and participating students at UmU and UiT; the project coordinator in Tromsø; The Department of Language and Culture at UiT; The Department of Language Studies at UmU; The Norwegian Sámi Parliament, and all participating pupils and their families. We also thank our two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments.

In other cities, such as Umeå in Sweden, the ancestral Sámi presence is deeply hidden and the linguistic ties to the new Sámi generations in the area are close to non-existent or have been cut many generations ago. The loss of ties to the cultural and linguistic heritage is to a large extent an effect of the assimilative political and educational systems that hit hard on the inland Sámi communities of the southernmost parts of Swedish Sápmi at the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century (see e.g. Kortekangas 2017, 59–60). Many Sámi families who maintain Sámi language in the homes today have moved to Umeå from elsewhere. The remaining speakers and learners of Sámi languages in Umeå have ancestral and/or linguistic ties to one, or more, of five different Sámi language varieties (North, Lule, Pite, Ume and South Sámi) resulting in cultural and linguistic diversity with a potential to divide rather than unite the efforts of language revitalisation. The strong will to reclaim, revitalise, maintain and develop the Sámi languages in the families is nevertheless a unifying factor that brings the Sámi together in both cities as well as in other urban communities with a larger presence of Sámi people.

In this article, we look at the context of the two cities, Tromsø and Umeå, from the point of view of linguistic and cultural revitalisation among Sámi children and youth. We examine a specific new domain for language use called *Giellariššu* ("språkdusch" in Norwegian or "language shower" in English), that has been established in the two cities on the basis of common methodological principles only a few years apart. This new arena is positioned between school and free time, which makes it difficult to place according to traditional notions of bilingual (weak or strong) education (Baker and Wright 2017, 198–200; see discussion in the Sámi context in e.g. Todal 2002, 54–55; Hirvonen 2008, 29–32), immersion education (see e.g. Cummins 1998; Tedick, Christian and Fortune 2011; Hopewell and Escamilla 2014; Royal-Tangaere 1997; and for discussion in the Sámi context Pasanen 2010; 2018) and community-based leisure time activities (see e.g. McCarty 2018; Chodkiewicz, Widin, and Yasukawa 2008; Hinman and He 2017; and for a description in the Sámi context see Aikio-Puoskari and Sámediggi 2016). In both cities, the language shower activities have been used as a resource in the higher education of Sámi students, and in Tromsø the project has succeeded in recruiting Sámi adolescents to function as language activity leaders and mentors for the participants in the language shower.

The term "language shower" was chosen to indicate that it is not the same concept as "language immersion," but nevertheless one that has the potential of becoming a form of partial immersion. The term is semantically and symbolically connected to the commonly used term for a full immersion model in Scandinavia and Finland, i.e. "language bath" [North Sámi: "giellalávgun", Norwegian/Swedish: "språkbad", and Finnish: "kielikylpy"] (e.g. Laurén 1999; Pasanen 2015; Swanström 2008; Todal 2007), which implies that the language learners are fully surrounded by the target language, or immersed in it, during their school or preschool day. In contrast, the (language) showers offer shorter intensive periods of language exposure instead of a fuller immersion environment, and they aim at filling the gap between formal school programmes and home language use. Unlike how for instance second language immersion programmes in Canada have been described (e.g. Cummins 1998), the Sámi language showers are not primarily directed towards non-Sámi learners, but embrace the whole spectrum of learners from ethnic L1 speakers to L2 learners with diverse ethnic backgrounds the way many other immersion programmes do that target Indigenous learners (e.g.

Hill 2020; McCarty 2014).The main function of the language showers is thus to offer an additional arena for active language use oriented towards play and games, arts and crafts, traditional cultural activities, cooking, story and reading sessions, theatre and drama, hobbies and interests, etc. Our paper seeks to describe this new sort of language arena and its challenges and affordances. The similar prerequisites, initiation, planning, set-up and preliminary outcomes offer a unique opportunity to compare the pilot projects from several different perspectives on language revitalisation, including the youth and participant perspectives which are the focus of this special journal issue.

The article is organised as follows. In the next section, we position our main research questions against the background context of multilingualism, the reversing of language shift, the reality of language revitalisation and the emerging language arenas in two urban settings in Norwegian and Swedish Sápmi. We then present the research design before we turn to describing and analysing the materials and the data from the two pilot project sites against concepts of language use, planning and identity. Finally, we discuss the results in light of the research questions and provide some concluding remarks.

Background and research questions

Language revitalisation through immersion education, bilingual programmes and various community-based vitalisation campaigns has become a common research object around the world. This is partly due to rapidly increased diversity and multilingualism, debates and views on human and minority rights and other similar phenomena that have arisen from the fact that people, and with them languages, are more mobile than in the past, and increasingly in constant contact with other cultures, languages, traditions and communities. Thus, there is also a growing number of contexts where processes of language shift are active and where the efforts to reverse such language shift are carried out to varying degrees.

In Joshua Fishman's (1991) classical theoretical framework on Reversing Language Shift (henceforth "RLS"), intergenerational transmission of language, i.e. when the language is transmitted from one generation to the other, is identified as one of the most urgent and crucial sore points to attend to when a language shift process is spotted and identified in a language community. Baker (2006, 52) spells out the harsh truth about the main cause of language shift as follows: "[a] lack of family language reproduction is a principal and direct cause of language shift." In our time, the challenges of language maintenance are closely connected to increased mobility, forced or voluntary, which in Sápmi is dominated by migration out of traditional Sámi communities to mainly larger urban places. Grenoble (2013, 797) states that "[i]n order for a language to be vital, it needs to be used by a community of speakers in a large number of domains." Mobility, urbanisation and access to the domains of the wider globalised world pose a very real challenge, or even a threat, to local minority/Indigenous language community building and domain maintenance. Fishman (1991, 258) addresses the core of the problem concerning intergenerational transmission of languages caused by differential social mobility in the following way:

> […] the fact [is] that they do not have their own relatively inviolate space, their own concentrated communities in which their own language-and-culture can dominate or at least where like-minded RLS-minded families can easily reinforce one another by dint of daily interaction and implementation of similar norms and values.

Although Fishman in this specific case refers to immigrant languages in Australia, the same is true also for many non-immigrant minorities and Indigenous peoples who have moved to urban areas and suddenly find themselves in contexts where language maintenance is no longer a natural process that requires no effort from the speakers.

The emergent and growing mobilisation of the Indigenous world, which gained momentum in the 1970's, functions as the engine in making the Indigenous voices heard in the global and local politics and, at least to some point, also in education. However, Indigenous communities are similarly, if not even more so, affected by globalisation which manifests itself through for instance complex (and often intrusive) migration patterns, increased tourism, land use of and by visitors, media content and popular youth culture in multimodal and multilingual forms. Intrusive migration, extractive violence, potentially violent dislocation policies of nation states, linguistic and cultural genocide and a number of other factors have led to situations where Indigenous peoples have been forcibly moved from their ancestral lands or extinguished, or have chosen to leave in the hope for a better future. In such cases, one may refer to distinct dislocation patterns that lead to different degrees of language shift. Fishman (1991, 57) specifically mentions physical and demographic dislocations which "leave the remaining populations demographically, socially and culturally weakened", and that lead to a situation where "those who leave, or are driven or carried off, are usually even in worse straits, insofar as intergenerational ethnolinguistic continuity is concerned". Furthermore, cultural dislocation has the consequence that "indigenous populations are enticed and rerouted from their customary areas and distributed in small numbers to a variety of new and less advantageous areas in which their traditional cultural pursuits cannot be successfully re-established" (Fishman 1991, 62).

In Sápmi, the land of the Sámi people, the linguistic effects of globalisation and forced dislocation/voluntary migration of the Sámi have not been researched on a larger scale. However, several sociolinguistic and other studies have documented the local processes of language shift and changed patterns of mono-, bi- and multilingualism (e.g. Helander-Renvall 1984; Svonni 1993; Olthuis, Kivelä, and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013; Scheller 2013; Pasanen 2015; Rasmussen 2013), that are more or less direct results of increased contacts with outsiders/settlers/migrants and oppressive majority language policies and political systems (Aikio-Puoskari 2005; Kortekangas 2017; Linkola and Keskitalo 2015; Minde 2003; Rasmus 2008) and of demographic changes (see e.g. Bals 2010; Bals et al. 2011). Other impacting factors are known from e.g. Hyltenstam and Stroud's taxonomy of factors that boost or hinder language shift at the level of society, group/community and individual (see summary of the factors in Table 4, Hyltenstam and Stroud 1991, 117). Although it is outside the scope of this paper, we acknowledge the past causes and the present effects of the systematic and oppressive assimilation processes that are crucial for understanding the early dislocation patterns in Sápmi and the systematic diminishing of the value of Sámi languages and cultures. These processes have their equivalents in other Indigenous contexts around the world. The direct effects of them in the mindset of the current Sámi speakers and learners are often discussed and described in public opinion, but they have not yet been systematically investigated.

There is furthermore very little research among Sámi youth about the linguistic and identity-oriented effects of globalisation and urbanisation. However, recent research on multilingual Sámi youth's writing and educational context (e.g.

Outakoski 2015; Sullivan et al. 2019; Lindgren et al. 2017) shows that even in the most remote areas of Sápmi, English, along with Western popular culture, has been added to the linguistic repertoire of Sámi children. This addition has "resulted in a daily tri-lingual (if not more linguistically diverse) context that together with other dimensions has created a superdiversity environment" (Lindgren et al. 2016, 56). Pietikäinen (2015, 208) describes the position of Sámi languages in Sápmi as Sámi being "a part of multilingual repertoires and practices", and Sápmi being "a site of emerging multilingualism". Jonsson and Rosenfors (2017) investigation of a Sámi learner's identity and linguistic struggles has also shown that the relationships between the languages in individual's linguistic repertoires are not straightforward. When the Sámi families move from remote homeland areas to cities, the complexity of the environment and identity struggles increase, as do the negotiations of new multicultural identities (e.g. Seurujärvi-Kari 2010; 2011; Pedersen and Nyseth 2015). Extensive out-migration by the Sámi from the core Sámi areas to urban areas and to areas outside Sápmi has resulted in a situation where most Sámi descendants now live outside those areas where Sámi language still has a strong standing locally.

The two urban sites in our study are in different ways, and to a varying degree, affected by the dislocation patterns of the past and of the more recent demographic changes that are no longer so much a result of forced processes as they are of voluntary out-migration from core Sámi cultural areas to cities. Both sites experience a steady in-migration of Sámi from surrounding and more distant areas. Tromsø and its surroundings has a long history of continuous Sámi presence (see e.g. Todal 2002, 103), but a historical "demographic diminution' (a term from Fishman 1991, 57) of the Sámi population has taken place as a result of state assimilation policies and also in connection with for instance the Sámi bággojohtimat, i.e. the forced relocations/dislocations in the early 20th century (see e.g. Lantto 2010).

In Umeå it is difficult to find written records of the Sámi history in the city. This could imply that the early demographic diminution has coincided with a rapid language shift and cultural integration, or, just simply, that the Sámi history in this area was never prioritised by those in charge of such historical recordings. The most prominent documentation of the Sámi presence in the area is based on the recent court cases that have been investigating the customary and traditional rights of the Sámi reindeer husbandry in the area. Those rights and the customary tradition were recently confirmed by the Swedish Supreme Court (verdict NJA 2011 s. 109).

There are no statistics providing exact numbers of Sámi living in these two cities since information concerning ethnic affiliation (including information about mother tongue) is not systematically gathered in Norway and Sweden. The electoral rolls for the Sámi parliaments in the two countries give some indications of the population size, but enrolment is voluntary and not contingent on knowledge of a Sámi language. The only readily available numbers which to some extent indicate some degree of Sámi language use, are school statistics which give the number of children and young that either study Sámi language as a subject in school (following separate curricula for L1/L2/L3 Sámi in Norway, or the so called Mother tongue subject, language choice or modern language subject in Sweden), including those pupils who also attend the Sámi as medium of instruction (henceforth "SMI") programme offered at one school in Tromsø (see total numbers of Sámi learners in table 1). The SMI programme in Tromsø typically recruits pupils who have attended Sámi language pre-schools and/or have Sámi

Table 1: Comparative Chart of the Two Pilot Projects.

City and Country	Umeå, Sweden	Tromsø, Norway
Pupil numbers in the catchment area 2015–2021, total for the compulsory school years, ages 6–16 (number of languages taught). (Swedish numbers are published in the winter term, Norwegian numbers in the autumn.)		
Sámi pupils 2015	22 (3)	111 (2)
Sámi pupils 2016	25 (3)	123 (2)
Sámi pupils 2017	36 (4)	153 (2)
Sámi pupils 2018	37 (4)	195 (2)
Sámi pupils 2019	46 (4)	226 (3)
Sámi pupils 2020	47 (4)	232 (3)
Sámi pupils 2021	42 (5)	n/a
Total amount of pupils in the municipality 2021	14 431	8 255
% Sámi pupils	0.3%	2.8%
Number of public schools in the municipality 2021	58	43
Municipality recorded total population 2020	129,651	76,974
General information – Giellariššu – Language shower		
Recurring activity - Periodicity	2–4 times/school term	Once a week
Weeks per year	08-apr	+/- 36
Time for each meeting	3 hours	3–4 hours
Estimated time for whole school year	12–24 hours	54–72
Offered to all Sámi pupils	No	Yes
Physical gatherings	Yes	Yes
Online gatherings	No	No
Covid-19 adjusted/"proof"	No	No
Number of attending pupils	7–14	49–55
Sámi languages (focused groups)	North and South Sámi	North Sámi
Ages	7–15	6–12
Mixed groups (based on age)	Yes	Sometimes in 1st year
Mixed groups (based on language skills)	Yes	Initially yes, 2nd year no
Including heritage pupils with no initial language skill	Yes	Yes
Including non-Sámi pupils	No	Yes
Primary catchment area	Umeå municipality	Tromsø municipality
Planning, community collaboration and initiatives		
Academic planning group	Yes (initially)	Yes
Municipal planning group	Yes	Yes

Other local planning group	Yes	No
Community initiative	Yes	No
Community collaboration	Yes	No
Municipal funding	Yes	Yes
University funding	Yes (initially)	Yes
State funding	No	No
External funding	No	Yes (Norw. Sámi Parliament)
Staff and language workers		
Sámi speaking director at the municipality	No	No
Sámi speaking coordinator	Yes (initially)	Yes
Sámi speaking teachers	Yes	No
Other Sámi speaking staff or resource staff	Yes	Yes
Sámi language students from university	Yes	Yes
Parents, elders, community members	No	No
Guests – e.g. Sámi artists, authors, tradition bearers	No	Yes
Pupils as language mentors	No	No
Only Sámi speaking staff	Yes	Yes
Activities, pedagogy and didactics		
Only planned activities	Yes	Yes
Thematic planning	Yes	No
Pedagogical/didactic planning	Yes	Yes (to some extent)
Meals included in the planned activities	Yes	No
Task based learning	Yes	Yes
Literacy training	Yes	Yes (to some extent)
Games and play	Yes	Yes
Outdoor activities	Yes (limited, no trips)	Yes
Internet and e-learning	Yes (e-learning support)	Only post COVID 19
Traditional knowledge	Yes (to some extent)	Yes (to some extent)
Dance and music	Yes (to some extent)	Yes (to some extent)
Arts	Yes (to some extent)	Yes
Drama	Yes (to some extent)	Yes
Gaming	No (or very little)	No
Mystery or problem solving	No	No
Cooking and baking	No	Yes
Elders, visits, guests	No	Yes (to some extent)

as a home language. There are no bilingual/immersion classes for Sámi pupils in Umeå and no SMI programme either. A newly established Sámi day care/preschool unit in Umeå has been struggling to find Sámi speaking staff, and currently it is not an immersion unit, although the children do learn cultural content and are exposed to Sámi languages to some degree.

We have summarised the available numbers in table 1. In the winter of 2021, there were 42 pupils with some degree of Sámi instruction in Umeå, and they made up 0.3 percent of all pupils (14,431) in the municipality. In Tromsø, the number was 242 pupils who made up 2.8 percent of the total pupil population (8,255). In practice, almost all Sámi pupils in Tromsø learn North Sámi, whereas in Umeå there are children and adolescents from five different Sámi language groups. A good number of children and young in Tromsø have Sámi as the language of daily communication, while only a few pupils have the language as an active home language in Umeå.

Apart from the SMI programme in Tromsø and some activities organised by the local Sámi associations in both cities, as well as in some of the homes, there are no other natural and regularly recurring meeting and gathering places for Sámi children where Sámi languages can be heard, used and learned. In Umeå, most of the Sámi pupils only encounter Sámi language in school during the mother tongue lesson(s) since there is no Sámi school or class, and because most of the parents have already experienced a full negative cycle of language shift. The same is true of a smaller number of Sámi pupils in Tromsø.

Against this background on ongoing urbanisation, Sámi populations' mobility patterns and the potential arenas of language use available for Sámi children and adolescents in the two Nordic cities we ask the following research questions:

- What are the challenges of language reclamation, revitalisation and maintenance among young Sámi in these two cities?
- What are the challenges, potential and affordances of the newly established language use arena called Giellariššu—language shower?

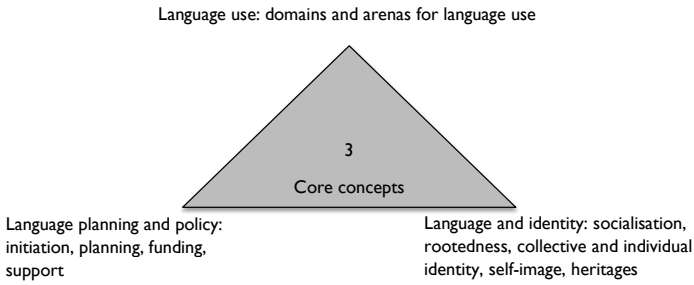
Research design

Our investigation and observations are based on three central concepts that are most often discussed in the RLS research (internationally in e.g. Fishman 1991; Baker and Wright 2017; Grenoble and Whaley 1998; Hornberger and King 2001; and in the Sámi contexts in e.g. Olthuis, Kivelä, and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013; Todal 2002; 2018; Pasanen 2018; Scheller 2013), see Figure 1. The central concepts are language use, language planning and identity. All of these concepts have been identified as central factors for defining, evaluating and assessing contexts for language revitalisation, for the potential of reversing language shift and for long lasting language maintenance and development efforts. In our study we have investigated these concepts in direct connection to the language shower activities without making generalisations about the Sámi language community at large.

Our analysis and results are mainly based on the investigation of these concepts in connection to numeric and descriptive data from the projects for comparative purposes (summarised in table 1), the reflections of three young language shower participants on their linguistic and cultural experiences, a popular scientific project report from Umeå, notes and observations by participant

observers (researcher, teachers, teacher trainees, leaders of the language shower, and staff), and annual surveys among the participating families.

Figure 1: The core concepts of language revitalisation central to the analysis and evaluation of an emergent language use arena in two cities in Sápmi.



The two pilot projects were never intended as research projects, but the focus has all along been to explore the opportunity of creating an additional arena for Sámi language use for children and young in school age. This initial aim of the project has some consequences for the ethical and analytical issues concerning this article. Sámi communities in the two sites are small, and the participants, teachers, students and other staff in the project are easily recognisable, at least inside the community. We have therefore chosen to exclude information that can be connected to individual participants. Three young Sámi speakers, with the permission of their guardians have, however, agreed to give their retrospective view on the language shower activities. The interviews are presented and summarised here as three narrative portraits. A general critical note on interviews as data gathering method is called for in this connection since it is difficult to evaluate or assess the experiences that the three young speakers have chosen to share with us. According to our own participation in the activities, there is, however, no reason for us to assume that the picture painted through the portraits deviates drastically from the actual experiences of the three participants.

Other limitations in this study concern 1) the fact that there is, to our knowledge, no comparable design/domain/language arena that is so clearly, and also didactically, positioned between the domains of formal education and community based activities, and yet supported by higher education and municipality joint efforts, and 2) the sample size, which only gives an indication of how an additional language arena like the Language shower may contribute to local RLS efforts.

Large scale interviews/surveys within the two projects have not been possible due to the escalating situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, that has worsened during early spring 2021—almost a year after all language shower activities were stopped. The pandemic has had a devastating effect on all language activities that require group gatherings in physical spaces, including language showers. Both projects have been ill-equipped to handle the consequences of a changed world and have not been able to move online in the same way as e.g. Sámi language classes in schools have done. The effects of the pandemic have also had negative effects on how the students and the teachers at the university have experienced the fact that they have not been able to participate in the course activities that were an integral

part of the course design. All language shower activities in both cities have been on hold since March 2020, and still were when we wrote this paper in the spring of 2021. In Tromsø, it is uncertain if the non-permanent staff that was hired to lead the language activities will be available when the language shower can start up again.

We would also like to offer a note of researcher positionality to our readers. As main initiators of these two projects we can hardly be seen as neutral investigators. We recognise this positionality as a potential challenge for the presentation of evaluative analysis in this article. However, many, if not most, language revitalisation projects have been researched on, described and presented by the very same people who have been deeply involved in the language revitalisation efforts or in the work of describing those efforts (in the Sámi context see e.g. Olthuis, Kivelä, and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013; Pasanen 2015; Rasmussen 2013; Todal 2002). It is our intention to describe and evaluate the projects as neutrally and objectively as possible against the common theoretical concepts and assumptions about language revitalisation. However, we remain unapologetic of the fact that we both support inclusion of Sámi language use in a wider societal context in the Nordic countries.

Two pilot projects - Sámi language showers in urban settings

The empirical part of this article focuses especially on two pilot projects that intended to create new language arenas for Sámi children in two urban environments: Umeå in Sweden and Tromsø in Norway. The language showers at the two sites are to a great extent similar, but there are also differences in the initiation and planning process, local resources, the extent and intensity, funding, periodicity and other aspects of the two projects. A summary of general and some more detailed information of the two projects is found in table 1.

Site 1: Umeå, Sweden

The language shower idea was first coined in the official dialogue between Umeå municipality and the representatives of the Sámi community in 2014–15. Both parties of the dialogue agreed that mother tongue teaching needed to be strengthened in some way. In this highly collaborative project between the municipality and Umeå university, the team who initially worked on the development of language showers consisted of the Sámi and Finnish mother tongue teachers in Umeå municipality and the project leader (first author).

The team produced a detailed teaching plan for monthly gatherings according to a number of seasonal themes relevant for Sámi and Finnish teaching. During the spring term 2016 and 2018, students from Sámi BA level course in Sámi didactics took actively part in the planning and execution of the language shower meetings. Documentation from this initial pilot project period during the school year 2015–2016 is used as data in this study.

Ubmi giellariššu, The Umeå language shower, started its activities in August 2015 and was initially organised once a month as a support to Sámi mother tongue education, which during that period consisted of 40–60-minute extracurricular classes per week. Participation in the activities was offered to all North and South Sámi pupils from grade 1 to grade 9 (ages 7 to 15) in compulsory schooling in Umeå. Language showers in the other Sámi languages have not been organised due to lack of teachers.

During the first year, approximately half of the 22–25 Sámi studying pupils in the municipality visited the language shower monthly. The pupils had different

degrees of language skills in Sámi and the groups consisted of pupils of different ages. When approached by the municipality, the Umeå Sámi association, Såhkie, provided the venue for the language showers during the first year of the project. However, the members of the association, the parents and Sámi elders have not participated in the activities, which means that the potential language community of the site has not been actively involved in the project.

During the initial period, the pupils were gathered and transported from different municipal schools to attend the language shower activities during one afternoon (3–4 hours) every month. Although the number of pupils was low, the costs for transportation were the biggest expenses for the project. Unlike in Tromsø, where the Norwegian Sámi parliament supported the project with external funds (see below), Umeå had to rely on municipal funds for this extra cost.

Initially, the language shower meetings were organised during school hours (for the older pupils) and during the organised after school activities (Swe. fritidsverksamhet) for the younger pupils, i.e. time after (and before) regular teaching but within regular working hours of the parents. To compensate for the missed afternoon lessons and to gather the mother tongue teachers to language showers, the regular Sámi lessons were replaced by the language shower activities during language shower weeks. During the two initial years of the language shower, the activities were carefully planned to support mother tongue teaching, although the format of the language showers was more explicitly oriented towards language use, communication and linguistic enrichment, rather than towards formal language skills, assessment and evaluation.

From the fall of 2018 until February 2020 the language shower was organised 2–4 times during a school term. The activities were also moved to weekends and more clearly characterised as leisure time and free time rather than school activities, thus also potentially separating them from the school budget and the earlier pedagogical set-up designed for the initial activity. The earlier opportunity to use the after-school organised activity time for language showers has been abandoned. Furthermore, as the activities were moved to weekends, the parents became responsible for transportation. The number of Sámi pupils in Umeå has almost doubled from 2015 till 2021 from 22 to 42, but since no documentation after spring of 2018 is available to us we do not know how many attended the language showers in the last part of the time span. Moreover, there have been no language shower activities after the pandemic was declared in Sweden in March 2020.

Site 2: Tromsø, Norway

The idea to start up Romssa giellariššu, The Tromsø Sámi language shower, was first pitched to the municipality in the late autumn of 2016, but it took until September 2018 before the activities started. Language showers were organised weekly from then on until the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020. Hence, it was operative in the school years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.

The language shower was set up as an offer to all children in grades 1–7 (ages 6 to 12) who receive instruction in North Sámi in Tromsø schools either as 1st or 2nd language. The language shower was established at the initiative of UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) (in practice by the second author) and was a collaboration between the university and Tromsø municipality. The municipality made physical facilities available for the project and hired a coordinator for the project on a part time (40–50 %) internship contract under a bilateral agreement

with the university. The university in turn paid language assistants at the language showers on an hourly basis, all of whom were fluent speakers of Sámi and most of whom were students enrolled in various programmes at the university. The tasks of the coordinator involved both practical administration and planning and leading of the activities. The Norwegian Sámi parliament supported the project with a budget for transportation and other running costs. Sámi students from a Sámi sociolinguistics course at UiT were also intended to join the showers and plan language activities every second spring starting in January 2020. Because of the COVID-19 situation, the first group of students managed to visit the shower only twice before all activities were cancelled.

During the first year of Romssa giellariššu, 55 children were enrolled in the activities, 43 of whom followed the North Sámi as a first language curriculum (Sámi 1). The remaining 12 second language students split in one group of five who followed the curriculum for pupils with some knowledge of and exposure to North Sámi from outside school (Sámi 2), and seven who followed the curriculum for children with little or no exposure to North Sámi outside of school (Sámi 3). The students came from twelve different schools in the municipality, with the biggest group coming from the SMI. In the second year of the project, 49 children were enrolled, 28 following Sámi 1 and 21 following Sámi 3. Both years there were more children from the lower grades (1–4) than from the higher grades (5–7).

The meetings took place on a particular weekday between approximately 1 pm and 4 pm: in Tromsø municipality the teaching hours are organised so that this weekday is a short day, ending at noon for the children, leaving time for meetings and other administrative tasks for teachers and staff to take place in the afternoon. This meant that the language shower did not interfere with the spare time activities of the children, and it still took place within normal working hours of their parents. Most of the youngest children in grades 1–4 were enrolled in organised after school activities at their local schools (Norwegian skolefritidsordning (SFO), cf. above for Umeå).

Physically, the language shower was based at a different school than the one hosting the SMI programme. This location provided more space for the activities, but did not provide any Sámi cultural environment. Many participants got free transportation by taxi back and forth from their local schools, with the most distant participants coming from schools about a 40-minute drive away. On some occasions the activities would take place outdoors at a nearby outdoor activity facility.

Surveys collecting feedback from the parents were issued in February 2018 (during the planning process), in December 2018 (at the end of the first semester), and in September 2020 (half a year after the activity had stopped due to COVID-19). Reports that summarise the second and third survey have been put together by the second author. These reports as well as notes and impressions from meetings and seminars with the coordinator and language assistants form part of the knowledge base for the present study.

Language planning at grass-root level

It should be pointed out that although the language showers were carefully planned to increase language use among Sámi learners, this kind of measure is not included in any official language planning programme that intends to strengthen the position of Sámi languages in general. The projects are therefore best described as a grass-root projects both in Umeå and in Tromsø, rather than a top-down long-term measure of an official language planning programme. In both cases the initial idea

has come from individuals, and furthermore all planning of the activities has been the responsibility of a handful of individuals. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Norway and Sweden, the nature of the planned activities, the size of the groups and the varied ages of the participants turned out to be a hinder for a rapid move to an online format, while top-down planned municipal educational programmes managed to make that move quite easily. This indicates a certain level of vulnerability in projects that are not part of official programmes.

Participant narratives

We have interviewed three language shower participants, two from Umeå and one from Tromsø. At the time of the interviews, all participants had turned 12 years of age and were enrolled in compulsory schooling. The semi-structured interviews collected background information, information on language attitudes and information about participation in the language shower activities. The interviews lasted between 15 and 23 minutes and the transcribed texts are between 1900-2800 words long. Interview answers are presented as compressed participant portraits to avoid identification on the basis of individual speech styles and other traits.

Portrait 1, Umeå language shower: This participant has Sámi as a daily language of interaction in the home, as language subject in school and as language of occasional interaction with Sámi friends and relatives who live at a distance. In the free time, there are no opportunities to use Sámi with peers other than occasionally in connection with visits and online activities. For this participant, Sámi is the language of the home and of a language community at a distance, and s/he often longs for opportunities to stay longer in the active language community. The participant has overall very positive attitudes toward Sámi and is personally proud of the language. S/he believes that s/he will be using the language also in the future and also with the next generation. S/he does, however, also experience that Sámi is a difficult language. The participant is very conscious about language use and language choices, and feels that language skills in Sámi make one rooted in the Sámi community and can also offer future job opportunities. S/he participated in all or most language showers during the pilot period in the school year 2015–16, but not in the following years. The language showers have not offered this participant a real opportunity to develop the language skills. S/he feels that the activities are designed for beginners, who are in majority in the language showers and the level of difficulty of the actual language activities has been too easy. The best activities have been physical and outdoor activities, the meals and some of the computer-based activities and games, where language use has been effortless and natural. The participant does, however, see the potential of the language showers as a good meeting place for those who are learning the language and for cultural group spirit. S/he notes, however, that s/he did not notice increased oral language use among the peers at the Umeå site, although the teachers were very consistent and always spoke Sámi. S/he has also participated in community led Sámi free time activities elsewhere, and feels that the activities that were solely in Sámi language and where the participants could themselves choose the activities (e.g. cooking, baking, football, games) were the best kind of language showers that really boosted language development. The peers also actively used the language since they were speakers like participant 1. This participant compares the opportunities to use the language in the city with the opportunities to use it somewhere else where the language is more visible and stronger, and often comes back to positive language experiences that are related to Sámi life and language elsewhere outside the city.

Portrait 2, Umeå language shower: This participant has a very similar background and opportunities for language use as the first participant. Sámi is spoken and used at home and is a school subject. This participant has had more free time opportunities to use Sámi with friends than the first participant, but also in this case the friends are online friends living at a distance. Furthermore, this participant feels that Sámi language is not the language of the city, but is used and survives somewhere else. Participant 2 has somewhat negative or ambivalent feelings and attitudes toward Sámi. S/he reports that s/he likes the language to some degree but that it is very difficult, and that there might be a future or a period of time when s/he is not going to use the language so much. S/he has participated on all or most language showers during the pilot period in school year 2015-16, and in the following years. Language shower activities are seen as a positive addition to opportunities for language use in the city. This participant also recalls that s/he did not speak so much Sámi before participation in the language shower. Language showers are identified as a place where one hears and can use the language if one has the skills. The participant feels pride in the skills s/he has and about the fact that s/he can do well in the language activities. S/he also feels that s/he has learned new things and acquired better language skills because of the language shower. At the same time the language showers have not expanded the participant's language community and s/he has not made new lasting friends there. The best memory of the language shower is from the meals where language use and learning happen naturally. This participant particularly mentions the positive sides of the venue for the initial language showers that were provided by the local Sámi association, which in many ways boosted the feeling of being on Sámi grounds. S/he feels that language showers are a good meeting place and can lead to better language skills.

Portrait 3, Tromsø language shower: Participant 3 identifies her-/himself as one of the more advanced speakers of Sámi among the pupils who participated in the language showers. S/he has one parent who does not speak Sámi, but almost exclusively uses Sámi with the other parent. Furthermore, participant 3 has been in the SMI programme in grades 1–7. S/he also has friends and peers with whom s/he can speak Sámi in the free time. S/he is conscious about language choices, and gladly uses Sámi with friends, family and other people who know Sámi. S/he also mentions, that s/he would very much like to speak Sámi to potential off-spring and to continue to use the language in the future. S/he has friends in the same age in other areas, who s/he meets at times and with whom s/he mostly uses Sámi. S/he participated in the language showers during the first year when all pupils of mixed ages and with varying language skills were in one group. S/he was one of the oldest participants and did not have so many peers in the same age there. S/he most often uses the word "fun" to describe language shower activities in general, and says that the language activities were varied. The best memories are from the practical cooking sessions, games and trips, or physical activities where participation has been effortless. Participant 3 was not equally positive about the venue for the gatherings and feels that it might have been more beneficial for the group to gather at a location where no other pupil groups were around. S/he would also have wanted to meet more pupils of the same age and perhaps separate the groups according to age. S/he also feels that s/he spent most of the time with people s/he knew from before and does not recall making new lasting friends at the showers. S/he describes the showers as a site of Sámi language use where even those pupils that knew less language were encouraged to use the language. According to participant 3, Sámi was always the main language of communication from the leaders to the participants. Another

positive comment concerns the young Sámi mentors that were recruited to lead the activities, some of whom s/he knew from before. When asked about language skills and development, s/he finds it difficult to assess improvement since s/he already had the language, but s/he also comments that language showers might better boost the language of those pupils who are not as fluent from the beginning. When asked what the best ways to strengthen Sámi are, s/he says that natural, effortless free time activities such as meeting, talking, playing and gaming together with other speakers are the occasions where language use is best boosted. According to this participant, Sámi language is spoken and used in the city as well as in other places.

Our three participants all share an interest for the Sámi language and they all identify themselves as speakers and users of Sámi. Participant 1 and 3 are in many ways similar to each other and share the visions and hopes for future use of Sámi language with potential children. They also feel that because of their language skills, participating in the language shower has perhaps not improved their proficiency as much as might be the case with pupils who start with lower proficiency in Sámi. They would also have wanted to meet more participants of the same age and with similar interests. While participant 1 has been very alone during the language showers, participant 3 has mostly kept company with people s/he knew from before.

What all three participants seem to have in common is that they have not made any new lasting friendships at the language shower. Participant 2 differs from the two others in that s/he has a somewhat less positive relation to Sámi language but still believes that language showers have boosted her/his Sámi language use. S/he has also been able to enjoy the feeling of being a speaker and commented on the benefits that access to language can bring about.

The most striking difference between the participants from Umeå and the one from Tromsø has to do with the mental image of Sámi language use. The Umeå participants connect Sámi language use with friends and family at a distance and not in the city, while the Tromsø participant identifies her/his city environment as a vital site for language use. The Umeå participants describe a situation where socialisation to the Sámi community happens elsewhere than in the city, and they are also rooted to their Sámi identity through family heritage that is connected to some other place. The Tromsø participant sees sáminess both in the city and in other places where friends and relatives live.

These voices reflect the experiences of participants from both a revitalisation and a maintenance perspective. In future research, we hope to be able to also include experiences from a beginning learner's perspective.

Language activities

We have summarised the main activities that were part of the language showers in table 1. The two sites are quite similar in this regard. Some of the differences have to do with thematic vs. non-thematic planning, and the possibility to organise practical activities such as cooking and baking, and the opportunity to invite Sámi speaking guests. Otherwise, the activities and tasks are alike in both places. At both sites, the language shower meetings during the pilot period were carefully planned to offer as much opportunity for language use as possible.

At both sites, community engagement has been non-existent in the sense that the parents, members of the local Sámi associations and elderly speakers have not been an active a part of the projects. The biggest difference between the two sites has to do with periodicity and extent of the language showers. Initially, the pupils

in Tromsø met each other once every week on a particular afternoon, but quite soon the group was split. After trying out different groupings based on age and language proficiency, in the second year the rotation ended up being based on the latter so that the first language pupils met one week and the second language pupils (Sámi 3) met the other week. The pupils in Umeå met initially one afternoon every month. This amounts to a substantial difference in volume giving the children in Tromsø significantly more language training than the pupils in Umeå.

Pupil, parent and teacher/leader assessments

We have gathered assessments from pupil, parent and teacher/leader surveys that summarise the positive and negative aspects concerning the language showers. One of the most positive aspects of the language showers had to do with the positive group spirit that the new arena created. At both sites, language showers functioned as a uniting cultural gathering place that had the potential to strengthen Sámi identity, feeling of rootedness and the knowledge of traditional Sámi content. Physical and outdoors activities, as well as the meals, were appreciated as opportunities for authentic and spontaneous language use and training of basic phraseology. In Umeå, access to the cultural physical environment provided by the local Sámi association was considered an asset. The youngest participants found joy in most activities, and the teachers/leaders also felt that it was easier to design activities for the younger pupils. Some parents and pupils reported increased use or will to use Sámi at home. For example, in Tromsø in December 2018, a parent left the following comment in an anonymous survey: My child has started speaking Sámi at home after joining the language shower [Mu mánná lea álgan hállat sámegiela ruovttus maŋŋá go álggii giellariššui].

The two sites differ somewhat when it comes to the negative aspects. In Umeå, the most negative aspects are connected directly to the small size of the participant group, and to opportunities to find peers in the same age and with the same language proficiency. The same seems to be true of the older participants in Tromsø. The leaders and the participants experienced more challenges and negative aspects with ascending age and limited language skills. Large age differences and very varying language skills in one group were conceived negatively, and the leaders struggled with designing activities and language tasks to suit all participants. In Tromsø, the coordinator of the showers experienced more challenges during the initial phase of the project when the groups were mixed. This led to adjustments in the group set-up that resulted in two separate groups, one for L1 speakers and one for heritage language learners, an organisation that became more natural in the second year where the balance between the two participant groups was more even. At both sites it was clear that the negative aspects decreased when the number of staff increased. Although the location in Tromsø provided for the language shower was spacious, it created some practical challenges for the logistics. Furthermore, the location did not provide a Sámi physical environment, and there was also occasional interference from outsiders.

Discussion

For the L1 pupils in Tromsø, language showers seem to offer a true chance of using and strengthening Sámi language with peers while engaging in fun and varying language activities that are not assessed as school work. For them, language showers can function as an important extension of the immersion environment of the SMI programme and the Sámi speaking home domain to free time and peer activities. For the pupils in Umeå and for the heritage language learners in Tromsø, the main

function of Giellariššu is that of a uniting cultural arena, rather than a natural domain for active self-initiated language use. The greatest challenge for the children and youth that belong to the heritage learner groups at both sites has to do with the colonial legacy that they are left to tackle. In order for them to enjoy the same positive language use effects as the pupils in the L1 group, there need to be more comprehensive and long-term opportunities to use and develop their language proficiency, better strategies to strengthen Sámi at homes, and increased opportunities to have Sámi as a language of instruction. The extent and volume of the language showers needs also to be expanded so that they can be experienced as a recurring, stable arena for language use. The goals of the future language arenas should, according to us, be in line with Grenoble (2013, 797) who claims that "[r]evitalization programs need to carve out domains for language use and foster them intensely".

For individual learners, language showers offer different things, just as their experiences with Sámi language and culture differ. Optimistic attitudes toward the heritage language, the feeling of rootedness and positive experiences of inclusion serve to maintain and increase the will to learn and to use the language. Enrichment and strengthening of such attitudes and experiences should therefore be at the core of the identity building that takes place at new arenas of language use. The most immediate and evident challenges of language reclamation, revitalisation and maintenance among Sámi youth in cities are, according to the young Sámi voices in the study, the lack of access to recurring, inspiring, natural and effortless language use domains and the missing company of peers with the same cultural and linguistic interests. For both groups, the language showers offer an important additional domain or arena where Sámi identity can grow and where rootedness to the Sámi community and knowledge of the cultural content is at focus.

Based on the study presented here, we argue that there is a need for additional Sámi language arenas in urban environments that are positioned between education and home environment, somewhere in the free time and leisure sphere. The organisation of such extracurricular arenas may take on different formats than how we have described the language showers in Tromsø and Umeå, which have been cooperative projects between the university and the municipality and which have non-intentionally excluded the rest of the language community. The RLS literature is clear about this point and states that high community engagement is more likely to result in a positive turn in the revitalisation process (e.g. McCarty 2018, 30–31; Royal-Tangaere 1997, 47; Olthuis, Kivelä, and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013, 4).

The challenges, potential and affordances of new additional language arenas such as Giellariššu are to a large extent dependent on the local premises and resources. We conclude that language showers offer an important addition to maintenance and development of Sámi language among the young Sámi in Tromsø. In Umeå, it may be worthwhile to consider whether a maintenance or a revitalisation programme is a better alternative. Revitalisation and reclamation programmes will require much greater efforts and a strong positive will from the municipality and the language community. Grenoble (2013, 794) states that "[j]ust what kind of revitalization program is realistic depends on an interplay of available resources, commitment from community members who will be involved in revitalization, and their overall goals". In our study we have observed that the needs of the local programmes can vary substantially and need to be mapped carefully, and we have also seen that the local programmes can be vulnerable to sudden changes when not included in a wider language planning programme.

Endnote

1 The Sámi people (The Saami/Sami, or in the past also Lapp, considered nowadays as a pejorative term) are Indigenous people of Northern Europe. Nine Sámi languages have survived until the present, but all of them are endangered and under a tremendous pressure. The traditional settlement area of the Sámi people is called Sápmi in North Sámi spelling, and it stretches from the Kola Peninsula in Russia across the northern parts of Norway, Finland and Sweden all the way to Central Norway and Sweden. Most Sámi of today live modern lives and are integrated in the majority societies through education and occupations. A technologised form of reindeer herding is often still seen as a main livelihood of many Sámi who live in the core areas of Sápmi. For many Sámi who still feel the connection to Sámi society, even the ones now living outside of Sápmi, the relations to the land, the waters and to family and ancestors form the core of the value system.

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multiethnica
Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre
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Home page: www.valentin.uu.se
Email: multiethnica@valentin.uu.se
HUGO VALENTIN CENTRUM
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Promotion and Preservation of Gurbet Romani in Eastern Serbia: Actions Targeting Children and Youth*

MIRJANA MIRIĆ, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

This paper deals with the Gurbet Romani variety spoken in Eastern Serbia, an area with an extensive language contact between Serbian as the dominant language and Romani as a minority language. The paper focuses on the Romani language classes in one of the schools in the town of Knjaževac (Eastern Serbia), as well as on the workshops and publishing activities organised by the local library with the purpose of promoting and preserving Romani varieties through activities targeted at primary-school pupils, but also through publishing the work of young local Roma authors. The aim of the paper is to investigate the ongoing participatory measures taken by the local community in Knjaževac, focusing on those targeting children and youth. I recorded a workshop and several semi-structured interviews with the school's principal, first to fourth grade teachers, pedagogical assistant, Romani language teacher, librarian and pupils. The qualitative analysis suggests that the activities organised by the library in Knjaževac represent significant affirmative measures for the promotion of Romani, which are crucial in the context of marginalization and restricted domains of language usage as indicated by my informants.

In the domain of minority language protection, as well as language policy and planning, government institutions in the Western world typically serve as law- and policy-makers, whose activities are oriented towards developing strategies for the implementation of the relevant legislation. However, local communities and activists are the ones who put these policies into practice and ensure that they are not only followed, but also used as a potential tool to develop various sorts of measures for the promotion and preservation of linguistic varieties. One of the possible roads to take in this endeavour is to target such activities towards youth and children. Keeping in mind the crucial importance of the intergenerational language transmission in the process of language maintenance (Fishman 1991; Kubaník, Sadílková, and Červenka 2013; Lee and van Way 2016; Soehl 2016), uninterrupted language acquisition and language use at home and within the local community are the first steps in safeguarding minority varieties, without which any other measures would be futile. In addition, young minority people encounter various social and economic challenges in the modern world, causing some of them to become indifferent "to-

* The paper is the result of work at the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, based on the contract of realization and financing of scientific research of SRO in 2021, no. 451-03-9/2021-14/200170, since 5 February 2021. The author is grateful to the informants and to Annemarie Sorescu-Marinković and Svetlana Ćirković on their comments on the earlier version of the paper.

wards belonging to a minority group and speaking its language", which along with "increasing cultural assimilation, globalization processes, economic conditions and lifestyle change, is one of the major threats faced by minority languages" (Dołowy-Rybińska 2020, 14). These threats especially affect the languages which are considered endangered or vulnerable, but also the ones which might still be vital, but have a restricted domain of usage.

Although Romani is an officially recognized minority language in many European countries, it has been characterized as a "functionally restricted, dominated language", with a functional distribution of speakers' linguistic repertoires between Romani and dominant majority languages: while the latter cover the public domain of language usage, Romani varieties are typically restricted to informal domains (Halwachs 2020, 430). The same observation holds true for the sociolinguistic situation in Serbia, as there exists an extensive language contact between Serbian as the dominant, official language of the state, and different varieties of Romani. Although the legislative framework of the Republic of Serbia appears to provide an adequate scope for minority language protection and promotion, the reality indicates that more work is needed, and significant improvement can be achieved only if local communities become more engaged.

This paper discusses the activities of the local community in the town of Knjaževac—one of the administrative, cultural and educational centres of Eastern Serbia—with a substantial Roma community residing in the town and the surrounding villages. As of 2013, the local library in Knjaževac has been organizing various projects which encompass young people and children of Romani origin. The staff put a lot of effort into promoting the Romani language and culture through workshops targeted at children and activities which include young Roma people as authors or collaborators in projects. By doing so, the library tends to promote the use of Romani beyond the intergroup communication in private and everyday life, aiming at increasing the motivation of Romani speakers to speak their mother tongue, but also making the language visible to the majority group.

The paper is organised as follows. First, I present information on the Romani language, focusing on the number of speakers provided by the last census in Serbia, and briefly describing the linguistic situation in the town of Knjaževac. The assessed levels of endangerment of Romani are then described, followed by the section on the legislation of the Republic of Serbia which provided the framework for the introduction of Romani language classes in primary schools. I proceed with the research aims and data collection methodology, and then focus on Romani language classes in one of the schools in Knjaževac, as well as activities organised by the local library in the sphere of promoting the Romani language, before rounding off with some concluding remarks.

Romani: (Eastern) Serbia and beyond

Romani is an Indo-Aryan language spoken worldwide. It has been primarily used within the family and local community as an oral language, without a widely accepted standard. Due to extensive language contacts with speakers of dominant or majority languages, as well as the low social prestige of Romani, its speakers are mostly bilingual or multilingual (Friedman 2001, 149; Halwachs 2020, 430; Matras and Adamou 2020, 329).

Based on linguistic criteria, Viktor Elšík and Michael Beníšek (2020) distinguish twelve Romani dialect groups: South Balkan, North Balkan, Apennine,

Slovene, South Central, North Central, Transylvanian, Vlax (North and South), Ukrainian, Northeastern, Northwestern, and Iberian Romani (see Matras 2002 for an earlier classification). The Vlax and Balkan groups are widely spoken in the Balkans, including Serbia. The Gurbet variety which is the focus of this paper belongs to the South Vlax group of dialects. It is mostly spoken in the southwest of Balkans, that is to say, in parts of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Albania (Bakker and Matras 1997, xxv; Matras 2002, 7–8; ROMLEX).

The estimated number of Romani speakers worldwide ranges between five and ten million (Bakker and Matras 1997, vii), but according to Yaron Matras (2002, 238), even the most conservative estimates agree that Romani is spoken by more than 3.5 million people. As for Serbia, according to the 2011 Census (cf. Table 1), there are 147,604 people (2.05% of the overall population) who declare themselves as Roma, but significantly fewer who declare themselves as Romani speakers (100,668, i.e. 1.4% of the population). The official census figures for the town of Knjaževac and its surroundings display the same discrepancy between the number of Roma and the number of Romani speakers: 789 (2.5%) vs. 673 (2.14%). It is noteworthy that the data from 2011 differ from the previous 2002 Census (cf. Table 1), which indicates that the number of Roma and Romani speakers increased between 2002 and 2011, in Serbia as a whole and in the area of Knjaževac, even though the overall number of citizens decreased. The increase in the number of Roma is probably due to the process of readmission and repatriation of Roma from Western European countries during the first decade of the twenty-first century (Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković 2020, 85–86), which clearly affected the area of Eastern Serbia. Another reason worth exploring might be an increase in the number of Roma who are willing to admit their ethnicity.

Table 1. The Number of Roma and Romani Speakers in the Republic of Serbia and Knjaževac Area, 2002–2011.

	Population		Roma				Romani Speakers			
	2002	2011	2002	in %	2011	in %	2002	in %	2011	in %
Serbia	7.498,001	7.186,862	108,193	1.4	147,604	2.05	82,242	1.1	100,668	1.4
Knjaževac area	37,172	31,491	452	1.21	789	2.5	366	0.98	673	2.14

In the town of Knjaževac and its surroundings three groups of Roma reside, namely Gurbet, Leyash and Kovachi 'Blacksmiths' (Ćirković and Mirić 2017; Sikimić 2017, 2018). The first two speak their varieties at home and within the local community—the Gurbet (South Vlax) and the Leyash variety (North Vlax). However, the Gurbet variety is the dominant Romani variety in this area owing to the higher number of speakers and the fact that Leyash speakers are often multilingual in both Romani varieties (and Serbian) due to mixed-marriages (Ćirković 2018, 239). The group typically known as Kovachi 'Blacksmiths' used to speak the Arli (Balkan) variety of Romani, but witnessed a complete language shift to Serbian in the 20th century (Sikimić 2017, 2018).

The Vitality of Romani in (Eastern) Serbia

The official figures provided by the 2011 Census, which indicate differences between the number of Romani speakers and the number of Roma, cannot be taken as the absolute measure of language endangerment, especially as they fail to provide information regarding the distribution of speakers across particular varieties or ages. However, they might be considered an indicator that certain varieties of Romani spoken in some parts of Serbia might be vulnerable to some extent. Additionally, the stigmatization and negative attitudes towards Romani and its speakers (Đurović 2002; Baucal 2012; Mirić 2019), as well as the absence of Romani in the linguistic landscape of Serbia as the language is not seen in the public spaces, may influence the vitality of Romani and need to be taken into account when assessing its endangerment (Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković 2020, 88).

The official estimates of the endangerment of Romani varieties in Serbia differ among databases which offer an assessment of Romani varieties, e.g., UNESCO's *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (Moseley 2010), *Ethnologue* (Lewis, Simons, and Fennig 2013) or the *Endangered Languages Project* (ELP) (Lee and van Way 2016). Numerous evaluations of these assessments have signalled that the estimated levels of endangerment of Romani varieties worldwide, but also in Serbia, are not reliable as regards the dialects spoken in a particular country, the estimated number of speakers, the assessed levels of endangerment, but also regarding the applied scientific methodology and terminology (Leggio and Matras 2017, Halwachs 2020, Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković 2020). According to the evaluation provided in Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković (2020), different Romani varieties spoken in Serbia have been assessed at different levels of endangerment, ranging from "definitely endangered" as estimated by the UNESCO *Atlas* and applied to Romani as a whole, not taking into account dialectal variation, to more positive assessments across different dialects provided by other databases. For instance, *Ethnologue* estimates Vlax Romani as "vigorous", i.e., "used orally by all generations of speakers and transmitted to children as their first language", inaccurately placing Vlax Romani only in Romania; the ELP database assesses Vlax Romani as being "at risk", whereas additional information in this database taken from other sources (e.g., Hancock 1995) estimates this variety as being "safe" (Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković 2020).

The presented discrepancy among databases suggests an urgent need for a more precise assessment of the endangerment of different Romani varieties. According to Dieter Halwachs (2020, 432), the evidence on the development and vitality of Romani ought to be collected for individual Romani varieties, taking into consideration its heterogeneity, as well as the multiplicity of speech communities and a high diversity of particular sociolinguistic situations. These observations are corroborated by the sociolinguistic situation in Knjaževac, which shows that the Gurbet Romani in this area is a vital variety, as it is being transmitted to younger generations of speakers and used as a primary means of family and intergroup communication in private and everyday life (Mirić 2019), the latter being mentioned as a criterion for language vitality (Halwachs 2020, 432).

The main issue as regards the Gurbet variety seems to be its restricted domain of usage and its low social prestige, as indicated by both the majority population and the Roma themselves. Previous fieldwork studies carried out in the town of Knjaževac and the nearby villages (Sikimić 2018; Mirić 2019) have shown that Gurbet Romani speakers are at least bilingual, and that Gurbet Romani is actively

used in this area. However, language usage is limited to informal domains, such as (private) communication with family members, kin and members of the local community, while children also speak the language with their Romani-speaking peers in the neighbourhood and occasionally at school (Mirić 2019). Conversely, Serbian completely dominates language usage in formal domains, as it is the majority language and the official language of the state. This domination of Serbian is also characteristic of the everyday, informal communication between Romani-speaking children who tend to switch to Serbian in the presence of their Serbian-speaking peers, and in public places, such as school (Mirić 2019). These observations are in line with the notion of "unidirectional multilingualism" which generally characterizes Romani speakers, who are competent speakers of the local, dominant language of the area where they reside, but whose speakers, in turn, do not speak Romani (Friedman 2001, 148). The exceptions are rather rare and represent only individual initiatives of local Serbian people to learn the language of their neighbours residing in Knjaževac and the surrounding villages, as pointed out by D. I., a native speaker of Romani from Knjaževac in a personal communication (March 2021), but also indicated in my interviews with Serbian-speaking pupils in the village of Minićevo near the town Knjaževac.

Legislative Framework and Language Policies in the Republic of Serbia

The important role of the exposure to one's mother tongue in the early years of education is emphasized in The Hague Recommendations regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities & Explanatory Notes, which were translated into many languages, including Serbian (OSCE, 1996). In the Republic of Serbia there are several legal documents which regulate the right to use minority languages, among them Romani.

As of 2006, the Romani language has officially been recognized as a minority language in Serbia, when The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe, 1992) came into force, previously ratified in 2005 by the Parliament of Serbia and Montenegro and subsequently applied to the Republic of Serbia as its successor. As one of the objectives and principles, Article 7 of the Charter specifies "the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life", while Article 8 encourages the states to make available or provide education in the relevant regional or minority languages at different levels of the education system.

In addition, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia joined the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Council of Europe, 1995) in 2001, which subsequently applied to the Republic of Serbia as its successor. In Article 14 of the Convention, "the Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language", and "shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education systems, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language."

Furthermore, the right to use minority languages in Serbia is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia and regulated by the Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts and the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities. In the domain of education in particular, the Law on Primary Education allows national minority students in primary schools to attend elective

classes of language with elements of national culture when the language of education is Serbian. However, this option is only possible if a sufficient number of students have registered, at least fifteen per school.

Despite the well-established legislative framework, the actual situation across the country signals that further efforts are required in order to implement language policies. Romani has not been introduced into official use in any of the local communities in Serbia due to the spatial dispersion of Roma, ethnic mimicry as a consequence of discrimination of the Roma, and the fact that the state has required a relatively high minimum number of minority students to introduce language classes (Bašić 2018; see also Filipović and Vučo 2018 for the lack of bilingual education in Romani).

The situation with Romani is further complicated by the fact that the long-term process of the standardisation of Romani varieties in different countries is still ongoing (for the situation in Serbia, see Bašić 2018, 25; Lukin Saitović 2018, 32–33). Unlike some of the minority languages which are already standardised in Serbia, such as Romanian, for which the official standard ("Romania Romanian") is used in formal contexts and learned in school, standing in a diglossic relation to the non-dominant Romanian varieties used at home and in everyday communication (Huţanu and Sorescu-Marinković 2018, 16), a different situation is encountered in the case of Romani, whose standardisation has been facing numerous difficulties at both international, as well as regional and local levels (Halwachs 2020). The heterogeneity of Romani is one of the factors which make the process of Romani language policy and planning (LPP) complex. According to Halwachs (2020), some European countries, including Serbia, pursue a "top-down" LPP strategy, usually standardising the variety of a numerically and/or politically strong Romani speech community, as is the case with the Gurbet variety in Serbia (Halwachs 2020, 437), whereas other countries, such as Austria, adopt a "bottom-up" strategy, standardising and introducing several Romani varieties in schools (Halwachs 2020, 443–44). Contrary to the "top-down" approach, which may negatively affect the process of preserving non-dominant minority varieties of Romani, the "bottom-up" approach, being focused on "plurality" and language maintenance, turns out to be more effective in education and extra-curricular activities (Halwachs 2020).

All these factors impede the implementation of the language policies and thus make the initiatives of local communities and individual activists much more important.

Aims and Methodology

Bearing in mind the aforementioned challenges posed by the implementation of the legislation regarding Romani, as well as the growing responsibilities of local communities, the aim of this paper is to investigate the ongoing participatory measures taken by the local community in the town of Knjaževac in Eastern Serbia, focusing on those that target children and youth.

The research is based on material collected between 2017 and 2019 during several fieldtrips to Knjaževac and the nearby village of Minićevo. The fieldwork was carried out within the project "Language, Folklore and Migrations in the Balkans" of the Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade (Serbia). The material was collected in cooperation with the Njegoš National Library in Knjaževac and two primary schools: Dimitrije Todorović

Kaplar in Knjaževac and Dubrava in Minićevo. The overall collected material comprises:

(a) recorded narratives of primary-school pupils (age 7–14), collected with the purpose of creating a corpus of children's narratives in Gurbet Romani. The narratives are based on semi-structured interviews conducted in Romani and Serbian, with questions focusing on traditional culture and autobiographic stories (Mirić, forthcoming). All recorded children are bilingual in Romani and Serbian;
(b) recorded experiments with primary-school pupils (age 7–10), in which pupils retold the content of cartoons in Romani with the purpose of investigating verbal aspect in Gurbet Romani (Mirić 2019a);
(c) recorded conversations with primary-school pupils (age 7–14), based on semi-structured interviews conducted in Romani and Serbian, with questions addressing domains of Romani language usage and pupils' attitudes towards Romani (Mirić 2019);
(d) recorded conversations with parents of the Romani-speaking pupils, conducted in Romani and Serbian, addressing the issues of education, as well as social and financial problems they encounter;
(e) a recorded session of a Romani language class with elements of national culture in one of the schools in Knjaževac (Mirić 2019);
(f) a recording of a workshop which the local library organises in cooperation with the abovementioned primary schools;
(g) recorded interviews with the librarian and the Romani language teacher in one of the schools in Knjaževac, as well as pedagogical assistants, principals, and school teachers from both schools. The interviews were conducted in Serbian according to a semi-structured interview method. The questions mainly addressed the issues of Romani language usage, the difficulties children face when it comes to language use, and the activities organised by schools and the local library aimed at overcoming these difficulties and encouraging children to speak and write in their mother tongue. Additionally, the attitudes towards Romani among the members of the Romani community, especially pupils, and their reactions and impressions regarding the classes and workshops also emerged as topics in the interviews.

For the purpose of this paper, I analysed the transcripts of the interviews with the school and library staff (following the interview topics) (g), and the recorded workshop (f). A few short follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with the Romani language teacher and the director of the library in March 2021 so as to obtain updated information on the classes and the workshop, given the current pandemic situation and the measures introduced by the Serbian government.

Several ethical issues should be mentioned with regard to the overall data collection, storage and accessibility. First, the interviews, experiments and the class and workshop recordings, mentioned in (a) to (g), were all conducted by the author of this article so as to ensure that the interviews would be conducted in the same manner and that all relevant aspects of the study would be controlled for, ethical issues included. All recorded material is stored in the Digital Archive of the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Belgrade. The audio

recordings and transcripts are available to researchers upon request after signing a usage protocol which guarantees that the material will be used for scientific purposes only. The recorded informants can also have access to their own recordings and transcripts upon request. In order to maintain the anonymity of the informants, personal data, such as names or date of birth, are neither stored nor made available.

Although the study deals with a community that is vulnerable to a certain extent, disclosing the name of the schools, the town and the village which are the focus of the study does not present any risk of identifying children who participated in the research, nor their parents, given the overall high number of Roma pupils who attend the schools in question. When it comes to the school and library staff, whose recordings were used for the purpose of this study, their work dedicated to the local Roma community is already recognized and appreciated by both the minority and the majority community. Disclosing the names of places was necessary to present them as examples of good practice. Overall, the data published in this study are not sensitive and present no risk for identifying participants.

Secondly, all of the informants consented to the participation and recording, as well as for the material to be used for scientific purposes. There was no compensation for their participation. The adult informants, the school and library staff and parents, gave their oral informed consent. They were informed about the research aims prior to the interviews or the class and workshop recording and their participation in the study was voluntary, with the possibility to withdraw at any time. As for the children's participation, parents consented to their children's participation, recording and for the material to be used for scientific purposes. The study was also approved by the schools' management. The children were recorded in their school premises or the premises of the local library during one of their Romani language workshops. Children's participation in the study was voluntary: all children who participated in the interviews, the class and the workshop were asked if they would like to participate and be recorded and they were informed that they were not required to do so, that this will not affect their school success, and that they could withdraw at any time. Only those children who willingly accepted the participation were recorded and their speech was transcribed. They enjoyed in speaking their first language and were quite enthusiastic during the interviews, the class and the workshop, often volunteering to be the next person to speak. Only a few children who had said that they would like to be included in the study, appeared to be reluctant when it was their turn to speak, saying that they were shy, so they were not recorded.

It is noteworthy that in the case of illiterate parents, the teacher or the pedagogical assistant was the one to read the consent form and a parent marked it. This does not change the already established relation parent(s) – teacher(s)/assistant(s), nor child(ren) – teacher(s)/assistant(s), as according to the school staff and parents, parents often address teachers and/or assistants if they need help with any kind of written material which they are not able to read. In turn, parents emphasize the importance of literacy to children, thus providing valuable help to the teachers. The relationship is considered by both parents and teachers as cooperation, rather than an imbalanced power relation.

Prior to the recording of children, the interviewer (i.e. the author of this article) presented herself in Romani and explained to children what the goal of the research was. Given that the interviewer was a researcher and Serbian L1 speaker has surely affected the relation between Romani-speaking children and the interviewer, but throughout the class, the workshop and the interviews, the interviewer emphasized

the importance of speaking and studying Romani, making it clear that their language is valuable and worth exploring, showing her own interest in and knowledge of the language. When it comes to the relation between the interviewer and the adult informants, i.e. the school and library staff, their cooperation had started in 2017, during the work on the Gurbet Romani dictionary and has been seen as necessary institutional cooperation which serves to promote the Romani language within the local community and beyond (see the section on Publishing Activities).

The interviews with the school and library staff were conducted in Serbian, given that it is the first language of all teachers and staff members except for the Romani language teacher, who is bilingual in Serbian and the Arli Romani variety which the interviewer (i.e. the author of this article) does not speak. This has not affected the content of the collected data. Interviews with children, and their parents, were conducted primarily in Romani and to a certain extent in Serbian, depending on the Romani language proficiency of the interviewer at the time of the recording, which significantly improved between the two fieldtrips, resulting in the increase in Romani language usage during the interviews. The use of Serbian might have affected the rate of the code-switching and borrowing in the speech of Romani-speaking children, which are unrelated to the topic of this paper.

The author of this article transcribed the recorded interviews and is responsible for any mistakes. The illustrative examples excerpted from the transcripts will be provided in a slightly adapted English translation, followed by the Serbian original.

Before I proceed with the analysis regarding the workshop and publishing activities of the library—which are in the focus of the paper—I will present the successful attempt of introducing the Romani language classes in the school in Knjaževac, which has a particular relevance for understanding the context and the potential impact of the workshops and publishing activities.

The Romani Language Classes in the Town of Knjaževac (Eastern Serbia)

Introducing a minority language into the education system may have a tremendous impact on the process of language maintenance and revitalization, as shown by numerous studies on indigenous or minority languages (see, for example, Sallabank 2005; Paccioto 2014; Siragusa 2018). As for endangered varieties, the education system plays an important role in this process, as it can affect language prestige, image and status, as well as increase the motivation of younger speakers to use the language, whereas in the case of vital minority languages, learning the mother tongue in school is meant to expand the domains of language usage (Sorescu-Marinković 2021, 212). Additionally, this may eventually reverse the negative attitudes towards its speakers when it comes to languages which are affected by marginalization, as is the case with Romani.

The primary school Dimitrije Todorović Kaplar in Knjaževac has organised elective classes of Romani as of September 2017. In the school year 2017/2018, classes were attended by 35 out of approximately 100 Roma pupils, but the number has slowly increased, to 45 pupils registered in 2018/2019 (Mirić 2019, 165–66), and then to 50 pupils who applied for the classes in 2020/2021 (follow-up interview with the Romani teacher, March 2021). As the overall number of Roma pupils did not increase significantly, the increase in the number of pupils attending classes might be taken as an indicator of the successful motivation of both pupils and their parents to register for the classes (Mirić 2019, 166).

As reported by Mirić (2019, 165–70), classes are taught twice a week. They are regularly attended by at least half of the registered pupils, who are divided into two

groups: the younger group encompasses second- to fourth-graders, while the older one includes fifth- to seventh-graders. Classes include neither first-graders, as parents are required to apply for the classes in the previous school year, nor eighth-graders, due to their numerous obligations in preparing for the graduation exam. According to the teacher (the follow-up interview, March 2021), the classes are optional and the pupils do not get final marks for the subject; however, there is a plan for the following school year to issue Romani language class attendance certificates, which is another means of increasing pupils' motivation to apply for the classes again, thus maintaining continuity, and providing a way to reward their regular attendance.

The curriculum of the Romani classes in Serbian schools like that in Knjaževac follows the national curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development for the classes of all languages of the national minorities with elements of national culture (Mirić 2019, 167). However, ever since the classes were initiated, the school has not received the official textbooks for the classes of Romani, and so the teacher prepares the material on her own or relies on the literature available in the school library (follow-up interview, March 2021). The Romani language textbooks for the first- to the fourth-graders were published in 2018 by the national Institute for Textbook Publishing and Teaching Aids (authors Rajko Đurić and Ljuan Koko), but the information is not available on the scope of their use at schools across Serbia (Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković 2020, 86).

The use of official textbooks and the presence of a minority language in education are issues closely related to language standardisation. When it comes to Knjaževac, the variety taught in school is Gurbet, the dominant Romani variety of the area, which fortunately coincides with the variety which has served as the basis for the standardisation process in Serbia. Although the choice of a variety does not represent a problematic issue for the speakers in the area with which we are dealing in the paper, as illustrated by the teacher's answer below, it certainly can be problematic for the speakers residing in the areas where other varieties or even different dialect groups predominate in terms of the number of speakers, e.g., Arli group in some parts of Serbia. This is also problematic in the areas where several varieties of Romani are spoken by pupils going to the same school.

> Researcher: And how do you solve the issue of different speeches, dialects, varieties? Well we are lucky here, Gurbet [Romani] is here [spoken]. Here. And now we'll see when the literature comes, we'll see what we'll do. (Researcher: Are all the children here Gurbet?) Yes. We also have the 'mixed ones'. I have a few 'mixed ones'. I have Arli-Gurbet [pupils]. But they understand the Arli dialect. And now, I understand them, they understand me […] It's fine. We are coping. (Interview with Romani language teacher, Knjaževac, November 2017)

> [Istraživač: A ovaj, kako se rešava pitanje različitih govora, dijalekata, varijeteta? E ovde imamo sreće, ovde je gurbetski. Ovde. E sad ćemo videti kad dođe, jel, literatura, videćemo šta ćemo. Istraživač: Jesu ovde sva deca Gurbeti? Da. Imamo i mešance. Imam i malo mešance. Imam i arlijsko-gurbetske. Ali razumeju arlijski dijalekat. A sad i ja njih razumem, sad i oni mene […] Dobro je. Snalazimo se.]

As the class recorded in May 2018 showed, one of the problems the pupils encounter in the class is the difference between the vocabulary of their local variety and the vocabulary of the varieties exemplified in the official dictionaries and other resources the teacher uses (Mirić 2019, 169). Even though the teacher attempts to make adjustments, taking different lexical variants into account during classes,

children still experience difficulties in memorizing novel vocabulary. Therefore, it seems that imposing a different variety in school may severely diminish the motivation of the pupils for speaking their mother tongue, as Romani varieties may differ considerably, especially in their phonology and lexicon. These issues must be more seriously considered and dialectal variation should be taken into account when introducing Romani into the education system.

Furthermore, the classes are held in Gurbet Romani, but the teacher herself is a native speaker of the Arli variety, born in a town in Southern Serbia. Although she speaks Gurbet Romani, at the beginning the pupils had a valuable role in translating from Serbian to the Gurbet variety, which the teacher highly appreciated (Mirić 2019, 166). The opposite was reported in the case of Roma pupils attending a Roma-only school in Slovakia: "Child agency was overlooked also in cases when children were practically helping the teachers for example when more competent children served as interpreters between the teacher and the children who were not able to understand Slovak." (Kubaník 2021, 61).

As regards the organisation of classes in the school in Knjaževac, several other challenges are reported, such as a low attendance rate of the classes, as well as difficulties with mastering the writing system. The recorded class was attended by a small number of pupils (only 5 out of 35), which reflects the general tendency of Roma pupils not to attend school regularly (Mirić 2019, 168; Hemelsoet 2015, 7). However, during the current school year (2020/2021), when the Romani classes are organised online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pupils have been more willing to participate, often sending the audio recordings of their own speech to the teacher, and regularly doing their weekly homework oriented towards writing in their mother tongue (the follow-up interview, March 2021). The fact that they were using technology (mostly mobile phones) for their homework might be one of the possible reasons for the pupils' increased interest in homework.

Also worth mentioning is the observation that Romani-speaking pupils face difficulties when writing in Romani (Mirić 2019, 169), as they are not used to reading and writing in their mother tongue and also due to the tendency to mix the Cyrillic script, which is the prevalent script in the Serbian education system especially at younger school ages, and the Latin script, which is used to write Romani in Serbia. The main reasons behind illiteracy in Romani will be elaborated in the following sections.

Actions Targeted at Children and Youth

The Njegoš National Library in Knjaževac initiated several activities oriented towards children and youth. In the following sections I will discuss the workshops and publishing activities organised by the library, emphasizing their role in language preservation and promotion.

Romani Language Workshops

In cooperation with the aforementioned school, the Njegoš National Library in Knjaževac organises language workshops, entitled "Mačke peru veš/E mačke parin e gada" [The cats wash the laundry]. The workshops take place in the library, approximately ten times a year, and each lasts for about an hour. They gather Romani-speaking pupils who aspire to speak Romani or learn about Romani language and culture. One of the librarians, a Serbian native speaker, is the main initiator and the organiser of each workshop. Although she does not speak Romani, she did learn

some vocabulary and simple phrases in order to motivate Roma pupils to speak the language themselves. The pedagogical assistant from the school, whose task is to facilitate the communication between Roma families and the school, between Roma pupils and their teachers, to follow their school progress and graduation rates, and help them with homework or during the classes (cf. Rus 2006), informs the pupils when a workshop is going to be held and decides which children are going to participate at a particular workshop, making sure that various children are included throughout the school year, as only ten to fifteen pupils can attend each of the workshops due to space limitations. The workshops represent an optional activity for the pupils and they are not obliged to attend them. The workshops were temporarily suspended during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (the follow-up interview with the director of the library, March 2021).

The main goals of the workshops are "for children to understand the importance of the book, reading, education and, above all, regular school attendance; to follow contents in Romani and Serbian in parallel, to develop a positive attitude towards themselves, their language and culture, the culture and the tradition of the environment in which they live and the national cultural heritage" (The Njegoš National Library website).[1] In the domain of language, the librarian emphasizes the opportunity of Romani-speaking pupils to use their language without stigmatization, in a formal context such as at a library, to freely speak their mother tongue in front of Serbian-speaking persons, and that pupils should not feel ashamed of speaking their mother tongue (the interview, July 2017).

According to the librarian, only the first encounter seemed difficult at the beginning, as pupils were reluctant to show that they could speak Romani, but later changed their attitude:

> When we started, that was the first time, the first encounter with the fairy-tale […] "Who speaks Romani?" Nobody. All right. And very cautiously I […] I wouldn't want to hurt any child, God forbid […] They followed the fairy-tale, and afterwards […] the youngest one said: Well then, they speak the same (language as we do)! [laughter] And then everybody agreed and then they started (speaking). (Interview with the librarian, Knjaževac, July 2017)

> [Kad smo počeli, to je bilo prvi put, prvi susret sa bajkom […] "Ko zna romski?" Ne zna niko. Dobro. A ja onako, vrlo oprezno […] ne bi htela dete da bilo koje dete taman posla, povredim […] Prate oni bajku, i posle […] jedan najmlađi kaže: A bre, pa ove pričaju isto! /smeh/ I onda se svi slože i onda krenu.]

In addition to fostering the use of Romani, the workshops aim to promote Romani culture and tradition, which is another way of raising children's awareness of their cultural and ethnical identity and encouragement to speak about their tradition in Romani:

> We celebrate the International Day of the Roma […] International Children's Book Day and we adapt these programmes for them […] Right before the New Year we have one encounter which is more like socializing, so we talk about holidays […] and they talk about their holidays, and how they celebrate them at home. (Interview with the librarian, Knjaževac, July 2017)

> [Obeležimo Međunarodni dan Roma […] Međunarodni dan dečije knjige i prilagodimo te ovaj programe njima […] Pred Novu godinu imamo jedan susret koji je više

druženje, onako pričamo i o praznicima […] pa oni pričaju o svojim praznicima, i kako slave kod kuće.]

One of the workshops was video recorded on 28 November 2017 in the presence of the Romani language teacher, the pedagogical assistant, and the librarian. It was attended by 11 primary-school pupils. The workshop was bilingual. The pupils were constantly encouraged to speak Romani, but they sometimes switched to Serbian in the conversation with the pedagogical assistant and the librarian.

During the workshop, a short discussion was initiated by the librarian about the domain of Romani language use. The children emphasized that they do not encounter problems when speaking Romani at school, but they prefer to speak Serbian in front of their Serbian-speaking peers who do not speak Romani and do not understand them (see also the narratives in Mirić 2019, 172–73). Unlike the librarian, who pointed out that Serbian-speaking children should make an effort to learn at least some Romani, the Romani language teacher and the pedagogical assistant placed emphasis on the importance of speaking Serbian at school in order for all children to understand each other, and as a means of integration into the society, as previously observed (Mirić 2019, 171), indicating that Romani-speaking pupils are still restricted in their language usage. (For pupils' attitudes towards their language usage and their narratives on how their Serbian-speaking peers perceive their language as being 'secretive' and 'aimed at gossiping', see Mirić 2019, 171–73):

Librarian: Do you speak Romani during the school breaks? Children [at the same time]: Yeeees. Child 1: No. Child 2: Yes. But not loudly. Not loudly. Librarian: Tell me, why not loudly, but tell me in Romani why not loudly. Child 2 [in Serbian]: Because afterwards, our friends don't want to talk to us afterwards. Librarian: All of them? Child 2: Yes. Not all of them. Librarian: Not all of them. And you wouldn't like this to be? Child 2: No. […] Child 1: I don't want to speak Romani at school because I'm with my friends and I don't want to. Teacher: Because they don't understand what you are saying. Child 1: Yes. Teacher: That is that problem in communication. […] Librarian: I just wanted to hear that you don't have problems because of that and that you are not isolated from your peers. Children: No. (Interview with the librarian, Knjaževac, July 2017)

[Bibliotekarka: Jel govorite na odmoru romski? Deca /istovremeno/: Daaaa. Dete 1: Ne. Dete 2: Da, al ne glasno. Ne glasno. Bibliotekarka: Kaži mi, zašto ne glasno, al na romskom mi to kaži. Dete 2: Zato posle naši drugari posle neće da pričaju sas nama. Bibliotekarka: Svi baš? Dete 2: Da. Ne baš svi. Bibliotekarka: Ne baš svi. A ti ne bi želeo da to bude? Dete 2: Ne. […] Dete 1: Ja ne volim da pričam (na) romskom u školi zato što sam sa drugaricama i ne želim. Nastavnica: Jer one tebe ne razumeju šta ti govoriš. Dete 1: Da. Nastavnica: To je taj problem u komunikaciji. […] Bibliotekarka: Ja sam tela samo da čujem da nemate probleme zbog toga i da niste izolovani od društva. Deca: Ne.]

The recorded workshop encompassed several activities. It started with the activity pupils frequently practice with the librarian—naming in Romani the objects displayed on a screen in the form of a presentation. They proceeded with another common activity of reading poems, also displayed on the screen. The poems are taken from the book of Serbian poet Ljubivoje Ršumović, entitled *Bukvar dečjih prava*

[The Book of Children's Rights], translated into Romani as *Fundo pe čavorikane* ortura (by Desanka Ranđelović). The librarian read in Serbian one of the poems from the book, devoted to Roma people, and then the children read the passages from the poem in Romani. As the book title in Romani puzzled the children, as well as the overall language of the book, the librarian explained that the variety to which the book is translated is different from Gurbet Romani they speak at home. Afterwards, the children were retelling in Gurbet Romani the content of cartoons previously displayed on the screen. As a final activity, the librarian prepared sheets of paper with a Serbian word for pupils to illustrate and write a sentence in Romani containing that word. After the workshop, the illustrated Romani sentences and words were exhibited in the library for the visitors to see them, which is a common activity according to the librarian:

> We exhibit those works, we publish it on our Facebook page, we talk about it. They can come to see. They bring parents over to see what they did here. (Interview with the librarian, Knjaževac, July 2017)
>
> [Mi izložimo te radove, objavimo to na našem Fejzbuku, pričamo o tome. Mogu da dođu da vide. Dovode roditelje da vide šta su tu radili.]

As the most important workshop objective, the library and the school staff emphasize teaching children to read and write in Romani and Serbian, as they are usually illiterate in their mother tongue and often manifest difficulties in writing both Romani and Serbian:

> You have observed here in the workshops that most of the children still can't read, they can't write and that represents the biggest problem for their further education. (Interview with the pedagogical assistant, Knjaževac, November 2017)
>
> [Vi ste i ovde sami na radionicima primetili da većina dece još uvek ne zna da čita, ne znaju da pišu i to im za dalje školovanje predstavlja najveći problem.]

There are several reasons for the pupils' low literacy in Romani. Firstly, the pupils are not used to writing in their mother tongue, as they are completely educated in Serbian as the country's dominant language. Secondly, literature written in Romani or translated into Romani is rather scarce and frequently not readily available, not just in Serbia, but also worldwide (Zahova 2020), which makes it difficult for pupils and adults to find literary works and become accustomed to routinely read in Romani. The librarian also emphasized that there are not enough books available in Romani in the library, and they use only a few publications for the workshops. Thirdly, inscriptions in Romani are not found anywhere in the linguistic landscape of Knjaževac, nor in the surrounding area, as the fieldwork has shown, which is also typical for Serbia as a whole (Sorescu-Marinković, Mirić, and Ćirković 2020, 88). The absence of a minority language from the linguistic landscape may serve as an indicator of the level of marginalization and discrimination of the language, and reveals the reluctance of speakers to use their language in public. Reading different types of inscriptions may positively affect reading skills, especially at the school age, as this would be one of the opportunities for pupils to get informally engaged in reading practice, in a playful manner, and therefore be motivated to use Romani in writing. It may also show them that their language is valuable enough to be written in public spaces, that it is not socially and politically discriminated against. In addition, as the pupils also manifest dif-

ficulties when writing Serbian, acquiring writing skills in their mother tongue can be beneficial for their easier acquisition of writing skills in the official state language (Sorescu-Marinković 2021, 216, see also Bialystok 2001 for a broader picture on the influence of bilingualism on children's literacy skills).

Furthermore, the fieldwork has shown that many parents are illiterate themselves, in both Romani and Serbian, which may prevent them from encouraging their children to read and write (in Romani), but also hinder them from helping their children to master these skills. The pedagogical assistant makes a similar observation:

> Most of the parents are illiterate, they don't know how to provide help and, in my opinion, they are still not aware of the importance of education. (Interview with the pedagogical assistant, Knjaževac, November 2017)
>
> [Većina roditelja su nepismena, ne znaju da pruže pomoć i po meni još uvek nisu svesni značaja obrazovanja.]

All obstacles in acquiring reading and writing skills in Romani make the workshop, along with the Romani classes, a highly valuable opportunity for pupils to learn to write in their mother tongue, to regularly practice these skills and to be encouraged to master them.

As the recorded workshop has shown, the pupils are enthusiastic about using their mother tongue during the workshop, and actively participate in all of the activities, using their language spontaneously. Their impressions are positive as reported by the pedagogical assistant:

> Researcher: And what is their relationship to these workshops? Are they looking forward …[to them]? They are looking forward, yes. They like [them]. They like to attend, they like to be in their environment, and they like to speak in their language. Then they are very free and they say everything they mean. (Interview with the pedagogical assistant, Knjaževac, November 2017)
>
> [Istraživač: A kakav, kakav je njihov odnos prema ovim radionicama, jel se raduju? Raduju /se/ da. Vole. Vole da idu i vole da su u svom okruženju i vole da pričaju na svom jeziku. Tada su jako slobodni i kažu ono sve što misle.]

Publishing Activities

Given the abovementioned facts, but especially the issues of literacy, the publishing activities of the Njegoš National Library oriented towards publishing works in Romani or related to Romani seem invaluable. A substantial part of these activities has been focused on the promotion of Romani language and culture among the younger generation of speakers.

The project "Exploring the Language and Folklore of Roma in Knjaževac" was carried out in 2016 and 2017 under the patronage of the library, and received financial support from the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia. The project resulted in the publication of several books pertaining to the Romani language and culture in Knjaževac and its surroundings, namely, *Miklošičeva zbirka reči "iz Timoka*" [Miklosich's Collection of Words "From Timok"] (Sikimić 2017), *Romsko-srpski rečnik knjaževačkog gurbetskog govora* [The Romani-Serbian Dictionary of the Knjaževac Gurbet Variety] (Ćirković and Mirić 2017), and *Jezik i tradicija knjaževačkih Roma* [Language and Tradition of the Knjaževac Roma] (Sikimić 2018). The publications abound in Romani texts; each lexeme in the dictionary is illustrated by Romani

examples, while the book on the Romani tradition encompasses numerous transcripts of Gurbet variety recordings from native speakers.

Although the publications were not strictly aimed at the younger population itself, it is important to emphasize that several young Roma people were engaged in the project in various activities. As reported in Mirić and Ćirković 2018, they first took part in the workshops whose aim was to provide training for the young Roma in the field research and transcription of audio recorded material. Afterwards, they actively participated in the fieldwork as interviewers and helped the linguistic team collect about 14 hours of audio and video material in Gurbet and Leyash Romani. Following the fieldwork, some of them were trained by the linguists in the lexicographical processing of the documented language material, so that they could be able to collaborate on publications as native speakers and provide valuable linguistic judgments and information on the linguistic forms, meanings and usage.

Another aspect of the project in question ought to be mentioned. By obtaining institutional financial support, together with organizing the project activities within the library and engaging scholars as the authors working on the Romani language and culture, the project aimed at raising the prestige and status of the language, in the eyes of its speakers and the members of the majority group. After publishing the abovementioned works, their promotion was organised in the library, gathering numerous members of the Romani minority, but also the members of the Serbian majority community. Parts of the promotional and other activities within the project were broadcasted on the local TV station.

Apart from the publishing activities that include young Roma collaborators, part of the activities is oriented towards children. The library has published three picture books in Romani, written in the Gurbet and Arli varieties, with Serbian translation. The books are entitled (in Serbian, Gurbet Romani and Arli Romani respectively): *Kuća od voska i kuća od soli/O ćher katar o mom thaj o ćher katar o lon/O ćher taro momelja o ćher taro lon* [The House of Salt and the House of Wax] (Ibrić, Simić, and Stojadinović 2018), *Siromašni momak nadmudrio kralja/Čoro čhavro xoxada e thagare/Čororo čhavo xoxavđa e thagare* [A Poor Boy Outwitted the King] (Ibrić, Simić, and Stojadinović 2019), *Lisica i medved/E vošeski bibi thaj o riči* [The Fox and the Bear] (Simić and Stojadinović 2020). The stories in all three picture books were originally written by the aforementioned Romani language teacher, in her native Arli variety, based on her memory of old Romani folktales she had heard in her childhood. The first two were then translated into the Gurbet variety by one of the young Roma, while the last book was translated into Gurbet Romani by the pupils themselves during their Romani language classes at school. In addition to being written for the children, the picture books were illustrated by Roma pupils during the workshops.

By providing the young Roma with the opportunity to be engaged as collaborators on these publications, the library attempts to preserve and promote the local Romani varieties spoken in the town of Knjaževac and its surroundings, but also to raise the awareness of its speakers of their identity, as well as to motivate young Roma to use their mother tongue. As it was suggested by Laura Siragusa in her research on Vepsian as a heritage language spoken in Northwest Russia, despite the predominant focus of the revival movements on the written language and the neglect of important oral practices, "the promotion of writing has provided other positive outcomes", such as pride in being able to write in the heritage language,

and the creation of new domains of use for the youth (Siragusa 2018, 196–99). The role that written-language forms can have in revitalizing endangered languages is also emphasized in the case of Wymysorys, a West Germanic language spoken in a town in Poland, in an overview of the youth theatre group (Borges and Król 2019).

What's more, by publishing the literature in Romani and about Romani language, culture and tradition, the library makes the Roma and their language visible to the broader community, not just in Knjaževac, as the publications were distributed to libraries across the country and made accessible on the library's website. These publications are now available to the majority community who might become more interested in the life and customs of the Roma and their language. Eventually, this may diminish the marginalization of this minority group.

Concluding Remarks

The focal point of this paper has been the Romani language classes and the activities pursued by the local library in the town of Knjaževac in Eastern Serbia, where a large Roma community resides. In cooperation with the local schools, the library has initiated Romani language workshops and prolific publication activities oriented towards children and youths. While the workshops are primarily aimed at preserving the Romani language by motivating children to freely speak their mother tongue in formal settings, the publishing activities are mainly oriented towards promoting Romani, and include children and youths as both recipients of the published works, but also as the authors and collaborators in projects. Targeting different Roma groups, including children and youths, is recognized as important by Nikola Rašić and his colleagues in one of their proposals for overcoming the marginalization of Roma in Croatian society:

> […] the expansion of programs and investment in multidirectional development projects targeting different sociodemographic groups of the Roma population (youth, women, children) will reduce the risk of their failure and complement the specificities aimed at raising awareness about the importance of the identity of one's own community by preserving the language, culture and customs of the Roma people. The design and (co)creation of targeted content and activities that will be more accessible to a heterogeneous population such as the Roma should therefore be emphasized. This especially refers to Roma youth and those who live dispersed among the majority population. (Rašić et al. 2020, 172)

Given that Romani has been a primarily oral language, the efforts of publishing diverse written material in Romani may positively impact the prestige, image and status of the language and motivate the younger generation to use their mother tongue. The overall Romani-speaking community can highly benefit from the workshops, given that children and youths are encouraged to use the language outside of their inner community, to discuss their customs and tradition, to develop positive attitudes towards the language use and to be aware that their language is equally apt as the dominant language to be used in all domains. What has been written about the introduction of the language spoken by the Bayash (Boyash) Roma in school in relation to formal settings may be applied to all Roma communities: it would make "pupils proud and aware of their cultural and linguistic heritage, and at the same time remove the stigma of a non-standardized language, unfit for writing, teaching or official communication." (Sorescu-Marinković 2021, 227). Although the change of image and status is usually associated with introducing native languages into the

education system (Sallabank 2005), the activities of the library show that this can also be achieved by engaging other actors.

Although the legislation of the Republic of Serbia provides a suitable framework for various strategies and programs, the reality indicates that the institutional and financial support, although invaluable, is not sufficient in language preservation and promotion. Although Serbia follows the "top-down" approach in implementing relevant laws and policies, it is clear that local initiatives, based on the good will of individuals and quality cooperation of institutions, such as schools and libraries, are indispensable in preserving a minority language and increasing its domains of usage. In the future, serious commitment of all the actors and their close cooperation is necessary in order to achieve genuine linguistic and cultural pluralism.

Endnotes

[1] Available at: http://biblio-knjazevac.org/programi-za-decu-i-mlade/macke-peru-ves-e-muce-thoven-gada (accessed 30 March 2021).

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multiethnica
Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre
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Home page: www.valentin.uu.se
Email: multiethnica@valentin.uu.se
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Learning to Speak Indigenous Languages with Compassionate Listening Practices*

MADOKA HAMMINE, Meio University

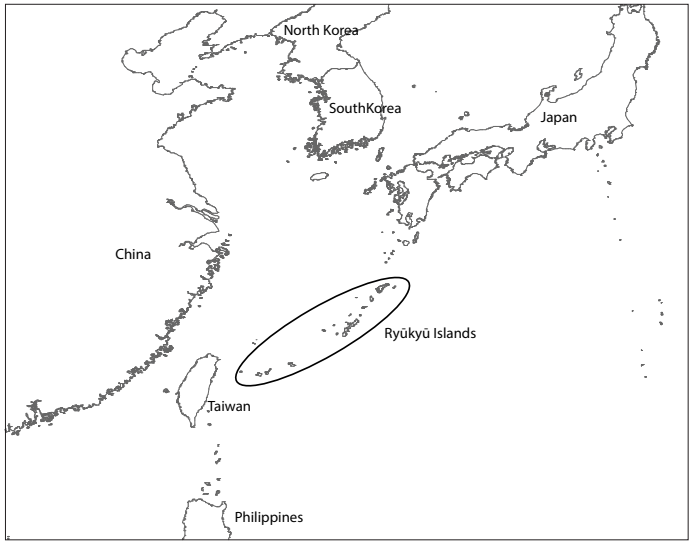
Indigenous language reclamation programs are considered an important way to reclaim indigenous identities and empower indigenous community members. Yet, without enough considerations for the participants, they could inhibit the language learning of those participants. The goal of this article is to empower Ryukyuan indigenous language learners using compassionate listening practices to support their learning. The author focuses on language reclamation activities targeting new speakers of the Yaeyaman language. The author analyzed interviews with new speakers (learners) of Yaeyaman and conducted video-recordings. This article identifies the following three issues: (1) linguistic purism, (2) linguistic insecurity, and (3) lack of ethical principles. These problems seem to hinder new speakers' motivation to learn and speak their heritage languages. The author found that the emotions and feelings of new speakers are often overlooked and thus, suggests that new learners can be empowered by addressing their feelings through compassionate listen practices. Hence, we need to focus on the emotional support of language learners. The article proposes using compassionate listening practices to empower language learners who are embedded in social power struggles both from outside and inside the language community.

Introduction

Over the past decades, many initiatives to revive, revitalise or reclaim indigenous languages and identities have sprung up around the world. Some of these language revitalisation projects involve changes of national policies while others are highly localized. Although indigenous language reclamation projects often aim at addressing historical domination over indigenous populations, such projects have the potential to "endanger endangered languages" if they are applied without conscious awareness and careful plannning (Whaley 2011). This article focuses on the context of indigenous language reclamation, in the Ryukyus (see figure 1). The Ryukyuan language family consists of at least five distinct languages, traditionally spoken in the Ryukyus, a chain of islands in the southwest region of Japan. The Ryukyuan languages are either definitely or severely endangered according to the standards set out in the UNESCO *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*. A group of new speakers are emerging in different regions of the Ryukyus both through local initiatives and through different collaborative projects with researchers (e.g. Sakihara and Oyakawa 2021; NPO-hands-on, no date; Port Language Revitalisation Project 2020; Topping 2021; Zlazli 2021).

* I would like to thank my research participants who helped me throughout the research process. Without the participants of this study, I could not have completed this article. *Shikaittu miihaiyuu*. I also would like to thank three anonymous reviewers as well as the editors of this journal for providing me with constructive feedback. Last, but not least, I thank Akino Oshiro, Daniel Iwama, Risako Sakai and Wesley Ueunten for our ongoing discussion on compassionate listening practices.

Figure 1. East Asia with Ryukyu Islands.



Although recognized by most linguists as sister languages of Japanese, Ryukyuan languages have historically been treated in Japan as *hōgen*, or dialects of Japanese, and are still viewed as such by many Ryukyuan islanders. This view of Ryukyuan languages as *hōgen* resulted from an ideology of Japan as a monolingual nation (Heinrich 2012) and has been a major obstacle to language preservation in the Ryukyus. Intergenerational transmission of Ryukyuan was mostly broken in the early 1950s, and most Ryukyuan people born since the 1970s are monolingual Japanese speakers (Anderson and Heinrich 2014). A more recent study in one community in the Northern Ryukyus, on Okinoerabu Island, shows that people in their 40s have linguistic knowledge of their local languages and are therefore passive bilinguals of Japanese and the local language (Yokoyama and Kagoyama 2019).

Among different Ryukyuan communities, this article focuses on one, the Yaeyaman language. After the Ryukyu Kingdom (1479–1879) was annexed in 1872 by Japan, the Yaeyama Islands were integrated into Okinawa Prefecture under the modern administration of Japan in 1879. The term 'Yaeyaman language' is often used when these linguistic varieties are described in English (Heinrich et al. 2015). The people from Yaeyama, however, use different terminologies, depending on areas and islands to describe their linguistic varieties. For instance, the terms, *sumamuni*[1] or *sïmamuni* are used by members of different communities. Each village has its own terms for their traditional speech practices such as *meeramuni* (a variety in Miyara) or *kumoomuni* (a variety in Kohama). Each village in Yaeyama has its own history as well as culture, languages, traditions, and identities (Matsuda 2008; Miki 2003; Miyagi 1972).

Previous Research

Previous studies show that the discourse of "endangered" languages could possibly do harm to the community if used without careful considerations (Davis 2017; Hill 2002). Universal ownership, hyperbolic valorization, and enumeration were identified as difficulties related to this emergent discourse of "endangered" languages (Hill

2002). Universal ownership refers to an idea of saving languages because these languages belong to all of humanity while hyperbolic valorization refers to viewing these languages as valuable "treasures" or "priceless" wealth. Enumeration means enumerating speakers or languages using a highly colonial way of "counting" speakers left. Recently, some studies argued that the discourse of endangerment does not serve the needs of their speakers or signers and propose a shift of discourse when referring to minoritized languages. For instance, Leonard (2012, 359) defines language reclamation as "the larger effort by a community to claim its right to speak a language and to set associated goals in response to community needs and perspectives." Roche, Kroik and Maruyama (2018, 7) define indigenous efflorescence as process-oriented term to draw attention to "the creative, dynamic nature of the contemporary indigenous moment." Indigenous efflorescence involves something exceeding the recreation of the past, the return to a former state of being." These authors argue for the need to respond to community needs and perspectives and to shift scholarly focus to the fluid or dynamic nature of indigenous (language) reclamation.

In the last decades, the discourse of language endangerment has become dominant among scholars as well as among the public in the Ryukyus. Locally initiated language revitalisation projects are emerging in different areas across the Ryukyuan archipelago, without official governmental recognition of Ryukyuan "dialects" as languages in their own right (Ishihara 2016). Along with a number of emerging language revitalisation activities, both prefecturally funded and locally initiated, numerous "new speakers" (O'Rourke et al. 2015) of indigenous languages are emerging. New speakers refer to those speakers of indigenous vernaculars who did not acquire these vernacular languages at home as their first languages, but rather acquired these languages outside of the home, often through the education system or as an adult learner (Costa 2015; O'Rourke et al. 2015; Williams 2019). The notion of the "new speaker" was introduced into the field of language revitalisation that is already populated with two terms that carry a great deal of ideological weight: the "semi-speaker" and the "native speaker" (Jaffe 2015). While the terms "native-speaker," "semi-speaker" or even "rusty-speaker" have been used in previous research in the context of endangered languages, "new speaker" as a concept sheds lights on the future-oriented processes in language reclamation.

By using the term "new speaker," language reclamation researchers challenge the belief in the automatic complete competence of "native speakers" in their "native languages" (Doerr 2009, 39). The concept of new speaker focuses on the process of language learning and also shows that linguistic competence is a product of complex process involving education, language and cultural policies in a given society. Challenging these beliefs around "native speakers" and "competence" is important in the context of language reclamation where language learners learn indigenous minoritized languages as heritage. The concept of the "new speaker" therefore raises questions about "nativeness" as a source of authority and as a target in the upward movement of language revitalisation and the creation of new speakers. The concept entails hope for the future; "he or she evokes an upward movement away from language shift and loss rather than an inevitable downward slope" (Jaffe 2015, 23).

New speakers have been largely ignored as a linguistic group in the Ryukyuan contexts, despite the fact that such speakers are a necessary part of reversing language shift (RLS) in minoritized endangered languages. This is a result of native speakers often being considered as the only legimitate representatives of a linguistic community. Therefore, I investigate the following questions:

What kind of experiences do leaners of Yaeyaman experience in their language learning journey to become new speakers?

How can we frame language revitalisation/reclamation projects to support new speakers' language learning journey?

The Researcher's Positionality

While language community members have increasingly written about indigenous languages around the world, they still rarely serve as primary voices in scholarly outlets. As the author, I thus focus this paper on the perspectives of indigenous[2] community members and learners of indigenous languages (e.g. Leonard 2018), both of which are categories to which I myself belong. As Nakagawa (2020) writes, Ryukyuan islanders tend to have differences visibly, culturally, linguistically, historically, and spiritually from "mainland" Japanese. In this article, I include voices and experiences of new speakers of Ryukyuan languages to provide a picture of social dynamics within indigenous language communities.

Among the different varieties of the Yaeyaman language, *meeramuni*, *Miyara Yaeyaman* (henceforth, Miyaran) is the author's heritage language, a language(s) of ancestors and family which is not a majority language in the nation state (see e.g. Van Deusen-Scholl 2003). As is the case for most individuals belonging to younger generations in the Ryukyus, I did not have the chance to learn this language in my childhood. My grandparents and some relatives are full speakers of Miyaran. I started learning it as an adult with the help of recordings and materials made by linguists as well as traditional speakers of Miyaran (see more in Hammine 2021). While being a cultural (partial) insider sometimes works to my advantage, the positionality of the researcher might also affect my research process negatively. This research might have limitations due to the positionality of the researcher on account of my subjective emotions, relationships with research participants and communities.

Research Methodology

This research draws from a framework of indigenous Methodologies (Kovach 2005; Smith 1999; Wilson 2008). Fundamental to indigenous Methodologies is the recognition that language is a social practice, and as a consequence, working with an endangered language entails social engagement with careful consideration of social dynamics and needs that underline language use (e.g. Whaley 2011). By employing indigenous Methodologies as a research framework, I view science as being inseparable from art, and religion and knowledge as also being approached through one's senses and intuitions (Wilson 2008, 55). In this framework, research is understood as a holistic process of decolonization. As Smith (1999, 41) writes, decolonization is not the rejection of Western theories but rather, it is about centering our concerns and worldviews and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspective and for our own purposes. Therefore, indigenous Methodologies as a framework enables the researcher to focus on instances where new speakers of Ryukyuan face difficulties or struggles the during the language acquisition process. This framework allows me to focus on not only mere acquisition of a language, but also participants' feelings and emotions concerning their language learning journey. Indigenous methodologies enable *our* indigenous experiences to come forward, and I aim at providing a possible efflorescence of indigenous languages and identities (Roche et al. 2018).

This research also draws from a framework of Participatory Action Research (Filipović 2019). Participatory action research enables researchers to become involved with language reclamation for communities. Thus, the research process has been interactive, involving educational activities of Yaeyaman both inside and outside the village. During my fieldwork in Yaeyama, I conducted language lessons at Miyara Elementary School on Ishigaki island and produced learning materials including a series of language learning podcasts. I translated some children`s stories ("the Gigantic Turnip" by Aleksey Nikolayevich Tolstoy and "Three Billy Goats Gruff," a Norwegian folktale) into Miyaran (Hammine 2020). In April 2020, I started a community radio program with two other speakers/teachers, in which each of us uses different varieties of Ryukyuan. Since 2019, I have also conducted a Yaeyaman language study group in which members meet occasionally with youth from the Yaeyama islands. Employing Participatory Action Research, my role both as a researcher and activist plays a fundamental role in this research.

To capture emotions of both new speakers and native speakers of Yaeyaman, I employed the practices of listening and letting emotional pain be accepted by others, and deployed the practice of "compassionate listening", a practice proposed by Diana L. Rehling in 2008. Compassionate listening is used in the field of psychology and clinical studies to refer to a practice which allows the researcher to build a strong relationship with their interlocutors. It is influenced by Carl Rogers's idea of empathic listening (Rogers 1980, 142) as well as therapeutic listening described by Wolvin and Coakley (Wolvin and Coakley 1996, 262):

> Compassionate listening is a form of active listening that begins with the intention to be present with the person for "when we are mindfully present, calm and compassionate, we radiate a powerful field that reassures, comforts and calms others. (Youngson 2012, 113)

I have come across with some moments of compassionate listening during language reclamation process, regarding the Yaeyaman language. In my doctoral dissertation, I wrote of a moment when my grandmother started crying upon learning Yaeyaman after some months of rejection (Hammine 2020, 66). Such moments of emotional transformation seem to create significant change in new speakers' language practices in other minoritized linguistic communities since these moments are critical junctures in a language trajectory when people make significant shift towards the target language (Walsh 2019). For instance, Walsh (2017) suggests that language learners experience a spectrum of emotions during the process of becoming new speakers ranging from shame, fear, and frustration to excitement, joy and pride (Walsh, 2019). Emotions, ranging from happiness and pride to frustration and shame, play a key role in the language trajectories of new speakers.

Compassion is an old word, explains Rehling (2008), with the Latin roots of "comm," meaning together, and "pati," meaning to suffer – a kind of shared suffering. Across time, traditions, languages and cultures, compassion remains a powerful concept that moves human beings beyond our self and beyond pity. Being compassionate in the context of indigenous language reclamation might help not only learners, but also social actors including researchers to be aware of the different needs of the new speakers. In compassionate listening, the primary objective is the recognition of our connectedness, which is also related to rationality and accountability as emphasized in indigenous Methodologies. The recognition of connectedness is important to create and nurture new speakers of indigenous languages such as Yaeyaman.

Data for this research were collected from native speakers of Yaeyaman (N=5), colleague researchers (N=2), new speakers (learners of Yaeyaman: N=7), and myself as a language learner, activist, and researcher. Based on principles from an ethics committee of my institution, consent forms were created by the researcher and signed by all the participants. My data consisted of field notes from language learning classes (N=35 classes/ one hour each session), audio/video/texts recordings of language practices with the participants, and semi-structured interviews with new speakers and native speakers. Semi-structured interviews lasted from one to two hours. Participants' age varied but most of the new speakers, both male and female, were in their twenties to forties. Native speakers of Yaeyaman include both male and female speakers from seventy years of age. Using video and audio recorders, Interviews were conducted using a mix of Yaeyaman and Japanese. Due to Covid-19, some of the interviews and classes were conducted using the online platform, Zoom. All of the interviews were transcribed, translated and analyzed by the researcher. In the analysis, different themes related to endangerment, revitalisation, and reclamation of Yaeyaman were generated. The following section will summarize themes related to new speakerness in Yaeyaman.

Linguistic Purism and Compromise

Although the term 'the Yaeyaman language' is often used in English to refer to linguistic varieties spoken on the Yaeyama islands, speakers of Yaeyaman seem to have different understandings of what the Yaeyaman language is. For instance, the following is from an interview with one of my teachers who is also a native speaker of one linguistic variety of the Yaeyaman language. Here, we have been discussing how to make people, adults specifically, interested in learning the Yeaeyaman language.

> "MH: As long as you know, when people did not have a common language do you think people from *shika-aza* [shika-section of Ishigaki city] spoke *shikamuni* to each other, and people from *meera* [miyara-section of Ishigaki city] spoke Miyaran to each other? How do you think people used to communicate?
>
> P1: We use *hyōjungo* [Standard Japanese], like I said before. When we cannot understand each other, we use Standard Japanese.
>
> MH: I see; it is quite chaotic.
>
> P1: Now I have been making a *sumamuni kentei*[3] [language proficiency exam], but we are just making a word-to-word dictionary. It is not enough. We need to make educational materials, textbooks and so on. This is already too much work for me. **We need to make for each village, *shikaaza, meera, sabu, kabira*…. each one for each village**. But, I have always thought that because in Yaeyama, **we have so many people who study Yaeyaman music so if we approach them**, I have a hope that they might be interested in learning the language as well. So I think the first step is to make them interested in learning the language.
>
> (Interview, 26 March 2021, conducted in Japanese)

As P1 identifies, there is an issue of purism (or compromise) when creating educational materials. Since Yaeyaman has never been standardized with an official status of language, there are many linguistic varieties within Yaeyaman. Native speakers struggle with different varieties among what we call Yaeyaman. P1 also implies the need to include art and music in language learning. We continued:

MH: Now, I have been mostly interested recently about when the term yaimamuni is used, how common it is.

P1: There is no such term as yaimamuni, it is just a way to describe the different varieties. There are different varieties within this term, yaimamuni such as shikamuni. So the use of this term is a little bit off. It sounds strange.

MH: Do you think it is something made up?

P1: Hmm, yes.

MH: Do you know when people started to use it?

P1: It is used only from outside by outsiders, like people from Okinawa or Miyako.

MH: As a native speaker of sumamuni, do you feel it sounds a little off when people say yaimamuni?

P1: Yes. It is the same idea as when people from Miyako and Okinawa say that they are going to Yaeyama. We also say when we go to Okinawa, we say we will go to Okinawa, right? So maybe it is normal to use the term…maybe.

(Interview, 16 March 2021)

The extract from above is one example of how the term *yaimamuni* sometimes is used and imposed from outside. It shows that within what is referred to as *yaimamuni,* or the Yaeyaman language, there is a high degree of diversity and different layers of social groups. The difficulty of determining mutual intelligibility within Yaeyaman is also mentioned in other work (Lawrence 2000; Pellard 2013). In addition, people from villages tend to have a strong identity which sometimes is distinctive from other parts of Yaeyama. Those (indigenous) identities are embedded in social dynamics and power relations within/outside Yaeyama.

Currently, speakers, local initiatives, learners and new speakers of Yaeyaman are following the classifications of the Yaeyaman language. In reality, when one of my students, one new speaker, has their heritage language from a different community of Yaeyama, it creates an issue related to a question of compromise or purism. Language teaching and learning as part of revitalisation/reclamation efforts often values the most traditional variants. On one hand, it is important to keep focusing on linguistic diversity within Yaeyaman, while it is difficult to keep up with all the needs of different heritage language learners. Hence, new speakers tend to learn a new language which they feel comfortable using. In a context of language reclamation/revitalisation of "the Yaeyaman language," my heritage variety might be different from my teacher's and my student's heritage variety of Yaeyaman. I am experiencing, as in other contexts of small or minoritized languages, a dilemma between purism and compromise. Purist ideologies affect the language attitudes of traditional speakers, regarding which linguistic variety is "true," "real," or "authentic," and which are widespread enough to create problems for efforts to support minority languages with a small native-speaker base (see Dorian 1994). New speakers' experiences of language purism stem not only from the outside but also from traditional speakers themselves. To empower learners and speakers of those languages, purist ideologies and attitudes should be avoided. Instead, pluralistic fluid understanding of languages and cultures, could encourage both learners and teachers of indigenous languages to learn/speak those languages comfortably.

Linguistic insecurity of "new speakers"

Linguistic purism at work seems to increase "insecurity" of new speakers of Yaeyaman. While discussions around native-speakerness in the context of a majority language such as English have been concerned with the linguistic, social and political implications of its spread as a global language, in the case of minority languages, the focus on native-ness has been on language loss and a concern with preventing potentially threatened languages from endangerment or "extinction." In contrast with the contested privileges associated with being a native speaker of a majority or global language, in minority language contexts the protection of the native speaker community becomes the focus of attention for language planners, revitalisation movements and sociolinguists (O'Rourke and Pujolar 2013; Smith-Christmas et al. 2018). The Yaeyaman speech communities were "imagined and re-imagined" through authentication, and as part of this process, native speaker communities were "reified and idealized as repositories of the 'true' speakers" (see also O'Rourke and Pujolar 2013, 61 for a case for Irish communities).

In other contexts, new speakers often navigate multilingual repertoires and engage in struggles for legitimization because the type of language they use may be seen as inauthentic compared to "native" speakers. For example, O'Rourke and Pujolar (2013) further argue:

> Problematizing nativeness and the native speaker concept in the context of language revitalisation and minority language research helps understand the ways in which specific social groups and linguistic forms acquire legitimacy. This in turn connects with the ways in which national belonging and authenticity are defined and experienced and the multiple ways that social actors construct and negotiate their sense of ownership in relation to the language and the community of speakers to which they wish to belong. (O'Rourke and Pujolar 2013, 61)

In the case of the Ryukyus, while the focus of most research on Ryukyuan languages has traditionally been on documentation of native speakers' linguistic varieties, focusing instead on potential new speakers reveals the possible emotional instability of learners of indigenous languages. In the case of Yaeyaman, the focus on native-speaker-ness has sometimes caused "linguistic insecurity" (Abtahian and Quinn, 2017) for learners who are considered as "semi-speakers" or "rusty-speakers" (e.g. Anderson, 2014). The relationship between linguistic insecurity and language shift in multilingual communities is neither straightforward nor necessarily causal, but speakers' expressions of linguistic insecurity are also often correlated with shift toward the dominant language, with speakers then demonstrating shame or embarrassment about using the minority language wrongly.

New speakers, or people who have been described as "semi-speaker" tend to experience "inflicted shame" in speaking indigenous languages accompanying a shift to widespread use of Japanese, which is perceived both as more prestigious and more useful in a multilingual context. This inflicted shame seems to be reported in other indigenous language learning contexts (García 2009, cited by Wyman 2009). In the context of Yaeyama, these "semi" or "rusty" speakers who do not speak the traditional "true" variety tend to view themselves negatively because they are not able to produce "correct" language for researchers or for the future generations. This could prevent them from learning and speaking the Yaeyaman comfortably. Being labelled as not good enough as a "true speaker," speakers who do not speak these linguistic varieties face difficulties in their self-esteem as a speaker or a

learner of these varieties. For instance, the following example demonstrates a moment where a new speaker was labelled as an inadequate speaker from outsiders:

> P3: Once I left the island, I felt that I lost even the passive ability of understanding Yaeyaman. I thought that once I got a job on the mainland, I lost my ability in Yaeyaman.
>
> P2: Based on what I learned talking with other people, I'd advise you to speak it. You're not speaking it, so it's clear you're a beginner of Yaeyaman.
>
> P3: **I am not comfortable**.
>
> P2: When you spend time with native speakers of Yaeyaman, you should speak it, not only listen to them, but from your side, you should speak it.
>
> P3: Yes, I think so.
>
> P2: A native speaker is not a teacher who can explain all the details of grammar of Yaeyaman. **You do not have the basics of *Yaeyaman,*** so I want to help you.
>
> (Focus group interview, 31 January 2021)

The interview extract above raises a question: when a heritage learner or speaker would like to speak and learn Yaeyaman, who is "good" enough to speak the language? The above excerpt shows P3, as a possible new speaker of Yaeyaman, who is learning it. P3 (community member) is also being told "you do not have the basics" by P2 (a person originally from outside). Being labeled as inadequate puts leaners in a position of being judged as not sufficient enough from the outside. By putting the speakers into these categories imposed from outside, speakers and learners of indigenous speech are made to feel insecure of speaking their own mother tongue, which is observed by indigenous researchers outside of the Yaeyaman context as well (e.g. Abtahian and Quinn 2017). This adds to the collective pain as a community and prevents younger generations from speaking and learning indigenous languages. Understanding the possible inflicted shame that new speakers experience might be crucial to encouraging language reclamation for Yaeyaman.

These labels of non-native-speaker leaners, "semi-speakers" or "rusty speakers" could possibly lead leaners of Yaeyaman to feel insecure of learning or speaking their heritage languages. The process is subtle, but it could lead to exclusion of potential new speakers of indigenous languages. Although it is not their fault that they are semi-speakers, rusty speakers, or non-speakers of their heritage language, they are constantly reminded from outsiders they know little and make mistakes when they speak their languages. This kind of attitude from both native speaker community members and external researchers does not assist comfortable language learning experiences; hence, it does not create a safe space for new speakers to speak in their heritage language. Individuals who are involved in language reclamation projects as either language activists, educators or researchers should be aware of the fact that leaners who have potential for becoming new speakers have a tendency of being to be afraid of speaking their languages since their repertoire is often seen as not "good enough" (see also Abtahian and Quinn 2017; Anderson 2014). Without consideration of their emotional transformation and obstacles, new speakers cannot start speaking their language comfortably. Researchers should be careful about putting learners and speakers of these languages into simple categories of language proficiency. This categorization also relates to an issue of what constitutes "traditional" speakers or "native" speakers of Yaeyaman. Linguistic purism, as an ideology of "nativeness," acts as

an obstacle for learners to acquire Yaeyaman. For many indigenous people who did not have a chance to acquire their indigenous heritage language(s), such assessments based on mere linguistic competence could hinder their motivation to learn their heritage language.

Revisiting Ethical Principles

Social dynamics in each social group in Yaeyama should be carefully examined based on ethical principles. Ethnical principles include that of careful consideration of emotional aspects of new speakers with a practice of compassionate listening. As an additional example of such moments, I share my experience with a colleague. When I started organizing workshops for potential new speakers in collaboration with other researchers, I started crying one day while explaining how I was feeling about learning my heritage language in front of a linguist friend (field note, December 1st, 2019). I have been told that my skills in Yaeyaman are broken, and full of mistakes. The experiences of learning and making mistakes in Yaeyaman made me conscious of this. This experience is normal as a learner of a heritage language. Additionally, traditional speakers suffering from local histories of linguistic oppression have sometimes confronted me with negative attitudes, without being conscious of how these confrontations affect me (see also Roche 2021). In cases such as this, compassionate practices can play a crucial role. My friend listened to me without telling me what to do. I felt embarrassed after this experience because I had been completely turned to tears, however, it was necessary for me to express how I feel (field note, December 1st, 2019).

After starting a language study group in the Yaeyama community, I realized that researchers' attitudes could influence those people who do not speak these vernaculars perfectly and are potential new speakers. For instance, researchers' attitudes could embarrass community members if they are made to feel as though they "know nothing" about their own language. Although the group activity was interrupted by the Covid-19 crisis, leaners who are mostly in their 20s requested to continue online, where we now meet once a week for one hour. Some of the leaners have shared with me similar experiences when being confronted by outside researchers who study the Yaeyaman languages and cultures. The following is from one of the interviews with a leaner of Yaeyaman:

> MH: Is there anything that you wish other people to know about Yaeyama? Other people who are not from Yaeyama.
>
> P4: **I wish people would understand that young people from Yaeyama know very little, or almost nothing of the Yaeyaman language.** And I wish **people acknowledge this as a premise**…. I don't know how to say…but I sometimes…. Sometimes I was told by outsiders that I know so little… it is like almost being blamed for not knowing about my island.
>
> MH: Hmm. Yes.
>
> P4: Maybe it is a little harsh to say this but when I get asked like…. why do you know nothing about the island although you are from here? I have seen these situations before, so…I saw this happen to us several times, I feel that it is so not fair. **Because we were educated and raised in this way. It was a good thing not to know about our own islands. That's how we were raised.**
>
> (Interview recorded on January 15th, 2021)

Language learners who are trying to become new speakers have an emotional fear of speaking their languages because they perceive that they are not good enough. As the above excerpt shows, community members tend to show these emotions when they are told that they are not taught about the language and about the island. By being blamed for not knowing their own heritage, it makes it even more difficult for potential new speakers to speak and learn their heritage language. Not only native speakers, but also new speakers' voices should be included. To encourage their linguistic repertoire to grow is a process of emancipation and decolonization. Based on Yaeyaman and Ryukyuan epistemology, there is a need to develop a safe space for compassionate listening practice.

As previous studies of other contexts of minoritized languages show, new speakers experience emotional transformation (Pujolar and Puigdevall 2015; Walsh 2019) since language is related to who we are and how we position ourselves in the world. Emotions matter because the prospect of losing who we are as a result of language loss is an emotional experience (e.g. Shimoji 2017). Understanding why people in the Yaeyama islands do not wish to speak Yaeyaman languages also entails understanding its history of layers of colonization. Memories of *jintōzei* [head taxation based on height of people] and forced relocation by the Ryukyu kingdom, are still being told during my *sanshin* music practices and on other occasions. Older generations have experienced double colonization with the Ryukyus and then with Japan. Immersing myself in these memories with older generations means understanding *our* history, and why ancestors took efforts *not* to transmit a "backward" culture or language to us children. These experiences should never be taken for granted by researchers who come to the language community. By coming to do research *on* local indigenous languages, rather than *with* or *for* indigenous language communities, researchers could possibly do harm to its community members. These researchers' ethics need to be carefully examined according to principles laid out by the communities in question.

Conclusion and Implications

Without understanding the meaning of the language learning process, researchers may hinder new speakers from acquiring their heritage language. I identified the following three issues: (1) Linguistic purism and compromise, (2) Linguistic insecurity of new speakers, (3) Ethical principles. Essentialist views of indigenous languages and linguistic purism seem to hinder new speakers' motivation to learn and speak their heritage languages. The problem of linguistic insecurity can interfere with intergenerational communication between new learners/speakers and traditional/native speakers. In addition, although documentary linguistic research has "a concern for supporting speakers and communities who wish to retrieve, revitalise or maintain their languages" (Austin 2016, 148), language documentation often prioritizes the "best" speakers, and so could add to the insecurity of "lesser" speakers. Linguistic insecurity, among speakers who are labelled as "semi" or "rusty" does not help new speakers to learn their heritage language comfortably. The labeling of speakers who have partial knowledge as 'inadequate' does not encourage them to speak in their heritage languages. For this reason, we see that documenting variation and explicitly addressing speakers' perception of variation in endangered language communities is a necessary part of documentation and revitalisation efforts. With respect to documentation, this may include the recognition and documentation of regional dialectal varia-

tion but should also include the documentation of within-community variation. Including documentation of the variants that are used by young people within the speech community, for instance, is one way of validating those varieties. It is important for future research to include the the voices of people who have been marginalized. Also, I suggest that ethical principles on how to communicate with new speakers are important in encouraging comfortable learning of indigenous languages. New young learners experience pressure to act, speak, and think in ways that are affirmed by allies with essentialist and purist attitudes toward indigenous languages and cultures. In order to heal, grow and raise new speakers of Ryukyuan languages, I propose including compassionate listening practices into language learning programs.

The aforementioned issues relating to linguistic purism, linguistic insecurity of new speakers, and ethical principles for the language speakers should be addressed from the perspectives of community members. In order to do this, I suggest that compassionate listening practices should be integrated in language reclamation programs. Building on Diana L. Rehling's principles, I propose the following five principles for including compassionate listening practices in the context of fostering new speakers (see Rehling, 2008):

1. Avoid trying to fix the problem or giving advice unless specifically asked. Sometimes we just want to be listened to and have our feelings heard. When people feel hurt, we need empathy, rather than advice. It's natural to want to help and offer instant solutions to someone, but advice might not be what that person needs at that moment. For instance, when a community member is starting a study group for new speakers of Yaeyaman, it is important to listen to their needs and their ways of doing so. Sometimes researchers immediately criticized the way in which the group was initiated by the community, based on academic "expertise". Sometimes, it is important to listen to community members, rather than playing the role of "expert." Although people might appreciate the advice, this dynamic could ultimately lead people in the community to abandon initiatives they are trying to start.

2. Be patient if people cannot explain their feelings right away. This is relevant to listening practice within a circle of learners. Sometimes it takes time for a person to find words to express what he or she is feeling. Learning indigenous language requires emotional transformation. Silence and patience from teachers or traditional speakers helps people give voice to their feelings. When we start discovering our heritage and our language through study groups or through language learning activities, learners experience emotions. These emotions need to be listened to and the listener must be patient enough to let the person express their feelings when they are ready.

3. As a listener, do not take other peoples' feelings or expressions personally. They are his or her feelings and don't necessarily match your own. Compassion means accepting others' feelings for what they are (Berlant 2004). Thus, as a listener, we also need to be aware that these expressions of emotion are not necessarily intended to criticize individuals. It is important not to take these emotions as personal criticism.

4. Do not feel attacked when a speaker/leaner expresses feelings that concern you. Give speakers and learners a safe space to express their feelings. Sometimes it helps to ask, "Can I have a safe space right now? I need to talk about something that bothers me." When Yaeyaman community members have been critiqued for what they have started, this principle is important.

5. Use reflective listening, a technique that makes the other person feel understood and cared for. When you say, "I understand that you are hurting right now," or "I hear that this is a difficult time for you," your student/teacher/colleague/partner will be encouraged to tell you more about the problem. If you say, "I can't understand why you feel that way," or "that doesn't make sense to me," they will shut down.

The process of language maintenance, reclamation and revitalisation depends on communication between different generations of speakers (intergenerational transmission, Fishman 1991). I suggest these above five principles of compassionate listening could work in language reclamation contexts. The process of decolonization needs empathy, effort, patience, reflective listening and a safe space. The compassionate practice with validating voices and negative/positive feelings of new speakers might help them grow their identities and linguistic repertoire comfortably. Researchers, social actors, practitioners and educators, including myself, are encouraged to listen to the voices of new speakers' as well as native speakers voices and their emotional change and transformation. This practice of compassionate listening might also relate to ethical concerns.

To conclude, language revitalisation and reclamation is a process of decolonization, which is not easy. It takes time to change the dominance of certain languages, because this process of change is not only about the language itself, but connected to attitudes, pain, and emotional transformation. There is no practical way of decolonization, and decolonization should not be used as a metaphor: applying compassionate listening in order to promote language reclamation in Yaeyama allows the project at hand to stay focused on an essential component of colonialism in the geographies in question (see also Tuck and Yang, 2012). Rather, I used indigenous methodologies as a framework to bring voices of new speakers of indigenous linguistic varieties spoken on Yaeyama to show that the process of decolonization is rather messy and not linear process. It is an overlapping, complicated, meaningful and long process. When I encounter challenges, I read other work by indigenous researchers, which usually helps (Smith et al. 2019). There is a need to improve education and professional training, focusing on listening skills such as compassionate listening for speakers of the Yaeyaman language. There is also a need to recognize the multiple linguistic, cultural and intercultural resources that exist in the land which will enable individuals from communities to construct pluralistic indigenous identities that are compatible with the modern world. Only once multicultural and multilingual educational policy becomes based upon the emotional experiences of new speakers, will indigenous learners of these varieties be enabled to construct their identities as new speakers.

Endnotes

[1] *Sïma* or *suma* refers not only to a community or village, but also a home (Karimata, 2013: 25).

[2] The term Indigenous is often contested in the Ryukyus.

[3] The Shimakutuba [community language] Center on Okinawa Island initiated the project. In 2020, they initiated a proficiency test for linguistic varieties spoken in the south of Okinawa Island. For the Yaeyaman varieties, people have been asked to help the center and currently we are in the process of making an exam for Yaeyaman. (Interview, on 26th March).

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multiethnica
Box 521 · 751 20 Uppsala · Sweden
Home page: www.valentin.uu.se
Email: multiethnica@valentin.uu.se
HUGO VALENTIN CENTRUM
Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie': Child Perspectives on Adult Second Language Learning within Mohawk Communities

JASMINE R. JIMERSON

This article focuses on the youth perspectives within the families of Ionkwahron–kha'onhátie' (we are becoming fluent), a grassroots Kanien'kéha (Mohawk Language) initiative of furthering advancement of proficient adult second language (L2) learners. The grassroots language initiative Ionkwahronkha'onhatie' seeks to address current challenges L2 speakers face in building and maintaining relationships with current first language speakers in an effort to raise a new generation of first language (L1) speakers. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' works to create and maintain speaking environments within and beyond immersion schools, cultural spaces, and home environments. This study seeks to answer the question: How do children perceive adult language learning practices and speaking relationships? The data reveals that children did not perceive language learning as an individual responsibility, but rather as an intergenerational and communal commitment to knowledge sharing. Children indirectly impacted by adult language learning perceive themselves as a valuable part of the learning community, as beneficiaries, and as the next generation of speakers who will pass on the collective knowledge of their ancestors.

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' (we are becoming fluent) is an innovative grassroots Kanien'kéha (Mohawk Language) initiative centering first language (L1) elder speakers, while supporting advanced second language (L2) speakers to create their own employment opportunity centering their individual interests and expertise. Ionkwaronkha'onhátie's summer intensive Akenhnhàke 2020 revealed unexpected findings which prompted Ionkwaronkha'onhátie' to dig deeper into how children perceived adult Kanien'kéha learning.

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' was developed by advanced L2 speakers who have graduated from adult Kanien'kéha immersion programs. Kanien'kéha, Onwehonwehnéha and Mohawk, will be terms that are used interchangeably throughout this paper when referring to the Mohawk language. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' exists throughout various Mohawk communities and extends throughout all spaces where Kanien'kéha can be spoken. Ionkwaronkha'onhátie's goal is to create and maintain full-immersion settings by: (1) Centering elders and L1 speakers; (2) supporting L2 speakers to continue to develop into advanced proficient speakers; (3) continuing to develop and provide a network of L2 speakers in order to prioritize language and knowledge transmission within these groups.

Mohawk communities have demonstrated great success from preschool through adult immersion programs (Maracle 2011, 83-94). As a result of these programs came Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' which was founded by graduates of

adult immersion programs who recognized a need to further support a population of current L2 students and graduates of adult language immersion programs. Ionkwaronkha'onhátie' piloted a summer project titled *Akenhnhà:ke 2020,* where second language speakers were able to further their language proficiency by immersing themselves with L1 speakers in a wide range of independent and group language learning and speaking activities. This project was the first of its kind, offering an opportunity for Kanien'kéha L2 learners and speakers to explore and develop their own employment opportunity, beyond the field of teaching, while employing L1 speakers to assist with their development.

The Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants designed their own individual learning goals. Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants utilized various resources for learning which included: Speaking to L1 speaking elders, listening and dissecting recordings, and creating social relationships across various Kanien'kéha speaking communities. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' documented Akenhnhà:ke 2020 by collecting data such as recordings, L2 habit trackers, youth perspectives, lexicon entries (google sheets), and exit interviews to be used as learning resources.

For program development and funding report purposes, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie's program evaluator completed an evaluation to measure progress and success of proposed goals. As part of the evaluation, 1:1 interviews were also completed of the Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants. In doing so, the data collected by Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' began to reflect how Akenhnhà:ke 2020 had made a positive impact on the youth living within the homes of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants. As a result of the collection of the evaluation data of the Akenhnhà:ke 2020 program, the following research question emerged: How do children perceive adult language learning practices and speaking relationships? Ionkwahronkha'onhátie's program evaluator then began interviewing the children within Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participant households.

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' began to further investigate whether their work aligned with pre-existing Kanien'kéha language revitalization research. Stacey (2016) authored *Ientsitewate'nikonhraié:ra'te Tsi Nonkwá: ti Ne Á: se Tahatikonhsontóntie (We Will Turn Our Minds There Once Again, To the Faces Yet To Come),* and Green (2017) authored *Pathways to creating Onkwehonwehnéha speakers at Six Nations of The Grand River Territory*. Both authors outlined the current best practices and needs for Kanien'kéha L2 acquisition, however, neither Stacey nor Green addressed the importance of youth perspectives on Kanien'kéha language revitalization. Youth have generally been overlooked by Indigenous-language research in the past, this has further contributed to language endangerment (Wyman et al. 2013, 2). However, Gomashie (2019, 158) identified the importance of an assessment of intergenerational transmission and the strategies being implemented by parents or caregivers within Mohawk Communities. This study attempts to fulfill this suggestion, by offering youth perspectives on the strategies being implemented by parents and family members who participate in Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' across various Mohawk Communities. This research was instrumental in addressing the gaps in the literature and supporting the research question.

The data collected from Akenhnhà:ke 2020 reflected the importance of youth perspectives on language learning and was supported through the literature in the discussion of language learning best practices. Interviews were transcribed by the evaluator during the interview, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie's core team members

analyzed the responses recognizing three themes. Three primary themes emerged from the data, aligning with Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' goals. The themes identified within this study include: (1) Children perceive language learning as an intergenerational commitment to knowledge sharing; (2) children perceive language learning as a communal commitment to knowledge sharing; and (3) children perceive themselves as a valuable part of the learning community, benefiting as the next generation of speakers who will pass on the collective knowledge of their ancestors, to both future generations as well as those living generations that have come before them, but do not speak the language.

Literature Review

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' Tsi Teionkhikahnerátie' can be translated to "We are becoming speakers as they are looking to us /observing us". Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' represents an intergenerational community of learners coming together to become fluent speakers of Kanien'kéha. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' values ancestral knowledge and collective thought. Both ancestral knowledge and the future generations are what guides the people forward. It is believed that the ancestors are always observing, and similarly the children look to us. Therefore, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' understood their important role as adults within an intergenerational system continuing the livelihood of the language, culture, and the people. According to McCarty et. al (2006, 44) Indigenous language revitalization is concerned not only with reclaiming the Native language as a gift but with reasserting linguistic self-determination as an inherent human right. Like many adult L2 learners Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' seeks to reclaim their indigenous language so as to heal speaking relationships with their children, family, and community members. According to Reyhner and Johnson (2015), "Indigenous language immersion schools are becoming a key part of the post-colonial healing process that seeks to strengthen native families and communities" (157). According to (Barker et al., 2017), "health and social inequities are being remedied because they provide Indigenous cultural identity and connectedness as an intervention" (209). Through language reclamation, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants are strengthening their cultural identity and therefore overall intergenerational wellness.

Immersion beyond school

Immersion programs are unquestionably one of the most successful efforts for indigenous language revitalization today (Maracle 2011, 83-94). Many Indigenous communities look to immersion schooling due to the rarity of Indigenous students entering school as proficient speakers of their ancestral language (McIvor 2017, 4). However, immersion schooling is not limited to non-proficient speakers, immersion schools can also reinforce language use, and build an understanding of the language for proficient speakers.

Immersion classrooms have been found to help learners attain new vocabulary words they may not have otherwise been exposed to for various reasons.. Learners are not always exposed to new vocabulary in a natural speaking environment. Laufer (1998) suggests that Immersion classroom instruction can optimize vocabulary expansion (265). Immersion classrooms often utilize exercises and tasks to teach new vocabulary. According to Laufer (1998): "The learner can often convey meaning without using these words, and if not 'pushed' to use them, they may never be activated and therefore remain in passive vocabulary" (267). Because of

these factors, language instruction can be beneficial not only for non-proficient learners, but proficient speakers as well.

Kanien'kéha immersion programs are well known for their success in producing a new generation of adult and child proficient speakers (Maracle 2011, 83–94). Language revitalization efforts in kahnawà:ke began as a school based initiative, which required teacher training that began adult immersion programs (Stacey, 2016, 11). In the past, immersion programming was primarily focused on elementary immersion schools. More recent studies demonstrated the effectiveness of adult immersion programs. According to Stacey (2016), "the adult immersion program has successfully changed the community focus from a primarily elementary school based approach to a whole community approach for language revitalization" (89). Results from a study conducted by Green (2017) reported, "0% of participants of this study attended elementary immersion schools, and 83% of second language learners have become advanced speakers through their involvement in adult immersion programs" (43).

The shift from the elementary school based approach, to the whole community approach was critical to address the current challenges that elementary immersion schools are facing today. Upon entering immersion schools most children have little or no previous speaking knowledge nor do they have familial support for acquiring Kanien'kéha (Green 2017, 76–77). "There is thus a time 'delay' in their ability to speak the language of instruction at a level high enough to allow for meaningful interaction in the classroom and at the school. This is the second language learner delay" (Green 2017, 76–77). "For bilingual and revitalization-immersion education to be successful and sustainable it also requires parents who understand the value of this type of schooling and are ideologically committed to it" (McIvor 2017, 11). Families must demonstrate their value and commitment by not only enrolling their children in immersion education programs, but furthermore supporting language use within the home. (McIvor 2017, 10)

However, McIvor also reports those advocating for endangered languages recommend that efforts should be focused on family, and community-based language, as opposed to schools (McIvor 2017, 11). In order to shift the focus from schools to familial and community learning, there is a need for adult learners to commit to increasing their speaking proficiency.

Recognizing the importance of making committed individual strides for advancing language proficiency outside of immersion programs, allows for a more natural learning environment for future generations. According to a study conducted by Stacey (2016), in order to raise children in Kanien'kéha it is imperative for second language speakers to become highly proficient speakers. The survival of the language is dependent on both, reversing the language shift through language revitalization efforts as well as maintaining the language through continued use (Fernando et al. 2010, 49). Adults who are committed to language revitalization, are better able to provide children with the values, skills, and environment to maintain language use in the future.

Mother tongues are developed and fostered within relationships. This occurs prior to, and independent of the child attending school (Fishman 1994, 88). Students whose language is nurtured within the home are more likely to willingly engage in conversation with friends, and able to participate in higher level discussions within the classroom setting, having the ability to aid the teacher in demonstrating conversational language use for learners (Green 2017, 78). According to

Mithun (2015, 39), language transcends mere sets of structural parameters, and language is the manner in which speakers choose to articulate their ideas as a communicative function to meet their social needs.

The Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' initiative

As part of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie's goals, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' utilizes Kanien'kéha within natural speaking environments in order to obtain as much knowledge as possible from elder L1 speakers to raise and support the future generation of speakers. Stacey (2016, 51) suggested "future planning for growing this support network must intentionally highlight the role of first language speakers and foster a strengthened community of second language speakers". Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' works together to create and support the advancement of individual learners, by providing diverse social settings. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participant evaluations reported that growing this support network allowed participants to feel more confident to engage in conversations and learning spaces.

Stacey (2016, 64) identified the importance of developing Kanien'kéha speaking relationships, for when speaking relationships are created and maintained L2 speakers more often utilize Kanien'kéha within all domains. Furthermore, utilizing the target language within the everyday environment is a way to avoid language being perceived as a cultural enactment, where speaking responsibilities become isolated in cultural spaces and known only to knowledge holders (Kaartinen 2020, 128). Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' achieved its goal to connect and expand the spaces where Kanien'kéha was being learned by providing speaking opportunities for learners to utilize Kanien'kéha in any space where language can be spoken. According to House (2016, 60) "language and culture is something that can be learned, taught, and practiced within all environments. It is not limited to a certain space or time". In order to maintain a diverse network of speakers, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' often met during school breaks, nights, and weekends allowing for learners and speakers from different immersion programs, occupations, communities, dialects, and Nations to come together. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants shared their appreciation for having a support system of equal individuals with similar goals. The intensity and passion of the participants seemed to motivate the group as a whole. Participants expressed how having peers to talk with and sharing their excitement for their work increased their proficiency and motivation within all domains. Creating a supporting intergenerational network of speakers is critical for the vitality of language.

Methods

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' identified five youth that were indirectly impacted by Akenhnhà:ke 2020; having been family members living within the household of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants. Upon completion of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' summer intensive, Akenhnhà:ke 2020 youth participants were interviewed by the Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' evaluator in January 2021. Because children were family members of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants, a blank space was left in the interview questions throughout this paper to protect the identity of the children. Five children voluntarily participated in this study. Youth participants (children) of this study will be identified as Child 001-005. The evaluator transcribed youth participant responses at the time of the interview, and a cohort of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' core team members identified themes based on responses to the following interview questions:

1. Does your ____ (family member) like speaking Kanien'kéha?
2. What does your _____(family member) do?
3. When do you hear your ___ (family member) speak Kanien'kéha?
4. Does your _____'s (family member) friends speak Mohawk?
5. Why is it important for you to speak Mohawk?
6. Do you think you will speak Mohawk when you grow up?
7. Who will you speak Kanien'kéha to when you grow up?
8. How does your_____ (family member) know how to speak?
9. How do you learn Mohawk?
10. How does your _____ (family member) learn Mohawk in the summertime?

Each child interviewed for this study was a same-household family member of a Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participant. Child participants ranged between the age of five and fifteen. Each participant of Akenhnhà:ke 2020 was an employee of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie', in addition to their jobs as Mohawk Language immersion teachers. Each child reported that their family member worked as Kanien'kéha Immersion teachers, however not one child reported that their family member worked for Ionkwahronkha'onhátie'.

Results and Discussion

The following section will discuss the processes of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' Akenhnhà:ke 2020 in greater detail, to further support and discuss the literature and the results of this study. The discussion will be organized by the three primary themes that emerged from the data; (1) Children perceive language learning as an intergenerational commitment to knowledge sharing; (2) Children perceive language learning as a communal commitment to knowledge sharing; and (3) Children perceive themselves as a valuable part of the learning community, benefiting as the next generation of speakers who will pass on the collective knowledge of their ancestors, to both future generations as well as those living generations that have come before them, but do not speak the language.

(1) Children perceive language as an intergenerational commitment to knowledge sharing

Stacey (2016, 42) reported, "When second language speakers were asked to share the most helpful resources to enhance their language skills after completing the adult immersion program, they identified other speakers and elders as their most valued resources". Centering and prioritizing relationships with L1 speaking elders is a core value of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie'. When establishing a space for elder L1 speakers to take center, it is important to identify willing L1 elders and establish roles. One example for establishing roles between L1 speaking elders and L2 speakers is to encourage elders to share their perspectives and experiences through storytelling, when this happens younger people are taught to show their elders respect by listening intently (Alexie et al. 2009, 14). Establishing roles within conversations with L1 speakers was a challenge for Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants. As L2 learners, participants expressed that it was difficult to gauge when it was appropriate to talk and when it was appropriate to listen. While Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' was proud of their ability to acknowledge elders and provide monetary honorariums for their time, there was an expressed desire to become more self-sustainable and create living relationships with elders. Specifically to explore non-monetary exchanges in line with onkwehón:we values and practices.

This feedback also suggests a need for support by providing opportunities to nurture closer relationships to our first language speakers (Stacey 2016, 64). Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants reported that while they learned about interaction skills with elders, they still need to acquire more skills and practice in regards to working, relating to and speaking with elder L1 speakers. It has become evident that these intergenerational relationships and interrelated interaction skills have not been nurtured over the past few generations or maybe this is the cultural aspect that used to develop this skill.

In addition to elder visits via zoom, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants utilized recordings and community resources such as the All Kanien'kéha Radio Talk Show archives. Stacey (2016, 45) reports that the All Kanien'kéha Talk Show (a community radio source) is regarded by L2 learners as a unique resource, that allows learners the opportunity to listen to first language speakers have conversations on a vast amount of subjects. "The show calls attention to the vital role of first language speakers in providing opportunities for rich language experiences for the growing population of second language speakers" (Stacey 2016, 45).

Due to COVID-19, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' had to adjust the Akenhnhà:ke 2020 summer project to take place online, thus Zoom was utilized as a means to conduct first language speaker visits and team meetings. According to Hermes et al. (2016, 287) "Intergenerational communication drives language revitalization, making these relationships our first purpose. Communication then easily follows. Technology should be used to support this community-building activity". Although meeting on zoom was not the initial nor ideal form of gathering for Ionkwahronkha'onhátie', it brought learners and speakers together from different communities, age groups and proficiency levels, right into the homes of participants. "No matter what the tool, communities—that is, relationships between people who want to communicate in the Indigenous language—are the central motivating force in revitalization and learning a language. Although technological tools are a means to establish, support, or continue these relationships" (Hermes and King, 2013). Getting L1 speakers to utilize technological methods of meeting has been a past challenge, but COVID-19 quarantine measures encouraged L1 speakers to reach out for socialization in ways they would not have prior to the pandemic.

Through observing family member's study habits, children of this study identified the importance of both listening and speaking in order to learn the target language. Children seemed to have perceived "listening", such as listening to zoom sessions, recorded stories and conversations, activities that they felt contributed to their family members' learning. Child 002 explains how her family member learns Kanien'kéha by stating: "he listens to recordings of old people talking" [Child 002]. Children also recognized the importance of creating speaking relationships in Kanien'kéha. Child 003 explains how her family member learns kanien'kéha as: "She's calling her friends in Kanien'kéha" [Child 003].

All five children of this study mentioned Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' weekly Zoom speaker visits when asked how their family member learns Mohawk; all three children expressed their positive feelings about the speaker visits. Child 004 shares: "He watches videos of people doing Mohawk, he does it a lot, I like it" [Child 004]. Furthermore, Two out of five children of this study expressed how they are beneficiaries of their family member's learning and particularly these two children seemed to view themselves as beneficiaries of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' weekly Zoom speaker visits. Child 001 expressed: "Well she was mostly around it,

she didn't work a lot but she tried her best to teach me a lot of it so she would have someone to speak to, she would get on language calls with a whole bunch of people. I think that it was cool, and I think that she could really make it far by using the language" [Child 001]. Child 005 responded, "Because she had friends who could speak, I can tell she is getting better because I listen to her all the time, because her friends tell me that she is getting to be a better speaker and I'm always watching her" [Child 005]. Children of this study were not only aware of the effort of adult language learners, but children of this study also expressed their value for the work that adult language learners are doing by perceiving each generation as a beneficiary of language revitalization.

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants are all second language speakers, when children were asked "How does your _____ know how to speak, all but one child reported that Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants had gone to an adult immersion program, studied, made friendships in Kanien'kéha, called friends, visited with elders, and taught in immersion schools. However, Child 004 was too young to remember when her family member attended an adult immersion program, so her response was, "He mostly likes...probably just reads" [Child 004]. One child who had recently witnessed a family member attend an adult immersion program suggested, "You should learn to speak when you're little, with your sister" [Child 004]. This response could suggest that children recognize that language is better learned within the natural environment.

Children expressed the desire to speak with their family members who are not speakers of Kanien'kéha. "I would like it if all my siblings would speak to each other" [Child 002]. Child 003 responded: "My father, because he doesn't know Kanien'kéha [Child 003]. Not only were the children interested in passing on the language to future generations, but they also expressed the desire to speak with their living grandparents, all of which were historically the first generation of non-speakers within their family line. One child replied, "My tota (Grandmother) who is learning, I don't really have a lot of people who can speak in my family" [Child 001]. Another child responded, "My toto (Great-grandmother), my grandma and my papa" [Child 005].

When asked "Do you think you will speak mohawk when you grow up?", four out of five children responded "yes". Of the four children who responded "yes", one child elaborated explaining, "Yes! That's the only language my kids are going to know [Child 005]. The one child who had not responded "yes" to the question, stated, "No, I don't know how to speak mohawk" [Child 003]. However, when the interviewer translated the sentence into Kanien'kéha, the child then responded "Hen!" [Child 003] which can be translated to "yes!" in Kanien'kéha. The difference in Child 003's response could suggest that when language is spoken about within her environment, it is done so in Kanien'kéha. It is important to again note that Child 003 is the only child of this study whose family member became a speaker of Kanien'kéha during the child's infancy.

Children of this study expressed the reason they want to learn and speak is because they have a desire to pass the language on to their future children. "I want to teach my children how to speak Mohawk [Child 002]. Another child explained, "I want to speak because I want my kids to be fluent, so that there will be more first language speakers when I grow up" [Child 005]. The responses reveal that children view language learning as an intergenerational commitment for knowledge sharing.

All the children reported that learning Mohawk happens in a Kanien'kéha speaking environment, in order to learn mohawk, you must listen, speak, and study the language. In order to put yourself in a Kanien'kéha speaking environment, children recommended the following: "Go to immersion school, do a lot of homework" [Child 003], "it's easier to be around it so you can hear it and speak it" [Child 001]. "Listen to the language, listen to old recordings and listen to old people speak" [Child 002].

Child 005 explains her perception of the process for adult second language learning. "You have to go to school, then you go to a first language speaker, then after that you just say it to your kids, and then they will teach it to their kids, and they will teach it to their kids. You have to read books, and books, and listen to it being spoken on the radio" [Child 005]. The advanced learning phase as laid out here by child 005, supports child 004's previously stated response to how her family member knows how to speak, saying: "He mostly likes...probably just reads" [Child 004]. Based on youth perspectives of adult language learning, reading and listening is how learners maintain and increase language proficiency.

Despite four out of five children in this study who attend Mohawk immersion schools, their responses to the question "How do you learn Mohawk?" suggest that learning Kanien'kéha happens between generations and within home. One child responded, "By my mom" [Child 003]. Furthermore, another explained, "Just like my dad… you copy what I say, you can just say what I say, because my dad has been teaching me. He just says it, that's how he teaches me [Child 004]. These results suggest that children perceive language is acquired between intergenerational speaking relationships.

(2) Children perceive language as a communal commitment to knowledge sharing

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants recognized the need for creating opportunities to further advance their proficiency beyond adult language immersion programs into the communities. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' was founded due to the lack of employment opportunities for advanced Kanien'kéha outside of education programs. "When apathy overtakes language renewal efforts, it is time to stop, reflect and explore new ways to re-engage or re-energize the community" (Romero-Little et al. 2012, 100). Founders of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' recognized a need across Mohawk communities and organized a solution.

Children of this study reported their observations of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants and Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' processes. Although the children were not informed that the interview was seeking to gather youth perspectives pertaining to Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' or language, activities around language learning and teaching showed up in every child's answers. Child 002 gave an example of her family members daily routine explaining, "He goes to work, he is a teacher, so he goes to work to teach language to adults and then he comes home and studies and takes a break and plays with his child, cooks supper, and goes on zoom and after that he gets his child ready for bed and they go to bed" [Child 002]. Child 005 expressed, "My mom does a lot of work, she is a teacher and she's also a student at the same time. She has to teach and learn homework, she just studies and studies all day, she studies on her computer and write" [Child 005].

One thing that really stood out to the evaluator was how children seemed to recognize the duality of learning and teaching, the importance of maintaining a

daily routine, while also balancing learning and teaching by doing things that they enjoy in order to maintain mental and physical health.

Child 004 expressed that their family members enjoyed reading about various topics of interest [Child 004]. Child 003 replied, "she always goes on trails, she drinks coffee a lot and does reading and goes on her computer and relax, and she likes her reading light. She teaches big kid's games, and she rides her bike, and relaxes her mind" [Child 003]. Finally, Child001's answer illustrates their awareness of the important work their family members are doing: "She's saving the language, she makes sure we're healthy" [Child 001].

Children responded that their family member uses Kanien'kéha in a variety of places and situations, ranging from family and friends to the workplace or with elders: "Everyday! Mostly with me and mostly on her calls" [Child 001], "When he's talking to an older person" [Child 002], "At work, in Kahnawake at home even when you're calling your friends [Child 003], "In the car" [Child 004], "When she's at work in a meeting, when she's teaching my family on zoom also when she's talking to her friends" [Child 005]. Participants of Akenhnhà:ke 2020 speak Kanien'kéha every single day and within various speaking environments such as: the home environment, with elders, at work (Kanien'kéha Immersion school setting), and with friends. Child 005 responded "When she's teaching my family" [Child 005], demonstrating that participants are also speaking with their family members who are not yet speakers of Kanien'kéha.

Children reported that their family member spends a great deal of time listening, especially listening to Kanien'kéha: "Usually in the car she puts on all Kanien'kéha radio talk show" [Child 001], "she listens to people talking about Kanien'kéha and more Kanien'kéha" [Child 005], "she listens to Kanien'kéha" [Child 003]. In addition to listening to Kanien'kéha, children also reported that Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants spend a great deal of time listening to podcasts. Child 005 stated, "She listens to podcasts and more podcasts, about how to exercise your brain and how to... different things like science..." [Child 005]. Similarly, child 002 stated, "He is constantly listening to podcasts" [Child 002].

Near the beginning of the project, an immediate action item was identified by Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' to assist participants in creating a plan for effectively meeting their individual goals. As a result, a written form titled Akenhnhà:ke 2020 Goals, Plans and Evaluation was created for each participant, all of the plans ended up recognizing their personal goals that demonstrated a communal commitment to knowledge sharing. A follow-up interview was conducted by Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' to help assess each participant's progress toward reaching each of their goals. Common needs were identified based on the responses collected from the Akenhnhà:ke 2020 Goals, Plans, and Evaluation form and follow-up interviews.

In response to the common needs identified by participants; Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' constructed two main resources using Google sheets, the first being a habit tracker and the second being a personal lexicon spreadsheet. Both resources were made to assist participants through their learning experience to document and assess their own proficiency and exposure to language. Furthermore, this type of documentation could also be utilized as a resource for other learners. According to Hermes et al. (2016, 278), language documentation includes archiving the defined language practices and organization of large amounts of data. This typically results in products that are useful in language teaching and learning practices, such as diction-

Table 1. Ro'nikonhkatste's Lexicon.

Date	Word	Loose Translation	Literal Translation	Context	Category	Speaker	Time Stamp
02-19-92	Enhseniotka'we'	You will come through the snow		How deep the snow used to be	Akohserà:ke	Skawen:nati Montour	01:10
02-19-92	Ken'k na'tekaianaka:rons ne iohni:ron	The hard packed path was narrow	The hard path was just this wide	How deep the snow used to be	Akohserà:ke	Skawen:nati Montour	01:24
02-19-92	Ensehsathahatewahte'	You'll miss the path with your step	You will mis the path	How deep the snow used to be	Akohserà:ke	Skawen:nati Montour	01:30
02-19-92	To:k niiorehko:wa oniehto:kon ienhtshi:nen'ne'	Your leg will sink deep in the snow	So far in the snow your leg will descend	How deep the snow used to be	Akohserà:ke	Skawen:nati Montour	01:33
02-19-92	Wa'ethitsiiohton:ni'	We made them weak	We made them weak	Todays generation has it easy	Akohserà:ke	Skawen:nati Montour	02:19
02-19-92	Wakathsineko'tawenhra:ton tsi na'teiohses	It's passed ankle deep	It is over my ankle how deep it is	How deep the snow used to be	Akohserà:ke	Awenhrathon Deer	02:59
02-19-92	Iahontera'nentahsia'te'	It came right off	It come unattached + Intensifier	Skating with mock-skates	Akohserà:ke; Skating	Skawen:nati Montour	03:32
02-19-92	Enhskwe:ni' ki' enhsetshen:ri' ka' nentehsie:ra'te' akta nenhsohetste'	You can find a way to come close	You can find a direction to pass by close	Skating with mock-skates	Akohserà:ke; Skating	Skawen:nati Montour	04:42
02-19-92	She:kon ienskotáhrhoke'	I'll talk about it again	I will hook onto it again	Resurface a previous topic	Idiomatic Expression	Awenhrathon Deer	04:48

02-19-92	Tsi nitkakwénion	The best that can be done; Make-do		Playing hockey with makeshift equipment	Akohserà:ke; Hockey	Awenhrathon Deer	05:18
02-19-92	Enhata'seraien:tonhwe'	he'll hack away with an axe	?	Finding a stick to use for hockey	Akohserà:ke; Hockey	Awenhrathon Deer	05:20
02-19-92	Ion'swen'totsenhtahkhwa'	A coal-stove shovel	It is used to scoop coal	Playing hockey with makeshift equipment	Akohserà:ke; Hockey	Awenhrathon Deer	05:58
02-19-92	Iah the: teioio'ta:ton	It didn't stop nothing	Nothing hindered it	Playing hockey with makeshift equipment	Akohserà:ke; Hockey	Skawen:nati Montour	06:06
02-19-92	Ientenirihohara:ko'	We will choose to speak about it		Topic shift	Idiomatic Expression	Skawen:nati Montour	06:31
02-19-92	Rahwe:tia	Good aim; a marksman			Actors	Awenhrathon Deer	08:20
02-19-92	Tho: ki' nahe shikarihwatatiene	It's been that way since				Awenhrathon Deer	09:00
02-19-92	Kanatahkwèn:ke	A previous settlement near La Prairie	Where the town was moved		Old Words; Places	Skawen:nati Montour	09:30
02-19-92	A'nowaráhne	A location between Kanatahkwen:ke and Saint-Catherine	At the turtle		Old Words; Places	Awenhrathon Deer	11:06

aries, narratives, and recorded conversations. These resources were designed to not only assist participants in organizing their notes and resources but were also designed as a way for Ionkwaronkha'onhátie' to assess the quality and quantity of participant language exposure. The personal lexicon spreadsheet was a tool designed to gather the quality and quantity of language exposure, by responsibly collecting lexical entries and linking the source from where the lexicon entry came from, such as the speaker's name and the voice recordings. The habit tracker was a tool designed for participants to log the strategies and daily habits impacting their personal language proficiency.

The versatility of the lexicons (see table 1) not only allowed Ionkwaronkha'onhátie' to track the collected words of the participants, but also allowed various innovative ways to support individual learning and future sharing of methods used by participants. Some participants utilized the lexicons to document words from recordings, some participants worked in teams (as well as, individually) using the screen share feature on zoom to input and edit data in the lexicon during speaker visits, while others entered data from their personal notes at a later date.

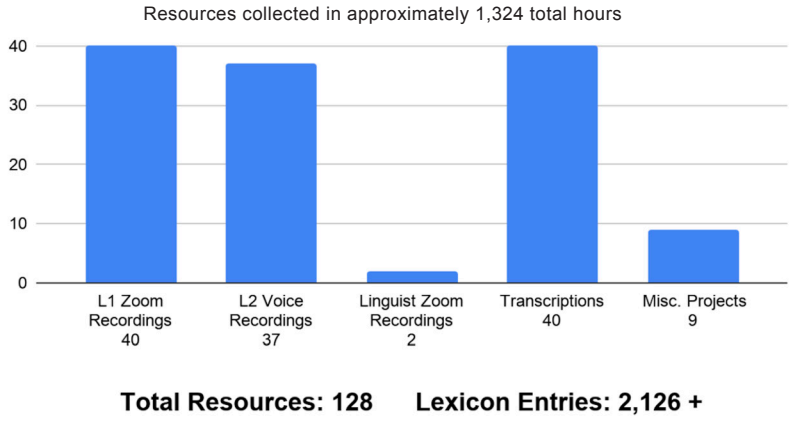
The words and phrases collected by participants were identified as less-frequently used words and phrases. While all language is valuable, the particular words and phrases collected by participants are valuable because L2 learners don't frequently find themselves in the context that elicits particular language from our L1 speakers. Collectively, over 2,126 words were entered into the lexicons of 5 Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants.

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants also took a special interest in investigating how to increase learner proficiency and productivity, while contributing to and utilizing research based practices. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' is careful not to invest time into recreating or creating resources that are not useful to life long learners and generations to come, such as beginner language learning software, apps, and curriculum. Rather, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' focuses energy investing in the fluency and capacity of learners and speakers. According to Stacey (2016 , 44-45), there are well developed resources that utilized considerable time and resources to create, that are now outdated, no longer accessible, never been fully implemented and therefore cannot report any impact on Kanien'kéha language revitalization. "It is a high investment, with little return" (Stacey 2016, 44-45). To avoid over investing in the creation of resources, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' focused on collecting information while speaking with elders, studying recordings and inputting the data into a simple format that can be easily referenced, utilized, and converted if needed in the future. The documentation that Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants had done, served as resources for learning. According to McIvor (2017, 11), "Language documentation does not always produce accessible, usable materials for new learners or beginning speakers and rather uses valuable elder-speaker time and energy". Utilizing programs as simple as Google Drive allowed for participants to save and share their work in a responsible, accessible and timeless platform.

Although the use of these resources were encouraged, it was not required of participants. Participants took well to the personal lexicons for documenting words and phrases. Participants went as far as documenting the date, word, loose translation, literal translation, context, category, speaker, reference (a link to the digital reference), and notes.

Upon completion of Akenhnhà:ke 2020, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' then collected data from each participant. The quantitative amount of resources that were created and collected were reported in a graph found in the data section of this paper.

Figure 1. Akenhnhà:ke 2020 Data Chart.



The fieldwork and other activities focused on the collection of digital recordings, documentation and archiving of endangered language data through the preparation of a lexicon. These were initially intended to create resources for participants to utilize in their personal studies.

Data was collected and reported by the evaluator based upon the amount of recordings, words and documents collected by the 5 Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants. Data was collected and saved into a Google Drive which included 40 recorded zoom sessions with first language speakers, 2 recorded zoom sessions with a Linguist, 37 voice recordings of second language speakers, 2,126+ words were documented into online lexicons, and 40 transcribed documents were reported.

It is difficult to differentiate levels of proficiency at the advanced level. Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants varied in proficiency level and skills. Participants reported that the diversity of participants was beneficial for their learning because they had the opportunity to share their own knowledge, techniques and skills, as well as learn and adopt those of their peers. Participants also reported having to go through uncomfortable periods of personal growth while developing teamwork, communication, and problem solving skills. Although challenging, the participants of Akenhnhà:ke 2020 also expressed how much they enjoyed this new experience of meeting and connecting with a wide range of elders, speakers, and learners.

Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants recognized the importance of creating social relationships to expand their vernacular vocabulary. One finding that really stood out within the Akenhnhà:ke 2020 summer project, was how participants reported their appreciation of the sense of equality and humility within the cohort. By creating social relationships between one another, children within the homes of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' were exposed to vernacular in natural conversations. According to Green (2017), "Students must be taught how to speak both the vernacular and academic language of Onkwehonwehnéha in immersion settings and further - that the efforts at school must be mirrored by equal efforts at home by parents" (44). In an effort to create opportunities to advance adult learning, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' modeled positive Kanien'kéha speaking relationships for their children.

All the Children of this study reported that they would talk to their friends and family-members who are participants of Ionkwahronkha'onátie', as well as other family members when they grow up.

Child 004 spoke directly to the interviewee who is also a participant of Ionkwaronkha'onhátie' and stated, "You, because you used to come here to learn how to speak Mohawk so you can talk to me when I grow up"[Child 004]. Child 003 responded by saying; "I'm going to say hi to friends... they are almost like brother and sisters, but they're friends" [Child 003].

Based on these responses it is apparent the children recognized Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants as important members of their future language learning and speaking journey, therefore perceiving themselves as a beneficiary of Ionkwaronkha'onhátie'. Furthermore, they appeared to value the relationships between Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants, as well as their own relationship with Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants.

3) Children perceive themselves as a valuable part of the learning community

Upon completion of Akenhnhà:ke 2020, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' conducted exit interviews for program development purposes. The program evaluator then wrote an evaluation based on the responses. The unexpected findings from the Akenhnhà:ke 2020 Evaluation Report concluded that Akenhnhà:ke 2020 had made a significant impact within the homes of the participants and between extended familial relationships. According to the conclusions drawn from a study done by Meek (2007), "In sum, language socialization studies have repeatedly emphasized the fact that the ways in which children are socialized into and through language affect the ways in which they participate in (and imagine) their sociolinguistic environment" (36). Ionkwahronkha'onhatie' Participants were noticing that the children within their household were speaking Kanien'kéha more frequently, pretending to speak to elders during their play, and were mimicking good habits for learning.

Although the children were not informed that this interview was seeking to gather youth perspectives pertaining to language, activities around language learning and teaching showed up in every child's answers. Child 002 gave an example of her family members daily routine explaining, "He goes to work, he is a teacher, so he goes to work to teach language to adults and then he comes home and studies and takes a break and plays with his child, cooks supper, and goes on zoom and after that he gets his child ready for bed and they go to bed" [Child 002]. Child 005 expressed, "My mom does a lot of work, she is a teacher and she's also a student at the same time. She has to teach and learn homework, she just studies and studies all day, she studies on her computer and write" [Child 005].

One thing that really stood out to the evaluator was how children seemed to recognize the duality of learning and teaching, the importance of maintaining a daily routine, while also balancing learning and teaching by doing things that they enjoy in order to maintain mental and physical health.

Child 004 expressed that their family member enjoyed reading about various topics of interest [Child 004]. Child 003 replied, "she always goes on trails, she drinks coffee a lot and does reading and goes on her computer and relax and she likes her reading light. She teaches big kid's games, and she rides her bike, and relaxes her mind" [Child 003].

Finally, Child001's answer illustrates their awareness of the important work their family members are doing: "She's saving the language, she makes sure we're healthy" [Child 001].

Children reported that their family member spends a great deal of time listening, especially listening to Kanien'kéha: "Usually in the car she puts on all Kanien'kéha radio talk show" [Child 001], "she listens to people talking about Kanien'kéha and more Kanien'kéha" [Child 005], "she listens to Kanien'kéha" [Child 003]. In addition to listening to Kanien'kéha, children also reported that Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants spend a great deal of time listening to podcasts. Child 005 stated, "She listens to podcasts and more podcasts, about how to exercise your brain and how to... different things like science..." [Child 005]. Similarly, child 002 stated, "He is constantly listening to podcasts" [Child 002].

Through observation children recognized Ionkwahronkha'onhátie's values and habits for learning. Children of this study reported that Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants value continued learning by maintaining physical and mental health. Through language and cultural participation, Indigenous communities are improving the overall health and wellness of its members (Gonzalez et al. 2017, 190). As L2 learners Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants sought to improve their overall health in order to enhance their learning experience. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants enhanced their ability to learn through mental exercises that improve memory and mental skills, such as reading, eating, listening, exercising, meditating and more.

Although the ultimate goal for most participants is to pass the language on to the next generation, the initial goals of Akenhnhà:ke 2020 was not centered on the children. As Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants worked to increase their own proficiency they recognized the impact Akenhnhà:ke 2020 was having on their children and family members. However, it was difficult to determine how much advanced language was benefiting passive listeners. According to Fitzgerald (2017), "An understanding of what constitutes 'success' for language revitalization and reclamation will face challenges and be disharmonious when outsiders' ideas, rather than community goals, determine whether Indigenous language reclamation has been successful" (Fitzgerald 2017, 11). For this reason, it was important to gather and report youth perspectives, as well as document the work of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' Akenhnhà:ke 2020 participants.

Akenhnhà:ke 2020 Implications

Akenhnhà:ke 2020 was successful in meeting the three goals of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' by re-centering our elders and first language speakers to prioritize language and knowledge transmission, while supporting second language speakers, and providing and continuing to develop a network of speakers. The purpose of Akenhnhà:ke 2020 was to allow L2 participants the freedom and space to become more fluent in their language proficiency. Not only did participants meet the goal for increased proficiency, they have exceeded them. Participants of Akenhnhà:ke 2020 shared best practices for language acquisition while also gathering resources that they themselves prove to be effective, necessary and timeless. Green (2017) stated, "Learners that become speakers plan, monitor and assess their language learning; use technology to assist their learning; have a language mentor; use language learning strategies, and study at the same time as a family member or friend" (Green 2017, 46). Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' has reached its goal to create a network of support for speakers and learners bringing together people from various communities, proficiencies, and ages.

During the writing and reflection process preceding Akenhnhà:ke 2020, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' noticed a need to investigate the impact that Akenhnhà:ke 2020 had on the family and more importantly, the children indirectly affected by the work of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie'. Stacey (2016, 64) recognized the challenges L2 speakers are experiencing in effort to foster Kanien'kéha within the home. She further suggested that future planning should focus on solutions for supporting Kanien'kéha speaking homes. A strong foundation is built within the home through fostering relationships with elders in which our languages are valued. Family then becomes the centerpoint of vitality in our language reclamation (Chew 2015, 176). Although Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' did not specifically plan to create solutions for supporting Kanien'kéha speaking homes, Akenhnhà:ke 2020 appeared to experience a natural shift, from prioritizing individual learning to a more balanced focus. Through modeling good learning habits and bringing a community of advanced speakers and language into the homes via online gathering, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' appears to have supported Kanien'kéha within the home. "The solutions to our present challenges lie in addressing the needs of advanced learners by supporting them in bringing rich language into the home, the community and the future" (Stacey 2016, 98). Through this experience and the shift that occurred, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' decided to conduct another round of interviews, this time seeking the perspectives of the children and youth family members who passively experienced Akenhnhà:ke 2020. This was not only an attempt to evaluate Akenhnhà:ke 2020 and the entirety of its effect, but to also design a study and results that could be shared with other first and second language learners, especially those seeking support as a Kanien'kéha speaking home.

The responses that were collected in this study demonstrated that the children understand the importance of learning and speaking kanien'kéha. Furthermore, the results of this study conclude that children identify as being Onkwehón:we (An original person) by learning and speaking the language. Child 004 stated, "Because that is our language and because I grew up being Onkwehon:we [Child 004]. "Well, you do have to worry about ourselves... inside our bodies...is going to be kidnapped" [Child 003]. It appeared that this child felt that language was within her and could be stolen.

Children expressed their awareness of the endangered state of their inherited language. Furthermore, children of this study recognized their role in not only passing the language on to the coming generations but also their role in passing the language on to the previous generations before them, such as their non-speaking grandparents. Child 001 responded to the interview question by saying, "It's dying, and it needs my help to keep it going" [Child 001]. Child 002 emphasized "if the newer generation don't learn it the language will eventually die out and the language is a big part of our culture" [Child 002].

Child 005 who is a first language speaker of a language closely related to Kanien'kéha expressed that she is learning Kanien'kéha to help her advance her own language. Child 005 explains that within her home community there is only one living L1 speaking elder. "I feel sad. I'm going to get a lot of money and fly back there and learn my language and speak it again, and I'll always be a first language speaker" [Child 005]. It is apparent that these children are well aware of the importance of their shared role in language revitalization and maintenance.

All the children of this study reported that their family members who had participated in Akenhnhà:ke 2020 enjoyed speaking Kanien'kéha. One child went on

to add: "Yes, because she is learning, and it's freedom" (Child003). The children's responses indicate that they associate the language with their identity and as something that belongs to them, by learning and speaking the language of their ancestors, children are free to be Onkwehón:we (An original person).

Implications for Future Research

There are many implications for future research from this work. The first is to redesign and test the validity of this research in a future study. Another would be to investigate the difference in perspectives between youth who can remember their parent/family member transition into becoming a second language speaker, with those who have only known their parent/ family member as a proficient first/second language speaker. The reported experiences of the children involved in this study suggest that Akenhnhà:ke 2020' processes seemed to motivate and encourage children and family members to lead healthy learning and speaking lifestyles. Further implications for research would be to illustrate the various methods of learning according to what the children have observed among other L2 advanced learners and speakers to identify the best methods and/or diversity of methods that can be utilized to learn second languages. Another critical area of investigation could be to interview the L1 speakers involved with Ionkwahronkha'onhatie' as a pre and post test to future programs, to capture their observations of learning, relationships, and language development in both the first and second languages.

Conclusion

As beneficiaries of Kanien'kéha adult immersion programming, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants value immersion education and demonstrate this by teaching within immersion schools, and by enrolling their children in immersion schools. However, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' recognized the need to re-center L1 elder speakers in order to further support graduates and students of adult immersion programs by advancing language within relationships, homes, and across communities. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' brought L1 and L2 advanced speakers together to enhance language usage in all domains. Therefore allowing for immersion schools to reinforce language learning, as opposed to being the primary domain in which language is spoken. In doing so, Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' began to notice the influence they had had on the children within their home. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie then conducted interviews to gather and analyze the perceptions of the children indirectly involved.

The goal for ensuring the vitality of languages is to learn the target language, maintain proficiency by utilizing the language within social settings, speak with your children, protect and teach indigenous students within immersion schools, create a network of speakers to advance your proficiency into higher socioeconomic domains, help raise grandchildren to repeat and strengthen the cycle (Wilson et al. 2009, 375).

The results of this study demonstrate that children not only perceive themselves as beneficiaries of adult learning, children value and reflect the effort adult L1 and L2 speakers invest into learning and knowledge sharing. Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants have positively impacted the children within their household, peaking the child's interest for learning. Mid-response to an interview question Child 003 stated, "Please send me a copy of this, because I want to read it" [Child 003].

Findings concluded that the more Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' participants worked to become fluent, the more the children valued their role and responsibility for car-

rying on the language as a part of their everyday lives. Furthermore, findings of this study suggest that children viewed each participant of Ionkwahronkha'onhátie' as important figures within their life, identifying that the work that each participant is doing to become fluent, is for the benefit of the whole. These findings suggest that children view communal relationships and familial relationships as equally important. Children view themselves as a valuable part of the learning and speaking community who will share the collective knowledge of their ancestors.

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multiethnica
Box 521 · 751 20 Uppsala · Sweden
Home page: www.valentin.uu.se
Email: multiethnica@valentin.uu.se
HUGO VALENTIN CENTRUM
The Hugo Valentin Centre
Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre

The Effect of Covid-19 on Livonian Language Learning Opportunities

GUNTA KĻAVA, University of Latvia

This article describes two projects created by the Livonian Institute at the University of Latvia to promote Livonian language learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The value and role of digital solutions increased during this period, becoming a part of every aspect of daily life. Despite the circumstances created by the pandemic, there have also been positive developments for language learning and endangered language maintenance. The pandemic seems to have prompted a change in perspective on Livonian language preservation as well as its role and function. This shift convinced the Livonian community as well as the broader society that Livonian — despite its small number of speakers — deserves the same opportunities as every other language. In this context, two new Livonian language learning projects are discussed: (1) online Livonian language lessons originally developed as an instructional module for schools, which was the first time in history that Livonian was included in a Latvian school curriculum; and (2) the next step in language-learning basics: a series of songs written by Livonian authors intended for children and young people. These initiatives show that in a difficult situation, a flexible approach and creative solutions can place even a small language on a more equal footing when competing with larger languages.

2020, as the year of the Covid-19 pandemic, was marked by various restrictions everywhere on gathering, movement, and public events, which affected all levels of society. However, these restrictions did not only have negative effects; the year of the pandemic also made activists involved in the maintenance of Livonian rethink existing approaches, search for new opportunities and solutions, and use them more actively so that everyday life could continue in times of crisis. It has also shown that remote-use and digital solutions are not just a matter of convenience, but can be a daily necessity.

The circumstances of the pandemic affected the already fragile situation of the Livonian language—both the opportunity to gather and hold events, and the language maintenance and learning process. Regarding Livonian, the number of speakers decreased critically during the time of Soviet occupation and now only about twenty to thirty people worldwide, including scientists and researchers, know the language sufficiently to be able to communicate, making each limit placed on its use critical for language vitality. But looking back on the year of the pandemic there is a hope that the Livonian language has become stronger than before. Activities in the field of preservation, development, and popularisation of the Livonian language that started before the pandemic continued after restrictions were put into place by changing emphasis and approach; new opportunities and solutions were also used more widely.

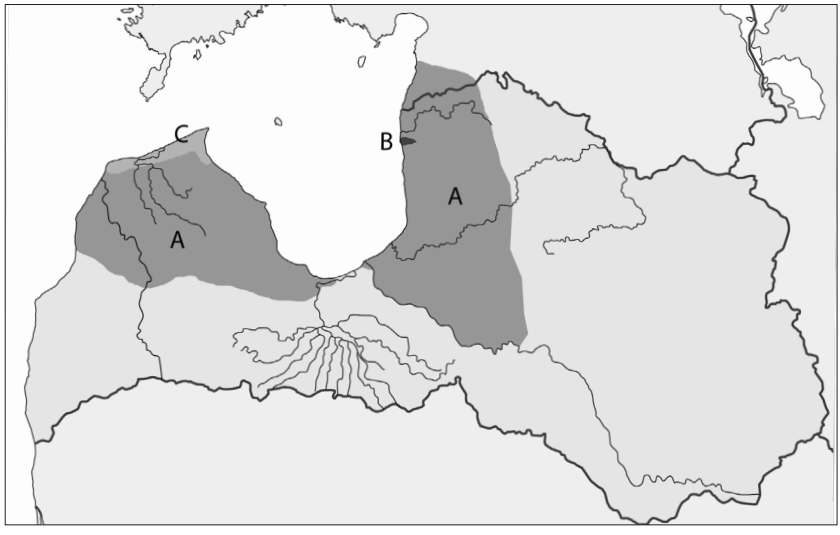
The article summarises the results of the study of the language learning needs and

experiences of the Livonian community, observations, experiences, and ideas created due to the pandemic, as well as the conclusions that have emerged from work in the field of preservation and promotion of the Livonian language in the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. The indirect purpose of this article is also to document this difficult, but also interesting and innovative time of crisis for society as a whole and for the Livonian language in particular, allowing one to look back at the events and evaluate the traces they have left in the history of the Livonian language.

A brief overview of the history of Livonian language acquisition

In briefly outlining the history of the acquisition of Livonian, some general references are important. Nowadays Livonian, a Finno-Ugric language indigenous to Latvia, is one of the world's most endangered languages and is listed in the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger as critically endangered. In around the twelfth century, the Livonians inhabited a large territory in the region of present-day Latvia, and over the centuries, as the Livonians merged with neighbouring tribes and formed the modern Latvian nation, the number of Livonian language speakers steadily decreased, but the Livonian language has been able to survive to this day, preserved in a once closed and peripheral area north of Courland Peninsula, also known as the Livonian Coast (Ernštreits 2020). The loss of the last compact territory inhabited by speakers of Livonian following the establishment of a border zone along the Baltic Sea in the area encompassing the Livonian villages at the start of the Soviet occupation after World War II made the history of the Livonian speech area more complicated and fragile (Ernštreits 2019, 105). In short—the process of language shift (from Livonian to Latvian), which had already begun before the developments of the twentieth century (O'Rourke 2018, 83), was pushed even further by various subsequent political, economic, and social developments in society.

Figure 1. Territory Inhabited by Livonians.



Note: A: twelfth century; B: Salaca Livonians in the middle of the nineteenth century; C: Courland Livonians in the twentieth century. Source: Lībieši/Līvlizt. Rīga: Līvõ kultūr sidām (Lībiešu kultūras centrs), Latvijas Universitātes Lībiešu institūts, 2019. Reproduced with permission.

As a result of all the historical development of the language situation, the mother tongue of the Livonian community members is mostly Latvian. Livonian is not inherited from parents, and everyone who does know it have learnt it in other ways (Druviete and Kļava 2018, 130). Despite the lack of language proficiency, a sense of belonging to the nation, culture and language of the Livonian community is and has been very strong (Kļava 2020, 22), thus serving to preserve their ethnic identity. It seems that language, or rather awareness that it is different and not related to Latvian[1], has been the main anchor in preserving the ethnic identity of Livonians. Their culture and traditions are also different, but the long history of living side by side with Latvians has merged the boundaries between the two traditions. Of course, some specific ones remain and now all of them are included in the National Inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latvia. In the light of the necessity of boundaries for distinguishing one ethnic group from another, as stated by theories of language and ethnicity (Edwards 1994, 128), language plays a crucial role as one of the characteristics of the ethnic group in the Livonian case. Awareness of language as an important symbol for ethnic identity was the reason for attempts to implement language acquisition activities at different scales during different times and using all the efforts of every community activist who wanted to keep the language alive for the next generations. Without these efforts the hope and opportunity for the vitality of Livonian would probably be even more complicated.

The first Livonian language learning possibilities in formal education were implemented in the 1920s in the form of an elective course in five Livonian village schools. The number of Livonian students hovered around 100 (Blumberga 2013, 220), which seems a significant number considering that the total number of Livonians at that time was around 900 (Mežs 2000, 76). These classes failed to increase the popularity of Livonian among schoolchildren for several reasons. One obstacle was mixed classes where children with Livonian and Latvian home languages participated. Proficiency in Livonian, even for children from Livonian families varied significantly, reflecting strong language shift processes in Livonian families that affected the quality of language learning and attendance. But more destructive from the viewpoint of language teaching methodology was the situation of weekly classes that were taught by a former sailor who both lacked teaching experience and spoke the least common Livonian variety. Standard Livonian orthography was at this time at the beginning of its development, and the use and knowledge of it was not sufficient (Ernštreits 2011, 18).

Efforts to improve the situation were made by Livonian supporters from Estonia and Finland. As the closest linguistic and cultural relatives, who also have a better political and economic situation, activists from these countries have provided important support to Livonians during the last hundred years. For example, in the 1920s they started to collect money for Christmas gifts to be sent to Livonian students, hoping to increase participation and interest in course participation. As evidenced by participants of these lessons this approach partially served its purpose: there was a temporary increase in the attendance of Livonian lessons in November and December, but after that attendance dropped (Blumberga 2013, 210). Seeing that this approach did not work, supporters in Finland began depositing donations collected for Christmas gifts into a special fund with the intention of publishing the first Livonian language reading book for schoolchildren (Damberg 1935). Another initiative was the education of Livonian youth by financing their tuition fees in different institutions of higher or professional education in Latvia, Finland, or Estonia (Blumberga 2013, 224).

Big changes came with the Soviet occupation in 1940 and the following global events. The Livonians had to abandon their historical home area and leave for other parts of Latvia or elsewhere in the world, the number of speakers decreased, and language courses, like many other activities, were not possible. For Livonians, this time extended the level of alienation physically and also mentally, which can be seen more clearly now with the distance in time. There is a place for deeper research for anthropologists and other fields related to identity issues, but from the perspective of language maintenance, the displacement of people made meeting difficult, and thus also the use of the language. If one has to classify this situation from a geographical perspective, the Livonian language community expands the many shapes and configurations of existing endangered language communities (Grinevald and Bert 2011, 55) and it is not possible to identify clear common living places or conditions which is important for opportunities to use language, so it is more diverse than homogeneous from this point of view. On the one hand, processes of language community displacement proved to be a serious additional factor for language shift or loss; on the other hand, first for community activists, and then for other members, an awareness of the need to maintain their ethnic identity through language and cultural activities has emerged since the Soviet occupation.

So, in a situation where language proficiency was very poor and language acquisition had ceased, as early as the 1970s, work began on the establishment of Livonian language nests[2] outside the area historically inhabited by the Livonians. The first steps were Livonian song ensembles formed in Rīga and Ventspils (Ernštreits 2019, 106), whose activities also included some work with Livonian language issues. However, the greater benefit to their work was in maintaining the self-confidence and identity of Livonians, which resulted in other active events and the renewal of the community organisation, the Livonian Union, in 1988. As Latvia regained its independence, due to various circumstances the role of these ensembles decreased, but the work continued in other directions to ensure the process of maintaining the Livonian language.

Efforts to teach and learn the Livonian language after 1988 encountered a number of challenges that were consequential and natural taking into account the evolution of modern society and general developments of language acquisition theories and practices, which are difficult to put into practice for such a small community without targeted support. The first attempts were made to teach the Livonian language in elective courses, which at the beginning were quite popular, but their popularity gradually slowed and almost completely ceased after a few years. The main reasons were the different levels of language knowledge and the age difference of the participants, the insufficient number of Livonians who wanted to improve their language level, and, as mentioned above, their dispersion across Latvia. For these reasons, the opportunities to form language learning groups from participants of the same language level and in the same place were limited. The lack of qualified language teachers, rather than a lack of funding, was the main problem facing these initiatives. Language learning courses became more like meetings of Livonian community groups, which played a role in strengthening the sense of belonging to Livonian community but did not have a sufficient effect on language learning or language maintenance (Ernštreits 2016, 264). For example, one challenge has been to ensure growth for higher-level language students, when teaching is only available at introductory levels.

The only measure related to the maintenance and learning of the language that has survived so far is the summer camp for children and youth of Livonian origin named "Mierlinkizt", which started in the summer of 1992 and brings together children and youth of Livonian origin. Usually, summer camp lasts between a week and ten days. During the summer camp, participants learn the basics of the Livonian language and culture. As this camp is in fact currently the only mechanism for learning and practicing the Livonian language, the knowledge acquired once a year at the camp serves mainly as an element for maintaining community identity and the basic knowledge about Livonians and the Livonian language (Kļava 2020, 22). The summer camp is successfully fulfilling this task, as evidenced by the widespread interest in participating in the camp[3] and the number of camp students who also continue to participate in Livonian intangible heritage maintenance initiatives later in life, which highlights the role of beliefs, ideology, and attitudes in language maintenance. As stated by Julia Sallabank (2013, 60), these factors have key importance in the existence of language as well as in maintenance and revitalisation. However, the process of language shift has resulted in a lack of Livonian language knowledge in the community, so all activities and events are held in Latvian, which is now the native language of most Livonians. Moreover, belonging to the Latvian culture and state is a very important part of the identity of the Livonians. But this does not mean that these two parts of identity are mutually exclusive. Current understandings of the value of linguistic diversity and the realities of multilingualism provide a possibility to use this knowledge in practices of bilingualism, which William O'Grady (2018, 498) calls the "foundation of a reasonable plan for language revitalisation". Opportunities to carry out the acquisition of endangered or indigenous language do not mean giving up the possibilities of the modern world provided by knowledge of a national language or language of wider communication within a country or society.

Additionally, the strong sense of belonging, positive linguistic attitude, and beliefs about the importance of the Livonian language in the maintenance and promotion of Livonian cultural heritage also favour many other regular activities carried out by both community members and organisations. There are more than eight Livonian music associations, some active social media profiles and websites (Livones.net, "Līvõ kēļ" on Facebook and other sites), events and language expert meetings take place (in person before the pandemic and online now), as well as Livonian language research (at the UL Livonian Institute, the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics of the University of Tartu, and other research institutions around the world) and the creation of new Livonian language sources for research and possible acquisition in the future. For now, however, these measures could be used in language teaching and learning on a broader scale, since the Livonian language is quite well researched, documented and developed for use. Language researchers have become especially active in recent years in preparing a base of high-quality scientific materials (Moseley 2016, 250). This was confirmed during the pandemic, when the uncertainty about the future had a significant impact on the preparation and conduct of the measures listed above. However, it appears that the restrictions and changes in society caused by the pandemic have given stimulus to new solutions for the preservation and inheritance of the Livonian language, as well as helped to improve the efficiency and quality of existing developments.

Identification of Livonian learning needs

Questions about the efficiency, quality and possible results of endangered language learning activities are relevant to any endangered language and can lead to findings that are not particularly optimistic or promising (O'Grady 2018, 504). Despite all the hardships that stand in the way of language preservation and revitalisation, the key to success may be putting harmonising theoretical and practical approaches with the needs of modern society, where the interests, experiences and learning needs of children and young community members in particular have recently undergone dramatic changes. It seems that this is the main issue now in the Livonian language learning process.

Since its founding in 2018, the UL Livonian Institute, has been involved in work with Livonian children and the youth camp "Mierlinkizt", where some of its researchers had previously worked. Previously observed considerations about challenges for language learning and teaching formed the basis of the preliminary research carried out during the camp. This research was intended to recognize the needs of teachers of Livonian and urgent aspects of Livonian language learning for a particular learners' group. This research was conducted to prepare for the postdoctoral project "Applying the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages to Livonian: A New Opportunity for Endangered Languages" (project no. 1.1.1.2/VIAA/3/19/527) implemented in 2020 by the UL Livonian Institute. Data obtained during this preliminary research by direct observation and semi-structured interviews with teachers of the camp served as a basis for developing a methodology for the deeper study of language acquisition and possible solutions during the postdoctoral project.

According to the respondents, along with the geographically scattered nature of the Livonian community and associated logistical problems, one of the primary hindrances to increasing the number of Livonian speakers was the lack of a systematic language acquisition process. Livonian community members agree that language learning must be adapted to the new conditions of a modern and technologically advanced society. Data gathered from in-depth interviews with Livonian speakers (B and C language proficiency level) and questionnaires completed by other Livonian community members show a particular emphasis on appropriate digital solutions for language use and language learning. It should be noted that respondents used the concept 'language in the computer' to mean not language availability in different types of new media (because of the understanding of their impossibility for a language like Livonian), but specifically different digital language resources from dictionaries and the option to check for a correct word or word form to the extended availability of language corpora, texts, information about Livonian and language learning tools. Summarising all kinds of factors, the need to expand the opportunities for learning the Livonian language (for different needs, different levels, different target groups) using the opportunities provided by modern technology becomes very clear.

The development of Livonian language learning opportunities, considering all aspects related to language learning, is one of the most important tasks in the near future. Many challenges will be posed by the issue of language provision for so-called small and endangered languages:

- an absence of pedagogical materials or an accompanying tradition of such materials to build on;
- a lack of pedagogically trained personnel as well as insufficient language

proficiency among potential teachers in general;
- a lack of language acquisition programmes for teachers and the wider community;
- an absence of certain domains of language use accompanied by an instant need for new terminology to fill these gaps; and
- a lack of standards, which are central to creating learning materials, improving accessibility, and using all possibilities provided in this digital age.

The pandemic situation during the last year, which has changed people's habits and understanding about forms of communication, was a great impetus to make language more accessible in a digital space.

Livonian learning opportunities developed during the Covid-19 pandemic

The situation for Livonian language acquisition is characterised by the need to evaluate the available knowledge and the effectiveness of existing solutions, and to find new, innovative solutions and methods for the acquisition of endangered languages, in order to expediently and effectively use the limited available resources to compensate for deficiencies in language use domains and resources (teachers, learning materials, technical base). Language learning solutions of this kind would make an indispensable contribution to the community and would provide significant help in the preservation of small and endangered language diversity around the world, because the majority of the world's languages are endangered, disappearing, or other so-called small languages (Ethnologue 2021). The new aspects of social life during the pandemic restricted the usual routine of learning something through physical meetings, and the need to meet was replaced by remote communication, leading to changes in mindsets and reflections about improving the functionality and usability of various types of technological resources.

In Latvia, in the spring of 2020, at the first appearance of the pandemic-related restrictions, it turned out that there was a lack of appropriate solutions for distance learning needs for all subjects in school. Therefore, as a quick solution at a time when most teachers were unfamiliar with the principles and methods of distance learning, at the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia, the special TV and Internet platform *Tavaklase.lv* was created. From April to May it was possible for students from grades 1 to 12 to learn various subjects mostly created by teachers of a particular subject. Among other subjects, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) offered to include Livonian language lessons for primary school (grades 5–9) and secondary school (grades 10–12). The new aspect for Livonian was the possibility for learners to be seen and heard by a broader audience including not only Livonians themselves but all school children and teachers and parents in the country. Thus, it also became the first time that the curriculum of Latvian general education offered the opportunity to learn more about Livonians and the Livonian language. In the context of a small country and the new situation in education in general, the platform was very popular, with a total of more than 400,000 views in almost seventy countries (the Latvian diaspora in the world also used it as a great opportunity) in the spring of 2020.

To realise the idea of including the Livonian language into this project, the UL Livonian Institute was charged with creating seven lessons, which afterwards turned into a separate online programme "Seis līvõ kīel stuņḑõ/Seven Livonian

language lessons". It is publicly available on the YouTube channel of the UL Livonian Institute (7 lessons 2020).

The target audience of the lessons—every Latvian student regardless of their place of residence, knowledge about Livonians or connection to them—determined their content and form. So, it was necessary to not only teach the basics of the language, but also to provide a general understanding of who the Livonians are, what their place in Latvia is, what the Livonian language is, etc., in a number of hours (140 minutes or 2.3 hours in total) that was far too little to learn a language or even its basics. The planned time for acquiring a standard beginner's language level (according to CEFR – A1) varies from 100 to 200 hours and more, depending on all the factors affecting language learning (King 2018, 218). On the basis of these circumstances, the lessons were planned as follows: an informative part on Livonians, the Livonian language, culture, and history, adapted to the beginner level, was among the main topics of the lessons, which will be described in more detail below. An important part of all materials produced for the popularization or learning of the language was and is also the principle of including members of the Livonian community, first, as a sign to any user of the material that Livonians have not disappeared (as is one of the common myths about endangered languages and cultures; King 2018, 541) but are members of a modern society, and second, to give the possibility for community members to use the Livonian language and to feel their importance in language maintenance work. Thus, although the main target audience was the students in the schools, the lessons also serve to strengthen the self-confidence and identity of the Livonian community itself.

The platform's format, in which one 20-minute classroom lesson was statically filmed without any editing, was not suitable for the full implementation of the idea and concept of Livonian lessons. Therefore, with the help of representatives of the Livonian community itself, ways were sought to include both the planned content and convey the message about the Livonians in a visually high-quality format in a 20-minute lesson. A professional Latvian Television journalist, director, producer, and popular TV personality in the country, who is also Livonian, was involved in filming the lessons. This individual's active belonging to the community provided a deep understanding of the subject and their many years of experience in television ensured a professional understanding of how to develop a quality TV product. Surprisingly, one of the positive effects of the pandemic on the Livonian Coast was that in the spring of 2020, when Livonian language lessons were filmed, Livonians were, exceptionally, already there. In the winter, very few people live in villages on the coast; it becomes active only when it warms up. But because of remote work and school during the pandemic people had returned to the Livonian villages even during the winter. It also made filming easier since most of the lessons took place on the Livonian Coast.

The planning of the lessons was determined by a clear division of the different needs of the target group, the number of lessons, the limitations of the video format as an educational tool and the expected lack of general knowledge. There were also a number of advantages such as the active participation of community representatives, which also became a way for them to practise the language, and the possibilities offered by video format, such as the reuse of the lessons for different audiences and age groups at different times. To ensure that video lessons serve as a productive part of a learning experience, planning of instructional design in the context of multimedia learning was an important part of the work, which was

based on the key principles of cognitive theory of multimedia learning by Richard E. Mayer (2021). It also means a clear structure of information to also serve as an appropriate source for users only interested in an overview about Livonians.

Regarding the content of lessons in L2 instruction, a well-known thematic-based approach was used. To ensure a focus on content-area information, seven topics were selected, which are most often included at the beginning of the acquisition of each L2, and through those topics the rest of the informative material on Livonians, Livonian culture and history was linked. Each lesson includes two conditional layers—language and informative material. The topic of each lesson serves as a thematic hub which ties together information about Livonian culture, traditions, and history. This is an important component of language acquisition, as learning a language also means learning a culture in the broader sense of the concept (Hudson 2009, 79). Thematic division and informative parts of lessons were as follows: Lesson 1 – polite expressions, linguistic diversity and who the Livonians are; Lesson 2 – the alphabet, sounds and Livonian traditions, such as the tradition of waking birds in spring; Lesson 3 – colour names and Livonian symbols, the flag and anthem; Lesson 4 – Livonian place names and the Livonian Coast; Lesson 5 – names of family members, Livonian dialects and the formation of new words; Lesson 6 – number words and Livonian's place in the Uralic language family; Lesson 7 – borrowings from Livonian in the Latvian language and traces of the Livonian language in Latvia and current events today, such as the Livonian Festival.

Among the goals of creating these lessons was to provide a basic introduction to Livonians for those with no prior knowledge. At the same time, based on the previous experience of UL Livonian Institute researchers doing informative work in different schools in country, one of the goals was also to widen the general comprehension in society about linguistic diversity, the value of languages, and society's connection with language, which also affects the development and situation of languages themselves. In 2019, which was declared the International Year of Indigenous Languages by UNESCO, UL LI actively participated in Latvia both in the promotion of the Livonian language and in informing the public about the current state of world languages and the value of each language. Events held in 2019 demonstrated the first evidence that the potential of technology for language learning needs to be exploited as widely as possible, especially for endangered languages. This can be particularly meaningful for the preservation and at least minimal use of the Livonian language. The beginning of the pandemic provided a basis and confirmation for plans to think about the need for language learning in the formats offered by technology, using the theoretical and practical knowledge of modern language acquisition.

To check the effectiveness of the filmed lessons, the testing at the "Mierlinkizt" Summer Camp for Livonian Children and Youth was carried out, adapting them to the traditional format of teaching lessons in the classroom. The traditional course of the camp divides the participants into two groups, one group from 6 to 11 years old and the other from 11 to 16 years old. The summer camp is attended by children who are descendants of Livonians or are otherwise related to Livonians; older participants often have both some prior knowledge of Livonian and knowledge of Livonian culture and history. Work with children and youth showed that the lessons can be successfully adapted into interesting and creative learning, thus not only confirming the necessity of new approaches and media in the learning process as an effective teaching tool, but also the need for a diverse teaching process

and forms of teaching. At the same time, it was observed that different materials are urgently needed for the youngest school-age children (grades 1–4). This is also confirmed by the conclusions of the study on Livonian community members, who stressed a particular lack of age-appropriate and simple materials for young children, for example, easy-to-repeat, 'catchy' songs and visually engaging books with age-appropriate texts. In addition, these materials must be available electronically, making them accessible to the widest possible audience.

The results of the study and the testing of video lessons also encouraged the Institute's researchers to focus on this target group of language learners. With the collaboration of Livonian community members and previous remote working experience, a project to create songs for learning the Livonian language was implemented. The idea of this new project is first and foremost based on the need to create material that, as mentioned above, would be engaging and simple for children. Thus, the project "Lōla īņõ ja op līvõ kīeldõ/Sing along and learn Livonian" (available on the UL LI YouTube channel) includes seven original Livonian songs. It was a special goal to create new, original songs, thus also allowing listeners to feel like it is a modern product. The authors of the songs were two Livonian musicians, who at the same time are good Livonian speakers; they also sang songs, one together with her family and the other together with the Livonian choir leader, who also created the full scores for the songs (which are also freely available for use). Researchers at the UL Livonian Institute were responsible for the quality of the language and its compliance with the pedagogical goal.

The idea of this project was to create songs in Livonian on various topics in everyday language use (people, animals, activities, numbers, relatives, nature, etc.), intended specifically for children (but accessible to anyone else who might be interested) for learning and maintaining the Livonian language. Songs and singing in the preservation, maintenance and learning of language is one of the most socially and emotionally effective cognitive tools, as traditional cultural values, worldviews, and customs are passed on through songs, and the sense of language, sound, and rhythm are especially important for language acquisition (Ludke, Ferreira and Overy 2014, 50). The task for the songwriters in this project was not easy, but the high Livonian proficiency level of both songwriters ensured the natural sound of the Livonian language. Special emphasis for the authors was placed on the task of creating simple and memorable songs that facilitate the understanding of the phonology of Livonian and learning and remembering vocabulary and phrases. Also, language structure and grammatical features were checked and included in cooperation with linguists from the UL Livonian Institute—not only thematically appropriate vocabulary, but also the principles of grammatical form, observing the conditions of composition. For example, by singing the song "Lēba" (Bread), in addition to the basic idea of the value of bread, you can learn the names of different products, the conjugation of the verb 'tǭdõ' (to want) in all personal forms and the use of different noun cases. Or the song "Ku ma randõ lā̃b" (When I go to the seaside) includes the use of the noun in partitive case with the verb 'ārmaztõ' (to love). The process of creating language-adapted songs and music videos reveals many aspects that need to be considered for this specific purpose. Young Livonian language learners have previously not had the opportunity to use age-appropriate, textually and musically adapted songs. It is clear that by just singing songs it would be hard to learn the language, but the special emphasis placed on the target group and clear vision about the content and form

of created material will hopefully help to address the current shortage in teaching aids for a particular group.

New experiences and conclusions

The Covid-19 pandemic forced people around the world to limit their direct communication and contact. As a result, the need to make language easier to use for different purposes in the digital space has become even more urgent. It seems that, at least in the case of the preservation and revitalisation of the Livonian language, the circumstances of the pandemic have hastened measures for which the community itself was ready and waiting, but which would otherwise have taken much more time, and whose investment, profit, and added value is now reaching a wider audience and public.

The first year of Covid-19 has shown that we have entered a new era, where digital and remote solutions, which until now were considered something rather exclusive, have become a necessity and an integral part of everyday life. The example of the Livonians clearly shows that the use of such solutions also helps to maintain the Livonian language environment and solve the problems that were once caused by the loss of a common Livonian area half a century ago. These solutions help to speed up and make the revitalisation of the Livonian language more effective. And even if the language revitalisation would not be possible for some reason, these solutions help to create new, contemporary examples of language and culture for the future.

Taking global tendencies into account, where multilingualism and multiculturalism are increasingly perceived as the norm and something that enriches the world, it is time for endangered and, so-called "small" languages to be more advanced and innovative than the major languages. For such languages, many linguistic development processes take place on their own in order to survive in today's information-rich age and to compete in the global language market. Improvisation and adaptation are keywords in an ever-changing situation, it can become essential for endangered languages to be able to adapt dynamically to the situation, turn negatives into positives and constantly seek and be able to see and seize new opportunities.

The first results of the projects carried out last year indicate valuable lessons and examples for future work on the preservation and revitalisation of the Livonian language. A lack of human resources, language speakers, language use, and so on determines their effective use in language preservation and development. In both projects described in the article, the involvement of community members as creators and authors, not only as users of the final product, has positive benefits both to the final products and to the community as a contribution to the development and preservation of the language, as an opportunity to work on their own culture and language, an opportunity to speak the Livonian language (which does

Endnotes

[1] Latvian belongs to the Baltic branch of the Indo-European language family, Livonian belongs to the Finnic branch of the Uralic language family.

[2] Places (usually the apartment of an active Livonian) and events where Livonians met for language practice and other activities.

[3] Despite the fact that participation fee was usually paid by the participants themselves in 2020, when it was possible to receive funding from the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia, which was a result of the active work of Livonian language and culture activists

as organisations or individuals such as the University of Latvia (UL) Livonian Institute, members of Livonian Society etc.

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Book Reviews/Bokrecensioner

Mercédesz Czimbalmos "Intermarriage, Conversion, and Jewish Identity in Contemporary Finland: A study of vernacular religion in the Finnish Jewish communities," (Åbo Akademi University 2021), diss.

Mercédesz Czimbalmos har skrivit en sammanläggningsavhandling i religionshistoria, bestående av en kappa, fyra artiklar och en sammanfattning. Avhandlingen är gedigen, väl sammanhållen, stringent, koncis och välargumenterad. Czimbalmos anger tydligt vad hon ska göra, vilka begrepp hon kommer att använda och hur, och gör det hon föresatt sig att göra på ett systematiskt sätt. Syftet är tydligt formulerat, frågorna rimliga, perspektivet givande, källorna och metoderna relevanta och resultaten övertygande.

Syftet med studien är "att analysera den vardagsreligiösa praxis som utvecklats i de judiska församlingarna i Helsingfors och Åbo genom en studie av blandäktenskap och därigenom fylla en forskningslucka samt att testa hur användbart perspektivet 'levd religion', vernacular religion, är inom fältet Judiska studier, där det hittills bara använts i begränsad utsträckning."

Ämnet är vetenskapligt relevant och forskningsproblemet tydligt formulerat. Det är en utmärkt idé att använda blandäktenskap som en prisma för att studera levd religion/vardagsreligiositet och judisk identitet. Studien fyller verkligen en lucka, och den gör det på två sätt. Dels empiriskt genom de arkiv- och intervjubaserade studierna, dels genom perspektivet.

De analytiska begreppen är också tydligt definierade och används systematiskt. Hantverket är gott. Czimbalmos använder verkligen de verktyg som valts och har en föredömligt pragmatisk inställning till teorier. Det centrala perspektivet, levd religion, är fruktbart, och uttolkning av det som att "göra, vara och tänka judiskt", eller som Lasse Dencik formulerat det, "att juda", är övertygande, även om författaren inte presenterar någon metod för att utvärdera perspektivets användbarhet inom Judiska studier. Användningen av resultaten i (amerikanska) studier av konversioner som empiriska generaliseringar för att skapa kategorier/teman för analysen av det finska fallet fungerar också bra. Enstaka andra aspekter kunde dock ha inkluderats/utvecklats. Eftersom projektet behandlar identitet, hur medlemmar av de finska judiska trossamfunden förhandlar sin judiskhet, kunde författaren ha övervägt att använda teorier om identitet och identitetsbildning. Hon diskuterar sådana liksom judisk identitet men inte som teoretiska ingångar utan som en del av forskningsläget och kontexten. Ett perspektiv som däremot används och därtill framgångsrikt och som dessutom styrt forskningsdesignen, men inte behandlas som en del i teoribygget, är genus. Det kunde gott ha redovisats explicit som en teoretisk utgångspunkt.

Vidare kunde diskussionen om de olika typerna av äktenskap ha utvecklats. Kategorierna som används fungerar utmärkt i analysen, men de är inte självklara. Till exempel kunde "religiöst" äktenskap ha nämnts som en separat kategori. Dessu-

tom kunde tre andra typer av ”äktenskap” ha diskuterats: samboskap; äktenskap där båda makarna är halakhiskt judiska; och samkönade äktenskap (både endo- och exogama). Samboende nämns, men författaren hävdar att det skulle ha krävts för mycket arbete att inkludera par som lever tillsammans utan att vara gifta och kanske är det också så. Det kunde dock ha varit givande att till exempel jämföra hur personer i de typer av äktenskap som nu analyserats gör, är och tänker judiskt med par som valt att inte gifta sig och med par där båda makarna är judar enligt halakhisk definition (och av olika eller samma kön).

Författaren använder flera olika metoder. De förklaras och motiveras tydligt och utnyttjas skickligt och konsekvent. Men eftersom jämförelser är ett kännetecken för avhandlingen borde de komparativa aspekterna ha diskuterats explicit. Författaren gör både en diakron (första artikeln) och en synkron komparation (jämförelsen mellan resultaten i de tre intervjubaserade studierna), och använder rönen från den longitudinella arkivbaserade utredningen i intervjustudierna men diskuterar inte systematiskt dessa jämförelser som en del av metoden. Det är synd, särskilt när det gäller de diakrona aspekterna. Hade författaren uttryckligen diskuterat jämförelser som metod och formulerat en forskningsfråga om kontinuitet och förändring, hade hon tydligare kunnat lyfta fram sina resultat om vad som förändras och varför och vad som förblev opåverkat i de finsk-judiska äktenskapsmönstren och i de strategier som används.

Presentationen av källorna och insamlingen och urvalet av data är klar och redig. Avhandlingen utgår från fyra typer av material: arkivmaterial från församlingarna i Helsingfors och Åbo liksom från Judiska församlingen i Stockholm; intervjuer med församlingsaktiva i de båda studerade församlingarna idag; intervjuer med och arkivmaterial från personer som var tongivande inom de båda församlingarna under 1970- och 80-talen samt en stor enkätundersökning. Den sistnämnda används dock inte till följd av att bortfallet var för stort. Det är synd eftersom det omöjliggör en jämförelse med Svante Lundgrens likartade studie från 2002 och med motsvarande svenska studier, vilket får till följd att frågan om ett eventuellt nordiskt-judiskt äktenskapsmönster faller. Den viktigaste kategorin är intervjuerna med medlemmar (över 18 år) i de judiska gemenskaperna i Helsingfors och Åbo, totalt ett fyrtiotal. Czimbalmos har dessutom gjort ett imponerande arbete i arkiven men kunde ha redogjort mera konkret för materialet, särskilt i beskrivningen och diskussionen av arkivmaterialet från Helsingfors, Åbo och Stockholm. Vilka är då de huvudsakliga resultaten? Den longitudinella studien av arkivmaterial visar övertygande att den finska lagstiftningen, särskilt 1917 års lag om civiläktenskap och 1922 års religionsfrihetslag, ”påverkade den judiska gemenskapen i Helsingfors, dess politik, sedvänjor och vanor.” Det ökande antalet blandäktenskap, som delvis var en konsekvens av dessa bestämmelser, orsakade förändringar i församlingarnas ”religiösa sedvänjor och administrativa system” vilket gav upphov till ”policies som inte bara påverkade registreringen av medlemskap utan även församlingens politik framgent”, i synnerhet vad gäller hanteringen av konversioner. Detta påverkade i sin tur debatterna om och förståelsen av judisk identitet.

Intervjustudierna visar att judiska kvinnor i blandade äktenskap ”ofta kombinerar modeller från olika traditioner istället för att helt överge judendomen; de ’judar’ på sitt eget sätt genom att skapa och [åter]uppfinna traditioner som de finner meningsfulla för sig själva och sina familjer.» Judiska män i blandade äktenskap däremot ”använder banden till sitt kulturarv för att öka sin förmåga att uppfostra sina barn effektivt.” Dessutom visade sig den praxis som utvecklats i blandäktenskap

där mannen är jude vara tydligt könsuppdelad i enlighet med traditionella judiska könsnormer. Det är alltså uppenbart, framhåller Czimbalmos, att ”könsskillnaderna är anmärkningsvärda; att göra, vara och tänka judiskt är starkt könsuppdelade praktiker.”

Avhandlingen ger ny kunskap även om konverteringar. Konvertiterna gick alla igenom den formella och långdragna process en övergång till judendomen innebär efter att de blivit förälskade och inlett en relation med en judisk partner. De ”konverterade [emellertid] inte enbart av personliga skäl utan också för att trygga sin familjs sammanhållning och för att kunna ge sina barn en judisk uppfostran genom den form av kulturell överföring som utvecklats i de finska judiska församlingarna under 1900-talet.” Czimbalmos noterar att ”denna typ av förmedling kanske inte nödvändigtvis följer en ortodox uppfattning om [judisk] tradition, trots att de lokala församlingarna följer en form av ortodox judisk halakhah”, men betonar samtidigt att denna typ av traditionsöverföring ”förstärks av både församlingarnas och deras medlemmars flexibla förhållningssätt.” Konverteringarna är också, framhåller författaren, könsuppdelade till sin natur och detta ”trots bruket av tidiga barnkonversioner för barn födda i blandäktenskap.”

Czimbalmos drar slutsatsen att i den finsk-judiska kontexten, ”är judendomen en uttalat ’praxisbaserad religion.’ Den praxis genom vilka informanterna […] etablerar sina judiska identiteter är emellertid ofta nära knutna till judisk kultur snarare än till judisk religion […].”

Resultaten är övertygande och presenteras i ständig dialog med tidigare forskning, vilket gör det lätt att identifiera Czimbalmos bidrag till fältet. Hon föresatte sig för att fylla ett tomrum, och det har hon gjort; avhandlingen är rik och ger en mängd ny kunskap om det judiska livet i Finland och hur medlemmarna i en liten gemenskap funnit och finner vägar att värna och utveckla en judisk identitet. Finska judar ”judar” på sitt eget vis.

Lars M Andersson, Uppsala universitet

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CONTACT INFORMATION

The Hugo Valentin Centre
Thunbergsvägen 3 D
Box 521, 751 20 Uppsala
Phone: +46 18 471 23 59
Email: multiethnica@valentin.uu.se
Home page: multiethnica.org