

Abstract CIFU 14 -Symposium A.2: Shifting and competing ideologies in minority language development and language maintenance.

Name: Sini Rasmus

Affiliation: Sámi allaskuvla – Sámi University of Applied Sciences

### **New speakers of Sámi in Unjárga – transmitting the Sámi language to the next generation**

This paper focuses on new speakerness in the Sámi context. The case study has been done in Unjárga, a small Sea Sámi municipality in northern Norway. The assimilation in Unjárga led to a near stop in the transmission of the Sámi language to the next generation by the middle of the 1960's. The language ideologies caused by norwegianization of that time nearly resulted in a total language loss in many families. Now, the phenomena of new speakerness is increasing in Unjárga, and many are now learning their heritage language.

Through survey- and interview data the processes and results of actively using Sámi language in social networks have been analyzed. This paper focuses on the individual's heritage language learning process in the context of language revitalization. What are the motivations to learn and choose the language to own children, how to find interlocutors, and how children and their language networks affect the new speakers' opportunities of language use will be discussed. Wider, crucial questions relate to how to become an active Sámi speaker as an adult, and how families in these processes should be supported.

Several of the new speakers of Sámi report emotional challenges in the process of reclaiming their language. One of the most important motivations and empowering factors of reclaiming the Sámi language in active use, seems to be the importance of transmitting the language to the next generation. This paper sheds light on the experiences of language learning and interaction efforts, and how the new speakers of Sámi expand their language network through children.

### **References:**

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