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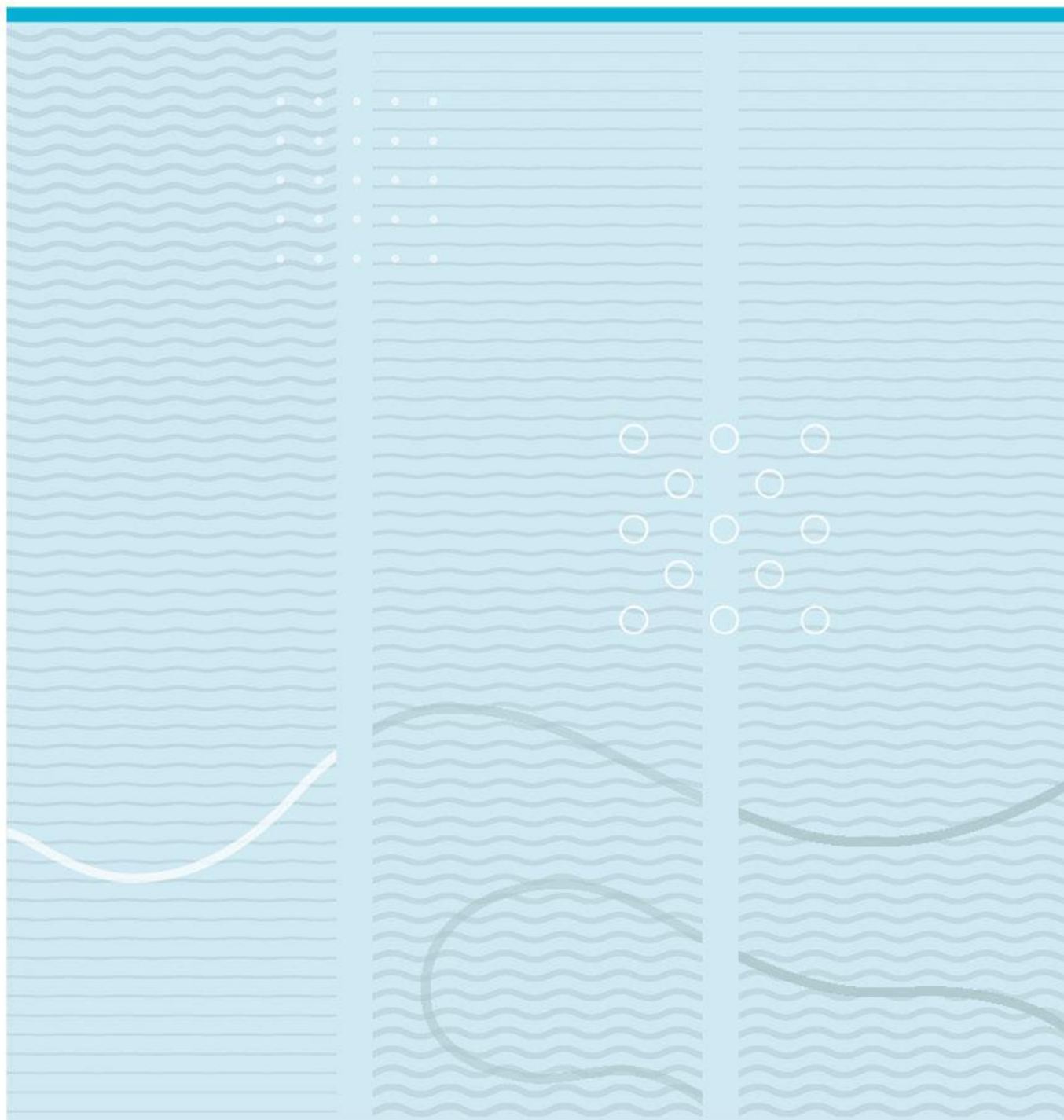
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The World Inside the Classroom

A Qualitative Research on the Experience of Norwegian Teachers in the Context of the Curriculum

“Læreplan for Kunnskapsløftet 2020” and its Sami Content



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Summary

In August of 2020, the new curriculum called “*Læreplan for Kunnskapsløftet 2020*” (LK20) was implemented in all of the primary schools and secondary schools in Norway. In the overarching part it is stated:

“Through the teaching and training the pupils shall gain insight into the indigenous Sami people's history, culture, societal life and rights. The pupils shall learn about diversity and variation in Sami culture and societal life.”

(Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 6)

This research seeks to gain insight in how teachers in Norwegian schools are experiencing the Sami content in the curriculum and how they experience the implementation of the themes in their own teaching. Furthermore, this research seeks to understand how institutionalised patterns, such as the educational curriculum and the teaching material, is affecting how groups, in this context the Sami people, become recognised and misrecognised in various ways.

In order to answer the research questions, the research applies a qualitative method, in order to capture the experiences of the research participants. The research participants are four teachers from Norwegian schools. The methods which are applied are semi-structured qualitative research interviews, as well as a thematic analysis of the findings from the gathered research data. The research is carried out in a broader context of multiculturalism and has a human rights framework at the basis. The philosophical perspectives of constructivism and interpretivism provides the lens which the research is seen through.

The research participants experienced their realities in different ways and saw both benefits and limitations with the curriculum and the implementation of the Sami themes in education. There were also identified various sub-themes of recognition and misrecognition, which in their own way is connected to the education and the context of the Sami people.

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Foreword

Writing a master's thesis has been an unique experience where I for the first time created my own study. It has been an educational, exciting and engaging process fueled by many coffee cups, where inspiration has taken over. It has also been a challenge where I have felt like there was not enough time in the world to do it all. Through these ups and downs, there have been people by my side whose help has been invaluable. I would like to thank the research participants for joining the project and for all of our interesting conversations. I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Oddvar Hollup for offering to be my supervisor and for all guidance and help with the research. I would like to thank my family, especially my mom and dad, who have supported me through the whole process.

Larvik, February 2023

Anne-Marte Jakobsen

1 Introduction

In August of 2020, the new curriculum called “*Læreplan for Kunnskapsløftet 2020*” (LK20) was implemented in all of the primary schools and secondary schools within the Norwegian state borders. This curriculum renewed all of the school subjects, and consists of an overarching part stating the fundamental values and core principles for the basic education, as well as parts specifically related to each school subject. The overarching part indicates the basic approach which represents educational practice, which applies to the entirety of basic education in Norway (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 1).

The overarching part of LK20 references the ILO-Convention No. 169 when stating that the Sami people are recognised as indigenous people, and the Norwegian Constitution when it is further stated that the Norwegian authorities are obligated to facilitate the right conditions for the Sami people to develop Sami languages, culture, and social life, through the Norwegian Education Act, “*Opplæringsloven*” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 2). In the overarching part of LK20, there is a section called “*Identity and Cultural Diversity*”, where it is stated that all pupils will gain insight into Sami history, culture, social life and rights, and that all pupils will learn about the diversity within Sami culture (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 5).

Therefore, content concerning Sami people is to be implemented in all Norwegian schools, and is to be taught to all pupils from 1st grade in primary school, up to 3rd grade of upper secondary school. Through the overarching goals and the subject-specific goals of LK20, teachers are obliged to implement indigenous and Sami content in their teaching. However, teachers are entitled to professional freedom, which is also a key characteristic of the new curriculum, and the teachers can thus implement themes surrounding indigenous and Sami people in their own unique ways.

The Norwegianisation policy was an assimilation policy which officially lasted from 1850 to 1963. Two main characteristics of the assimilation policy was that it was aimed towards the Sami children, and the Sami languages (Brandal, Døving & Plesner, 2018, p. 18). Thus, school was an arena where the assimilation could be carried out most

effectively. The Sami children were sent to boarding schools where they would be separated from, and not allowed to exercise or use, their cultural expressions and their languages. The frames of mind which motivated the Norwegianisation policy developed way before the official policy took effect, and the aftermath of the assimilation is still present to this day. The outcome of the assimilation policy for many Sami people was a significant loss of cultural identity and languages. Another aftermath has been that many Sami people are reclaiming their identities and languages.

As seen during the era of the Norwegianisation policy, schools hold a strong definition power when it comes to how identities are recognised and misrecognised, and this is an underlying premise of this research. This research seeks to explore how schools as institutions affect how Sami identities are recognised and misrecognised. Furthermore, this research seeks to figure out how teachers are experiencing the indigenous and Sami content in the educational material, and how they utilise them and implement them into their own practice, based on the new curriculum.

1.1 The Choice of Topic and Relevance

The choice of topic is largely connected to the general argument that schools are important institutions in society. Schools are arenas which children attend in formative years, and where the main purpose is for the children to gain knowledge. In school, the children are taught subjects through lessons and the corresponding homework. However, I argue that schools are places where the children learn so much more than what is stated in the curriculum. This argument is substantiated by, for example, Halstead & Xiao (2010), Sari & Doganay (2009), and Rahman (2013), who speaks of a hidden curriculum of values.

It goes without saying that schools are important arenas for socialisation. There, the children engage with each other in conversations and play, and there are adults present who have influential power over the children. There are many arenas where children socialise, but I argue that schools as educational institutions carry a certain authority. This authority involves that the signals which are given in schools, could be

registered as knowledge, both outside and inside the classroom. How schools are handling thematics is thus very important.

The implementation of the current curriculum (LK20) brings about a visibility of the Sami people, both when it comes to their rights as indigenous people and pupils in schools within Norwegian state borders, and when it comes to the fact that every pupils should learn about Sami themes such as their culture and languages (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 6). In relation to this research, a large point of interest has to do with the fact that Norwegian schools were the main frontline for the Norwegianisation policy. In light of this, it is interesting to see how the educational content, as stated in the curriculum, are handling themes surrounding the Sami people today. In examining the teachers' points of view, this research will provide an insight in how the content of this relatively new curriculum is carried out in practice, as well as giving an insight in how the teachers themselves experience the content. The research is also part of a wider field of recognition and misrecognition, and gives insight into how modes of recognition and misrecognition take form in the context of Norwegian education and how this is related to the Sami content.

1.1.1 Legislation and the Human Rights Context

The Norwegian Constitution received a new addition concerning the Sami people in 1988. The Constitution's § 108 is named "*The Sami Paragraph*" and declares that the state authorities of Norway have an obligation towards the Sami people to ensure that their languages, culture and social life are safe and can develop (Skogvang, 2023). In addition to this change in the Constitution, there were other laws created to further ensure protection of the Sami people, such as "*the Finnmark Act*" ("*Finnmarksloven*") of 2005 which protects Sami rights (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 146). The Sami Parliament, "*Sametinget*", was founded in 1989 and provided a political platform where Sami representatives could handle political affairs which concerned the Sami people and their rights (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 146). The political shifts and new legislation concerning the Sami people in Norway was largely due to Sami political mobilisation and their spokespersons. However, there was another shift which is relevant for the context of Sami politics and legislation in Norway. After the Second World War, there

were new, international developments and shifts which the Norwegian government took part in (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 147). One of these developments was the emergence of the field of human rights. The Sami political mobilisation took part in this international movement of human rights, and the Sami people became important in the international movement of indigenous peoples (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 147).

“The Universal Declaration of Human Rights” was created in 1948. The UDHR is a non-binding resolution. The declaration serves as a manifestation of an overarching global goal, namely that the events of the war would never happen again. The legally binding measures to adhere to the declaration typically take the forms of conventions and treaties, which the states sign. Signing the treaties and conventions shows the good-will of the states and binds them to an obligation to adhere to the treaty or convention. In order for the states to be legally bound by the treaty or convention, they have to ratify them and implement them into the domestic law of the states. In this way, the state becomes *“duty-bearers”* who are bound by law to adhere to the treaties signed, and the people living in the state in question become the *“rights-holders”* of the specific rights which are stated in the relevant treaty or convention. One example which is relevant to the context of education is *“The United Nations International Convention on the Rights of the Child”* (CRC) of 20th of November 1989, which was ratified by Norway in 1991 (Regjeringen, 2022). Another relevant example is *“The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation’s Convention against Discrimination in Education”* (the UNESCO-Convention) of 14th of December 1960, which was ratified by Norway in 1962 (Regjeringen, 2021).

It is important to note here that the human rights as stated in the UDHR was first and foremost aimed to protect individuals from the states. This means that the rights of indigenous peoples were protected indirectly, because the rights of each individual indigenous person were protected through the signing and ratification of the human rights treaties and conventions which protected their civil rights (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 22). Group rights and institutions were not protected at this point. However, there was a political shift in the 1960s which resulted in an increased focus on group rights and groups protection from the states, especially for the minority groups and

indigenous groups (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 23). This shift brought about declarations, conventions, and treaties which would protect indigenous groups. One example is the *“United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”* which was created the 13th of September, 2007 and which Norway follows in order to protect the Sami people (Regjeringen, 2020). Similarly to the UDHR, the UNDRIP is a non-binding declaration. One of the most important turning point for the Sami people as an indigenous group in Norway was when Norway was the first state to ratify the *“International Labour Organisation’s Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169”* of 1989, on the 20th of June 1990 (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 146). The reason for this is that this is when the Sami people officially and formally got the status as indigenous people, which was a great milestone when it comes to both the recognition and empowerment of the Sami people as a group. Another reason why this convention is especially important, is because it is legally binding, making the state of Norway obligated to protect the rights of the Sami people as an indigenous group, for example by protecting their cultural traditions (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 24).

Stemming from the UDHR, there have been created covenants, in addition to the aforementioned conventions and treaties. The two most important covenants are the *“The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”* (ICCPR) and *“The United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)”*. They were both created on the 16th of December in 1966, and ratified by Norway in 1972 (Regjeringen, 15.03.2021; Regjeringen, 10.03.2022). Together with the UDHR, these two covenants and their additional optional protocols, constitute what is formally known as the International Bill of Human Rights (OHCHR, 2022). The International Bill of Human Rights is known as the foundation of International Human Rights Law.

As the name implies, ICCPR sets out to protect the civil and political rights of the rights-holders. § 27 of ICCPR is an article which directly addresses minority rights and collective rights to having their cultural life, religions, and languages protected. § 27 of ICCPR states (OCHR, 2023):

“In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.”

ICESCR is a covenant which protects the economic, social, and cultural rights of the rights-holders. § 13.1 of ICESCR declares the right for everyone to get an education. In addition, the article expresses the importance of respect, freedom, and dignity in education. § 13.1 of ICESCR states (OCHR, 2023):

“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”

1.1.2 The Multicultural Context

An important context for this research is the backdrop of the multicultural society, and the dynamic between majority and minority. The definition of what constitutes a minority is not easy to grasp, but the term is commonly defined as a group of people who identify on the basis of a shared history and shared common traits, and on the basis of having been in precarious situations (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 21).

Norway is a multicultural country with a vast diversity in its demographic. Minorities in Norway are divided between *“immigrant minorities”*, which are minority groups who have arrived in the country more recently, and *“national minorities”* (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 21). The national minorities are defined as groups of people who have roots in countries other than the one they are currently living in, but who are considered national to that country they are living in because they have a long-standing attachment to that country, and because they with time lost the attachment to the

country which they have their roots in (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 21). The term “*national minorities*” was implemented in Norway in 1998, when the country joined the Council of Europe’s “*Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*”, and the national minorities are the Jews, the Kvens, the Roma, the Romani, and the Forest Finns (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 14).

While the Sami people constitute a minority group in the Norwegian context, they are not recognised as one of the national minorities. The Sami people are recognised as indigenous peoples, and as aforementioned, this recognition became official when Norway ratified the ILO-Convention in 1990 (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 146). There are different reasons why the Sami people are recognised as indigenous peoples rather than national minorities. Indigenous people are in part also defined by the fact that their land was colonised by other people (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 21). For the Sami people, this marks an important difference, because they constituted the initial population, and thus also the majority, of the area which today is known as Norway (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 24). Another reason why the Sami people would rather be recognised as indigenous people rather than national minorities, has to do with the rights. The Sami people have more rights by being recognised as indigenous peoples and through Norway's ratification of treaties protecting their indigenous rights, such as the ILO-Convention, than what they would have if they were recognised as national minorities and having the rights which are set forth in the convention protecting national minorities (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 24-25).

The question of rights is important in the context of multicultural society, and in the majority-minority debate. The discourse largely has to do with when there is a need for individual rights, and when there is a need for group rights. As seen previously in the chapter about the human rights context, the treaties and conventions which protect the group rights of the Sami people and other indigenous groups were implemented because there was discussion about the need for group rights. These discussions consisted of the question of how the individual rights did not help develop the indigenous communities, and that group rights would aid in such development, as well as protect the indigenous institutions from the state (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 23).

Another part of the majority/minority discourse is the argument that the majority itself is so diverse in this modern age, that there would hardly be any need for special rights given to indigenous and/or minority groups, such as the Sami people.

1.2 The Scope of the Study

This research is a qualitative research of the experiences of the research participants. I will therefore point out that I am not looking for quantifiable data, nor are there any right or wrong answers to the interview questions. This research is using an interpretive and constructivist lens when examining the experiences of the research participants.

The research seeks to investigate how the research participants experience the indigenous and Sami content in the curriculum, as well as how they experience implementing them in their practice. As LK20 is only relevant to Norwegian schools, the research is limited to Norwegian primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary schools. The research is also limited to teachers who teach at these schools, and who have been teaching while the current curriculum has been in effect. There is also a curriculum named *“Kunnskapsløftet 2020 – Samisk”*, which is important to note, but will not otherwise be examined in this research (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2022).

The overarching part of the curriculum is the focus point and the study approaches the content of this part of the curriculum thoroughly. This research does not account for the content of the subject specific parts of the curriculum related to Sami themes, unless the research participants share their experiences about these parts during their interviews. Thus, the subject specific parts of the curriculum could be included in the study, but will not be examined thoroughly.

1.3 Research Objectives and Research Questions

The Sami content of the overarching part of the curriculum is found in the chapters called *“Core Values of the Education and Training”* and *“Identity and Cultural Diversity”*. When reading through these chapters, I became interested in examining how such

general and somehow abstract values can be carried out in practice in education, both in general, and in relation to the Sami content. Understanding how this is done is essential to understand how the teachers work with the Sami themes in their practice. It is also essential to understand how the teachers experience the content in relation to aspects of recognition and misrecognition of the Sami people. Therefore, a research objective is to examine these two relevant chapters of the curriculum. However, it is important to keep in mind that these chapters are part of a greater whole, and cannot necessarily in every context be seen separately.

In this research, there are two primary research questions:

“How do the teachers in Norwegian schools experience the indigenous and Sami content in the curriculum, and how are they implementing the content into their practice?”

“How are institutionalised patterns, such as the educational curriculum and the teaching material, affecting how groups are recognised and misrecognised, and how does this apply to the context of the Sami people?”

1.4 The Structure of the Thesis

The entirety of the thesis is built up of seven chapters. In the introductory chapter, the research and its line of inquiry is presented. In the second chapter, the essential background to the main aspects of the research is accounted for. The third chapter provides the theories which are applied into the context of this research. The fourth chapter displays a literature review which positions this research in a greater context of research. The fifth chapter accounts for the methodology which is utilised to carry out the research. The sixth chapter contains the analysis and findings of the gathered data, as well as a discussion of the findings. Lastly, chapter seven comprises a conclusion and summary of the findings.

2 Historical Background

This chapter presents the background material which is essential to understand the main aspects of the research. There are two main aspects of this research that will be touched on in this chapter. Firstly, the history of the Sami people in Norway will be accounted for, with a main focus on the history of assimilation and revitalisation of identity. Secondly, the relevant content of the overarching part of the curriculum will be accounted for, explaining the content of the Sami people in the chapter “*Core Values of Education and Training*” and the subchapter “*Identity and Cultural Diversity*”.

2.1 The Assimilation of the Sami People in Norway

The “*Norwegianisation policy*” is the commonly used term for the extensive assimilation politics that impacted multiple of the national minorities, and the Sami people, in Norway. The policy had two major concepts at its basis. The first concept was Social Darwinism, where the main principle was that there are some ways of life with an inherently greater value than others (Zachariassen, 2022). When applied to the Sami people, their ways of life were considered to be of lesser value than the ways of life of the Norwegian majority. The second concept was nationalism, where the protection of the state is of uttermost importance, and assimilation of minorities was considered a useful strategy to enforce the nation (Brandal et.al, 2018, p. 22).

The era of the Norwegianisation policy can be divided into four periods. The first period lasted from 1850-1870, and is understood as a slow build-up of tendencies towards Norwegianisation (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 134). In the educational context, this took the form of the Norwegian government making investments in a new school policy (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 135). As a result of the debates surrounding the new school policy, was a moderate approach where for example textbooks with both Sami languages and Norwegian was allowed, and the schools were searching for teachers who had competence in Sami languages (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 135). However, this moderate approach was considered means to an end, as there was necessary for teachers to teach the Sami children in Sami languages in order for the Sami children to

reach the teaching goals, and in this way, the use of the Sami languages was a way of reaching Norwegianisation (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 135).

The second phase lasted from 1870 to 1900, and is considered as a period where the Norwegianisation policy was intensified, especially in the educational sphere (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 138). Norwegianisation was not as effective in schools as the government wanted and there was resistance against it among teachers, so the central government decided that the Norwegianisation policy had to both be escalated and sharpened (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 139). As a result of the sharpened Norwegianisation policy, the *“Instrux for Lærerne i de Lappiske og Kvænske Overgangsdistrikter i Tromsø Stift”* was implemented (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 139). This was an instruction about how teachers were to operate in the classroom and regulations for the teaching materials, which would ensure a strengthened Norwegianisation policy, by for example limiting the use of textbooks with both Sami languages and Norwegian (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 139-140). In 1898 *“Wexelsen-plakaten”* was implemented, and this was a modernisation of the instructions of 1880 (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 140). In this second phase of the Norwegianisation policy, you can see that it had some effect in influencing the teachers. Teachers were more willing to adhere to the Norwegianisation policy (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 141).

The third phase lasted from 1900 until 1940, and by this period, the Norwegianisation was represented in legislation and instructions (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 143). School was considered the primary institution for promoting the Norwegianisation policy, and this was the time of the boarding schools (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 143). The boarding schools were schools where the Sami children lived away from their families and were educated in subjects which were taught in the Norwegian language. In this period, the resistance against the Norwegianisation policy, even if there had been resistance from the beginning, started to pick up the pace, and this will be touched on more in the next chapter. As a result of this resistance, there was in 1936 stated in the the *“Educational Act”* that Sami languages were allowed to be used in schools (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 145-146).

2.2 Sami Resistance of the Norwegianisation Policy

The Sami people resisted the Norwegianisation policy from the very beginning. However, in the third period of the Norwegianisation era, the resistance became more powerful. The largest resistance was raised by the two first generations of the political Sami mobilisation, which have gotten the name of “*Sami National Strategists*”, and some front figures were Elsa Laula Renberg, Andreas Larsen, and Isak Saba (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 145). As this was the start of the mobilisation phase, not much were achieved yet, but some things happened which are worth mentioning: The first Sami national meeting was held in 1917, the government agreed to remove the words “*Finn*” and “*Lapp*” from public use and replaced these words with the word “*Sami*” (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 145).

As aforementioned, the Norwegianisation era is divided into four periods. The last period was the post-war period, and is seen as the period where the Norwegianisation policy reached its end, after a strong Sami political resistance in the 70s and 80s (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 146). The most important outcome of this resistance is the official recognition of the Sami people as indigenous peoples. After the Sami people were officially recognised as indigenous people in Norway, things escalated, and there were implemented legislations which will be presented more in depth in the next chapter. In this period, the King of Norway, Harald V, visited the Sami Parliament and publicly apologised to the Sami people for the injustice which was committed towards them by the Norwegian government (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 146). This was a period of the Norwegian central authorities to implement new legislations in hopes of providing remedy to the effects of the Norwegianisation policy, and these legislations would be met with somewhat strong resistance locally (Brandal et.al., 2018, p. 147). One legislation which met strong resistance was the rights of the Sami to have extended rights to Sami education in schools (Brandal et.al, Niemi, 2018, p. 147).

2.3 Core Values of the Education and Training

Human rights are mentioned in the chapter called “*Core Values of the Education and Training*” in the curriculum LK20. There it is stated that the values that creates the

foundation for education are rooted in human rights (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 4). In addition to referring to the human rights at large, the curriculum also makes reference to the ILO Convention, directly making reference to the Sami people:

“According to the ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, the Sami in Norway have the status as an indigenous people. The Norwegian Constitution lays down the principle that the central authorities must make it possible for the Sami to protect and develop the Sami languages, culture and societal life, a principle that is addressed in the Education Act. The core curriculum also applies to the Sami school. The designation “the Sami school” is used about education and training which follows a parallel and equal Sami curriculum. The Sami curriculum applies in the municipalities that are part of the administrative area for Sami languages. The same curriculum also applies to pupils who have the right to be taught in one of the Sami languages in the rest of Norway. Pupils in the rest of Norway who have the right to learn a Sami language must follow the Sami curriculum in the Sami subject. School is responsible for ensuring that access is given to these rights” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 2-3).

The curriculum adheres to the obligations set forth by “the Sami paragraph” in protecting and developing Sami culture and languages, by stating that:

“The Sami school shall ensure that the pupils receive education and training based on Sami values and the Sami languages, culture and societal life. The values in the objectives clause are also Sami values and apply in the Sami school. It is important to have a holistic- Sami perspective and an indigenous-people's perspective in the Sami school, and to focus on material and immaterial cultural heritage, such as traditional knowledge, duodji/duodje/duedtie and the importance of familial relations” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 4).

“Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway's cultural heritage. Our shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 6).

“Language gives us a sense of belonging and cultural awareness. In Norway, Norwegian and the Sami languages, South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami, have equal standing.” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 6).

The curriculum also states that there is not only the Sami pupils that shall gain knowledge of the Sami people. Every pupil shall gain knowledge of these themes, as it is stated that:

“Through the teaching and training the pupils shall gain insight into the indigenous Sami people's history, culture, societal life and rights. The pupils shall learn about diversity and variation in Sami culture and societal life” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 6).

3 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter the concepts and theories which make up the theoretical framework will be presented. Firstly, the theories of constructivism and phenomenology will be accounted for. Secondly, the concept of *“indigenisation”* will be explained. Lastly, Charles Taylor’s understanding of the theory of politics of recognition will be explained.

3.1 Constructivism and Phenomenology

In qualitative research, where the findings may not be quantifiable like they are in quantitative research, it is more common to apply a theory with a greater level of abstraction (Bryman, 2012, p. 21). *“Constructivist theory”* is one example of this. Constructivist theory claims that social phenomena, such as social categories and experiences, are continually achieved and revised by social actors (Bryman, 2012, p. 33). In simpler terms, social actors continually construct their realities. The theory of constructivism is closely linked to the philosophy of phenomenology.

“Phenomenology” explores how social actors interpret phenomena on the basis of their own point of view (Bryman, 2012, p. 714). In this chapter, constructivism and interpretive phenomenology are understood as a theoretical framework which will aid in understanding the context of the research. In the methodology chapter, constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology are explained as a part of the research method.

3.2 Indigenisation in Education

In order to understand the space Sami themes take up in the educational system in Norway, the term *“indigenisation”* is useful. Indigenisation could be considered to belong to the *“decolonial theory”* branch, which aims to address and dismantle structures of colonialism and oppression. Indigenisation is a concept which makes reference to indigenous groups, and is used to describe the efforts which are made to create a space for indigenous people in different spheres, such as education (Nakata, 2006). In the context of this research, indigenisation could be used to explain the way Sami themes take up space in the overarching part of the curriculum, the subjects which the research participants tell about, and the teaching material.

3.3 Charles Taylor's Politics of Recognition

A theory of recognition is Charles Taylor's "*politics of recognition*". Taylor draws on the phenomenologist philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel when understanding that recognition is created through interpersonal socialisation (Findlay & Hegel, 1979 [1807]). While there are many theories surrounding recognition, Taylor's primary focus is on the political aspects of recognition. According to Taylor, recognition is very prominent in contemporary politics. This relationship between contemporary politics and the concept of recognition is discussed in his essay "*The Politics of Recognition*" which was published in the book "*Multiculturalism*" (1994). The major premise for Taylor's theory is that recognition is not something that we owe people as a mere formality, but that it is actually a "vital human need" (Taylor, 1994, p. 26). Another major premise in this theory is that misrecognition is not just disrespectful, but could cause severe harm to those who are misrecognised (Taylor, 1994, p. 26). The demand for recognition has been made on behalf of minority groups and indigenous groups.

In "*Politics of Difference*", Taylor describes the historical and theoretical changes that have led up to a newfound understanding and emphasis on recognition, with the outcome being two different modes of recognition, namely "*politics of equal dignity*" and "*politics of difference*" (Taylor, 1994). Taylor states that in earlier hierarchical societies, "*honour*" was defined by inequality because it was awarded to some and not all, and in modern democratic societies, the more modern concept of "*dignity*" is universal for all (Taylor, 1994, p. 37). Thus, it was the fall of social hierarchies and the rise of modern democracy that gave rise to the politics of equal dignity. Within this politics of equal dignity, people are recognised as equals on the basis of a shared human dignity, and people are thus treated with the same respect. Taylor states that politics of equal dignity entails that people are awarded with the same rights and entitlements on the basis of this equality, and that inequalities on the basis of for example class is to be avoided (Taylor, 1994, p. 37).

The second process Taylor describes is the development of the concept of identity, which gave rise to the politics of difference. Taylor attributes the modern understanding of identity to a process where one concept develops into a better

understanding of identity (Taylor, 1994). According to Taylor, we become humans who are capable of understanding ourselves and who are able to define our identity, by socialising with others (Taylor, 1994). As he explained, a feature of humanity is “its fundamentally dialogical character” (Taylor, 1994, p. 32). The overarching idea in the politics of difference is that everyone should be recognised on the basis of their uniqueness and their differences, whether that is individual differences or different characteristics of groups (Taylor, 1994, p. 38). In other words, respect stems from acknowledging what makes someone unique. Like in the case of politics of dignity, this mode of recognition has been criticised for opening up a possibility of granting some individuals or groups different rights which are not equal to all.

The demand for respect is what the two modes of recognition have in common, albeit with different approaches for ensuring respect. The same could be said about non-discrimination, which is another goal of both modes of recognition (Taylor, 1994). Non-discrimination in politics of equal dignity is ensuring that every human is granted the same rights and entitlements without favouring a group over another.

Non-discrimination within the politics of difference behave differently. Here, the idea is to take into account differences so as to not fall into the trap of assimilation and colour-blindness. Colour-blindness is the failing to acknowledge, see, or take into account the clear differences among people. In these cases, Taylor states that distinctiveness is “ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or major identity” (Taylor, 1994, p. 38). The result is ultimately that some individuals or groups may be misrecognised, and as a result, be harmed, by for example being assimilated.

One may be of the impression that these two modes are two polar opposites. However, the case is that politics of difference stems from the politics of equal dignity (Taylor, 1994, p. 39). The difference is the idea of equality. In the politics of equal dignity, equality takes on the form of sameness, and that the same principles, rights, and rules apply to everyone in the same way. In the politics of differences, equality means that everyone has the equal right to be recognised based on their uniqueness. In other words, within these two modes of recognition, the goals are the same, but the approaches to achieving these goals are quite different.

4 Literature Review

The previous chapters have positioned the research in a historical context and given an explanation of the relevant theory of politics of recognition. This chapter seeks to position this research in a broader field of research, and review the literature published about the themes relevant to the field of recognition, especially in the context of education. The literature review is thematically structured, seeking to highlight literary contributions on each theme in order to figure out how the themes are connected to each other and to identify patterns between them.

4.1 The Concept of Identity

In sociology, “identity involves knowing who we are, knowing who others are, them knowing who we are, us knowing who they think they are, and so on” according to Jenkins (2008). In other words, in the sociological understanding of the concept, identity is connected to the understanding of the self both as individuals and in relation to a community. In “*Place and Identity*” (2001), Trond Thuen shares a similar perception of identity. The point of his article is to understand the relationship between individuals and the places that surround them, and how this relationship affects forms of identity attribution (Thuen, 2001). According to Thuen, identity can be understood individually as a unique self that is “identical to oneself” and “unlike everyone else”, as well as collectively, where identity creates a membership in a category based on a set of common characteristics, such as belonging to a place, making individuals “alike everyone else” (Thuen, 2001, p. 79). An important argument which Thuen makes in his research, is that the different parts to the dual understanding of identity, can change depending on location. For example, the emphasis of uniqueness and individuality dominates the Western world, but other places in the world, there is a larger emphasis on group identity (Thuen, 2001, p. 79). Here we can see that locality can make a difference depending on how we see identity, which could tie together with how locality can affect the beliefs which affect the understanding of sameness and difference.

Within group identification, where identity is attributed to us by being identical to someone else, there is a focus on sameness. Across from this understanding, one can find a different understanding, putting its focus on perceived differences, which could take the shape of othering, and prejudices leading to essentialism and stereotypes. In other words, in this sense, individual and group identities are created when we meet others who are alike or unlike ourselves.

4.2 Sameness and Othering

Some key terms to exemplify the relationship between similarity and difference within the concept of identity, are “*sameness*” and “*othering*”. Gullestad examines the notion of “*imagined sameness*” in the work “*Det norske sett med nye øyne*”, and one of her main arguments is that the concept of sameness is central to Norwegian self-understanding (Gullestad, 2002). According to Gullestad, sameness can be understood as a conceptualisation of national identity focusing on equality and sameness as central to being considered of equal value (Gullestad, 2002). Åberg discusses this relationship in her study from 2021 called “*Imagined Sameness or Imagined Difference?*” This study is contextualised within the Norwegian school system, examining teachers’ attitudes towards cultural difference among their pupils. One finding in Åberg’s study was that some teachers found that addressing difference was disruptive to an idea of an imagined Norwegian sameness, and that this disruption could be detrimental to equality, and that this made these teachers inclined to promote schools as neutral places (Åberg, 2021). Sameness was important for these teachers to ensure that the schools were egalitarian and promoted equality. Åberg uses Lundahl (2016) and Chinga-Ramirez (2015) in order to explain that in the Norwegian school system, “*learning Norwegianness*” has been thought to promote justice and a central goal of unified education (Åberg, 2021, p. 179-180). Another finding in Åberg’s research was that some teachers found that recognising diversity among the pupils could be done by revitalising the idea of “*Norwegian sameness*” by acknowledging that the Norwegian majority itself is diverse, and that addressing this diversity could assist in fighting against injustice (Åberg, 2021). A main argument retrieved from Åberg’s study is that strong assumption of sameness, a type of prejudice, creates an

intolerance to differences, and that this intolerance is what is detrimental to equality, because it promotes an environment where people who are presumed to be different become negatively characterised and thus, discriminated against (Åberg, 2021).

Said examines the phenomenon of “othering” in his book *“Orientalism”* (1978). Othering is defined as a process where representatives from a group, such as an individual or multiple people, attribute negative characteristics towards an individual or multiple people from another group, making it so that the negatively characterised people are set apart and representing a group which is different from the one placing the negative characteristics (Said, 1978). This can commonly be found in social settings where there is a strong sense of a majority, such as a national majority, and minority, such as immigrants and indigenous peoples. Sense of belonging to one of these groups, such as being part of the homogenous majority or part of the minority, which is either met with neutrality or “othered”, could then be a very strongly felt attribution of identity.

4.3 Neutrality

In Åberg’s study, avoidance of differences was linked to a notion of the school as a neutral and equal place for all, which could be interpreted as colour-blindness (Åberg, 2021, p. 191). As we have seen earlier in Taylor’s *“Politics of Recognition”*, colour-blindness is the failure to acknowledge differences, which could cause diversity to be assimilated into one major identity (Taylor, 1994, p. 38). Åberg explains in her research that by revitalising and challenging the view of what it is to be Norwegian, both views of a presumed sameness and the views of the presumed “other” were weakened (Åberg, 2021, p. 191-192). This proves the premise of Nustad, which we will look at later, which is that schools are places that could counteract the formation of prejudices such as essentialistic views and stereotypical thinking (Brandal et al., 2018).

In Åberg’s research, she explains that the teachers who tried to avoid acknowledging differences found the differences disruptive and uncomfortable, and she argues that in order to counteract pupils being misrecognised through this avoidance, the teachers should adopt a *“pedagogy of discomfort”* (Åberg, 2021). The notion of a pedagogy of

discomfort is supported by authors such as Røthing (2019) and Zembylas (2015). A pedagogy of discomfort, where teachers deal with the discomfort of challenging biases, could be one of the ways in which the schools can function in the way that Nustad poses. One of the ways one could approach the pedagogy of discomfort, is through something Åberg explains as a *“multicultural adaptation”* (Åberg, 2021). Much like Taylor (1994) claims that there is a tension between politics of equal dignity on the one hand and politics of difference on the other, Åberg argues that there is a tension between equality understood as sameness and equality understood as *“multicultural adaptation”* (Åberg, 2021). She further argues that while the goal of neutrality and comfort could very well be well intentioned, there is a value in preparing the pupils to become advocates for justice by not shying away from the difficult discussions about differences (Åberg, 2021, p. 193).

4.4 Alienation Through Diffuse Narratives

Eriksen, Aamas and Bjerkenes explains in *“Å lytte til - og å engasjere seg i fortellinger”* that the Sami people have been mystified and alienated through the creation of a diffuse narrative, placing the Sami people somewhere outside time and place (Eriksen, Aamas & Bjerkenes, 2022, p. 13). Hætta builds up under this argument, and explains in the work *“Samisk kulturkunnskap”* that one example of such a diffuse narrative is when imprecise terms such as *“Sami Land”* and *“the North Calotte”* are used about the locations of the Sami people (Hætta, 2007, p. 7). In the textbooks used in the Norwegian schools, one can see that such diffuse narratives are present in education. Eriksen exemplifies in the work *“Teaching About the Other in Primary Level Social Studies”* that statements such as the one claiming that the Sami people were the first people to live in Norway, creates an illusion that Norway existed before the Sami people settled in the area (Eriksen, 2018, p. 62). The Sami people are indigenous people, meaning that they have inhabited an area before the creation of nation states. Another common conception about indigenous groups is that *“they have been around since the dawn of time”*, which is also diffuse and alienating (Eriksen et al., 2022, p. 13). Such statements place indigenous groups outside of the time we are in now, even when indigenous groups have taken part of modernisation processes. This could tie

into Thuen's understanding of identity, in terms of how a sense of identity could stem from attachment to a place (Thuen, 2001). In accordance with the work of Nustad, schools are places where prejudice could be counteracted, by challenging these alienating and diffuse narratives in textbooks, as well as in how teachers talk about the presumed "other" in their teaching.

4.5 Prejudice Through Essentialisation

Today, there are approximately 80,000 Sami people in the world, and about half of them live within the Norwegian state borders. In textbooks used in schools, there is a certain stereotypical perception of the Sami people. Gjerpe explains in the work *"Gruppebaserte fordommer i lærebøker: Konseptualiseringen av "lærebok Sápmi"* that more often than not, the Sami people are portrayed as partaking in traditional reindeer husbandry in the inland, wearing the traditional dress gákti, and living in a lávvu (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 295). Gjerpe dubs this *"the textbook Sami"* (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 295). This portrayal may apply to some and does indeed portray some of the aspects of the traditional Sami culture in general, but a one-sided representation of the Sami people could contribute to an essentialist and homogenous perception of a group who has always been, and continues to be, diverse. Furthermore, such representation could make it so Sami people, and in a school context, Sami pupils, are not recognising themselves in the way they collectively are represented. There are differences within the culture, and there are differences between the languages. Lingaas explains in *"Hate Speech and Racialised Discrimination of the Norwegian Sámi"* that languages are essential for group identity, and that the assimilation policy which affected the languages, led to loss of the Sami languages and thus, parts of their identities (Lingaas, 2021, p. 94). Today, there are three living Sami languages in Norway: Lule Sami, South Sami, and Northern Sami (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 299). These languages differ greatly from each other and speakers of one of the languages do not necessarily understand the other language. Lingaas explains that the Northern Sami language has received a stronger position in society (Lingaas, 2021, p. 94). According to Eriksen, the textbooks used in school prove this strong position of the Northern Sami language and the Northern Sami people, because most of the school textbooks written in a Sami

language, are written in Northern Sami (Eriksen, 2018, p. 61). In this way, “*essentialisation*” has given one part of a group a stronger position because the essential traits apply more to them, than the other parts of the group. Gjerpe explains that a “*strategic essentialisation*” is an important tool for people to reclaim identities (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 316). However, if this strategic essentialisation only applies to part of a group, there are parts of the groups that get marginalised.

In the work “*Nasjonale minoriteter og urfolk i norsk politikk fra 1900 til 2016*”, Nustad is one of the writers, and writes about the bias of “*prejudice*”. According to Nustad, our prejudice tells us something about ourselves because they are tied to our own identities, for example our values and our attitudes (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 273). Nustad claims that prejudice is caused when reality is categorised by specific traits (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 275). In other words, prejudice happens when essentialisation is happening, these two co-exist. However, as Nustad states, prejudice based on essentialisation is not necessarily the problem; the problem is when people are not adapting their views according to new knowledge, for example by meeting someone who challenges their prejudice (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 275). Nustad explains that there is a social aspect to prejudice. Since prejudice makes the world more manageable because reality is simplified by categories, social actors get a clear understanding of what categories they belong to, and what categories they do not belong to (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 275; 276-277). In other words, essentialisation and prejudice creates a social environment where people get a clear understanding of who belongs and who does not belong.

Prejudice and essentialisation can lead to othering as well. This happens when negative attributes are attached to the groups which are categorised as “*the others*”. Nustad explains that one common function of prejudice, when negative attributes are attached to the others, is that the groups what identify as the “*us*” gain a positive sense of self, because they are not like the negative “*others*” (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 276). As we have seen through the Norwegianisation policy, such a view of a positive “*us*” and a negative “*others*” can have tremendous effects. Nustad explains that prejudice can legitimise power and privileges for the “*us*” by treating the “*others*” in certain ways

(Brandal et al., 2018, 276). In the example of the Norwegianisation policy, schools were places where such a power was exercised. However, schools are also the places where prejudice can be counteracted (Brandal, 2018, p. 273). Nustad argues that prejudice can be counteracted in inclusive, safe, and open communities where people can learn to add nuance to the essentialistic views, gain knowledge, and learn to understand diversity (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 273-274).

5 Methodology

This chapter contains an explanation of the methods applied in the research. The goal of the methodology chapter is to show how the research question is answered. This chapter presents philosophical perspectives which are the foundations for the methodology, explains what methods were used and how they were applied in the research, accounts for ethical considerations, and provides an evaluation of the methods used in the research.

5.1 Epistemology and Ontology

The foundation for qualitative methods is the relationship between the philosophical positions of “*interpretivist epistemology*” and “*constructionist ontology*” (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). Epistemology is the philosophical study which concerns itself with questions of what is regarded as knowledge (Bryman, 2012, p. 27). Applied to the context of qualitative research and for studying the social world and its phenomena, one needs an epistemological approach which shares the same flexible characteristics as the qualitative research methods. Interpretivism is thus an epistemological lens which is suitable for this research. Interpretivism is to understand, or to interpret, how meaning is applied to social actions (Bryman, 2012, p. 29). Such epistemology is often linked to the social research method of ethnography, however, ethnography is not used in this research. Here, interpretivism is applied to qualitative interviews, in order to interpret and understand the social meaning behind what is said in the interviews.

Ontology concerns itself with the nature of knowledge and how knowledge exists (Bryman, 2012, p. 32). The ontological position which is appropriate for this qualitative research is the constructivist approach. Constructivism can be used to understand how concepts such as identity and culture are not absolute truths out of reach of human society, but rather something which is socially constructed and maintained (Bryman, 2012, p. 33). This is important to this research, as it aids in understanding the social element of formation and maintenance of terms such as identity, culture, recognition, misrecognition, stereotypes, alienation, etc.

5.2 Qualitative Method

To answer the research questions, qualitative research methods are used because experience is something that is difficult to quantify. Operating with qualitative methods means setting out to see through the eyes of the people being studied, in order to understand their experiences (Bryman, 2012, p. 399). One aims to understand lived reality, and to understand the meaning behind social phenomena. This ties up with another main preoccupation of qualitative research methods, which is an emphasis on understanding reality based on context (Bryman, 2012, p. 401). Social life is dynamic and built up of different contexts, as well as social life being everchanging and unfolding over time. This makes qualitative research process-oriented in nature (Bryman, 2012, p. 402). In other words, social life is less tangible and more dynamic, and the qualitative mode of methodology mirrors this. Flexibility and a limited structure characterise the qualitative methods, which means that the researchers approach social settings with a more general focus which gradually narrows down (Bryman, 2012, p. 403). On the basis of these preoccupations of qualitative methods, such an approach is appropriate for this research.

5.2.1 The Qualitative Research Interview

The qualitative research interview is a widely employed method in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012, p. 469). The qualitative interview has a retrospective approach, meaning it looks back at what has already happened, rather than looking at something that is going on at the moment. However, this method still emphasises understanding meaning, context, and processes. These interviews are also flexible and limited in structure, and there are two main interview styles. The unstructured interview is more like a conversation guided by prompts, and the semi-structured interview is a flexible type of interview where one may use an interview guide to lead the interview (Bryman, 2012, p. 471). In this research, the semi-structured interview style will be used.

5.3 Data Collection

This chapter consists of a walk-through of the process of collecting the qualitative data, starting with the preparations, moving on to the execution of the data collection, and concluding with the processing of the gathered data.

5.3.1 Preparations

One of the preparations for data collection is to create an interview guide (Annex 1). According to Bryman, when you are constructing an interview guide, you should ask yourself what you need to know in order to answer the research question (Bryman, 2012, p. 473). The interview guide consists of some key questions categorised into different topics. The categories were 1) introduction questions, 2) the teacher's competence and background, 3) practice in the classroom, 4) textbooks and learning material, 5) the teacher's attitudes and role, 5) the pupils's attitudes, 6) co-worker's attitudes, 7) recognition and misrecognition, and 8) closing question. To prepare for the interviews, I tested the dictaphone to ensure that I understood how to use it and that my voice could be heard at different volumes and at different distances. I then connected the dictaphone to my computer and made sure that I could transfer the recordings and that I had the proper software to listen to them. One last step of the preparations for data collection was to get familiar with the rules and laws regarding data collection. In order to get familiar, I got updated on "*Personopplysningsloven*", the law which regulated all treatment of personal data in Norway (Lovdata.no).

5.3.2 Selecting the Research Participants

For this research I was looking for research participants who are teachers in Norwegian schools who have completed their teacher education and who have been teaching while LK20 has been in effect. Furthermore, there were two main objectives which were relevant when choosing the informants. First, I wanted to interview at least one participant who teaches in primary school, one who teaches in lower secondary school, and one who teaches in upper secondary school. The reason for this is the wish to bring forth different viewpoints from teachers teaching at the different levels in the educational system. Second, I wanted some variation within the research participant

sample, so the research participants are all teaching different subjects, also to bring forth different viewpoints. In order to have research participants from all levels of the educational system, the minimum number of research participants are 3. At maximum I wanted 2 participants from each level in order to analyse their answers against one another, making 6 the maximum number of research participants for this research. I ended up getting 4 research participants, 2 teaching at primary school, 1 teaching in lower secondary school, and 1 teaching at upper secondary school.

5.3.3 Establishing Contact with the Research Participants

For establishing contact with potential research participants, I sent an email to contact teachers of Norwegian lower secondary and upper secondary schools. The mail itself consisted of a short introduction of myself and the research, and had two attachments. The first attachment was a more in-depth information letter informing about the research and a declaration of consent (Annex 2) and the second was a flyer (Annex 3) which they were asked to hang up for other teachers to see, if they wanted to. Sending the information to different schools to establish contact with possible research participants can aid in creating a maximum variation within the research group, as well as providing a wider reach. However, a weakness is that this type of contact may make it easy for potential research candidates to dismiss the inquiry. Only one teacher was willing to join the research based on this approach. In addition to sending these emails, I contacted teachers, who I know personally, and asked them if they would like to join the research. This method proved to be more effective, and all of the people I approached in this way participated in the research.

5.3.4 Presentation of the Research Participants

Each of the research participants' names have been anonymised with an alias and their ages are put in age groups, rather than using their actual name and age, in order to ensure their anonymity. Below is listed some additional generalised characteristics of each of the research participants, which is considered relevant to the research.

Tor: 55-60 years old. Teaches history, social science, and Norwegian in upper secondary school. He has history as the main subject from the University of Oslo, intermediate

subject in media science and intermediate subject in Nordic. He also has a basic subject in political science. In addition to this, he has a general teacher education. Tor has been working as a teacher for circa 30 years. He has also been working as an external lecturer at OsloMet, at the teacher's education. Tor is also a textbook author in the history subject.

Alma: 25-30 years old. Teaches English, gym, and swimming in primary school. She has a four-year primary school teacher education, 1st-7th grade, and then a two-year master's in physical education. Alma has been working as a teacher for almost 3 years.

Siri: 25-30 years old. Teaches natural science and maths in lower secondary school. Last year she taught social science and English. She has a four-year primary school teacher education, 5th-10th grade, a one-year study in law, and a two-year master's with a specialisation in mathematics. She has been working as a teacher for 1 and a half years.

Kari: 20-25 years old. Teaches initial education in primary school. She has taken a five-year primary school education, 1st-7th grade, with a master's degree in initial education. Kari has been working as a teacher 40 % one school year, and 100 % for circa half a year.

Three of the four research participants are quite new in the teacher profession and still relatively inexperienced. Tor has been working as a teacher for a long time and has additional experience as a textbook author in the history subject. These differences in professional experience are important to take note of, because this affects the research participants' answers, and whether they can actually answer the interview questions or not.

5.3.5 Conducting the Interviews

The interview locations were of the research informants' choosing in order to make them feel as comfortable as possible with the interview setting. In order to capture as many details as possible during the interviews, it was favourable that as many of the interviews as possible were held in person. Before the interviews, we were having a conversation off the record to go through information about the planned interview

process, as well as clarifying the rights and roles as research participants. These conversations included information about the length of the interview, informing about taking breaks when they need one, and their rights to withdrawing pieces of information at any given moment, and to withdrawing from the research altogether at any given moment. During this conversation, the research participants could ask their own questions about the research and the interview situation. During this conversation, the research participants also handed in their signed declaration of consent. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian, as this is the language most commonly spoken in Norway. The research participant of the first interview was informed about being the first candidate to be interviewed, and that it was the pilot interview. On the basis of this first interview, I figured out what worked and what did not, and changed the way of asking questions accordingly, while keeping the interview guide (Annex 1) as it was. The interviews are, as aforementioned, semi-structured and the interview guide was utilised (Annex 1). Notes were taken during the interviews if some impromptu follow-up questions emerged, or to note down important information or details. The interviews were recorded with a Dictaphone and the recordings were stored in accordance with the guidelines of “*Opplysningsloven*”.

5.3.6 Transcribing the Interviews

After the completion of the interviews, I went through the recorded material and transcribed the voice recordings into text, in order to structure the interviews material and to prepare it for further analysis. In the transcript, the words said are repeated word for word. In addition, I included as many relevant details as possible, such as tone of voice, laughter, sighs, stuttering, and the filler-words. The reason for this is that these details reflect the interview situation in a more detailed way. Since the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, a part of the transcribing process was to translate the interview transcripts into English. Finally, I listened through the voice recording one last time to double check that the interviews were properly transcribed and translated.

5.3.7 Thematic Analysis of the Results

The purpose of the research is to understand the lived reality of the research participants and how they experience implementing indigenous and Sami themes in

their teaching. Under the category of education there are many topics to analyse, such as the curriculum itself, the teaching books and material, the way education is carried out in practice, attitudes in school, implementation of topics, and facilitation for learning, to name a few. Under the central category of recognition and misrecognition, there are several topics to analyse, such as stereotypes, essentialisation, visibility, empowerment, and victimisation, to name a few. In the interviews, the research participants will have the possibility of speaking about these topics. An appropriate method for analysing the interviews, then, is to analyse the material thematically. That means that I will be looking for common themes and systemise them into groups for further discussion. The common themes will aid in finding the essence of the interviews. Thematic analysis is also helpful for finding patterns and to get a clear picture of where there is a common understanding between the research participants, and where the answers differ from each other.

5.4 Ethical Considerations

Bryman identifies four ethical principles, which have been taken into account when conducting the research (Bryman, 2012, p. 135). The first one is to ensure that there is no harm of any kind to the participants. In order to ensure that the research participants suffered no physical, mental, emotional, or social harm during the duration of the research or after, different measures were taken. One of them was to ensure anonymity. The principle of anonymity was honoured by ensuring that the interviews were conducted in private, that the voice recordings and the transcripts were stored safely away, and that the names of the research participants were replaced with aliases. Furthermore, the principle of informed consent was taken into consideration by taking measures to inform all the research participants about the entirety of the research. Such measures were to write information letters and to have conversations with the research participants before the interviews, where they were given the information needed for them to consent to partaking in the research, such as the right to withdraw at any moment. The privacy of the research participants was respected by ensuring their anonymity, and by respecting their private boundaries by for example not pushing or coercing the research participants to talk about anything. Their rights to withdraw any information at any given moment is highly relevant in the context of this

principle, as the research participants could change their minds about their own boundaries at any point. The last ethical principle is to ensure that no deception is involved in the research, which was done by conducting the research in accordance with the quality criteria for qualitative research, and by honouring the other ethical principles.

5.5 Evaluation of Method

The choice of research method sets the tone for the research in its entirety, and favouring qualitative methodology over quantitative has its advantages, as well as limitations. There are some critiques of qualitative methods, such as them being too impressionistic and subjective, because they rely largely on the personal interpretations of the researcher (Bryman, 2012, p. 405). Therefore, it is important to be aware of one's own positionality. My positionality as an anthropologist and human rights scholar is what prompted the research topic, and I was inclined to combine the two disciplines by creating a study of indigenous peoples in a context of cultural studies and human rights. As a part of the Norwegian majority, I am an insider looking into the reality of the Sami people. Then, it is important for me to be aware of my own bias and to attempt to keep them at a minimum in the research.

Another critique of the qualitative research methods are problems with reliability and generalisation (Bryman, 2012, p. 405-406). Generalisation in quantitative research is ensured by having a large sample, however in qualitative research, the research sample is smaller. I decided on a minimum number of three research participants. Having acquired four research participants for this research, I reached my minimum goal. However, there were some limitations with a sample of this size. One of the limitations was that most of the research participants were relatively inexperienced and have been teaching for a short amount of time. Another limitation of the sample has to do with the variety between the subjects they teach, which presents some limitations in terms of comparing the findings.

Qualitative research methods come with their own sets of quality criteria as alternatives to those best suited for quantitative research. One main criterion is

trustworthiness, which is made up by the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Bryman, 2012, p. 390). Another criterion is authenticity, which has its emphasis on fairness (Bryman, 2012, p. 393). Keeping these criteria in mind when conducting a qualitative research ensures that such a flexible, and interpretive mode of doing research is done in a way which ensures high quality of the research.

Choosing research methods will inevitably create limitations, but also possibilities. Choosing a qualitative method allowed me to create a study which contributes to promote individual voices, and to get an unique view into the lived lives and experiences of the research participants. Had I chosen another method, the research would have looked differently. On the basis of Bryman's book on social research methods, I formed an opinion on what would be the best methodology to suit the research design and to answer the research question. Thus, I am pleased with the chosen methodology of the research.

6 Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

This chapter will contain a description of the process of analysing the gathered data material from the interviews with the research participants. As described in the methodology chapter, the data is systematised and analysed thematically. This chapter will account for the findings relevant to each category. Furthermore, the findings will be discussed in relation to a bigger context retrieved from the entirety of the background, theoretical framework, and the relevant literature.

6.1 The Initial Analysis

In the beginning of the analysis, I systematised all the answers from each research participant under all of the corresponding interview questions. This was done in order to get a better view of what each participant answered, so that similarities between the answers would be more visible, and differences between the answers would be easier to distinguish. This was also done to make it clear who answered what question, as some research participants did not answer some of the questions because they did not apply, and because some additional questions were asked to different participants. After doing this, the answers of the research participants were colour-coded in order to get an overview of where the different participants answered something related to a set of preliminary codes, or themes, that I consider relevant to the research. These codes are based on the research in its entirety: the background, chosen theories, and the chosen literature. The codes were as well listed under the answers, marked with an *. The reason for this was so when I would search for the code, such as “diversity”, only the code would show up in the document, and not every occurrence of the word “diversity”. The preliminary codes and their corresponding colours were:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pluralism and Diversity● Victimization● Conflict● Alienation and Distance● Focus, Openness and Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sameness● Visibility● Stereotypes and Essentialisation● Empowerment
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In addition to these codes, the codes of “*identity*” and “*inclusion*” were included and underlined with black lines.

Lastly, under the system of interview questions and their answers, with the preliminary colour-codes, I added a section called “*discussion notes*”. In this section I added a draft of my initial thoughts about the content, such as the similarities and differences between the answers. The most important functions of this section was to write the different pieces of information together into one coherent text, and to prepare the material to be discussed more in depth later.

6.1.1 Example of the Initial Analysis

What do you consider to be the most important focus when it comes to indigenous and Sami themes?

<p><i>Tor:</i></p> <p>I think that my focus is this regarding pluralism. In other words, we have a society where there is leeway for different groups, and different groups can in a way help influence different decision-making processes and that there is respect for diversity! I think it is such an important topic to bring out. That respect for pluralism.</p>	<p><i>Alma:</i></p> <p>Yes... Eh, no, it is to... Yeah. That pupils should learn to include and see that there is greater diversity in Norway. That it is not just us who sit here in the South. That there are several cultures and a deeper history that one must gain insight into and respect.</p>
<p><i>Siri:</i></p> <p>Oh, that's hard! I think a bit of history is very important, so the pupils have some background on what has happened. All the genocides that have taken place and that they sort of know... Gets a bit of an impression, then, of how awful it has been. So it will somehow not be forgotten. Eh, but then it is also important to make sure that the pupils are aware of, then, that there are Sami people around the world, even if you may not see them. Like here in Norway, there are quite a few, but you are not aware of them. That it is like... It is not just those who live far up North.</p>	<p><i>Kari:</i></p> <p>I think it is important to get it across that there is... (Sighs) Like, that they have... That they have a right, and that they are a part of the Norwegian population. They shall be visible, and they shall... Yeah!</p>

Preliminary codes: PLURALISM*, DIVERSITY*, CONFLICT*, ALIENATION*, DISTANCE*, VICTIMISATION*, SAMENESS*, INCLUSION*

Discussion notes:

Here there seems to be three main focuses: visibility and pluralism/diversity, and history. About visibility, Kari said that the Sami people should be visible, and Siri explains that it is important that the pupils understand that the Sami people exist, even though they are not visible to them in everyday life...

6.2 Defining the Categories and Themes for Analysis

The gathered data material is systematised into different main categories and their corresponding subcategories. This is done in order to get a coherent overview of the findings. The main categories and their subcategories are based on the entirety of the content of the interview guide, the gathered data material, and the codes, or themes, which were detected in the initial analysis. The main themes which were detected in the gathered data material from the interviews with the research participants, are:

Pluralism and Diversity: In the gathered data, one of the themes that are frequently talked about is the theme of diversity and pluralism. This theme encompasses pluralism and diversity between groups in society, as well as diversity within groups, such as the Sami people.

Sameness: The topic of sameness was also frequently mentioned in the interviews, and this theme poses as a counterpoint to the theme of pluralism and diversity. Sameness in this context is related to the mentions of similarity between the Sami people and the Norwegian majority, or the Sami peoples' place within the Norwegian community.

Alienation and Distance: This topic could be considered as the opposite of sameness. This theme encompasses the parts where the research candidates mention a sense of distance towards the Sami people, either in geographical terms, or in more abstract terms, such as applying an “othering” mindset.

Visibility: What is meant by this theme is the visibility of the Sami people, mostly in the educational context, but not limited to this context. Visibility here is meant in terms of both quantity, how much the Sami themes appear, and quality, how the Sami themes are visible.

Stereotypes and Essentialisation: This theme could be considered to go hand in hand with alienation. However, what is meant by this theme is the mentions of essential traits to the Sami culture and identity. Here, essential cultural

expressions are taken into account, taking into consideration the context in which they mentioned. The way essential cultural expressions are mentioned in this theme, is different to the way the essential cultural expressions are mentioned in the theme of empowerment.

Victimisation: In the gathered data, the research participants touched on topics that I have chosen to gather in the umbrella theme of victimisation. What is meant by this are expressions related to, for example, pity and sympathy. All mentions of the Norwegianisation policy falls under this theme.

Conflict: Any indicators of conflict have been gathered in this theme. What is meant by this is the expressions surrounding specific events of conflict such as rebellions and clashes, the mention of conflict as a focus point, and expressions hinting towards a conflict narrative. Here, the topic of the Norwegianisation policy is excluded, as contextually, this topic belongs in the theme of victimisation.

Empowerment: This theme functions as a counterpoint to victimisation, and is constituted of expressions related to Sami politics, mobilisation, and rights. This theme also involves mentions of representatives from the Sami communities, such as prominent figures within cultural life. Furthermore, this theme encompasses the mentions of Sami languages and cultural expressions.

Focus, Openness and Interest: This theme is related to the focus the teachers have on the Sami themes and how interested they are in them. This theme also relates to the focus and interest of the pupils and the co-workers of the research participants.

Identity: This topic encompasses the mentions of how the concept of identity is dealt with in school as a larger topic. This theme also involves mentions of Sami identity more specifically.

Inclusion: This theme includes mentions of inclusion as a larger topic in the education context, as well as more specific mentions of inclusion.

The content of the gathered data material is vast, and contains many findings. Unfortunately, due to limitations of space, all of the findings cannot be included. Therefore, the data material which is systematised and analysed is chosen on the basis of their ability to answer the research questions:

“How are institutionalised patterns, such as the educational curriculum, affecting how groups are recognised and misrecognised, and how does this apply to the context of the Sami people?”

“How do the teachers in Norwegian schools experience the indigenous and Sami content in the curriculum, and how are they implementing the content into their practice?”

6.3 The Teacher’s Experience With the Curriculum (LK20)

Part of one of the research questions and thus, one of the main purposes of this research, is to examine how the research participants experience the indigenous and Sami content in the curriculum. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse how the teachers experience the curriculum as a whole. The opinions of the curriculum is divided into two parts; opinions expressing that the curriculum is a useful tool for teaching, and opinions expressing that there are some considerable limitations to the curriculum.

6.3.1. The Teacher’s Opinions About the Curriculum

One of the research participants was of the opinion that the current curriculum is different from the previous curriculums because it is not a more cohesive instrument than the previous curricula had been. The overarching part of the curriculum and the subject-specific curricula are no longer considerably divided from each other.

(Tor) - “The curriculum has actually become a useful instrument for planning

teaching.”

- *“ ... you had the completely subject-specific curriculum and then you had the general curriculum which lived its own life, and which was perhaps not so much present in the individual teacher's everyday life. So I think the curriculum has improved!”*

- *“ ... it is a little easier than before. Because now there is a connection in the curriculum ... So the curriculum has become a more cohesive instrument. ”*

Because of this cohesiveness between the overarching part of the curriculum and the subject-specific parts of the curriculum, the research participant now finds it easier to see how the overarching and more abstract goals and values are implemented in the various specific subjects.

(Tor) - “You have an entrance in the curriculum that deals with values and relevance. The subject matter is actually drawn on to the core elements, the interdisciplinary topics, and the competence goals.”

- *“If you look up the core elements, then what is there is described. And in the curriculum you can also find links between the various parts of, at least online...”*

- *“The online curriculum has nice linking possibilities on how to understand the curriculum. There you can see which competence goals are connected to which core elements, which are connected to various interdisciplinary themes. And that makes it a little easier to apply the curriculum and ensure that both the overarching and the more academically specific are more connected.”*

However, an important finding is that the same research participant was not of the impression that the Sami people had gained more space in the curriculum after the implementation of the new curriculum and the renewal of the specific subjects.

(Tor) - "I do not quite know if there was a very big transition from "Reform 94" to "Kunnskapsløftet" in the first place. And whether it has been so big from LK06 to LK20 in "Kunnskapsløftet". I actually think that Sami had its place in both places. I may not think that there is a lot more in LK20, actually.»

In this way we can see that the Sami people have had a place in the curriculum. However, the research participant also states that he did not visit the topics much when he went to school to become a teacher. It would therefore be interesting for more in-depth research to be done on whether the layout of the current curriculum is making it so the different topics are coming to the forefront.

There were also some expressions of the limitations of the curriculum. One of the research participants was expressing some concerns about the limiting effects of the principle of professional freedom, which is a main trait in the current curriculum.

(Siri) - "I think perhaps that the curriculum goals are a bit vague, and there is a reason for that, because there shall be... We have professional freedom. But there is a great possibility that you can opt out quite a bit if you want to."

- *"But it also opens up the possibility that you can sweep it quite to the side if you would rather do something else."*
- *"We have more freedom. The other one was a bit more decisive. Now it is more open for the teacher to prioritise what is important themselves, and that is good in many cases, but... You do not get that quality assurance either, from all the teachers doing it, since you are so independent in the profession. So that is probably the biggest difference."*

The fact that professional freedom could be considered to be a limitation of the curriculum, is an interesting and unexpected find. The research participant is not framing the focus on professional freedom as an inherently and solely negative trait of the new curriculum. Based on her explanations, professional freedom can be considered to be a positive trait which is providing each individual teacher with the opportunity to shape their teaching according to their own personal interests and their knowledge. In this way, there is a possibility for each teacher to give the pupils an in-depth education on the different themes of the different subjects. Therefore, a professional freedom could ensure that the teachers avoid pitfalls such as essentialisation and alienation, because they can provide thorough education about specific topics. However, there is a chance that professional freedom, on the other hand, could cause problems with essentialisation and alienation. The reason for this is that the teachers, by opting out of going deeper into a topic, could resort to not researching the educational material and opt for educational material which has a limited explanation of the topics. Furthermore, the teacher could give surface-level education which is oversimplified.

We have seen that there is a clear connection between the overarching part of the curriculum and the subject-specific curricula. Another aspect to discover about the curriculum is how well it is connected to the teaching material. One of the teachers had nothing to say about the topic and two of them agreed that the connection between the curriculum and the teaching material was clear. Siri, the research participant who posed a critical view on the current curriculum previously, was the one teacher who stated that there was a lack in the connection.

(Siri) - "It is probably a little lacking. It does not quite facilitate any in-depth learning, and that is what LK20 is aiming for, that in-depth learning. It is a bit more superficial... Then you are dependent on, as a teacher, finding other sources to fill up a bit."

The fact that the teachers have to find other sources to supplement the teaching material, because the teaching material which is available is deficient, is a key finding. Siri was not the only research participant to mention this. Alma supports this statement as well, explaining the need to find resources elsewhere.

(Alma) - “The only thing I could think of was someone buying their own learning materials using their own salary. So we have, not “we”... *Some* have extra books in the various team rooms we sit in. *Some*. Which you can use. But no course or anything.”

It is important to point out that these statements are expressing the clear benefits and limitations of the curriculum. Given the polarities between benefit and limitations, the answers are bound to pose polar opposites as well. The key findings about the opinions of the curriculum is that the curriculum is beneficial in terms of giving a clear overview of how the overarching part and the subject-specific parts are connected. Furthermore, the curriculum is beneficial because it provides a clear connection between the more abstract and overarching goals, and the goals of the subjects. On the other hand, there are some limitations connected to two main traits of the new curriculum: professional freedom and in-depth learning, and these limitations are somewhat combined. Professional freedom can make it so the teacher opts out of visiting certain topics in-depth. Furthermore, teachers sometimes have to find resources outside of the teaching material because the goals which are stated in the curriculum are not best achieved with the resources that are available.

6.4 The Teacher’s Experience With Indigenous and Sami Themes

Another significant part of one of the research questions is to investigate how the teachers implement the indigenous and Sami themes into their own teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to understand what their knowledge of the themes are, how they experience the content of the teaching material, and the focus the themes get in the educational setting.

6.4.1 The Teacher's Knowledge About Indigenous and Sami Themes

There were large differences between how the research participants visited indigenous and Sami themes during their own education to become teachers. Their answers differ from having not visited the themes at all, to having whole weeks dedicated to the themes. Despite the fact that all of the research participants have completed a primary, or basic, teachers education, their experiences are quite different. Even the research candidates who completed their education around the same time, have varying experiences. This goes to show that the teachers' education is varying, even if the teacher students will go on to teach based on the same curriculum after they graduate. Whether or not this varying teachers education has connection to the aforementioned professional freedom, is subject for further research.

(Alma) - *“ We did not visit it at all. Not in Norwegian. Not in the pedagogy that we had. And not in English. And not in the gym and not in swimming.”*

(Tor) - *“ I would probably not say that it had a very big place in my education, actually. This is probably something that I have gone more into afterwards. But I can not say that it had back then, now I am getting older, of course, that it did not have a very prominent place, actually. Maybe a little in the Norwegian Subject, where we worked with Sami texts... Some space in political science, in relation to the concept of citizenship... But in history... Of course, you learned about the Norwegianisation process, but maybe a little more on a surface level. I can not remember that there were any special academic subjects either...”*

(Kari) - *“One semester in particular, we had quite a lot about it. That was when I immersed myself in Norwegian... Had a bit about language. Language development, where there was a focus on that.”*

(Siri) - *“Quite a lot! We had, both in natural science... We had ... like a theme week*

about indigenous peoples with a focus on the Sami, and a bit of ... natural science history. When I took social studies, we also had a whole week where we talked about the Sami. And then we also had a whole day where we were outdoors and ... had a lot of games linked to Sami culture."

Based on the large differences between the education of each of the research participants, it comes as no surprise that they are providing quite different statements about how their own education to become a teacher has affected the way they are working with indigenous and Sami themes in their own teaching. The opinions differ between statements saying that their educations have no influence on their teaching regarding these themes, to expressions claiming that the education has influenced their teaching because of good knowledge. Two out of the four research participants answer that their education did not affect them much, while the other two claim that their education has affected them, albeit in two different ways.

(Kari) - *"... it may have affected how I want to work on it, but not if I will work on it. Because I think it goes without saying that one should work on it at school. But "how", it has affected me."*

(Siri) - *"We got a lot of good knowledge about it in the teacher's education. It was one of those themes that were really good. And that has made me reflect a lot more on it in everyday life."*

Provided that there is a difference in the basic teachers' education, it is not surprising that the competence of the research participants are varying. Two out of the four research participants experience that they are competent to teach indigenous and Sami themes. Alma expresses that she does not feel competent, and Siri expresses some uncertainty because of the vague curriculum goals. Siri had previously expressed that professional freedom was the reason for the vague curriculum goals.

(Siri) - *"I think perhaps that the curriculum goals are a bit vague..."*

(Alma) - *"The education I have in the subjects that I teach, does not ... Have not dealt*

with Sami culture at all.”

(Tor) - *“So, I feel in and of itself, where I stand today with the sum of my education and experience, both as a teacher and textbook author, that I have the background to be able to go into these topics.”*

(Kari) - *“Yes... I am having 1-7. And there it is like you have to learn about culture and traditions and a little bit about what rights they have. And I certainly feel that.”*

Three out of the four research participants feel like they can implement indigenous and Sami themes into their teaching, and all of the research participants could answer what measures they make to get the themes into their teaching. Kari and Alma express that they work with the themes interdisciplinary. Siri and Tor express that they try to implement the themes and see what the pupils think about the themes, and to put their thoughts into a context.

(Kari) - *“We work... In several subjects. We work with it in arts and crafts, we work with it in social studies, in Norwegian. So, we work a bit interdisciplinary with it. In first grade... We use our hands a lot. They are supposed to work with this by using their bodies... They colour the flag and their traditional clothes. But then we also started to look at some picture books that can be used as a way of talking about... Culture and traditions.”*

(Alma) - *“I am involved in the interdisciplinary collaboration that is now... I bring the English subject with me. Where we talk about diaries and writing in general, and being able to make some writing tasks.”*

(Tor) - *“In social studies... When I introduce the Sami people, I often propose to the pupils a sort of brainstorming. What do they associate with being Sami? I use a “padlet” ... A digital whiteboard... Where the pupils can give their input... they come up as yellow post-it notes... Anonymously... Then we go through*

what the pupils have answered, and then I comment on it and try to put it into context.”

(Siri) - *“I make sure I am up to date on what is happening around the world, and keep an eye on it if I notice something... Then I include it in the teaching. Perhaps as a five-minute small discussion, or a larger topic during the day. To hear what the pupils think... If I see that I can connect it to one of the topics I am working on, that I at least mention it, so that the pupils pay attention to it.”*

6.4.2 Indigenous and Sami Themes in the Teaching Material

In order to understand how the research participants are implementing indigenous and Sami themes in their teaching, it is crucial to investigate how indigenous and Sami themes are implemented and represented in the teaching material they utilise. This is largely connected to the theme of visibility. In terms of the quantity of the indigenous and Sami themes in the teaching materials, all of the research participants expressed that the Sami themes are visible. However, the grade of visibility is varying. Considering the fact that indigenous and Sami themes are to be implemented in all of the subjects in school, it is an interesting find that there is such a variety of visibility in the teaching materials.

(Alma) - *“Not in the ones that I use in English. It is not. I know that there are chapters at least in social studies, or the books we use.. Or textbooks that are used in social studies have their own chapter.”*

(Siri) - *“Well, it is visible in the sense that if you go in and check topics there is a small section called "The Sami". But it is not clearly visible otherwise in the themes that are out there, that one could think that one could easily connect it to... There are chapters about it, but it is not so visible that it is in excess.”*

(Tor) - *“That can be discussed. But I think it has come forth better than it has been... There could probably have been more.”*

(Kari) - *“We do not use many textbooks in first grade. So I will have to say no there, but that is because we do not really have any textbooks. If we have any social science books, there is maybe one page about it. But that is in general, because the social science books in first grade are not very comprehensive. There is something called “Salaby”, which has a lot... Or some... I mean that they tend to have a designated theme page, because they have them around holidays... And then they have a designated one about Sami languages, too... This one about the Sami languages I believe is there year-round.”*

In statements regarding the quality of the content, or rather, how the Sami people are represented in the textbooks, there is a common conception that the Sami people are represented in a way that either places them in a victim position, or that essentialises them by pulling forward stereotypical representations. This finding is supported by Gjerpe, which in the work *“Gruppebaserte fordommer i lærebøker: Konseptualiseringen av “lærebok Sápmi”*”, where there is explained that the Sami oftentimes are represented in a stereotypical way in textbooks (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 295). The way the *“textbook Sami”* is utilised in the teaching material is explained by Kari and Siri. However, I will argue that the victimisation aspect, which comes forth in the statements of Tor and Alma, is part of an essentialisation. Some essential parts to Sami history are pulled to the forefront, while perspectives which could provide nuance, such as empowerment, take a backseat. In this way, the pupils who are consuming the educational content are left with an oversimplified knowledge about the history of the Sami people.

(Kari) - *“They are pulling... forward the typical “traits”. So it is probably a bit stereotypical. But it is a little bit to show what is typical, I guess. They are probably dividing “them” a bit from “us”! It becomes a bit like “Yeah, this is how they live”, but they do not show that they can live in the same way as us, but that they have other traditions. So it is maybe a bit stereotypical in the way that “This is a Sami person”.”*

(Siri) - *"It is a short and straightforward introduction about "This has happened" and "This is the history of the Sami" and a bit about their culture. I do not think they have changed that much from the way it has been in the past in the old, typical textbooks. A lot of which is fact-based. Little focus on modern Sami. A lot of focus on the past. But also little focus on everything that has somehow happened throughout history. There is a lot of history about the Sami and what the reindeer herding is like, for example, and how they have moved around, and what land they have..."*

(Tor) - *"That has often been, perhaps, a challenge. That the Sami have been represented as an oppressed victim group. I think perhaps several textbooks have actually tried to do something about that."*

(Alma) - *"Very neutral, and preferably historical. If it is about Sami people as a whole, then there is that. And if it is about episodes, I think they angle it very educationally, angle it very emotionally, playing on our feelings... That it is very neutral, but plays on emotions."*

The lack of nuance in the teaching materials were further proved by the research participants, as there were expressions which called for more nuance in the teaching materials. As aforementioned, one key finding was that the curriculum goals are not matched by much of the research material, which makes it so teachers have to find resources elsewhere. In that case, the reason for this was because the curriculum goals are vague. Here another finding, which is provided by one of the research participants, is connected to the same issue. Siri explains that the teaching materials are oversimplified and thus cannot easily be matched to the curriculum goals, which she has earlier described as vague. Kari explains that in the subject she is teaching, there are no good sources at all.

(Siri) - *"There should have been more subject material so that you can look a bit at different themes within Sami culture. Not just "Here you have the Sami, you're welcome!" in a text. In such a way that it is written in a little more detail so that*

the pupil can in a way explore and get the in-depth learning they are looking for..."

6.4.3 Focus on Indigenous and Sami Themes in School

Having seen what knowledge the research participants have from before and what resources they have at their disposal now, it is also interesting to examine how they would ideally like to work with the indigenous and Sami themes in the future. There seems to be a common understanding between all of the four research participants that there is a need for variation. One mode of variation is the variation in ways to work with the themes, as exemplified by Kari and Siri.

(Kari) - *"I like to work in various ways with it. We are reading books, we are using our hands by drawing, cutting, glueing. Conversations! Maybe watch some videos! Working in a varied way, then, in various subjects. Or interdisciplinary."*

(Siri) - *"I think the day we had when I took my education was quite alright, where we in a way travelled back in time, then, but we also had that aspect of modern Sami, at the same time. You can make it a bit practical. You are outdoors. You learn about reindeer herding more practically through a bit of acting... Learning to cook in Sami traditional ways... You can... hold things physically. Explore a bit with your hands, not just look at pictures in a book and read up on things. But you can be outdoors and do more practical things."*

Another mode of variation is a variation in the resources which are available, especially in terms of good textbooks. This perspective is shared by three out of the four research participants.

(Tor) - *"We need good textbooks, we need good learning resources. Maybe something more web-based Sami resource material. There exists some, but maybe something more along those lines."*

(Alma) - *"For the English subject, I think it is largely about everything that happens*

everywhere that is not Norway. About England, the USA, Australia, New Zealand. Perhaps mainly the United States, then. And there, after all, it is a completely different indigenous population that the pupils learn about to a greater extent.”

- *“I think there is very little about the Sami people in English that is good to use in teaching. Not heavy language and easy to translate and use in teaching. I find that difficult to find, at least in English.”*

(Siri) - *“It would have made the job much more manageable if you had good textbooks.”*

It becomes apparent through the statements of how they would ideally like to work with the indigenous and Sami themes by utilising better and more varied textbooks, that the sparse research material is a limitation for teachers. One key finding on the topic of limitation of textbooks, has to do with the fact that textbooks are now digital and there are very limited textbooks left. While the digitalisation of the curriculum has been successful, the digitalisation of the textbooks have caused some limitations for the teachers.

(Siri) - *“Before there were textbooks for all the topics. Now there are only digital textbooks, and these things are prioritised a little differently. Before there were themes that somehow came back almost every year, whereas now it ... will be a very long time between when you come across it.”*

(Alma) - *“Right now we do not have any books in the schools in this city, unless they have preserved old books from the 80s and 90s. Mainly we only use what is online. So there it is quite limited. Because before at school you had maybe two or three different Norwegian books, two or three different social studies books, English books. But now we have one to deal with one book.”*

Another point of examination on the topic of focus, has to do with the theme of prioritisation. Three out of the four research participants state that there is no particular focus on indigenous or Sami themes at the school where they are working. Both Tor and Siri nods to the teachers, by taking into account their experiences and interest in relation to how much focus there is on the themes.

(Tor) - *“I am not going to claim that... How much people make of it I think depends a bit on... A bit on competence-background... A bit of the teacher's personal interests. And it also depends a little on how teaching material approaches this.”*

(Siri) - *“No. I do not think so. When you are a teacher, everyday life is hectic... and you have to deal a bit with the resources you have available... But there is little out there. There are a couple of pieces of text and then maybe some associated tasks. But that is about it, at the entire lower secondary school level.”*

Kari and Alma explains that there is a heightened focus on the indigenous and Sami themes around the Sami National Day, and it is stated many times in the research material that the Sami National Day is a focus point in which the schools are working with implementing the curriculum goals surrounding indigenous and Sami themes.

(Kari) - *“There is simply no particular focus on it, especially where we live. In everyday life the flag must be visible like the Norwegian flag... It might be mentioned a little now and then if we talk about cultures and such. It is mostly simply for the National Day... And we have already started talking about how to do it.”*

(Alma) - *“At least where I work now. Then we have started with it now after Christmas, a whole period until the winter holidays which is in week 8. So it is from week 1 to week 7. Then we have Sami as the main theme. So I think that at least where I work, it is well prioritised, and where we work interdisciplinary and take as many subjects as we can take with us under that theme.”*

All of the research participants agree on the point that including indigenous and Sami themes is important to do in education. However, all of the research participants had different opinions on what was the most important focus. One commonality, however, is that the indigenous and Sami themes are seen in a larger context. This larger context has to do with the themes of sameness and diversity.

(Tor) - *“I think that my focus is this regarding pluralism. We have a society where there is leeway for different groups, and different groups can in a way help influence different decision-making processes and that there is respect for diversity! I think it is such an important topic to bring out. That respect for pluralism.”*

- *“It affects our society, our history, our culture. But we also have many other minorities. The Sami have their status as an indigenous population, but we also have other minority groups in Norway. Whether it concerns the national minorities or also the minorities who have come to the country. So it is somewhat about what we teachers signal to the classes in the meeting with people from different backgrounds.”*

(Alma) - *“That pupils should learn to include and see that there is greater diversity in Norway. That it is not just us who sit here in the South. That there are several cultures and a deeper history that one must gain insight into and respect.”*

(Kari) - *“That they have a right, and that they are a part of the Norwegian population. They shall be visible.”*

(Siri) - *“They are part of society, and it is still the case that one might feel that they are perhaps being given a bit of a lower priority in society.”*

The Sami people are part of a larger multicultural and diverse context consisting of a Norwegian majority, immigrant minorities, and national minorities (Brandal et al., 2018). However, the research participants all have a particular focus on sameness, as they all point out that the Sami people are part of Norwegian society. This finding is supported by Åberg, who explains that teachers are inclined to promote neutrality, or

sameness, in educational settings, in order to avoid disruption (Åberg, 2021). The themes about sameness and difference will be examined further in the next chapter.

6.5 Sameness and Difference

As seen previously, there were some themes that were prominent in the gathered research material, and these themes all contribute to highlighting various ways of recognition and misrecognition. In order to answer the research question, these themes will be analysed. The themes of sameness and difference were both consistent themes in the gathered data, and they serve as each other's counterpoint.

6.5.1 The Idea of Sameness

Gullestad is one of the authors who explains the concept of sameness, and she states that focus on sameness and equality when it comes to national identity, is central to being considered of equal, and of equal value (Gullestad, 2002). As stated in the previous chapter, the research participants all had a particular focus on sameness, and I consider this a key finding in the research. Following up on the point of Gullestad, one could interpret the finding of a particular focus on sameness as a way for the research participants to confirm that there is no difference in value between the Sami people and the Norwegian majority.

(Alma) - *"... they are a part of the Norwegian population."*

(Kari) - *"... simply just make it clear that they too are Norwegian. "The Sami children go to school just like you!""*

(Siri) - *"They are part of society, and it is still the case that one might feel that they are perhaps being given a bit of a lower priority in society."*

(Tor) - *"... it is important. Both because it affects our society, our history, our culture."*

- *“Yes, she is Sami. But she is also so much more! She is Norwegian, she is European...”*

It is evident that all of the research participants consider the Sami people in Norway to be part of a Norwegian heritage and part of the Norwegian culture at large. It may also very well be that they focus on sameness to remove a divide in value between the Sami people and the Norwegian majority. However, it is important to add another important finding, which will add nuance to this argument. Similarly to the focus on sameness, there was a focus on the Sami people as part of the Norwegian population, but taking into consideration differences in terms of cultural differences. In the theory of politics of recognition, Taylor explains that there are differences between politics of equal dignity and politics of difference (Taylor, 1994). When discussing politics of equal dignity, a politics focusing on sameness, Taylor warns against the trap of colour-blindness. He defines colour-blindness as ignoring distinctiveness, which could in turn contribute to a minority being assimilated into a majority identity (Taylor, 1994, p. 38). These statements from the research participants goes to show that they have not fallen into the trap of being colour-blind, and that they are not trying to diminish differences in culture.

(Siri) - *“Norwegians. I also know that they are not just Norwegians. But yes, simply Norwegians, with a slightly different cultural background to oneself.”*

(Tor) - *“And now it is difficult to use the term Sami versus ethnic Norwegians, because they are also Norwegians.”*

(Kari) - *“... they do not show that they can live in the same way as us, but that they have other traditions.”*

On the note of sameness, Tor mentioned that the pupils can find it easier to connect to the Sami themes if they can connect the themes to something that they can relate to. In other words, the pupils found it easier to connect if they could recognise themselves somehow in what they were studying. This proves the point of the importance of recognition.

(Tor) - *“I have some classes where I have a large proportion of pupils with a non-Norwegian background. I think maybe they are a little more responsive. Like aware. Preoccupied with how we address the place of minority groups in Society...”*

- *“Some things to grasp from the pupils’s fields of interest. To in a way take it from there and into the academic field.”*

As Gullestad (2002) states, sameness is understood as equality. Equality is an overarching value which the schools seek to protect (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, p. 5). On this note, Siri and Tor explain that sameness can be understood as having equal prerequisites in the educational context. This is primarily understood in the context of having equal rights.

(Siri)- *“... as a teacher you have to make arrangements for them to have the same prerequisites. They also have the right to enjoy themselves at school and have a safe everyday school life. They should be able to come to school and have the same rights and opportunities, regardless of for example, gender and religion, culture, identity...”*

(Tor) - *“The pupils are concerned with justice. That one should be treated equally. The pupils are concerned about that, and it is important for us teachers to follow up on that. But what does that mean? Because that is maybe more in regards to the more purely formal things. In relation to following up on rules and assessments, and order...”*

6.5.2 Diversity and Pluralism

Diversity and pluralism can be seen as the counterpart to the idea of sameness. All of the research participants talked about diversity at some point, so this was a consistent theme in the gathered data. Among other things, there was talk about diversity and pluralism as an important focus. As we have seen in the previous part, the research

participants have focused both on sameness, and sameness in combination with an acknowledgement of cultural differences. Adding the perspective of diversity and pluralism adds the counterview to these statements, and shows the complexity of the social environment which the teachers have to manoeuvre.

Pluralism and diversity can be found in all levels of society, and are characteristic traits of modern society. Three out of the four research participants talk about the importance of the pupils having an understanding of and respect for a diverse society.

(Tor) - *“I think that my focus is this regarding pluralism. In other words, we have a society where there is leeway for different groups, and different groups can in a way help influence different decision-making processes and that there is respect for diversity! I think it is such an important topic to bring out, that respect for pluralism.”*

(Alma) - *“That pupils should learn to include and see that there is greater diversity in Norway. That it is not just us who sit here in the South. That there are several cultures and a deeper history that one must gain insight into and respect.”*

In addition, Kari provides the interesting perspective of diversity on an international level, in order for the pupils to understand their own positionality in society at large.

(Kari) - *“When we talk about children's rights, we also look towards other countries and cultures who may not accomplish these rights. They see the difference, then. Because there is the right to have food, you know? The right to have a safe environment. Those things. So it shows that they do not have it like people in other countries.”*

In the context of the schools, there was a focus on pluralism and diversity because schools are institutions in a multicultural society, and this transfers to the schools. Furthermore, it makes it so the demographic of pupils are highly multicultural and therefore diverse.

(Tor) - *"I am sort of interested in pluralism. It is a fundamental feature of our society, and of liberal democracy. This means that we must have respect for diversity. We also work a lot with, especially in social studies, different approaches to cultures. Ethnocentrism versus cultural relativism. So promoting respect for diversity... And we now have classes that are very complex, in terms of pupils."*

- *"We are a world inside that classroom. And the fact that we have a pluralistic society must also be transferred into the classroom."*

- *"... we are a very diverse school. And I know that there have been some measures taken by the environmental workers here. To sort of highlight cultural diversity."*

(Siri) - *"... we have a lot, or many different cultures, in everyday school life... Maybe there is more general talk about multiculturalism, then. And how we can facilitate and take care to safeguard all types of cultures."*

(Kari) - *"We have flags for all the cultures. At school. Which are represented in the school. To highlight the diversity."*

(Alma) - *"...there will also be assignments that deal with those themes, then. Where it is... Where they can feel a bit of it themselves, and feel that "My identity is like this and that, and their identity is like this and that." And what is similar, what is different."*

When put into the context of the main point of Gullestad (2002), one could say that this focus on pluralism and diversity poses a counterpoint to the argument that focus on sameness is considered to be an indicator of equality and equal value. In this context, the differences are coming forth as a value in its own right, in the same way that sameness is.

(Kari) - *“They have to learn to know that nobody is equal, but everyone is equally valuable.”*

- *“Make sure to hold space for them being different. Children have different needs. To ensure that the different needs are met. Some need a lot of play. Others need more academic challenges. We adjust all the time to meet the needs of the children, both with assignments and in play. We adjust all the time.”*

(Tor) - *“That fact that there shall be equality and justice does not mean that everyone should be similar.”*

(Siri) - *“... based on that, they also have different needs. So it will not be completely one hundred percent equality, in that sense.”*

- *“That you have some focus on the fact that we are different and perhaps need slightly different things during everyday life. That everyone is important, but even though everyone is important and everyone should have the same prerequisites, there are still some who may need a little more or some who need a little less.”*

Furthermore, the perspectives on diversity do not only take the shape of diversity between groups, but also diversity within groups. The research participants had a focus on variations and on not oversimplifying the identities of the Sami people.

(Tor) - *“And it is clear that part of what they highlight is part of the Sami tradition, the Sami identity. But then I try to take it further, then. That being Sami is also so much more!”*

- *“Which we have used then, to emphasise it. That being Sami really means a lot of things!”*

- *“Because a Sami person can just as easily be included among the football boys, and the sports culture.”*

(Kari) - *“It becomes a bit like “Yeah, this is how they live”. So it is maybe a bit stereotypical in the way that “This is a Sami person”. A Sami person is so many different things!”*

(Siri) - *“There should have been more subject material so that you can look a bit at different themes within Sami culture. Not just “Here you have the Sami, you’re welcome!” in a text.”*

This focus proves the point of Nustad, which is that schools are important institutions where people can learn, so that they can avoid falling into the traps of a prejudicial mindset (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 273-274). In this way, the research participants are combating essentialisation and prejudice, by not oversimplifying the Sami identities. The themes of essentialisation and stereotypes will be covered in the next chapter.

6.6 Essentialisation and Stereotypes

Essentialisation and descriptions with the use of stereotypes are modes of misrecognition. To analyse the ways the Sami people are essentialised in education, as well as to examine what kind of stereotypes are being used to describe them, will uncover ways the Sami people are misrecognised. As a counterpoint to this, this chapter will analyse the ways essentialisation could contribute to empowerment and recognition. This will aid in answering the research question about the recognition and misrecognition of the Sami people.

Essentialisation of the Sami people is something that is quite prominent in the school teaching material. Gjerpe uses the term *“the textbook Sami”* when explaining how the essentialised traits of the, mostly Northern, Sami culture is what is mostly visible in the educational textbooks (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 295). This point is further proven by Siri and Kari.

(Siri) - *“Little focus on modern Sami. A lot of focus on the past. But also little focus on everything that has somehow happened throughout history, then. There is a lot of history about the Sami and what the reindeer herding is like, for example, and how they have moved around, and what land they have, and so on.”*

(Kari) - *“They are pulling... forward the typical “traits”. So it is maybe a bit stereotypical*

in the way that: “This is a Sami person”. A Sami person is so many different things! So it is probably a bit stereotypical. But it is a little bit to show, what is typical, I guess.”

Tor explains that in an educational setting, he is investigating what the pupils are associating with the Sami and then works on the basis of that. This further proves the point of Nustad, which is that schools are inclusive arenas where pupils can gain knowledge and understand diversity, in a safe and inclusive environment, where their prejudice is challenged through open communication rather than being met with condemnation (Brandal et al., 2018, p. 273-274).

(Tor) - *“When I introduce the Sami people, I often propose to the pupils a sort of brainstorming. What do they associate with being Sami? Then it is clear, it comes to a large degree these typical, or perhaps stereotypical, notions. That, the Sami people, they are on the plain, they work with reindeer, they wear kofte, and all that.”*

- *“Because there we are somehow back to perhaps the stereotypical... “What are identity markers for the Sami?” ... We have to be a bit careful when we work with such topics, thinking too much in “cubicles”.”*

Essentialisation is considered something to avoid. However, an interesting counterpoint to this is the concept of *“strategic essentialisation”* as an important instrument for recognition and reclaiming identities (Gjerpe, 2021, p. 316). Eriksen also speaks of such

a strategic essentialisation when explaining that the Northern Sami people have gained a hegemonic position over the other Sami groups because their essential traits are visible (Eriksen, 2018, p. 61). Essentialisation and stereotypes could in this context become a tool for empowerment. On this note, I would like to bring forth cultural expressions as a way of strategic essentialism which could lead to empowerment. The theme of empowerment will be analysed further in the next chapter. Three of the four research participants made reference to cultural expressions which are considered essential to Sami culture.

(Tor) - *“That fact that the Sami was then played there, like joik ... in in the Norwegian public. That it was, in a sense, a bit of a magical moment.”*

- *“Joik, for example, has become very widespread as a form of expression. It also fascinates, at least the music pupils.”*

(Kari) - *“I also associate them with reindeer husbandry, their beautiful clothes, joik.”*

- *“... they colour the flag and their, like, traditional clothes, things like that.”*

(Siri) - *“We also had a whole day where we were outside and had a lot of, like, games linked to Sami culture. Then we practised "catching reindeer". We were reindeer ourselves. We made quite a bit of Sami dishes on a fire and all sorts of things. Put up a lávvu...”*

- *“You can make it a bit practical. You are outside. You learn about reindeer herding more practically through a bit of acting ... Learning to cook in Sami traditional ways...”*

One key findings on the theme of essentialisation and stereotypes, is that examples of the concept of *“the textbook Sami”* are found in the textbooks which some of the research participants use, and these are considered to be stereotypical. Another key finding is that examples of *“strategic essentialism”*, such as joik which is used by the

Sami community to take back their identity and as a means to empowerment, is used in education to spark some engagement about indigenous and Sami themes.

6.7 Victimisation and Empowerment

Placing groups of people who have been, or currently are, in a precarious situation in a victim position could potentially contribute to continuing an oppressive mentality. On the other hand, a focus on empowerment can contribute to recognise the authority, autonomy, and power of these groups. Thus, the themes of victimisation and empowerment are important to understand how the Sami people are recognised and misrecognised.

For two of the research participants, the empowerment aspect was particularly important, placing a focus on what the Sami people have achieved as a group and how they have fought for their rights.

(Alma) - *“I think a lot of the teaching is about the injustice rather than what they have achieved now in the long run.”*

- *“To have a proper place in the curriculum to the extent that it has, and that we have, a whole period with a focus on Sami culture and Sami history. It is a way, at least in my opinion, of empowering.”*
- *“Of course, it is a pity that a lot happened, from a purely historical point of view, but that it is an important turning point in Norwegian history for equality.”*
- *“... talk about what rights they have been given throughout the ages.”*

(Tor) - *“It could perhaps have come forth a little more clearly how the Sami people themselves have worked to, in a way, improve their position ... Now you can kind
of get the impression that at one point the Norwegian authorities kind of just...*

The light dawned on them and then they were kind and somehow gave the Sami people a better status. But there is a lot of work behind it!"

- *"It is actually in the competence objectives for the history subject as well. How groups have worked for empowerment in Norwegian politics."*
- *"I also emphasise why this indigenous status is so important. And then you also have to ... bring out the fact that the status Sami culture has today, it is not a given. It has arrived."*
- *"I also emphasise why this indigenous status is so important. And then you also have to, even though in social studies they do not have room to draw the long historical lines, but you have to bring out the fact that the status Sami culture has today is not a given."*
- *"Also this with getting involved in the community and using the community to sort of influence the conditions for their lives."*

Due to the history of the Sami people in Norway, it is natural to have a focus on the assimilation policy. However, one of the research participants, Tor, had a particular focus on not drawing on the conflict lines too much.

(Tor) - *"I am also a bit concerned that one should not just go into the conflict dimension. So the Norwegianisation is... You know, it has such a conflict dimension to it."*

- *"... that is what has often been a challenge. That the Sami have been represented as an oppressed victim group. I think perhaps several textbooks have tried to do something about that."*

However, there seems to be a more common focus and consensus on the fact that the Norwegianisation policy is something that needs to have a focus in education. Three

out of the four research participants have stated that they are implementing this part of history into their teaching. Kari was the only one saying that this topic was not implemented in her teaching, but stated that this is common for first grade.

(Alma) - *“... that the pupils can imagine what it was like to grow up during the time when the Sami were the most oppressed.”*

(Siri) - *“I think history is very important, so the pupils have some background on what has happened... Get a bit of an impression of how awful it has been.”*

- *“It is important that the pupils become aware of the history, and have knowledge of the background those with Sami culture have.”*

(Tor) - *“I have often highlighted how people then had their Sami identity completely stripped away.”*

The concept of empowerment and victimisation has a lot to do with how the indigenous and Sami themes are represented and how they are visible. The theme of visibility and alienation will be covered in the next chapter. In the context of victimisation and empowerment, the key findings are that while a historical focus on the Norwegianisation policy is still considered important in order to not forget history and to provide a proper context, perspectives on empowerment are just as important.

6.8 Perspectives on Alienation and Visibility

The theme of alienation was something that occurred multiple times in the gathered data, and as a counterpoint to this, expressions of visibility were also mentioned often. Visibility is important for people to be properly recognised, and alienation, both in a physical sense of geographical distance and as an abstract concept of remoteness, could lead to misrecognition. Therefore, having a closer look at these two themes will aid in answering the research question because it will help understanding how recognition and misrecognition happens.

Geographical distance was mentioned by the research participants as something which had an alienating effect. Here it was understood that the pupils had some trouble connecting to issues which were not close to them. This feeling of distance could have something to do with a lack of visibility. This ties up to the argument of Thuen (2001), which explains that identity is largely linked to place. In this way, one could say that by virtue of being localised at a distance from the traditional Sami areas, the pupils may feel distanced to the Sami themes identity-wise as well.

(Siri) - *"... it is also important to make sure that the pupils are aware that there are Sami people around the world, even if they may not see them. Like here in Norway, there are quite a few, but you are not aware of them. It is not just those who live far up North."*

(Tor) - *"Many feel that they may not pose any threat to them or perhaps they have a distance to it..."*

(Alma) - *"... it is perhaps difficult for some to relate to what is happening around the world. But one can then think about what has happened in Norway and can allow oneself to become a little more sympathetic and get more involved."*

Alienation may also happen because of a disconnection between the pupils and the indigenous and Sami themes. In *"Å lytte til - og å engasjere seg i fortellinger"* that alienation can take place through diffuse narratives where the Sami people are placed outside time and place (Eriksen et al., 2022, p. 13). Such diffuse narratives can lead to a disconnect between the pupils and the Sami people. Three of the four research participants speaks of such a disconnect where the pupils feel distanced from the themes.

(Kari) - *"They are probably dividing "them" a bit from "us"! That it becomes a bit like "Yeah, this is how they live..."*

- *“Some of them probably find it a bit difficult to understand that they are living quite similarly to us.”*

(Siri) - *“We do not have pupils who somehow have any connection to any indigenous peoples. Many different cultures, but not anyone who has in a way said or who in a way expresses that they have any connection.”*

- *“If you start talking about the Sami and indigenous people, that it becomes a bit far from their reality. Considering that it is not very visible.”*

(Tor) - *“I tend to emphasise this point with the fact that the Sami... Yes, they have a Sami identity, they have a Sami community. So they kind of have a kind of dual citizenship. Because we see that in Norway, that the Sami are not a group that has opted out of society.”*

Diffuse narratives could also lead to *“othering”*, which is setting apart a group as different by attributing them to negative traits (Said, 1978). Alienation could also lead to a type of exoticisation, which makes the group seem interesting by virtue of being different. Three of the four research participants express that the pupils are interested in the topic and that they react with emotions such as fascination and curiosity.

(Kari) - *“Yes, they think it is exciting and they become a little like “Oh, wow!” They are indigenous peoples. So it is “Oh, are they living like that now?”*

- *“They thought it was interesting. And I think that they almost become a bit like “Wow!” Fascinated!”*

(Alma) - *“They are very curious, I think. I think they are very positive.”*

(Siri) - *“They are very open. They find it exciting. But it is somehow a little far from their reality.”*

Tor also expresses that he appeals to the interests of the pupils in order to get them engaged in the themes. He also states that he likes to use “resource people” from society, in order for the pupils to have someone to relate to. He is also interested in promoting the Sami point of view, and therefore he chooses to show the movie “Kautokeino-opprøret” from 2008, both to pose as a counterpoint to the sources provided by the state of Norway, and in order to engage the pupils emotionally.

(Tor) - *“We have some visible resource persons in society with a Sami background who have gained attention around themselves and also used the opportunity to emphasise that they also have a Sami culture. So, Ella Marie, I think in fact, especially her, has actually had a rather important impact.”*

- *“She is a musician, a very talented musician who reaches out widely with her music. Who at the same time has a commitment both to the environment and the climate, and also Sami interests.”*

- *“I also think that Mari Boine has done a lot of good for the Sami people.”*

One key finding is that the indigenous and Sami themes are more in the forefront around the Sami National Day. Three out of the four research participants express that there is a heightened focus on the themes around the Sami National Day, while Tor expresses that the school he works at does not celebrate the day. He further expresses that he believes the school lacks identity when it comes to political cases and philosophies.

(Siri) - *“I do not think we have a Sami flag to hang up on the big flagpole, but I know... that it is inside the teacher’s room, so that we can sort of hang it up...”*

- *“That we hang something on the wall in the classroom and celebrate something in that way, then. We often set aside some time during the day.”*

(Kari) - *“... the National Day is not only celebrated by using the flag. Then we work a lot*

with it. The flag is very visible. We may listen to joik.”

(Alma) - *“We have a Sami flag in the classroom... We are working towards that date.”*

- *“At least we have a separate period aimed at Sami culture and history and work quite similarly academically to other schools in the municipality.”*

7 Conclusion

By examining the lived experiences of the research participants, teachers in Norwegian schools, the purpose of this research was to investigate the research questions:

“How do the teachers in Norwegian schools experience the indigenous and Sami content in the curriculum, and how are they implementing the content into their practice?”

“How are institutionalised patterns, such as the educational curriculum and the teaching material, affecting how groups are recognised and misrecognised, and how does this apply to the context of the Sami people?”

The research questions are answered by the use of a thematic analysis, which is made up of categories which are relevant to the topic, as well as some themes which are relevant to the overarching topic of recognition and misrecognition. The gathered research data is provided by four teachers from Norwegian schools who have been teaching when the current curriculum has been implemented. Considering that the curriculum is still quite new, this research can contribute with some insight in how the curriculum is functioning in practice, in terms of strengths and weaknesses. In addition, this research can contribute to the wider field of recognition and misrecognition, by giving insight from the context of indigenous peoples. As the research is created on the basis of a smaller sample, it would be interesting to see what the findings would look like in research with a larger sample.

There were some interesting findings regarding the teachers' experiences of the curriculum. While the renewal of the curriculum has made it a useful tool, there are some limitations posed by some of the main characteristics of the curriculum, namely the focus on professional freedom and in-depth learning. In relation to how the teachers are experiencing the implementation of the content of the curriculum into their practice, the findings point to this being largely dependent on their own background. The findings show that the teachers' education is varying. This results in variation in the teachers' competence, and how the teachers implement the themes

into their practices. Teaching materials also affected the implementation, and the use of digital textbooks has made the selection and content somewhat limited, causing some teachers to find resources elsewhere.

Most of the teachers implement the indigenous and Sami themes around the Sami National Day and the themes then get a greater focus. Thus, this is a time when the indigenous and Sami themes get recognised, or misrecognised, in the educational context. The focus of the teachers are then on sameness between the Sami people and the Norwegian majority, but in a larger multicultural context where differences are taken into account. In order to connect the pupils with emotional impressions and connection through cultural expressions is a way to combat alienation and create engagement. However, while the topic which causes the greatest impact of all, the assimilation policy, is needed in the curriculum, there is also a great emphasis on empowerment. Empowerment is what has made the Sami people get the place they have in the curriculum in the first place.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE.

Introduction questions:

- What is your educational background?
- How long have you been working as a teacher?
- What subjects do you teach?

The teacher's background and competence:

- To what degree were topics surrounding indigenous peoples and the Sami people a part of your own education to become a teacher?
- Have you been taking any advanced courses which are relevant for these topics, such as for example EVU? Are you planning to take any such courses in the future? If yes, explain.
- Does your education affect how you work with indigenous themes and Sami themes? In what ways?
- Do you consider the curriculum's requirements for the teacher's competence on these topics match your own competence?
- To what extent are you able to fulfil the requirements in the curriculum for teaching about Sami themes in your own teaching?

In practice/in the classroom:

- Are themes around indigenous peoples and the Sami people prioritised well enough at school?
- Were there any changes around indigenous and Sami topics before and after LK20, in terms of how you teach these topics? What is the difference?
- Do you take any concrete measures and adaptations to ensure that these topics are part of the teaching?
- What do you consider to be the most important focus when it comes to indigenous and Sami themes in your own teaching after LK20?
- How do you experience the process of introducing these themes into your different subjects? What challenges arise? What consequences does it have?

Textbooks and teaching material:

- Are indigenous and Sami themes visible enough in the textbooks you use in the teaching?

- How do you experience the way the Sami people are represented in the textbooks you use?
- In what way does the Sami content in the textbooks match the content of the curriculum?
- Is there something missing or that should be done differently in the textbooks?

The attitudes and roles of the teacher:

- What do you associate with Sami?
- What do you think about the importance of indigenous and Sami themes in education?
- How would you ideally like to work with these topics in your teaching? What is needed to achieve this?

The attitudes of the pupils:

- How do you find that your pupils receive topics about indigenous peoples and the Sami people?
- Do you notice any difference in reactions, attitudes or expressions based on which subject you teach?
- Are there any topics that they react to more or that make them express attitudes in a clearer way? For example, prejudice or sympathy?
- Have you observed that pupils express themselves, directly or indirectly, about Sami people at school? Such as bullying, stereotypical statements, defensiveness, etc.

The attitudes of co-workers:

- Do you know what resources the teaching staff can use to reinforce or encourage more knowledge about these topics?
 - Are there any concrete measures that can facilitate professional development among the teaching staff?
- Focus areas.
 Competence sharing.
 Courses.
 Other. What?
- Does the school management make arrangements for the teachers to be able to introduce indigenous and Sami themes in the teaching? In what way?
 - What could be the reason for the lack of facilitation?
 - Do the teaching staff work in teams/sections to plan and discuss what should be included in the teaching? Is there any focus on indigenous themes and Sami themes?
 - How do you find that your colleagues receive topics about indigenous peoples and the Sami people?

Recognition and misrecognition:

- How do you ensure that the overarching values such as identity and cultural diversity are put into practice in teaching?
- In what way does the school function as an arena where identity is shaped?
- How can the classroom be an inclusive place in the best possible way?
- Do you consider the overarching goal of equality to be achievable? In what way?
- How can one ensure in a teaching situation that minorities such as the Sami people can be empowered, rather than victimised?
- Do you mark Sami holidays by, for example, using the Sami flag?
- Are human rights and indigenous people's rights sufficiently visible at school?
- Do you think that school is a good arena for human rights and indigenous rights to be realised? In what way? What can be done better?

Closing questions:

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Annex 2: Information Letter and Declaration of Consent

Information letter to teachers in Norwegian schools (part-time and full-time).

Drammen: 17.10.2022.

Master's student Anne-Marte Jakobsen, with supervision from Professor Oddvar Hollup, has started a research project which will examine teachers' experiences with the representation of Sami themes and identities in education, and how this promotes recognition, or the lack of recognition.

The purpose of the study.

I would like to interview current and former teachers, both part-time and full-time, who have taught when LK20 has been the curriculum. I will ask a number of questions about the implementation of indigenous and Sami themes in education, your thoughts on the Sami content in the curriculum and textbooks, attitudes towards indigenous peoples and the Sami people in pupils and colleagues, and your experiences with recognition and misrecognition of Sami identity in school. With this, I want to gain knowledge about how teachers experience being recognised and misrecognised in education.

What does participating in the study mean for you?

As a participant in the study, you will contribute in a personal interview, where you will be asked questions about your personal experiences with indigenous and Sami themes at the school where you work. The interview will have a duration of up to approximately 1 - 1 ½ hours, and there will be opportunities to take breaks along the way. The interview can take place at USN Campus Drammen, USN Campus Vestfold, or another location by agreement. The interview can also take place on Zoom by agreement. The interviews will be recorded on a dictaphone if you consent.

Your rights and your privacy as a participant in the study.

Participation in the study is voluntary, and you can choose to withdraw your consent at any time during the study process. As long as you can be identified in the aggregated material, you have the right to access the information about you. Information about you is collected and processed on the basis of your consent, and in accordance with the privacy regulations. The information you provide during the interviews will only be used for the purpose described in this information letter. Personal information will be kept to a minimum. Collected personal information about you is treated confidentially and will only be available to the student and supervisor. Personal information will be anonymised in the completed assignment. Information and recordings will be destroyed when the study is finished in mid-February.

If you find it interesting to participate in the study and agree to the information in this document, please sign the attached declaration of consent and take it with you to the

interview.

If you want further information or have any questions about the project, please get in touch!

Student: Anne-Marte Jakobsen
Phone: 40456782
email: annemartejakobsen@msn.com

Supervisor: Oddvar Hollup
Phone: 31009514/97541287
email: Oddvar.Hollup@usn.no

Best regards,

Anne-Marte Jakobsen (student) og Oddvar Hollup (supervisor)

Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge
Fakultet for humaniora, idretts- og utdanningsvitenskap
Institutt for kultur, religion og samfunnsfag
PO Box 235
NO-3603 Kongsberg, Norge

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I have received written information and agree with the project and its purpose.

I am willing to participate in this study and give my consent.

Signature

Phone number

Place

Date



 **ISN** University of
South-Eastern Norway

DELTAKERE SØKES

MASTEROPPGAVE I "HUMAN RIGHTS & MULTICULTURALISM"

**Jeg søker lærere på skoler i Norge som ønsker
å være med i et forskningsprosjekt!**

Prosjektet handler om å undersøke hvordan temaer omkring urbefolkninger, og spesifikt samer, som beskrevet i læreplanen LK20, blir implementert i utdanningen.

Formålet med prosjektet er å finne ut av hvordan lærere ved norske skoler erfarer at samiske temaer, identiteter, og rettigheter blir anerkjent, representert, og implementert i læreplanen, i utdanningen, og i personlige oppfatninger på skolen.

Intervju vil foregå enten personlig, eller via Zoom.

Er dette noe for deg? For å melde interesse eller for mer informasjon, kontakt meg på:

 +4740456782  annemartejakobsen@msn.com