UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities and Education

Indigenous Efflorescence and Tjåenieh in Southern Saepmie

Rethinking Language Revitalization Research in Conversation with a Saemie Illustrator

Kaja Nan Gjelde-Bennett

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Tjåanghkan tjaaleme

Aalkoeåålmegen bahtsedimmiem jïh tjåenieh gïehtjedidh Åarjel Saepmesne. Orresth gïeleskrejeerehtimmiedotkemem ussjedidh goh saemien guvviedæjjine soptsestalla

Goh jeahta ahte internasjonaale aalkoeåålmegen seabradahke jeatjahtovveminie daelie, antropolååge jïh gïeleskreejrehtimmiedotkije, Gearald Roche, daam åssjalmassem evtede aalkoeåålmegen bahtsedimmien bïjre juktie vïhtesjidh jïh dotkedh goh aalkoeåålmegen gïele jïh kultuvre baahtsedieh jalhts kolonialismine tjabreme. Mohte, åarjelsaemien gïele gohtjesovveme "joekoen prååsehke" jïh daate seabradahke mij lea tjabreminie gohtjesåvva "unnebelåhkoe unnebelåhkoen sisnie" goh dam stuerebe Saemien tsiehkiem ussjede juktie Aalkoeåålmege Skandinavijesne jïh Russlaantesne.

Daate maastere tjaalege galka voestes ieresne goerehtidh, guktie maahta daam orre teorijeles åssjalmassem aalkoeåålmegen baahtsedimmien bïjre utnedh aalkeåålmegen gïelen gaavhtan, daesnie åarjelsaemien gïeleseabradahken gaavhtan. Dan lissine, guktie maahta aalkoeåålmegen baahtsedimmie dïrreginie sjïdtedh goh aalkoeåålmegen gïelh dotkoe? Goh galka empireles bïevnesh tjöönghkedh aalkoeåålmegen dotkemenparadigmen mietie, manne aalkoeåålmegen metodologijen jïh barkoevuekieh åtnam, eeremes soptestalleme-barkoevuekiem åtnam maam Cree akademihkere Mararet Kovach buerkeste, juktie akte-vyöketje barkoegaskesem evtiedidh åarjelsaemien guvviedæjjine, Katarina Blind. Manne aalkoeåålmegen baahtsedimmiem åtnam teorehteles barkoedïrreginie lïhkes analysem darjodh göökteden guvveste mah vuesiehtieh åarjelsaemien gïeletsiehkiem, dah båetieh Kataria Blinden Instagram bieleste, Tjåenieh. Goh galka Katarina Blinden barkoem buerkiestidh, mahta jiehtedh dïhte akte vuesiehtimmie aalkoeåålmegen baahtsedimmeste. Katarinan guvvieh jïh sov jïjtse gïele vuesiehtieh juktie akte almetje barka daaletje åarjelsaemien gïeleseabradahkesne. Vuajna guktie Katarina aalkoeåålmegen baahtsedimmiem *dorje* jïh guktie satne *domtoe* daaletje tsiehkesne. Minngemosth, dotkemeprosjekte dah illeldahkh goerehte mah båetieh individuelle daltesistie, goh geatskene åarjelsaemien gïelem dan aalkoeåålmegen bahtsedimmien baaktoe, jïh aaj guktie aalkoeåålmegen baahtsedimmie maahta aalkoeåålmegen gïeledotkemem viehkiehtidh.

Tjoevtenjebaakoeh Aalkoeåålmegen bahtsedimmie, åarjelsaemien, aalkoeåålmegen dotkeme paradigme, Gïeleskreejrehtimmie, Sosiaale medije, Aalkoeåålmehlearoe

South Saemie translation by Joseph Fjellgren

Abstract

Proclaiming an international Indigenous societal revolution is taking place, anthropologist and language revitalization researcher, Gerald Roche develops the concept of Indigenous efflorescence to identify and investigate sites of Indigenous language and cultural flourishing in spite of colonialism. Conversely, the South Saemie language has been framed as "severely endangered" and the community a struggling "minority within a minority" within the larger Saemie context as an Indigenous people in Scandinavia and Russia.

This master's thesis aims to explore first, how may this relatively new theoretical concept of Indigenous efflorescence be directly applied to a particular Indigenous language context, in this case the South Saemie language community? Additionally, what can Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical tool contribute to Indigenous language research? To gather empirical data within an Indigenous research paradigm, I employ Indigenous methodologies and methods, principally the conversational method described by Cree scholar Margaret Kovach, to develop a collaborative working relationship with self-identifying South Saemie Illustrator, Katarina Blind. I then utilize Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical framework to perform a close analysis of two illustrations pertaining to the South Saemie language situation from Katarina Blind's Instagram page, Tjåenieh. Framing Katarina Blind's work as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence, Katarina's illustrations paired with her own voice highlight an individual's experience within the contemporary South Saemie language community in how Katarina *does* Indigenous efflorescence and how she *feels* about the current situation. Finally, the research project discusses the outcomes of an individual focused, micro-level approach to understanding the South Saemie language context through practices of Indigenous efflorescence, and then more generally what an Indigenous efflorescence perspective can contribute to Indigenous language research.

Keywords: Indigenous Efflorescence, South Saemie/ Sami/ Saami, Indigenous Research Paradigm, Language Revitalization, Social Media, Indigenous Studies

Note on Language Choice

One of the goals of this master's thesis is to make the South Saemie language as visible as possible, and so I use South Saemie words whenever possible for place names, culturally significant objects, etc. For quick reference, here is a table of the South Saemie terms I have used throughout the thesis with translations in English, and then in some cases North Saemie. In my experience, in cases where Saemie terms do not have direct translations into majority languages the default language is usually North Saemie since it is the most popularly spoken Saemie language.

Place Names:

Plaassje- Røros

Romsa- Tromsø

Saepmie- The traditional territory of the Saemie people, Sápmi

Snåasa- Snåsa

Tråante- Trondheim

Objects:

Gapta- Saemie traditional dress, Gákti

Kranna- Large woven wool textile, Rátnu

Lijnie- Wool shawl, Liidni

Låavtege- Sami tent, Lávvu

Sjielege- Cradle ball, šiella, suodji

Soehpenje- Lasso, Suohpan

Baarhkohke (singular)/ Baarhkohkh (plural)- Boot/ Boots, Bieksu/ Bievssut

Tjåenieh- Things

Other:

Gïele- Language, Giella

Kåanste- Art, Dáidda

Saemie (noun) - Sami, Saami, Sámi

Saemien (adjective)- Sami, Saami, Sápmelaš/ Sáme

Tjakten Tjåanghkoe- Fall festival

Vætnoe- Saemie hand craft, Duodji

Note on Spelling

According to the editors of *Indigenous Efflorescence*, there are three main ways of spelling Saemie: Sami, Sámi and Saami. Sami is the more linguistically neutral way of spelling Saemie in the English language since it is generally spelled Saami in the South Saemie language context, and Sámi in the North Saemie language context (Roche, Maruyama, & Virdi Kroik, 2018, p. xvi). Similarly there are different ways of spelling the name for the Saemie's traditional territory: Sapmi, Sábme, Saepmie and Sápmie (Roche et al., 2018, p. xvi). Though South and North Saemie are particularly discussed in this thesis, there are ten spoken Saemie languages total representing a great deal of linguistic diversity. As beforementioned, my aim is to make the South Saemie language appropriately visible for a thesis focusing on the South Saemie language context, and so I differ to the South Saemie spelling for terms like Saepmie. I was also told that "Saami" is not the spelling used in the South Saemie language itself, rather Saemie is the noun used to refer to a Saemie person, Saemieh is the plural form for Saemie people and Saemien is the adjective form. To make visible the South Saemie language and to not disrupt the flow of this thesis, that is primarily written in English, I will use the singular noun form of Saemie to refer to singular and collective nouns as well as adjectives. This is similar to how the terms Sami/Saami are used in other predominantly English texts. However, I want to acknowledge the diversity of Sami languages which exist. Due to this linguistic diversity, there will be a combination of the above spellings of Saemie particularly in other cited texts throughout the thesis.

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Preface

I can do everything when I can draw. Yeah, that's the magic about it. -Katarina Blind[1]

Figure 1 Be a Rebel

Since I first met her in Snåasa, Katarina Blind has been an insightful and artistically talented friend and collaborator for this master's thesis. As I shall detail later, Katarina is a self-identifying South Saemie illustrator who lives on the Norwegian side of Southern Saepmie and owns her own business, Tjåenieh. Not only has Katarina graciously given her time to aid in the realization of my research project, but she also agreed to design the thesis cover image with an original illustration. The stark image of an armor-clad Jeanne d'Arc/ Joan of Arc with a typical South Saemie red hat, standing defiantly holding the Saemie national flag in one hand and the other hand on her hip, reflects aspects of our relationship and succinctly conveys the overall message behind this thesis: be a rebel.

One of the first things Katarina and I connected on was the French language, and we exchanged stories of our study abroad experiences in France. Katarina told me it was during her immersion in a new culture as a student that she reflected on the uniqueness of her own Saemie identity. As our collaborative relationship developed, I became acquainted with Katarina's artistic style and I came to understand how her satirical illustrations highlight problematic aspects of her South Saemie language community, and she cleverly presents a solution, "be a rebel."[2] Through her own creative medium and social media platform, Katarina engages with contentious topics, such as racism and language policing, that others consider almost taboo. However, Katarina does not single out or ridicule members of her community, rather she extends a compassionate invitation to break down these social barriers.

[1] Highlighted from our conversation in November (Blind, 2019a)
[2] Quote from our conversation in November (Blind, 2019a)

Katarina adds small details to her illustrations, like the blue crocs featured on the cover illustration, which many within her community can relate to as a quirky local fashion trend.

Within the discipline of Indigenous Studies, I have written this master's thesis as an invitation for the academic community particularly to reflect upon the ways in which Indigenous language research is conducted and to explore alternative research approaches which prioritize the perspectives of the Indigenous language speakers, like Katarina. We can all be rebels in some respect and push boundaries within our own communities, standing in solidarity with others. It seems only appropriate that Katarina illustrate a South Saemie version of a famous historical French leader, who toppled numerous barriers during her time, to don the cover of this master's thesis, highlighting our rebellious spirits from the start.

Gæjhtoe, thank you Katarina for the perfect thesis cover!

1 Introducing Indigenous Efflorescence and Tjåenieh

A global Indigenous revolution is taking place which has been largely overlooked by mainstream academia (Roche et al., 2018). To investigate this phenomenon, anthropologist Gerald Roche has been developing the concept of Indigenous efflorescence, which can be used as both a descriptor for identifying and a framework for analyzing future-oriented processes of generativity and creativity within contemporary Indigenous societies (Roche et al., 2018). Roche borrowed the term efflorescence from political theorist and sociologist Jack A. Goldstone (Roche et al., 2018). In his work on early modern history, Goldstone exposes a gap in the English language: there is no word that signifies the direct opposite of crisis (Goldstone, 2002, p. 333). Goldstone asserts that previous terms used to describe historical progress are both constrictive and biased stating, "Words are just words, but they bedevil our efforts to write a meaningful history of the world when they limit our discourse, and therefore our understanding of patterns and trends" (Goldstone, 2002, p. 323). Instead of a simplistic dichotomy of growth and decline, Goldstone colorfully affirms, "Growth comes in several flavors" (Goldstone, 2002, p. 323). Similarly, Roche sought an innovative approach to understanding changing contemporary Indigenous contexts that writes back against simplistic descriptions of the decline and progress of Indigenous societies, especially ones that reflect colonial narratives of crisis and inevitable decline (Roche et al., 2018). In the anthology *Indigenous Efflorescence: Beyond Revitalisation in Sapmi and Ainu Mosir* (2018) he co-edited with Åsa Virdi Kroik and Hiroshi Maruyama, Roche details the multifaceted nature of Indigenous efflorescence by exploring what sociopolitical and economic contexts foster efflorescence and how Indigenous peoples experience efflorescence in practice, focusing on the Saemie and Ainu contexts (Roche et al., 2018).

Investigating the South Saemie language situation as an Indigenous Studies master's student, I was immediately intrigued by this new concept of Indigenous efflorescence because it assumes that Indigenous peoples' languages, cultures and societies are on the rise rather than in decline, flipping many common colonial tropes of "vanishing natives" and deficit narratives of "endangered" Indigenous languages on their head (Roche et al., 2018, p. 6).

In particular, Roche and the other co-editors uplift Indigenous language revitalization as a prime example of Indigenous efflorescence, referring to global efforts to reawaken Indigenous languages that were once declared dead (Roche et al., 2018). The language endangerment movement in the late 20th century attempted to raise public awareness about the decline of minoritized languages internationally by framing these discussions as an urgent call to action to save the world's linguistic diversity (Roche, 2018a). The editors point out how recent language revitalization research has begun to change discourses around Indigenous languages with few speakers, from calling them "dead" to "sleeping languages," acknowledging future possibilities (Roche et al., 2018, p. 6). However, Roche contends that these narratives around Indigenous language revitalization have not changed completely, nor are they universally acknowledged. One chapter of *Indigenous Efflorescence* by Leena Huss and Sigrid Stångberg relays findings of a sociolinguistic study on what social factors have promoted and deterred South Saemie language revitalization in a South Saemie community in Sweden (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). For the purpose of the anthology, this article serves to establish the context of Indigenous efflorescence in relation to the revitalization of the South Saemie language. However, it stops short of directly applying Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical and/or analytical framework since that particular study was conducted prior to Roche developing the concept. This led me to further investigate Indigenous efflorescence and its utility for understanding the South Saemie language situation.

1.1 The Research Project: Exploring Indigenous Efflorescence in Southern Saepmie

This master's thesis proposes to take the concept of Indigenous efflorescence further by investigating what a direct, practical application of Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical framework to a particular case study does. In other words, when the concept of Indigenous efflorescence is used to analyze an example of Indigenous efflorescence in practice, what aspects of an Indigenous language situation are highlighted? To address this inquiry, I researched the South Saemie language situation from recent studies published in English and then investigated current language revitalization activities in the South Saemie language community. I traveled to the South Saemie community of Snåasa/ Snåsa twice, first in August

2019 to visit the South Saemie museum and cultural center, Saemien Sijte, and the South Saemie language center, Gïelem nastedh, and then again in September 2019 to attend the South Saemie festival Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe. During my first visit to Gïelem nastedh, I met South Saemie illustrator Katarina Blind, who kindly showed me the center and described her work as an illustrator, social media manager and youth project leader. At Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe, I followed-up with Katarina and conducted a semi-structured interview about her life, artistic work and perspectives on the South Saemie language. I soon realized the uniqueness of her work and she graciously agreed to not only allow me to analyze her illustrations for my thesis, but also to continue our conversations to that end.

Accordingly, the initial inquiry of this project developed into the main research questions of my master's thesis: first, how may this theoretical concept of Indigenous efflorescence be directly applied to a particular Indigenous language situation, in this case the South Saemie language community? Additionally, what can Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical tool contribute to Indigenous language research? Quite simply, what exactly does Indigenous efflorescence do and what does it mean for the future of research related to Indigenous language communities?

Drawing from Indigenous efflorescence's epistemological foundations, I ground this project within an Indigenous research paradigm and incorporate decolonizing and indigenist methodologies throughout the research and writing processes as detailed by Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Cree scholar Margaret Kovach respectively. To gather the empirical data for the case study, I employ Indigenous research methods, principally the conversational method as described by Margaret Kovach to develop a collaborative, working relationship with self-identifying South Saemie illustrator, Katarina Blind (Kovach, 2010a). I utilize Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical framework to investigate Katarina's Instagram page, Tjåenieh, as a whole and then to perform a close analysis of two illustrations from Tjåenieh pertaining directly to the South Saemie language situation (Tjåenieh, 2018a). Framing Tjåenieh as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence, Katarina's illustrations paired with her own voice highlight an individual's experience within the contemporary South Saemie language community in how Katarina *does* Indigenous efflorescence and how she *feels* about the current situation. Finally, I discuss the outcomes of an individual focused, micro-level approach to understanding the South Saemie language situation through practices of

Indigenous efflorescence, and then more generally what an Indigenous efflorescence perspective can contribute to Indigenous language research.

Having established the research project including its principle inquiries, methodologies and methods, the rest of this chapter will expand upon the main theoretical concept of Indigenous efflorescence, provide some context of the current South Saemie language situation and introduce Katarina Blind and her Instagram account, Tjåenieh. Then I will detail how I as a researcher position myself within this context, and finally this introductory chapter will conclude with an outline of the entire research project.

1.2 Indigenous Efflorescence

> *Efflorescence: The process in which a crystalline hydrate loses water, forming a powdery deposit on the crystals* (Rennie & Law, 2016).

Efflorescence initially appeared in the English language as a chemistry term for the sudden appearance of crystals on the side of buildings as the result of water in the structure's building materials suddenly evaporating (Roche et al., 2018). From describing a chemical phenomenon, sociologist Goldstone adopted efflorescence to signify the direct opposite of crisis or an 'anti-crisis' (Goldstone, 2002). Contradicting the notion, 'modern or Western,' societies alone have a monopoly on societal growth and prosperity, Goldstone contends a dynamic view of history using efflorescence illuminates instances of upward development around the world (Goldstone, 2002). Goldstone defines efflorescence as an, "often unexpected upturn in significant demographic and economic indices, usually accompanied by political expansion, institution-building, cultural synthesis and consolidation" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 6).

To develop an alternative approach to the contemporary international Indigenous movement, Gerald Roche coins the term Indigenous efflorescence, adapting Goldstone's concept to refer to the, "under-studied phenomenon of the multi-sited demographic and cultural flourishing of Indigenous peoples" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 7). Gerald Roche self-identifies as a non-Indigenous anthropologist who researches Indigenous language revitalization and politics around the world (Roche et al., 2018). Roche was particularly inspired by his experiences

working in Tibet and the methodological challenges he encountered researching language revitalization and cultural documentation which caused him to compare that context to the situations of Indigenous peoples he was familiar with in Sweden and Australia (Roche, 2019; Roche et al., 2018). Reflecting on the origins of Indigenous efflorescence, Roche states in an online interview, "it was really that contrast between the situation in Tibet and what I first encountered in Sweden that prompted me to try and find a new term. So I think it's appropriate that it came from Chinese economic history into Indigenous Studies" (Roche, 2019).

In the anthology *Indigenous Efflorescence*, Roche and his fellow co-editors, Åse Viridi Kroik and Hiroshi Maruyama, expand upon this new concept of Indigenous efflorescence by exploring what sociopolitical and economic contexts foster efflorescence and how Indigenous peoples realize and experience efflorescence in practice (Roche et al., 2018). According to the editors, Indigenous efflorescence serves several functions. One is that it writes back against simplistic descriptions of the decline and progress of Indigenous societies (Roche et al., 2018). Indigenous efflorescence also provides an analytical framework with which scholars can analyze contemporary Indigenous contexts through a new lens. Indigenous efflorescence thus emphasizes instances of Indigenous social progress and cultural flourishing and provides conceptual framework for studying these phenomena (Roche et al., 2018).

1.3 The South Saemie Language Situation

Figure 2 Map of Saepmie: The light grey area represents the Saemie traditional area, the darker grey shading indicates the South Saemie area and the region with the grey lines are still contested. The South Saemie place names are in Norwegian and South Saemie (Hermanstrand, Kolberg, Nilssen, & Sem, 2019, p. 7)

The South Saemie people represent a culturally and linguistically distinct group who inhabit the southern region of Saepmie,[3] the traditional territory of the Indigenous Saemie peoples encompassing modern day Scandinavia and western Russia. The South Saemie region of Saepmie is relatively large, and the traditional South Saemie communities are spread out across Norway and Sweden (Mæhlum, 2019).

[3] The Saemie traditional territory can be spelled Sápmi, Sábme or Saepmie in the North Saemie, Lule Saemie and South Saemie languages respectively. See section, "Note on Language Choice" for more details.

The South Saemie language has sociocultural symbolic value within the South Saemie community and is closely associated with South Saemie identity (Hermanstrand et al., 2019). Within the limited scholarly literature today, South Saemie is often depicted as an endangered language and the people a struggling minority within a minority (Hermanstrand et al., 2019). The number of South Saemie language speakers vary depending on when information from individual sources was gathered and what factors were being examined. Ergo, there are no reliable statistics currently available only estimates (Hermanstrand et al., 2019). One sociolinguistic study estimates 1,000 South Saemie individuals in Norway, and roughly the same amount in Sweden (Mæhlum, 2019). Another source estimates 500-700 South Saemie language speakers in Norway and Sweden (Hermanstrand et al., 2019). According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s "Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger," South Saemie is classified as "severely endangered," with approximately 500 language speakers in Norway and Sweden (Moseley, 2010). Until recently there has been little scholarly literature published in English on the South Saemie in general, and even less on the South Saemie language specifically.

Within the last two years, two books have been published on the South Saemie: *The Indigenous Identity of the South Saemie: Historical and Political Perspectives on a Minority within a Minority* (2019) edited by Håkon Hermanstrand, Asbjørn Kolberg, Trond Risto Nilssen and Live Sem, and the aforementioned *Indigenous Efflorescence: Beyond Revitalisation in Sapmi and Ainu Mosir* (2018) edited by Gerald Roche, Åsa Virdi Kroik and Hiroshi Maruyama. These recent works feature the South Saemie context and provide much needed theoretical and empirical context on South Saemie language revitalization. These two publications have been important scholarly sources for establishing the current and historical context of the South Saemie language situation, and I will describe their findings in detail later in chapter 3, "The South Saemie Language Context for Efflorescence." As previously mentioned, I visited Snåasa twice to conduct research on the current language situation in this South Saemie community and I attended a conference during Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe for an expanded South Saemie language context. I will also further describe my research and the conference in the third chapter, though I must highlight here that my experiences in Snåasa revealed a plethora of projects and dedicated individuals working to strengthen South Saemie language, culture and ethnic identity.

1.4 Katarina Blind: “Samisk illustratør”

Now to introduce Katarina Blind, who has graciously assisted me in my exploration of Indigenous efflorescence in Southern Saepmie. Katarina is a self-identifying Saemie illustrator who lives and works in the South Saemie community of Snåasa. Katarina’s father is North Saemie and her mother South Saemie. Though Katarina was born in Sweden, her family moved to Snåasa on the Norwegian side of Southern Saepmie soon after where she spent most of her childhood, as her stepfather is from Snåasa. If anyone asks Katarina where she is from, she says she is from Snåasa because it has been and remains her home (Blind, 2019c). Katarina attended the South Saemie immersion school in Snåasa for grades seven through twelve, and then the Sámij åhpadusguovdásj/ Samernas utbildningscentrum school in Jokkmokk to study vætnoe, traditional Saemie handicraft. Katarina specialized in the “soft” form of vætnoe consisting primarily of sewing, embroidery and other textile related forms (Blind, 2019a). Katarina enjoyed the hands-on learning aspect of the program, but soon became anxious to break away from more traditional forms to develop her own style. Katarina vividly remembers when a guest instructor gave a painting workshop that inspired her to pursue a different creative medium, “it's all color and shape, and you have to work with… paint, and it was the best week. I could do what I want, and I’m sitting there just, woohoo! And then I realized, ok I don’t think this duodji[4] is something for me” (Blind, 2019a). After a year, Katarina enrolled in an art school in Tråante/ Trondheim, the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art, to become an illustrator, “And there I can do whatever I want… my mind was free” (Blind, 2019a).

After moving back to Snåasa, Katarina decided that she wanted to start her own business. The name of her business, Tjåenieh, translates to “things” in South Saemie, and Katarina saw this business as an opportunity to use her talents for art and design to create a variety of products from greeting cards to prints to wrapping paper. After working several jobs and beginning a

[4] Duodji is the North Saemie word for vætnoe, and the term most popularly used in English texts.

family, Katarina decided it was the right time to take a risk and begin her own venture, “and I said, ah, just do it. Do something else, do what you want” (Blind, 2019a).

Katarina employs a distinctive illustrating style using a variety of bright colors that don’t always stay within the lines of her boldly drawn figures. Her shop’s logo is a good example of her artistic style. The image is her own interpretation of a kranna, a large woven Saemie textile that was traditionally placed on the doors of låavtege, typical Saemie tent traditionally made of reindeer skins and birchwood poles. Now the woolen textiles are produced in greater numbers and adorn the walls of people’s homes and even some classrooms at The Arctic University of Norway. Although the logo itself is inspired by a traditional Saemie pattern from her grandparents’ kranna, Katarina has made it her own by illustrating it with disjointed lines and in bright pastel colors (Blind, 2019a).

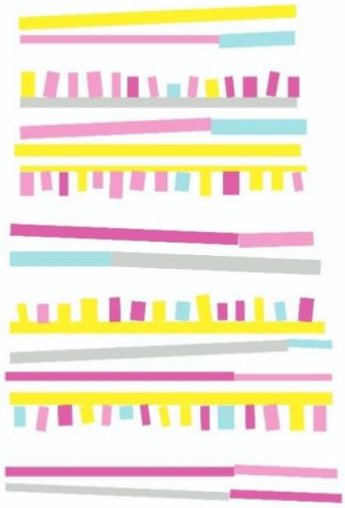

Figure 3 Example of Katarina’s kraana design similar to her original store logo (Tjåenieh, 2018b)

At first, Katarina was hesitant to explicitly refer to her illustrations as Saemie art or draw too heavily from her Saemie background for inspiration. However, she soon realized that her Saemie identity is a significant part of her life and indeed influences her work. Thus, she

chose a South Saemie name for her business and a typical Saemie textile pattern for her logo. Though she still chooses not to use the colors generally associated with the Saemie, dark red, yellow, blue and green, that adorn the Saemie national flag and that are featured on most traditional Saemie dress, gapta. Instead her palette features bright pastel colors, since those are her personal favorites (Blind, 2019c).

Katarina is not alone in her personal debate to highlight her Saemie identity in her work. Within the larger art community in Saepmie, there are ongoing discussions on what can and cannot be considered Saemie art, kåanste. Some assert that Saemie vætnoe is an artform that is outside of the fine arts but has been developed as a form of authentically Saemie creative expression. Saemie art scholar Gunvor Guttorm (2009) points out how once Saemie vætnoe became institutionalized, it began to be viewed as an art form of its own. Self-identifying Saemie artists who engage in other creative mediums within what is considered the institution of fine arts vary in their perception of their work (Guttorm, 2009). Some artists, like Synnøve Persen, assert that their paintings and sculptures are not examples of Saemie kåanste. They just happen to be Saemie who create pieces of art. Persen has stated that she draws inspiration from her life experiences, including her Saemie background, but that her artwork is still not meant to be Saemie kåanste. Other artists assert that if a self-identifying Saemie makes a piece of art, then that work is Saemie kåanste, regardless of the subject matter (Guttorm, 2009).

Katarina seems to locate her work in a space somewhere in between these debates. She is a self-identifying Saemie illustrator, and it happens that a lot of what she is inspired by is her Saemie background and her Saemie community. Katarina does not work within the traditional medium of Saemie vætnoe, yet the majority of her illustrations' subject matter features one or more Saemie languages, cultures and identities. So even though Katarina did not set out to create Saemie kåanste when she started her business, that is what happened and what she continues to do (Blind, 2019a). When I asked her if she considers her work to be Saemie art or just art inspired by her Saemie background, she responded:

> I just take it [inspiration] from my background. And that is the Saemie, so I don't know [that] I can't relate to the Swedish background, or the Norwegian, or the Danish or something. I just know the Saemie one. And for me I think it's [my work is] Saemie illustrations. Not all of them of course, but most of them. And I have specifically

> chosen to be an illustrator for the Saemie people, if you can say it like that, with Instagram (Blind, 2019a).

To launch her business, Katarina began by designing things she thought people would be interested in purchasing, like greeting cards. She created an Instagram account for her business to advertise her products. However, once she started producing materials, she kept illustrating more works and posting them on her Instagram account. When I pointed out to her how much material she has been able to produce in a short time, she shrugged her shoulders and replied that it is not so difficult for her to produce new material with current technology (Blind, 2019c). She illustrates whatever comes to her and whenever she is inspired, she is able to instantly share her work online. Katarina began posting to her Instagram account on October 2, 2018. In just over a year she has over 200 posts,[5] the majority of which feature original content (Tjåenieh, 2018a). She also commented on how many people have had positive reactions to her work both in person and online. At first she said she was only selling her cards and prints at local markets and festivals in Snåasa and Plaassje/ Røros, but now her art is sold in the Saemien Sijte giftshop in Snåasa and she has begun to travel to more places in Saepmie on the Norwegian and Swedish side (Blind, 2019c). After she began consistently creating and posting illustrations to her social media page in addition to those she sells, she quickly gained a sizable following of over 2,000 Instagram users[6] (Tjåenieh, 2018a). Now her Instagram profile is still called Tjåenieh created by Katarina Blind, who lists herself as an artist with the description, "Samisk illustratør" - Saemie illustrator, and her profile picture changed from her business logo to a self-portrait (Tjåenieh, 2018a). In her typical illustrative style, Katarina depicts herself from the shoulders up wearing a North Saemie gapta[7] from her paternal grandmother's community in Jukkasjärvi, Sweden (Blind, 2019a). Once again, she is displaying her multifaceted Saemie identity in a subtle way (her surname is a typical North Saemie name and she is wearing North Saemie dress on her profile with a South Saemie account name) that also clearly represents her own unique style and sense of self.

[5] 224 posts as of Feb 03, 2019 (Tjåenieh, 2018a)

[6] 2,186 followers as of Feb 03, 2019 (Tjåenieh, 2018a)

[7] North Saemie term for Saemie traditional dress is gákti, gapta in South Saemie

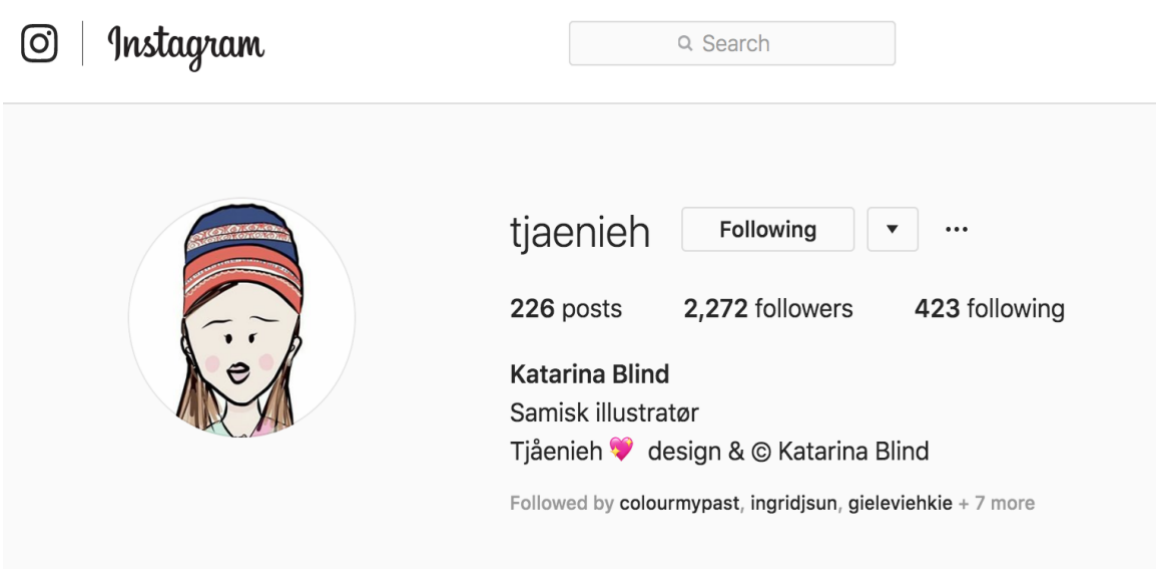

Figure 4 Screenshot of Katarina's Instagram profile, Tjåenieh (Tjåenieh, 2018a)

Moreover, Katarina currently works part time as an illustrator and youth project group leader at the South Saemie language center in Snåasa, Gïelem nastedh. In addition to her business Instagram page, she is also in charge of creating illustrations for Gïelem nastedh and posting on their social media pages. These illustrations are distinct from those on her own account, because she has purposefully made them for language learning (Blind, 2019c). Her Gïelem nastedh posts usually feature a South Saemie word and then an illustration to represent that word. Though I am not focusing on these illustrations for the purpose of this thesis due to the different approach and context in which these pieces are created, they are certainly another example of South Saemie language efflorescence for many of the same reasons I will expand upon later. These illustrations have a more pedagogical approach and are created specifically for the language center and the South Saemie language learning community. Like on Katarina's Tjåenieh page, her illustrations on Gïelem nastedh's Instagram account also receive feedback from followers online and have questions or suggestions. I have elected instead to focus on Katarina's illustrations on her personal Instagram page because, as I will explain in later chapters on methodology and data collection, Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical framework highlights an individual, subjective life experience. This is to say that while I will not be considering her work for Gïelem nastedh as part of my primary sources for analysis in this thesis, the artwork she creates in other contexts still influences her life and creative processes outside of her other jobs, demonstrating her involvement within the South

Saemie language community. Her process of language learning through her work influences and is influenced by others' learning processes as well. However, given my interpretation of Indigenous efflorescence as practices of personal, creative expressions of indigeneity, I will be using Katarina's personal Instagram page as a significant portion of my research data for analysis.

1.5 The Position of the Researcher: From America to Saepmie

Now that I have introduced Katarina Blind with whom I have collaborated for creating this thesis, I will describe a bit about myself as a researcher and how I position myself within this master's thesis project. Positionality is a core value of research ethics within Indigenous Studies (Russell-Mundine, 2012). More than establishing whether or not the researcher self-identifies as Indigenous or non-Indigenous, it is ethically essential to disclose one's personal background and motivations for conducting Indigenous research. As Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith has famously pointed out, research has historically been weaponized against Indigenous peoples and so now Indigenous Studies scholars must position themselves within their research and practice reflexivity throughout the process of research to ensure it benefits, or at the very least does not do harm to the Indigenous community (Smith, 2012). To clarify, I do not claim that by incorporating this section on positionality into my thesis that it exempts my study from ethical scrutiny. Rather, I am including it in an attempt to create greater transparency and exercise reflexivity. I have constantly interrogated my own priorities and reflected upon my own identity throughout the research and writing process of this master's thesis.

I self-identify as a Saemie American writer and researcher. I was born in the United States and I have Norwegian, Saemie, English and Scottish ethnic heritage, and I share in my brother's South Korean cultural heritage.[8] The Saemie and Norwegian aspects of my identity

[8] To clarify, I am not claiming South Korean ethnic heritage myself, but my immediate family and I have always shared in and honored my adopted brother's South Korean cultural heritage. We feel enriched by our family's multi-ethnic and cultural background and we try to make visible many families' multi-ethnic and/or cultural realities.

were constantly highlighted during my childhood. My mother's family is Saemie and Norwegian American. Growing up in the US, my Mother was often 'othered' because of her "Asiatic" eyes and darker complexion. Throughout her life people have asked if she was Egyptian, Hawaiian or Puerto Rican, and few believed her when she replied her grandparents came from Norway. Regardless of others' disbelief, my siblings and I have typical Norwegian names and grew up with Norwegian cultural practices. Since I was three years old I have been a member of Sons of Norway, an organization initially created to assist Norwegian immigrants in the United States that now serves to connect Americans to their Scandinavian ancestry. My Mother was the president of our lodge for many years and won a Viking of the Year Award for her leadership in 2001. Within this group, we were labeled "the Saemie family" and were explicitly invited to cultural events featuring the Saemie, which were usually based off of stereotypes. It was not until I was in high school however, that I began to take a more active interest in the Saemie to better know my own heritage as well as investigate the superficial image of Saemie society that I had repeatedly encountered. In 2017, I joined an organization called Pacific Sámi Searvi where I connected with other Saemie Americans and learned that my extended family's hesitance to talk about my Saemie relatives, which resulted in my lack of knowledge about them, was actually a common occurrence. It was heartbreaking to realize that so many Saemie who immigrated to the United States felt they had to obscure their Indigenous identity in hopes of a better future, but it was also encouraging to be surrounded by those decedents actively reclaiming their ancestry.[9]

For both personal and professional reasons, I have been conducting research on various aspects of contemporary Saemie society in Scandinavia for the past nine years, leading to my decision to pursue a master's in Indigenous Studies in Saepmie. On a superficial level, I have completed this research project with the aim of obtaining a master's degree. More importantly, I have chosen to focus on the context of the South Saemie language situation to draw attention to the incredible works and resilience of the South Saemie community. To my knowledge, there has been limited research published on the topic in the English language, which (for better or worse) is a popular international language and the native language of

[9] For more information on Saemie Americans I recommend reading *We Stopped Forgetting: Stories from Sámi Americans* (2012) by Ellen Marie Jensen.

many South Saemie descendants in North America. I have also chosen to employ Indigenous methodologies and methods to highlight the validity and utility of Indigenous knowledge systems in academia. For this thesis project overall, I humbly hope that I have accurately and respectfully portrayed, to the best of my ability, the South Saemie language community and the work of Katarina Blind, who so graciously has taken time from her many endeavors to collaborate with me; honored my Saemie ancestry; and contributed to developing decolonial academic discourses that recognize and empower Indigenous language, culture and knowledge systems. [10]

1.6 Thesis Project Overview

To conceptually position Indigenous efflorescence as my theoretical framework, the following chapter, "Conceptual Contexts of Indigenous Efflorescence," establishes the context from which the concept of Indigenous language efflorescence emerged in response to developments within the international Indigenous movement and the academic fields of Indigenous Studies and sociolinguistics. The third chapter, "The South Saemie Language Context for Efflorescence," provides an overview of how the South Saemie language situation has been portrayed in past and more recent studies, as well as a description of my experiences and observations within the South Saemie community of Snåasa at Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe.

Chapter four, "An Indigenous Research Approach for Investigating Efflorescence," details my methodologies and methods for how I executed a practical analytical application of Indigenous efflorescence informed by an Indigenous research framework. Chapter five, "Determining the Scope of Indigenous Efflorescence Data," explores Indigenous efflorescence data collection through interpreting Katarina Blind's Instagram page, Tjåenieh, as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence.

Chapter six, "Examining Tjåenieh as a Practice of Indigenous Efflorescence," analytically applies Indigenous efflorescence to Katarina's work on Tjåenieh as a whole, and then chapter

[10] I will continue to employ the first person throughout this thesis when appropriate to clarify my thoughts and actions throughout this research process.

seven, “Analyzing Indigenous language efflorescence,” includes a close analysis of two of Katarina’s illustrations directly related to the South Saemie language situation as Indigenous efflorescence.

Reflecting on the practical application of Indigenous efflorescence to Katarina’s work, chapter eight, “Outcomes of Indigenous Efflorescence,” then discusses what Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical concept does when applied generally and what it highlights about the South Saemie language situation. The final chapter, “The Significance of Indigenous Efflorescence,” summarizes the principal findings of this study, discusses their significance and speculates on the future potential of Indigenous efflorescence.

2 Conceptual Contexts of Indigenous Efflorescence

As aforementioned, Indigenous efflorescence represents a recently developed theoretical concept for identifying and analyzing processes of generativity in contemporary Indigenous societies (Roche et al., 2018). Specifically, this thesis focuses on applying Indigenous efflorescence to a case study in the South Sami language community. Although Indigenous efflorescence itself is a relatively new concept, it has evolved from established historical and contemporary academic discourses from multiple disciplines. To conceptually contextualize Indigenous efflorescence, this chapter will detail the diverse discourses within Indigenous Studies and sociolinguistics[11] from which it emerged and demonstrate how they connect to Roche's current concept of Indigenous efflorescence.

2.1 A Decolonizing Discourse

In 1999 Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith published, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, leading a significant discourse in Indigenous Studies: decolonization (Smith, 2012). Decolonization, as outlined by Smith, is a methodological approach which asserts research and academia are framed within a colonial "Western"[12] paradigm and that Indigenous peoples must decolonize the academy in order to center Indigenous perspectives within Indigenous research (Smith, 2012, pp. 1-3) Reflecting on *Decolonizing Methodologies* twenty years after its publication, Smith explains during a lecture that decolonization, "is a process that works alongside our agenda, the agenda of Indigenous peoples, simply in becoming the humans we saw ourselves as being before colonization" (Smith, 2019). Smith details how Western knowledge and science has both benefited from and been an instrument of colonization, continuing to maintain the superiority

[11] To clarify, within the wider discipline of sociolinguistics I am principally referring to scholarship within the sociology of language subfield as popularly represented by the work of Joshua Fishman, who is considered one of the founding contributors to the language revitalization research area (Bayley, Cameron, & Lucas, 2013; Huss & Stånberg, 2018).

[12] Smith clarifies that when she refers to Stuart Hall's conception of the "West" as a, "concept, a language for imagining a set of complex stories, ideas, historical events and social relationships." (Smith, 2012, p. 44). Thus the West is more of a sociopolitical rather than geographic concept.

of the West over Indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012). Within Western colonial research paradigms, Indigenous peoples were merely 'objects' of research without agency or even humanity (Smith, 2012). And so Smith contends the, "reach of imperialism into 'our heads' challenges those who belong to colonized communities to understand how this occurred, partly because we perceive a need to decolonize our minds, to recover ourselves, to claim a space in which to develop a sense of authentic humanity" (Smith, 2012, p. 24). Therefore, Indigenous peoples as colonized peoples must decolonize their minds in order reclaim their humanity by influencing the way in which Indigenous research is organized and conducted and revalorizing Indigenous knowledge systems which fall outside traditional Western paradigms (Smith, 2012).

In the forward to the second edition, Smith affirms *Decolonizing Methodologies* has less to do with the selection of the "theory of method" in Indigenous research, and more to do with, "the context in which research problems are conceptualized and designed, and with the implications of research for its participants and their communities" (Smith, 2012, p. ix). Based largely on Smith's work, the predominant decolonizing discourse within Indigenous Studies thus recognizes the influences of Western colonial research paradigms that must be challenged and ultimately dismantled in order to revalorize Indigenous knowledge systems and to center Indigenous approaches to Indigenous research (Smith, 2019). Smith finishes her 2019 lecture at Goldsmiths, University of London declaring, "we need to think of completely different understandings of knowledge or what it means to know and be… that there are different conceptions of knowledge" (Smith, 2019).

In *Indigenous Efflorescence*, Roche highlights the decolonizing scaffolding of Indigenous efflorescence throughout the anthology. As a theoretical framework, Indigenous efflorescence can be used both to describe and analyze future-oriented processes of Indigenous social, cultural and linguistic flourishing that contradicts pervasive colonial narratives of the "vanishing native" (Roche et al., 2018, pp. 6-7). More important than the products of Indigenous efflorescence, the continuation of these generative processes into the future is essential and demands a commitment to fostering sites Indigenous efflorescence that have yet to be discovered (Roche, 2018a; Roche et al., 2018). The analysis of these current and future processes of efflorescence represents, "a commitment to anticolonial engagement and intervention" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 9). In this sense, Indigenous efflorescence is a call to

action. It is a way to not only write back against harmful colonial narratives of Indigenous social/ cultural/ linguistic decline, but to identify barriers to Indigenous efflorescence and to support the continuation of these generative processes into the future (Roche et al., 2018). Roche points out in the conclusion that one of the main factors which limits Indigenous efflorescence is ongoing colonialism (Roche, 2018a). Roche refers to Patrick Wolf's conceptualization of colonization as a structure not an event, and so it is important to understand contemporary forms of colonialism and how they affect Indigenous efflorescence (Roche, 2018a). Roche states that this understanding is especially important in ethical considerations for non-Indigenous scholars who benefit from these colonial structures (Roche, 2018a).

Utilizing a decolonizing discourse, Roche not only highlights the historical impact of colonialism on Indigenous peoples, but also seeks to identify ongoing structures of colonialism and to evaluate the role of researchers within this context (Roche, 2018a). Roche addresses the academic community in the anthology's conclusion for how he sees the concept of Indigenous efflorescence changing Indigenous research practices (Roche, 2018a). Roche contends Indigenous efflorescence highlights Indigenous agency and represents, "a strategic and critical intervention, and a refusal to participate in the feedback between the actual and theoretical hegemony of colonialism" (Roche, 2018a, p. 228). Roche's description of Indigenous efflorescence echoes Smith's call to action nearly twenty years prior in his emphasis on researchers' responsibility to expose and challenge Western colonial hegemony in order to center Indigenous perspectives, particularly in Indigenous research (Roche, 2018a).

2.2 An Indigenist Spirit

Indigenism is another popular discourse within contemporary Indigenous Studies that influenced the development of Indigenous efflorescence (Roche et al., 2018). Roche and the other editors explicitly state that *Indigenous Efflorescence*, "is offered in an 'Indigenist' spirit- an inclusive research paradigm that emphasizes indigeneity as a philosophical orientation and political project" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 11). More broadly, Roche didactically explains:

> Indigenism refers to the transnational movement to promote the political interests of Indigenous people, including promotion of the universal applicability of the categories 'Indigenous peoples' and 'indigeneity' (Niezen 2003; Clifford 2013). Although originating primarily in the CANZUS (Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US) countries, and now vigorously supported by the Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden and Norway), this movement has since taken on global dimensions (Merlan 2009), including the creation of legal norms and international agreements that have developed constant feedback between local movements and global networks (Johnson 2016) (Roche, 2018a, p. 229)

Indigenism as a research paradigm in Indigenous Studies refers to the centering of Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives for furthering Indigenous self-determination and the valorization of Indigenous approaches to research within academia. Though the term indigenism is fairly recent, developed as a response to globalization, Indigenous scholars have been arguing for and developing an Indigenous research paradigm since the mid twentieth century if not earlier.[13] In *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (2010), Cree scholar Margaret Kovach details a variety of research methodologies centered upon Indigenous knowledges[14] from her experience and those of other Indigenous academics to assist Indigenous researchers and their allies (Kovach, 2010b). Kovach explains that decolonization fits conceptually under the umbrella of an Indigenous research framework and its objective is to expose power inequalities and bring Indigenous approaches to research from the margins, though, "it is more aligned with Western critical research methodologies" (Kovach, 2010b, pp. 80-82). Kovach writes how Smith's work on decolonization, "has provoked analysis of how methodologies per se impact Indigenous peoples, and we are now at a point where it is not only Indigenous knowledges themselves that require attention, but the processes by which Indigenous knowledges are generated" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 13). Thus developing indigenist approaches to research, Indigenous methodologies, are the logical next step in the Indigenous research agenda (Kovach, 2010b).

[13] Here I am referring particularly to the incorporation of Indigenous research approaches within the academy. Indigenous knowledge systems generally of course have existed for much longer, being developed and transmitted from one generation to the next, though Indigenous ways of knowing have largely been excluded from knowledge production in Western institutions (Kovach, 2010b, pp. 76-78).

[14] Kovach utilizes the term Indigenous knowledges to refer to the diversity of knowledge of Indigenous peoples generally, as well as tribal knowledge and epistemology when referring to specific Indigenous contexts (Kovach, 2010b, p. 20).

Detailing some of the principal characteristics of indigenism, Kovach explains an Indigenous research approach is holistic and based on the relational knowledge production that aims for reciprocity rather than extracting information (Kovach, 2010b). To ensure the research process gives back to the research participants, Indigenous research approaches are designed to shift the power from the researcher to the research participants. This gives participants greater agency within the research process and includes individuals' subjective experiences (Kovach, 2010b). Indigenous research is also context specific and centered around a particular 'tribal epistemology,' for instance Cree knowledges and ways of knowing are distinct from those of the South Sami because they are based within a particular ontology (Kovach, 2010b). Kovach clarifies, "Indigenous epistemologies assume a holistic approach that finds expression within the personal manifestations of culture" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 61). For instance, Kovach emphasizes the importance of language to Indigenous epistemologies, from the epistemological significance of Indigenous language grammatical structures to the symbolism of Indigenous place names (Kovach, 2010b). Through her work on an indigenist approach to research, Kovach conveys the importance of uplifting and developing Indigenous knowledge production, metaphorically illustrating, "On the methodological buffet table, Indigenous methodologies ought to be a choice" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 13).

Clearly, Indigenous efflorescence is significantly influenced by both decolonial and indigenist conceptual discourses within Indigenous Studies in that it aims to expose ongoing colonial structures and emphasizes experiences of indigeneity (Roche et al., 2018).

2.3 Discourses of Language Endangerment

Referring to the revitalization Indigenous languages as an example of Indigenous efflorescence, Gerald Roche traces back this newly developed concept to the endangered language movement that emerged in the late 20th century as a response to globalization and the universalization of language diversity (Roche, 2018a). Previously, linguistic diversity was understood as a national-level political issue within academic studies on language policy and language shift (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). With the development of the new global economy in the late 1990's, existing nation-states and minority groups felt they had to reassert boundaries and translate their interests onto the supranational level in conjunction with the

growing influence of transnational actors, such as UNESCO (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). Since then, language rights discourses have primarily taken place at the international level. However, the issues surrounding endangered languages have been constructed on the national level and have largely remained a concern for states (Patrick, 2008). Currently, discourses of language endangerment have become problematically pervasive on both the international and national level, although institutional language policies themselves differ domestically.

In *Discourses of Language Endangerment* (2008), sociolinguists Alexandre Duchêne and Monica Heller outline the origins, uses and problematic aspects of discourses of language endangerment. Duchêne and Heller clarify endangered languages refer to "small" languages with few speakers, many of which are Indigenous languages (Heller & Duchêne, 2008, p. 2). Among several common tropes of discourses of language endangerment, the authors explain the first trope universalizes the value of linguistic diversity and states that all languages are equally valuable and unique. This argument is based on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, that each language represents a particular worldview and contains special knowledge (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). Another common trope likens linguistic diversity to biodiversity, and closely related to this, linguistic diversity is framed as part of humanity's global heritage (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). The loss of a language is thus equated to the loss of a plant or animal species (Cameron, 2008). These tropes have thus formulated a larger argument for the right of minoritized languages to be protected against the incursion of majority languages (Heller & Duchêne, 2008).

Indigenous language discourses are distinct in that they consist of a supranational, moral appeal to human rights and social justice. Their discursive strategies involve essentializing Indigenous languages and linking them to culture, traditional knowledge and land (Patrick, 2008). This is because Indigenous language discourse is oftentimes linked to larger mobilization efforts for Indigenous rights to autonomy that began in the mid to late 20th century (Patrick, 2008). Historically, colonial regimes forced language shift from Indigenous to majority languages as part of the colonization process, the systematic devaluing and attempted erasure of Indigenous languages, cultures and histories. Now, Indigenous languages and their revitalization have become an important part of contemporary Indigenous rights movements. Within the Canadian context, Donna Patrick explains how Indigenous peoples are marginalized within the nation-state, and so they need a particular discourse of language

endangerment that prioritizes political reconciliation and highlights Indigenous rights to their traditional territories (Patrick, 2008). In Canadian media and politics, discourses around Indigenous languages are essentializing and purposefully associate language with rights to culture and land. This has led to a territorialized conception of Indigenous language and has been used in a variety of court cases to advocate for Indigenous land rights (Patrick, 2008).

Although discourses of language endangerment have been used to advocate on behalf of minoritized languages, and even for Indigenous rights in the case of Indigenous languages, they are also problematic and have had adverse, if unintended, consequences. Within discourses of language endangerment, the focus shifts from the speakers to the language, emphasizing it is the language that is in danger (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). Language is conceptualized as an organic entity separate from social practice that is innately tied to ideologies of culture and nationhood (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). In this way, discourses of language endangerment reproduce ideologies of the nation-state in the connection between language, culture and nationality (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). Alexandra Jaffe points out how the connection between language and culture is problematic because it essentializes both and, "implicitly casts the content of both language and communities as fixed and unproblematic" (Jaffe, 2008, p. 61). This essentialized and objectified view of language as, "clearly-bounded entities," means that they can be theoretically quantified, counted and saved (Jaffe, 2008, p. 61). Enumeration, presenting statistics to enforce an argument, is commonplace in discourses of language endangerment and creates a sense of urgency by highlighting the declining number of world languages and/or number of speakers of a particular language (Jaffe, 2008). This strategy fits neatly within the practice of equating language diversity to biodiversity, utilizing biological metaphors like language extinction (Jaffe, 2008).

Additionally, quantitative data on Indigenous peoples, such as numbers of Indigenous language speakers, continues to frame how Indigenous communities are perceived by both those inside and outside a respective community (Walter & Andersen, 2013). In *Indigenous Statistics: A Quantitative Research Methodology* (2013), Maggie Walter and Chris Anderson caution that not only do statistics on Indigenous peoples significantly influence governmental policies and planning processes, but they also impact how Indigenous peoples view themselves (Walter & Andersen, 2013). Despite the various ways in which empirical data can be collected, quantitative data has become so important to researchers, politicians and

Indigenous peoples alike that the authors claim statistics, "do not just describe reality- they create it. In doing so, they do not only influence how the phenomena they describe are understood, they also shape their accepted explanations" (Walter & Andersen, 2013, pp. 8-9). Accordingly, one of the dangers of enumeration among other discourses of language endangerment is that these discursive strategies do not just frame Indigenous language situations to achieve their goals, to raise general public awareness and urgency to protect Indigenous languages, but these strategies actually shape the perceived realities of these situations (Jaffe, 2008; Walter & Andersen, 2013). Roche points out in *Indigenous Efflorescence* that one of the foundational language revitalization scholars, Joshua Fishman, "examined how tropes of the death and demise of languages… are often more prescriptive than descriptive, expressing desires more than prediction. For Fishman, to speak of death was to wish it" (Roche, 2018a, p. 228). Instead, Fishman asserts that it is the responsibility of researcher to support the speakers of "suppressed and endangered languages" by "avoiding such laden terminology and misleading, negative imagery" (Roche, 2018a, p. 228).

Furthermore, this view of linguistic diversity and the objectification of language in discourses of language endangerment shifts the focus from the speech community to the 'endangered' language itself and frames language shift as a natural, if unfortunate phenomena (Heller & Duchêne, 2008; Jaffe, 2008). Deborah Cameron highlights how discourses of language endangerment frame language shift as a global crisis in order to raise public awareness and create an urgent call for action (Cameron, 2008). Cameron points to the increasing presence of language endangerment discourses in mainstream media and likens language endangerment to climate change in that they are both long-term processes that usually affect smaller populations disproportionately. They are thus framed as a crisis within mainstream media to grab the public's attention (Cameron, 2008). There are two major problems with this conceptualization of language shift: one, by essentializing the language it takes the agency away from the speech community who are presented as passive victims of language shift, and two: framing language endangerment as a natural phenomenon obscures the culpability of colonial governmental regimes that oftentimes caused language shift (Cameron, 2008). Discourses of language endangerment rely on moral arguments for upholding universal values of human rights and preserving linguistic diversity that appeals to a general audience and overshadows the nuances of internal power relations (Cameron, 2008).

Moreover, the essentialization of language and culture is problematic because it creates hierarchies within speech communities in its attempt to unify minority groups against the majority (Jaffe, 2008). Utilizing the Corsican context from the Mediterranean as an example, Jaffe discusses how once Corsican was considered a 'legitimate' language that needed to be saved, then there were numerous debates around the standardization of the language and what should be considered correct language practices (Jaffe, 2008). The standardization process in conjunction with the strong connection between language and identity created conflict within the Corsican speech community. Those in charge of the standardization set the criteria for what should be considered "authentic" and "pure" Corsican (Jaffe, 2008, p. 65). Jaffe thus points this out how the standardization process obscures the diversity of language forms as well as identities which exist within a speech community (Jaffe, 2008).

In summation, discourses of language endangerment have been developed to advocate for minoritized languages in response to globalization on the national and international level (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). These discursive strategies have constructed language as something that is separate from social practice, is quantifiable with clear boundaries and is innately linked to culture, identity and, in the case of Indigenous languages, land. This essentialist conceptualization of language has had a number of adverse outcomes, as it takes the agency away from speech communities and creates counterproductive hierarchies within them.

The simplification of the narrative of Indigenous language loss and recovery may have helped raise public awareness about the challenges Indigenous language communities face, but these discourses of endangerment can obscure important nuances and hinder Indigenous speech communities' efforts (Cameron, 2008; Jaffe, 2008). Responding to the challenges presented by discourses of language endangerment, Indigenous efflorescence represents a theoretical framework that avoids tropes of language death and illuminates unique ways in which Indigenous language efflorescence occurs and how those in the speech community experience this dynamic process (Roche, 2018a).

2.4 Language Revitalization

Though currently sociolinguists have come to renounce the use of enumeration and salvage linguistic research approaches, recent publications still utilize these concepts of language endangerment in order to justify their work. On the first page of the introduction to *The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization* (2018), the editors use multiple classical iterations of language endangerment discourses. They state that there are, "7,099 known languages in the world," and of those the vast majority are, "endangered," and that 473 of them are, "almost extinct" (Hinton, Huss, & Roche, 2018, p. xxi). They then state that the, "loss of language diversity on earth also involves the loss of diversity of knowledge systems, cultures, and ecosystems, as well as human rights" (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxi). This sentence alone caries three tropes of language endangerment discourse: biological metaphor, human heritage and human rights. Later in the book, the editors and other contributing authors discuss the problematic aspects of discourses of language endangerment and try to shift the focus of language revitalization discussions. It is revealing that in 2018 sociolinguists are still having to respond to the question, "Why Language Revitalization?" and are forced to answer with the same universalist arguments that have been used for decades (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxi). However, at the end of this first section of the handbook, the authors clarify that language loss is not the focus of their book stating:

> It is a book about how people are rising to the challenge of keeping their languages alive, of regaining a relationship to the language in whatever ways they can, re-establishing traditions where the language is used, finding new functions for the language, and trying to bring up new generations of speakers. (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxii).

The editors state language revitalization is a reaction to language shift that has occurred as the result of colonialism and governmental assimilation efforts and is oftentimes part of a larger revival effort. Revitalization represents a mode of healing and empowerment for the speech community (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxii). Since the 1960's, language revitalization has become an international movement that has been developed within speech communities and has gradually drawn the attention of linguists and other scholars from around the world (Hinton et al., 2018). They also assert language revitalization is a decolonizing movement, especially when it comes to research ethics, referring to the hierarchical classification of researchers versus informants (Hinton et al., 2018). The editors affirm language revitalization research

should be conducted in collaboration with the speech community and that the final project should empower and give back to that community (Hinton et al., 2018). In contrast to previous conceptions of Indigenous languages, Gerald Roche highlights the language revitalization movement's active approach to promoting linguistic diversity, stating it, "combines the call to action of language endangerment with the political vision of Indigenism, focusing on self-determination, empowerment, and service to and collaboration with, rather than the study of, Indigenous communities" (Roche, 2018a, p. 231). While discourses of language endangerment prioritize the universal value of Indigenous languages, language revitalization approaches within sociolinguistics examine the needs and practices of the Indigenous speech community.

Finally, Hinton et al discuss the different terms used in these discussions and why they choose language revitalization. According to the editors, language revitalization is now the most generic, commonly used term to describe, "activities designed not only to maintain but also to increase the presence of an endangered or dormant language in the speech community and/or the lives of individuals" (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxvi). The term language revitalization refers to languages, "where a speech community is shifting toward monolingualism in an encroaching language" (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxvi). To clarify, speech community refers to one or more people who identify with a language as part of their heritage and does not necessarily refer to a group of people in a singular geographic location. Members of a particular speech community can live in diaspora within various other communities in the general sense of the word (Hinton et al., 2018). For the purpose of this thesis, the South Saemie language community refers to those who identify with South Saemie as their heritage language within Norway. Although there are members of the South Saemie speech community that live in Sweden, North America and elsewhere in the world, the scope of this thesis will primarily focus on those residing in Norway.

As aforementioned, Roche frames Indigenous language revitalization as an example of Indigenous efflorescence, in that languages that were thought to have disappeared are now growing within dedicated Indigenous communities. (Roche et al., 2018). Roche highlights current language revitalization scholars' work for changing discourses around Indigenous language research, for instance using terms like "sleeping languages," rather than fatalistically calling them "dead" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 6). Notably, Gerald Roche himself is a well-

known researcher in the emerging field of language revitalization and co-edited the previously cited *The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization*. However, Roche points out in *Indigenous Efflorescence* that these narratives around Indigenous language revitalization have not changed completely, nor are they fully recognized in academia (Roche, 2018a). In many ways, Indigenous efflorescence is a response to the recent rise in discourses of revitalization. Concerning what makes Indigenous efflorescence unique, Roche and his co-editors state that it provides an alternative to other "(re)work" approaches to the contemporary Indigenous movement, such as revitalization, resilience, resurgence etc. (Roche et al., 2018, p. 7).

2.5 The Antithesis of Crisis: Indigenous Efflorescence

Given the diverse ways in which contemporary Indigenous languages and societies have been discussed within Indigenous Studies and sociolinguistics, the question becomes how does Indigenous efflorescence represent a distinct theoretical approach to Indigenous language situations? In summation, Indigenous efflorescence as a conceptual framework can be used both to describe and analyze instances of Indigenous social, cultural and linguistic flourishing that contradicts pervasive colonial narratives of the "vanishing native" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 6). It is different from previous conceptual frameworks because it is both process and future oriented (Roche et al., 2018). Beyond the products of Indigenous efflorescence, the continuation of these generative processes into the future is essential and demands a commitment to fostering sites Indigenous efflorescence that have yet to be discovered (Roche, 2018a; Roche et al., 2018). Ergo Indigenous efflorescence provides an innovative theoretical framework with which scholars can analyze contemporary Indigenous contexts through a new lens (Roche et al., 2018).

3 The South Saemie Language Context for Efflorescence

To thoroughly establish the context for Indigenous efflorescence, this chapter aims to first detail recent studies published principally in English about the South Saemie language situation, and then describe what discussions and activities are occurring within the South Saemie language community that I observed during my experience at Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe.

3.1 Recent Research on the South Saemie Language Situation

For this section, I will provide an overview of the scholarly literature published on the South Saemie in English over the past two years to provide context for the current South Saemie language situation and how it is currently being discussed in academia.[15]

In *The Indigenous Identity of the South Saemie* (2019), the editors, Hermanstrand et al, conceptualize the South Saemie as a minority within a minority, aiming to highlight the complexity and development of contemporary South Saemie communities with a particular focus on investigating how history shapes modern South Saemie society and self-understanding (Hermanstrand et al., 2019). In her article, "Southern Saami Language and Culture—Between Stigma and Pride, Tradition and Modernity," Brit Mæhlum discusses the sociocultural and political factors which have contributed to both the loss and reclamation of South Saemie language (Mæhlum, 2019). Mæhlum focuses on the symbolic value of South Saemie language as a minority language and as a marker of ethnic identity throughout history. Within Norway, Mæhlum describes how state assimilation policies starting in the 18th Century systematically devalued Saemie languages and continue to influence modern perceptions of the Saemie as the antithesis of modernity (Mæhlum, 2019). Thus the South Saemie language symbolically represents the past, and the majority Norwegian language

[15] Though I explicitly focus on recent English publications on the South Saemie language situation, I have read other scholarly sources published more than two years ago, like Risten Birje Steinfjell's master's thesis, "Taking our language back home," as well as the work of scholars, such as Jon Todal, who publish in languages other than English (R. B. Steinfjell, 2014; Todal, 2006). Specifically, I cite one of Jon Todal's articles in Norwegian (Nynorsk) on språksperre/ the language barrier later in the thesis since it is one of the few sources available on the subject in any language (Todal, 2007).

represents modernity (Mæhlum, 2019). The South Saemie language did not even have its own official orthography until 1978 (Mæhlum, 2019). Mæhlum points out how South Saemie is a minority language within a group of minority languages. As the result, institutionalized efforts to revitalize the Saemie languages on the national level largely benefit the more popularly spoken North Saemie language (Mæhlum, 2019). Mæhlum concludes the greatest challenges to South Saemie language revitalization today are the historical stigma attached to Saemie language and the pressures of authenticity which essentialize Saemie culture and language, creating divisions within the community (Mæhlum, 2019).

In "'But They Call Us the Language Police!' Speaker and Ethnic Identifying Profiles in the Process of Revitalizing the South Saami Language, Culture and Ethnic Identity," sociolinguist Inger Johansen relays her findings from qualitative interviews and ethnographic fieldwork on how "two language shifts" within a century have affected the relationship between South Saemie language and identity (Johansen, 2019, pp. 29-30). Johansen categorizes the study's participants by identity, age and level of language proficiency. The sociolinguist then creates a distinction between older language speakers who "romanticize" the time before colonization and try to preserve the purity of the South Saemie language, and the new or neo-speakers[16] who are involved in language revitalization projects and are largely concerned with passing the language on to the next generation (Johansen, 2019, pp. 42-43). Although both groups are trying to right the history of colonization and assimilation, Johansen argues they are creating competing conceptions of legitimacy on who and what can be considered authentically South Saemie that further divide an already small and marginalized group (Johansen, 2019).

Pointing out similar obstacles to language revitalization in *Indigenous Efflorescence* (2018), Roche repeatedly refers to the concept of revitalization paradox, which explains how past stigma toward Indigenous languages gets paired with the positive pursuit of language revitalization, resulting in a form of paralysis where the needs and desires of the community become unclear (Roche, 2018b). This concept is not new to the field of sociolinguistics but

[16] For further clarification, Johansen defines neo-speakers as, "learners of endangered languages in the context of revitalization programmes and activities' (ibid.: 52). They can reach any level of competence, but many become some kind of a semi-speaker. '[T]heir positive attitudes toward the endangered language and their particular vision of the endangered language community [...] propels them into conscious efforts to learn it'" (Johansen, 2019, p. 31).

placed within the South Saemie context it aids in understanding some of the main societal challenges to language revitalization. Lena Huss and Sigrig Stånberg explore this concept further in, "The Yoke and the Candy Bowl: Beliefs and Emotions in South Saami Revitalisation," as they analyze perceptions of language revitalization from a sociolinguistic study conducted in two traditional South Saemie municipalities in Sweden (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). The authors also highlight recent psychological studies on the effects of assimilation policies on mental health to understand current attitudes of Saemie people toward Saemie language revitalization (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). Huss and Stånberg conclude that those interviewed in these South Saemie communities in general feel positively about opportunities for strengthening the South Saemie language. The majority feel it is a personal obligation to revitalize South Saemie, but some perceive the task as burdensome while others describe it as a chance to address past intergenerational trauma (Huss & Stånberg, 2018).

3.2 Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe: *gïele lea faamoe*- power of language

Here I reflect upon my own experiences attending Saemie language conferences in 2019, particularly Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe in Snåasa, and how the presentations and my observations from these events enriched my understandings of both the Saemie languages contexts generally and that of the South Saemie language situation particularly.

UNESCO designated 2019 the International Year of Indigenous languages (IYIL2019) and I began the year attending the Sámi Language Conference in February hosted by the Sámi Parliament of Norway in Romsa/ Tromsø[17] (UNESCO, 2019). The theme of the conference was *Gïelelutnjeme – Giellalåpptim – Giellalokten,* translated from the three main Saemie languages[18] in Norway to, "lift the language." President of the Norwegian Saemie Parliament Aili Keskitalo emphasized the importance of elevating the status and visibility of the Saemie languages by supporting language education, creating new language arenas and simply

[17] A side note on language: During the conference presentations were given in North Saemie, Ume Saemie, South Saemie, English, Norwegian and Swedish. There were headsets available and interpreters for North Saemie, Norwegian and English.

[18] In order: South Saemie, Lule Saemie and North Saemie

speaking Saemie when and wherever possible (Keskitalo, 2019). It was announced at the conference that the week of October 21st would be national Saemie Language Week. Although I was unfortunately unable to attend the festivities, I saw that Gïelem nastedh's social media pages were blowing up with activity in Snåasa from that week, featuring illustrations, photos and videos. In September, I did attend the biannual South Saemie language festival, Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe.

Figure 5 Image from Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe with the festival organizers and their Māori guests captioned: "Gïele lea faamoe! Power of language!"(Saemien Sijte, 2019)

Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe translates from South Saemie to, "autumn festival," and takes place in Snåasa every other year[19] (Blind, 2019c). There is a more traditional academic conference and a youth conference for the younger members of the community. This year Saemien Sijte hosted the event in collaboration with Gïelem nastedh and the municipality of Snåasa from September 19-21, 2019. The conference invited community members, educators, artists and scholars to discuss the theme, *gïele lea faamoe*- power of language. A current elected member of the Norwegian Saemie Parliament, Mikkel Eskil Mikkelsen, began the conference echoing

[19] Snåasa and Plaassje/ Røros trade off hosting the event each year

the words he and Aili Keskitalo had spoken in February, highlighting the need for more Saemie speakers and professionals to elevate the status of the language (Mikkelsen, 2020).

As beforementioned, I came to Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe as part of my research on the South Saemie language situation. Although I have read what limited resources are available on the South Saemie language context in English, it was quite another thing to be in a South Saemie community and hearing directly from them what current activities they are engaged in and what discussions and discourses are going on in their language community.[20] There were a number of insightful and thought-provoking presentations over the three days. Instead of presenting an exhaustive list of the presentations,[21] I will highlight some most relevant to my project.

The Saemie language centers in Snåasa and Plaassje, Gïelem nastedh and Aajege respectively, detailed the various activates they have been coordinating between each other, schools and the local communities, including South Saemie language courses and cultural workshops (Aajege & Gïelem nastedh, 2019). Henrik Barruk gave a poignant presentation on his experiences vitalizing the Ume Saemie language. Saemie journalist and lecturer, Magne Ove Varsi introduced Barruk as a man who had succeeded in an impossible task to revitalize the Ume Saemie language (Barruk, 2019). Henrik Barruk is a Saemie language teacher and consultant from the Swedish side of Saepmie who was part of the working group that created an orthography for Ume Saemie. Barruk stated that many discouraged him from attempting to work with Ume Saemie because it is a severely endangered language and to revitalize it would be impossible. Barruk spoke out against these attitudes, stating how colonialism has impacted people's view of the Saemie languages and their societal worth (Barruk, 2019). However, he emphasized that the task of revitalizing a language is not easy nor expedient. Barruk stated the first thing he needed to do was to believe in himself and in what he was doing, and then he needed others to participate and encourage him. He recalled that revitalization is like a marathon, you have to work consistently at a good pace, so you don't

[20] A side note on language: During the conference presentations were given in South Saemie, English, Norwegian and Swedish. There were headsets available and interpreters for South Saemie, Norwegian and English.

[21] Find the full program in South Saemie and Norwegian on the Tjaktjen Tjåangkoe 2019 Facebook event page, link in the references list (Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe, 2019)

tire too soon. Fear and self-doubt were his greatest challenges. Barruk stated that despite their efforts, creating the Ume Saemie orthography took too long, from 1998-2016 (Barruk, 2019). Barruk ended his presentation with the memory of when the first Ume Saemie dictionary was published. He remembers people taking the book in their arms with strong emotion, physically touching and seeing the language for the first time in print. His parting message was that there needs to be an acknowledgement of the different Saemie languages and that they need to support one another, quoting, "anything is possible for those who believe"[22] (Barruk, 2019).

Barruk's presentation made me reflect on the way that Indigenous languages are viewed and framed within and outside of Saemie society in Scandinavia. Language revitalization is seen as an impossible task, yet the dedication of a few individuals makes it possible. This begs the question, should researchers be emphasizing the difficulty and even impossibility of reversing language shift? Also, there is still a need for a greater general awareness of the diversity of Saemie languages and their varying contexts. Moreover, a few hardworking individuals and communities should not have to take on language vitalization efforts alone, but there should be a wider support base and more coordination between different sectors of society, including allies in academia.

On the second day, Inga Marja Steinfjell detailed the results of her provocative master's thesis from the Indigenous Journalism program at the Saemie University of Applied Science in Guovdageainnu/ Kautokeino (I. M. Steinfjell, 2019). For her project, Steinfjell investigates the questions: is there a public space for South Saemie discussions, and what is the role of the media? What she found was that there was no South Saemie presence in the mainstream media, unless it involved reporting a conflict. She reflected that she had expected there to be limited coverage of South Saemie topics in public media, but she didn't expect there to be none. Even including the Saemie branch of the public broadcasting station in Norway, NRK Sápmi, the vast majority of the news coverage focused on the Northern Saemie context. Stienfjell pointed out that editors have just as much to do with this shortage of media presence as journalists and that similar people in positions of power are shutting out South Saemie perspectives. Steinfjell called for a more democratic approach to journalism in popular media

[22] My own translation from Swedish

and emphasized the need for more of a space specifically for the South Saemie. She ended her talk proposing that South Saemie meet more and have more open forums for discussing issues relevant to themselves to avoid oppressive silences (I. M. Steinfjell, 2019).

As beforementioned, I have found limited scholarly and media sources about the South Saemie generally and even less about the language situation specifically. This discussion about media representation points to larger power structures and asks questions of who should be accountable to whom within Saemie society as well as within the broader Norwegian and Scandinavian societies. It would take too long to go into detail about this debate for the purpose of this section, but I want to highlight it as another way in which the concepts of indigeneity and identity can be applied to discussions on popular media representation and can aid in reflecting on why it is important for the South Saemie to have a space of their own.

Notably, a group of Māori artists and scholars were invited to the conference to add their knowledge and experience to both the academic and youth conferences. Te Kahautu Maxwell is a Māori scholar at the University of Waikato specializing in Māori language and traditional performing arts, and the leader of the Ōpōtiki Kapa Haka Tribal Dance Group established in 1995 (Maxwell, 2019b). The aim of the dance group is to empower Māori youth to reclaim their identities. Maxwell strongly refers to the colonial legacy in Aotearoa/ New Zealand as a form of "mental slavery," and he continues his work to revalorize Māori language and culture in his iwi and beyond (Maxwell, 2019b). Maxwell showed videos of the group and shared how his iwi's history, language and culture is taught and strengthened though the group. Maxwell taught the conference participants a welcoming song in Māori with the accompanied motions so that we were able to experience his teaching techniques first-hand (Maxwell, 2019a). It was a unique and engaging experience, and months later I still remember many of the words and movements.

Figure 6 Te Kahautu Maxwell presenting on the Māori language situation, reemphasizing the importance of positivity (Gjelde-Bennett, 2019)

The Māori scholars brought the discussions on indigeneity, language revitalization and reconciliation onto a global level and highlighted the importance of having the opportunity, like at Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe, to facilitate exchanges between different groups of Indigenous peoples. This is by no means a new practice, but it continues to be a crucial one.

Generally, the presentations proceeded throughout the day as they would at any other academic conference. However, during the coffee breaks it sometimes felt as though I was intruding on someone else's family reunion. Not to say people in Snåasa were not welcoming, they were wonderful hosts. However, it was evident that the conference participants were more than just colleagues, they were friends and families reuniting. Although the cities and towns in which they live may be spread out geographically, the South Saemie community undeniably remains a close-knit and vibrant one. At the formal evening dinner, I was privileged to see several individuals be recognized for a lifetime of service to the South Saemie language community. The occasion was marked with flowers, speeches, tears and embraces. It made me realize the depth and breadth of the work going into the revitalization of South Saemie that is, as Steinfjell pointed out, largely absent from popular media and academia.

My experience at Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe challenged many of my preconceived notions of the South Saemie language community and affirmed others. The South Saemie language community may be small in numbers according to outside sources, but it has an abundance of energy, dedication and pride. Overall, it was an insightful learning experience that went beyond the walls of the Snåsa Hotel conference room. The entire community seemed to be alive and engaged in the festivities. Every moment of that weekend I spent absorbing all the presentations, songs and stories told over coffee. I was not left with a sense of disparaging gloom found in many academic texts or UNESCO reports, but rather a feeling of vitality and resilience from within the South Saemie community (Moseley, 2010). I am incredibly humbled by and grateful to my hosts in Snåasa, and I cannot thank them enough for this experience. The discrepancies between how scholarly research present the South Saemie language context and what I witnessed in the Snåasa community during the festival reminded me of Roche's proclamation of an Indigenous revolution and solidified my choice to use Indigenous efflorescence as the primary theoretical framework for my thesis.

4 An Indigenous Research Approach for Investigating Indigenous Efflorescence

Diving into the core elements of this research project on Indigenous efflorescence in the South Saemie context, this chapter will detail the methodologies and methods employed in my interpretation of an Indigenous efflorescence research approach. Due to the fact Indigenous efflorescence is a relatively new theoretical concept, I will first explain how I adapted it into a practical research approach by placing it within an Indigenous research paradigm. Specifically, I will illustrate how indigenism informed my methodological approach and research methods through a retelling of my experience collaborating with Katarina Blind. Finally, this chapter will explain how my method for choosing scholarly and other secondary sources to include in my thesis derived from decolonizing methodologies and Indigenous research ethical considerations.

4.1 Developing a Research Approach within an Indigenous Paradigm

Being inherently interdisciplinary, Indigenous Studies uniquely allows researchers to draw knowledge from a variety of academic disciplines (Charles, Harris, & Carlson, 2016). This thesis has already utilized and will continue to draw from theoretical discourses, concepts and terms from both Indigenous Studies itself and sociolinguistics. Though in part Roche developed the concept of Indigenous efflorescence as a response to discourses of language endangerment and the emerging field of language revitalization, the conceptual framework of Indigenous efflorescence is clearly derived from prominent discourses within Indigenous Studies (Roche, 2018a; Roche et al., 2018). Accordingly, I decided early in the research process that my project must be grounded within an Indigenous research paradigm, an approach informed by Indigenous ontology, epistemology and methodology (Kovach, 2010b).

To support my interpretation and application of Indigenous efflorescence, I draw from previously established decolonizing and indigenist methodologies and methods, particularly those detailed by Indigenous scholars Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Margaret Kovach. I principally utilize Indigenous methodologies as detailed by Cree scholar Margaret Kovach for determining my Indigenous research methods. Kovach contends, “Indigenous methodologies

are guided by tribal epistemologies," which are specific to certain contexts (Kovach, 2010b, p. 30). As a researcher from outside the particular Indigenous context I study, I had to establish a relationship with someone from the South Saemie language community to gain my methodological grounding. While I do not have the ability to create my own 'tribal epistemology,' as Kovach terms it, I did adapt Indigenous scholars' understandings of Indigenous methodologies and methods to gather data from the South Saemie context informed by both a broader Indigenous research paradigm and my own personal experiences and relationships formed within the South Saemie language community (Kovach, 2010b).

4.2 Indigenous Research Methods in Practice: Building Story-Sharing Relationships

Relationality is at the core of the Indigenous research paradigm, therefore approaches to obtaining knowledge are based on relationships (Kovach, 2010a). The main method I utilized for collecting my data was the conversational method, which Margaret Kovach details in her work as a way of gathering knowledge through dialogue and story (Kovach, 2010a). Within an Indigenous research paradigm, as any other, there are certain assumptions about what counts as knowledge and how knowledge is created and transferred. An Indigenous research paradigm assumes that knowledge can be co-created and transferred via story (Kovach, 2010a). This is not accomplished in isolation, rather story highlights the central relational dynamic within Indigenous research; it inherently suggests that there is a storyteller and a story receiver. Kovach states the conversational method, "aligns with an Indigenous worldview that honors orality as means of transmitting knowledge and upholds the relational which is necessary to maintain a collectivist tradition" (Kovach, 2010a, p. 42). Dialogue is therefore an organic way of creating and sharing knowledge via story because of its relational aspect (Kovach, 2010a). Within this tradition, I shall transmit the knowledge I gained through my various relationships in order to explain the research methods I used for collecting my data and the ethical considerations which arise from these choices. As Kovach contends to, "make visible the holistic, relational meaning requires a reflexive narrative by the researcher" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 102)

The first time I went to Snåasa was in August 2019. Though many in Norway have their summer holidays during August, I still decided to take the opportunity before the semester began to visit Snåasa. My goals were to gain first-hand experience of the area and to obtain local contacts for planning a return visit, particularly at Saemien Sijte and Gïelem nastedh. As Kovach, among many other Indigenous scholars, have pointed out, Indigenous research is founded on relationships and I needed to start somewhere to begin forming my network of relationships in Snåasa (Kovach, 2010a; Smith, 2012). Discussing Indigenous research ethics, Smith pointedly writes, "In indigenous frameworks, relationships matter. Respectful, reciprocal, genuine relationships" (Smith, 2012, p. 125). I entered into my research trip keeping in mind that the Snåasa community did not owe me information, and that I had to be willing to put in the time and effort to build relationships based on mutual trust. Due to the colonial history of research, Kovach dictates, "earning trust is critical and may take time, upsetting the efficiency variable of research timelines" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 98).

Though the Saemie community in Romsa has been largely welcoming and friendly toward me as a Saemie American, I had already been met with some skepticism as to why I, as an 'American researcher,' came to Norway to 'study the Saemie.' During my first few months living in Romsa, I had to explain my Saemie heritage and desire to conduct research in collaboration with rather than on the Saemie community. Relationships take time and effort to develop and build trust, so I was hoping to at least begin that process in August. I was lucky enough to have met Katarina Blind at Gïelem nastedh and the Director of Saemien Sijte, Birgitta Fossum. Both women generously took the time to meet with me, allowed me to share my story of who I am and why I decided to study the South Saemie language situation. Then they reciprocated by showing me their institutions and explaining the different things they do in the Snåasa community.

By sharing my story, I mean that I introduced myself as a Saemie American researcher from a northern Norwegian university and explained my research project to learn more about the South Saemie language situation. I also explained why I chose this particular research topic and to come to Snåasa, which partially had to do with my family history. Though I am not sure exactly where my relatives came from in Saepmie, based on their surname and my friends' help researching, there is a possibility my Saemie relatives came from Southern Saepmie. Moreover, I know that I have Norwegian relatives that came from that same

geographic region, Trøndelag, and so I have a personal connection to the place and an obligation to the Indigenous peoples who live there. The researcher's positionality, or "self-location" as Kovach terms it, is an important first step in an Indigenous research processes because it allows, "the research participant to situate and assess the researcher's motivations for the research" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 98). Each time I met someone new at Saemien Sijte or Gïelem nastedh I had to position myself within the context of Snåasa. Similar to my experience in Romsa, people in Snåasa seemed genuinely curious about my family background and many generously offered to ask local people, who know about the history of families in the area, about my relatives to try and help me find my family.

Katarina was especially curious about my project and why I was in Snåasa. She took the time to answer all my questions about the different projects going on at the language center. By the end of my visit, she kindly invited me to come back to Snåasa in September for Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe. At this point, my research objective was to investigate language revitalization projects currently underway in Snåasa and Plaassje/ Røros. My next trip was going to be to Plaassje. Instead I returned to Snåasa in September to follow-up with the contacts I had met there and attend the language conference. Katarina was busy during the festival selling her Tjåenieh products, but she graciously invited me to her home and I met her family. We also made the time for a follow-up conversation. She had previously agreed to a semi-structured interview sometime during the festival, and I had emailed her in advance with a list of interview questions. She also agreed in the interview consent form I drafted to not be anonymized, though she has the right to be anonymized at any time. Our interaction started out more as a formal interview where I asked questions and she answered, but then as time went on, and after I clarified that she could respond in whichever language she felt most comfortable,[23] it became more of a relaxed conversation focusing on her personal background, how she started her business and her processes for creating her illustrations on her Instagram page, Tjåenieh (Blind, 2019c).

[23] To clarify, Katarina feels most comfortable responding to my inquiries in Norwegian, and she was fine with me still asking questions in English since both of us have a comprehensive understanding of each other's languages. We also have French as a common language along with some North and South Saemie words and phrases that I know. So while language was sometimes a challenge, we both communicate well and our conversations are a combination of all the languages listed above.

This is what I had hoped for, for us to get to know each other better and for her to feel comfortable enough to share her story with me. Kovach argues, "the more structured the interview the less flexibility and power the research participant has in sharing his or her story," and through a less structured interview method, "the story breathes and the narrator regulates" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 99). This conversational approach also decentered my control as the researcher, allowing Katarina to contribute to the process of generating the research data. Kovach contends Indigenous research frameworks purposefully lessen the researcher's power over the research process and outcome (Kovach, 2010b). I was also fortunate that Katarina is a very friendly, approachable person. It was after visiting Snåasa a second time, gaining a greater understanding of the South Saemie language community from Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe and talking to Katarina and her family, that I knew I wanted to focus on Katarina and her unique illustrations. Tjåenieh not only reflects her experiences living in the South Saemie community, but also creates a digital space where South Saemie people can connect virtually. Similar to the emphasis of subjective experiences of indigeneity within Indigenous efflorescence, Kovach states, "Indigenous epistemologies assume a holistic approach that finds expression within the personal manifestations of culture" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 61). Katarina's illustrations clearly represent manifestations of her South Saemie culture, and in this way, I argue Katarina practices Indigenous efflorescence through her page, Tjåenieh. From that point forward my thesis project changed dramatically.

After September, I read more about Margaret Kovach's conversational method specifically and designed my next conversation with Katarina with that particular Indigenous method in mind. As Kovach emphasizes the importance of preparation work, I emailed Katarina before we met via an online call with several images from her account which explicitly referenced her experiences as a South Saemie language learner. I also included other illustrations displaying what I saw to be challenges her community faces as the result of ongoing colonialism, such as depictions of racism and industrial projects (Blind, 2019c; Kovach, 2010a). I started our call with some follow-up questions from our previous conversation, and then I asked Katarina about the different images I had sent her. We discussed her motivations for creating the illustrations, she described her creative process and I asked a lot of questions about the symbolism in her illustrations. Each illustration is layered in sociocultural meaning that is designed by and for a member of the South Saemie community, particularly in Snåasa. Though Katarina says she tries to include the wider South Saemie community by making

design choices, like drawing a generic South Saemie gapta rather than one specific to a certain area (Blind, 2019a). As someone outside the Snåasa community I had many questions for her, some of which she had not thought of before since many of the details are just reflective of her daily life.

Although as Kovach cautions, creating and maintaining a relationship within an Indigenous methodological framework takes time (Kovach, 2010b). It was not until the end of November that I finally had (nearly) all my research data, which I will detail the scope of in the following chapter. Within an Indigenous research approach, Kovach explains the implicit connection between story, relationality and trust:

> The centrality of relationship within Indigenous research frameworks, and the responsibility that that evokes, manifest themselves in broad strokes throughout research in the form of protocols and ethical considerations… This is significant in Indigenous qualitative methodologies involving story where there is a primary relationship between researcher and research participant. For story to surface, there must be trust (Kovach, 2010a, p. 98).

Kovach goes on to describe this knowledge sharing relationship as having, "a history of shared story with one another" (Kovach, 2010b, p. 98). Both the researcher and participant are part of the knowledge creating process and are therefore accountable to one another. When the researcher also shares her/his/their story, the researcher and participant transform into collaborators co-constructing knowledge within an Indigenous research paradigm (Kovach, 2010b). In turn, this relationship requires confidence in each other to both successfully and ethically produce research data (Kovach, 2010b). In Indigenous research, Smith contends ethical guidelines are not just about the researcher's personal integrity, but also collective responsibility (Smith, 2012). Though I did not initially set out to form such a relationship with one particular member of the South Saemie community in Snåasa,[24] I was fortunate enough to have met Katarina and had the opportunity to build the collaborative relationship that we did over the course of several months. From the beginning, our relationship was based on sharing knowledge with each other and building that trust Kovach emphasizes is necessary for

[24] To clarify, I did intend to use Indigenous methodologies and methods focusing on relationality from the beginning of my research project, but I initially planned to have multiple participants. This was of course until I established a good working relationship with Katarina. Then I decided to highlight her practicing Indigenous efflorescence, which entails focusing on her personal perspective and experiences.

knowledge transmission and creation within an Indigenous research paradigm. I also had to make myself vulnerable to an extent in detailing my personal family history and reasoning behind my research project, which was important to me professionally to develop my research skills and personally to generate ethical Indigenous research.

Into the new year, 2020, I continued my virtual correspondence with Katarina and shared the transcripts I had made of our conversations and sent her drafts of my thesis so she could see and have the opportunity to comment on my portrayal of her life and work. Kovach contends sharing data represents an important aspect of ethical research, emphasizing the responsibility of the researcher to safeguard the participant's voice (Kovach, 2010b). Through our multiple conversations and sustained online correspondence, we effectively generated and analyzed the research data together. This is principally why Katarina has not been anonymized, so that I am relationally obligated to represent her respectfully in my work, and more importantly it acknowledges her contributions to the research process. Though I still made certain choices singularly as the researcher, such as how to structure our conversations initially, we collectively analyzed her illustrations and discussed the significance of her work, generously providing her own insights and perspectives. For instance, sometimes my interpretation of one of her illustrations was completely different from what she was thinking when she created it, and so we were able to discuss that and what it means for my research project together. This methodological choice decentered my control as the researcher over the research process, and I welcomed Katarina's involvement to the extent that she was able and comfortable.

Since Katarina and I collaboratively created and analyzed the data, I remain aware of the ethical obligation I have to respectfully represent her life and work within my research. Near the end of the writing process, Katarina graciously offered to illustrate the cover of my master's thesis. True to our collaborative relationship we discussed what she could draw, but I gave her creative license for what she wanted to illustrate. I am extremely honored to have her work in my project, let alone an original piece on the cover of this master's thesis. It seems a fitting tribute to our collective efforts in creating this final product together.

4.3 Concerning the Selection of Secondary and other Scholarly Sources

The interdisciplinary nature of Indigenous Studies invites intersectionality and it carries a moral obligation to reflect on what that complex intersectional reality means for Indigenous research. From my project's inception, I have been cognizant of my selection of the academic sources I utilized and which voices I chose to highlight in my thesis. Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* serves as the main inspiration for my source selection research method. In the section on the legacy of colonial research, Smith discusses the connection between race and gender in describing how Indigenous women have been especially marginalized in Western research (Smith, 2012). Referring to how European colonialism imposed Western conceptions of race and gender onto Indigenous communities, Smith explains:

> The processes of engendering descriptions of the Other has had very real consequences for indigenous women in that the ways in which indigenous women were described, objectified and represented by Europeans in the nineteenth century has left a legacy of marginalization within indigenous societies as much as within the colonizing society (Smith, 2012, p. 48).

Incorporating this decolonial methodological approach, I am acutely aware of the colonial legacy of Indigenous research on Indigenous peoples, particularly on Indigenous women. I am continually reflexive during the research process concerning who I choose to collaborate with and what scholars' research I use.

Due to my thesis' focus on the work of an Indigenous woman illustrator and my positionality as a woman researcher, I purposefully chose to prioritize the scholarly work and voices of Indigenous women in my thesis. Though some of my colleagues were concerned that I was creating more work for myself, I quickly discovered, as I surmised, that there is a great breadth of scholarship by Indigenous women. For instance, Linda Tuhiwai Smith is considered the foremost Indigenous decolonization theorist and her work is required course reading in the Indigenous Studies Program at UiT.[25] Regardless of their gender, Smith and Kovach are logical scholars to highlight in my thesis due to the quality and quantity of their

[25] Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* was required reading and for my 2018 Introduction to Indigenous Studies and 2019 Indigenous Methods and Methodology courses, and Kovach's work on Indigenous research positionality and *Indigenous Methodologies* has been recommended to me by numerous Indigenous scholars.

contributions to Indigenous research. As a side note, I do recognize that Gerald Roche, who developed the main theoretical concept of this thesis, identifies as a non-Indigenous man (Roche et al., 2018). However, Roche collaborates with Indigenous women scholars as he co-edited *Indigenous Efflorescence* with a self-identifying South Saemie woman, Åse Virdi Kroik (Roche et al., 2018). Concerning my sociolinguistic sources, only one of the sociolinguists I came across in my research self-identified as an Indigenous woman, and the vast majority of scholars I encountered who researched the South Saemie language context in English are non-Indigenous women. Sadly, there is limited scholarship in English on this particular topic.

Additionally, during my visits to Snåasa I noted that the directors of both Gïelem nastedh and Saemien Sijte are both self-identifying Saemie women and the majority of educators and scholars who presented at the Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe conference were Indigenous women. Not only did I intentionally prioritize Indigenous women's perspectives in my work, but I also found that the majority of scholars and community leaders I encountered during my research are Indigenous women. It was a pleasant surprise, which I realize looking back now should not be exceptional, but rather Indigenous women's contributions and leadership roles should be normalized. Though I also acknowledge that I am focusing almost exclusively on the South Saemie context in Snåasa and I have had an even narrower view of that situation, limited by time, resources, my role as a researcher from outside the community etc. Context is a key element of Indigenous research, and so the roles and representation of Indigenous women vary, but it is still a privilege for me to investigate this particular context.

5 Determining the Scope of Indigenous Efflorescence Data

As the title suggests, this chapter details the data I utilize for exploring the application of Indigenous efflorescence to the South Sami language situation through Katarina Blind's Instagram page, Tjåenieh. Specifically, I first explore what kind of data would be collected for an Indigenous efflorescence research project by making the distinction between contexts and practices of Indigenous efflorescence. Then I further define the scope of the research data by spatially and temporally locating practices of Indigenous efflorescence, primarily focusing on Katarina's Instagram page Tjåenieh.

5.1 Indigenous Efflorescence Data

One of the main methodological challenges of this research project involved determining the scope of the research data. What is Indigenous efflorescence data? To address this inquiry, I continually referenced *Indigenous Efflorescence*, revisiting the examples of Indigenous efflorescence the editors compiled to communicate this new theoretical concept. Reflexivity remained my methodological approach for locating Indigenous efflorescence within an Indigenous research paradigm.

To break down a complex concept, Gerald Roche divides the anthology into two main sections: contexts and practices of Indigenous efflorescence. Contexts of Indigenous efflorescence refers to, "the political, economic and technological circumstances that have scaffolded the emergence of contemporary efflorescence" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 12). Whereas practices of Indigenous efflorescence, "explore how people *do* efflorescence, and what their subjective experience of it is" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 12). Therefore, a study of the contexts of Indigenous efflorescence would investigate developments within and outside of Indigenous societies to determine what factors make Indigenous efflorescence possible. Alternatively, an exploration of practices of Indigenous efflorescence looks into the subjective experiences of individuals engaged in processes of Indigenous efflorescence. A research project on contexts of Indigenous efflorescence would ask what makes Indigenous efflorescence possible, and one on practices would inquire how Indigenous efflorescence is done by Indigenous peoples and how it feels to do it (Roche et al., 2018). Within an

Indigenous research paradigm, I contend both of these project orientations would be worth pursuing in any given Indigenous context as a unique approach to contemporary Indigenous communities that assumes their societies are flourishing rather than struggling.

While there has been little research done on the situation of the South Saemie language community, I presuppose that there has been more scholarly attention given to the various factors that have contributed to the current South Saemie language situation. For instance, various recent sociolinguistic studies conducted in South Saemie communities on the Norwegian and Swedish sides of Saepmie focus on social attitudes toward South Saemie language revitalization (Huss & Stånberg, 2018; Johansen, 2019; Mæhlum, 2019). These sources would be more oriented toward addressing research objectives about the contexts of Indigenous efflorescence in the South Saemie language community. Although, these previous studies could also provide essential background information for understanding current practices of Indigenous efflorescence in the same community depending on the source. Since there has been some, if not a plentiful amount, of scholarship on the South Saemie language context in general, I have elected to explore practices of Indigenous efflorescence to further investigate the potential of Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical tool in Indigenous language research.

5.2 Practices of Indigenous Efflorescence

To clarify what I mean by practices of Indigenous efflorescence, I will now summarize Gerald Roche's description of what constitutes practices within *Indigenous Efflorescence*. Within the context of, or perhaps more precisely despite, ongoing colonialism, Roche explains practices of Indigenous efflorescence align with recent Indigenous research that lends, "theoretical attention to the embodied and quotidian politics of resurgence, of *being* Indigenous, of 'thinking, speaking and acting with the conscious intent of regenerating one's indigeneity'" (Roche, 2018b, p. 123). Practices of Indigenous efflorescence highlights how individuals experience indigeneity and connect to their languages and cultures through, "'everyday acts of resurgence'" (Roche, 2018b, p. 125).

Moreover, these quotidian practices of indigeneity are politically charged as they represent, “a commitment to personal sovereignty” (Roche, 2018b, p. 123). While Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical approach takes the flourishing of Indigenous societies as its point of departure, it also recognizes the various ways in which colonialism affects Indigenous people’s lives (Roche, 2018a). Roche explains these practices expose, “how ongoing structures of colonialism continue to condition not only what can viably be *done* by Indigenous people, but also how it *feels* to participate” (Roche, 2018a, p. 225). This is particularly important within Indigenous language revitalization discussions. Roche points out the colonial legacy of state assimilation policies makes it, “common to find numerous emotional and psychological tensions running through revitalisation work” (Roche, 2018b, p. 124). One example of these challenges to language revitalization Roche gives is the beforementioned revitalization paradox, which describes the situation in language communities where there are, “positive attitudes and ideologies about the language, on the one hand, but also deeply felt emotions of shame and anxiety about learning the language, as well as negative attitudes toward the language and its utility on the other” (Roche, 2018b, p. 124). To summarize the significance of practices of Indigenous efflorescence, Roche states, “quotidian practices of efflorescence, demonstrate how even simple, ‘banal’ actions are saturated with the legacy of historical process, and conditioned by systems and structures of ongoing domination and manifestations of power asymmetries” (Roche, 2018b, p. 125).

As detailed in the previous chapter, once I became acquainted with Katarina and her work, I recognized that she is in fact practicing Indigenous efflorescence almost precisely as Roche describes. Since August 2019 we have been discussing together what she does in the South Saemie language community, how she does it and how she feels about it from her work at Gïelem nastedh to her Instagram page. This is how I came to focus on Katarina, and next I will detail how I decided to specifically analyze her illustrations on Tjåenieh.

5.3 The Spatial and Temporal Scope of Indigenous Efflorescence

To determine the scope of Indigenous efflorescence research data, I examine how Roche and the other co-editors describe the spatial and temporal orientation of Indigenous efflorescence.

In other words, I investigate who practices Indigenous efflorescence, where they practice it and when it is practiced.

As beforementioned, practices of Indigenous efflorescence focus on the subjective experiences of individuals who *do* Indigenous efflorescence (Roche et al., 2018). Roche specifies, "individuals bringing about Indigenous efflorescence come from all walks of life… What they all share is a common desire to see their languages and cultures flourish again, a conviction that this is possible, and a dedication to making it happen" (Roche, 2018b, p. 123). I therefore submit, while a *contexts* of Indigenous efflorescence research project would consist of a wide scope of data examining the societal macro-level of analysis, *practices* of Indigenous efflorescence would have a much narrower scope exploring individuals' experiences on the micro-level. Spatially speaking therefore, the scope of my project on practices of Indigenous efflorescence is zoomed in onto the individual level, highlighting how Katarina does and feels about Indigenous efflorescence in her daily life. As the result, I contend the illustrations, the generated cultural manifestations, on Katarina's Instagram page, Tjåenieh, present a logical data set to analyze. As opposed to the illustrations she creates for posts on Gïelem nastedh's official Instagram page, her work on the Tjåenieh page is all her own for her own purposes as a business but also as more general a creative outlet (Blind, 2019c). In one of our conversations, Katarina specifies that she makes her illustrations on her Instagram page for herself based on what she feels inspired to draw (Blind, 2019c).

The fact that Katarina practices Indigenous efflorescence digitally on Instagram is another important consideration for spatially locating and collecting the research data. Katarina lives and works in the Snåasa community, although the reach of her work extends much farther due to its social media platform. Since the widespread use of the Internet in the 1990's, Indigenous peoples have been actively engaged in establishing an online presence (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). In their 2017 article on the use of social media in the Saemie context, Simon Lindgren and Coppélie Cocq point out that Saemie have developed their own social media platforms since the early years of the Internet, like *Samenet*, and online engagement has continually shifted onto new and changing social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). Though not all Indigenous social media users explicitly engage with just Indigenous specific topics all the time (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). In her article on Aboriginal social media activism, Cherokee scholar Theresa Petray points out

how social media ‘destabilizes’ singular identities in how Indigenous rights activists can, “integrate multiple aspects of their identity in a way that doesn't happen easily in compartmentalised, offline protests” (Petray, 2015, p. 25). Petray contends social media provides a meaningful platform for Aboriginal activists to display and to explore complex identities, and so it represents an effective way to challenge the status quo (Petray, 2015).

Similarly, Lindgren and Cocq highlight how social media has been used by Saemie, among other Indigenous peoples, to connect both Indigenous language speakers to aid in language revitalization efforts and political activists to increase general public awareness of Indigenous rights issues (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). Through social media, the online presence of Saemie language and culture has dramatically increased over the past decade (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). Lindgren and Cocq contend that the global, instantaneous nature of the internet makes it a potentially useful tool for ethnic communities, “to share symbolic resources and react jointly to events happening globally. Thus, ‘marginalized discourses can be published without having to enter into the traditional top-down editorial processes’” (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017, p. 135). Circumventing hierarchical mainstream media sources, which Steinfjell problematizes in her work, social media platforms permit a bottom-up or “grassroots” approach to virtual Indigenous community building (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017, pp. 134-135; I. M. Steinfjell, 2019). The consequence of which being, as Lindgren and Cocq articulately explain, “Indigenous voices may provide counter-narratives to discourses articulated from a majority’s perspective, and social media might facilitate minority self-representation in a way that is hardly possible in mainstream media” (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017, p. 135). Additionally, in their article on Indigenous social media practices, Alex Wilson, Bronwyn Carlson and Acushla Sciascia conceive of the Internet as an information and communication space, and social media represents a means for Indigenous communities to, “reterritorialize” and “Indigenise” this space (Wilson, Carlson, & Sciascia, 2017). Posting her illustrations on Instagram, Katarina is contributing to this online Indigenous movement in creating a space by South Saemie for South Saemie (Blind, 2019a). Moreover, this virtual space Katarina is forming through her Instagram page instantly connects her work to not only South Saemie all over Saepmie, mitigating the geographic distances that separate them, but it also connects the South Saemie community to the international community.

Now to temporally locate practices of Indigenous efflorescence. Roche and the other co-editors state how Indigenous efflorescence focuses on, "processes of creativity and generativity, rather than on the social forms, cultural and linguistic products and so on which are generated" (Roche et al., 2018, p. 8). Indigenous efflorescence also possesses a decolonial agenda, and practices of efflorescence expose how past and present forms of colonialism affect individuals' experiences (Roche, 2018a, 2018b). Practices of Indigenous efflorescence themselves reveal, "the presence of ongoing colonialism and the ways it impacts on individual efforts to reclaim language, identity and culture, and to *be* Indigenous" (Roche, 2018b, p. 124). More importantly, Roche explains that these practices highlight, "the creative, generative nature of Indigenous efflorescence, and the complex links between past, present and future that this entails" (Roche, 2018b, p. 126) In this way, Indigenous efflorescence has multiple temporal locations because it highlights what has been done in the past, what processes are going on in the present and imagines what can be done in the future(s)[26] (Roche, 2018b; Roche et al., 2018).

Through the process of choosing a practices of Indigenous efflorescence research approach to define the spatial and temporal scope of the research data, I take the complex concept of Indigenous efflorescence and apply it to a practical case study to narrow down my research data. Ergo my research data consists of Katarina Blind's illustrations on her Instagram page, Tjåenieh, and our conversations together which convey her personal experiences in the South Saemie language community. Although I am utilizing the products of Katarina's practice of Indigenous efflorescence, the illustrations, as a significant part of the research data, I am also highlighting Katarina's generative and creative process by including our conversations about the images as part of the research data and later analysis. My experiences within the South Saemie community in Snåasa during Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe also comprise part of my research data that inform my analysis. This is because I employ a holistic research approach based in an Indigenous paradigm by utilizing the media products directly within the text, enforcing it with Katarina's own words and acknowledging my own position and reflections from the research process (Kovach, 2010b).

[26] In writing, "future(s)" I am referring to the multiplicity of possible imagined and yet to be realized futures Roche and the other co-authors describe in the introduction (Roche et al., 2018, pp. 8-9).

6 Examining Tjåenieh as a Practice of Indigenous Efflorescence

This chapter analyzes Katarina's Tjåenieh Instagram profile as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence first by examining the overall style and subject matter of her work on Tjåenieh. Then I will detail how Tjåenieh represents a practice of Indigenous efflorescence through Katarina's use of humor in her illustrations, her expression of personal sovereignty and her use of social media for virtual community building. Each of Katarina's illustrations contain layers of meaning that reflect her life experience, but in order to tease out the narrative within, one must first understand her illustrations within the greater context of her work. In the second analysis chapter, I will present two images from her account that highlight how Katarina practices Indigenous efflorescence through Tjåenieh in the South Saemie language community explicitly.

6.1 A Stylistic Overview of Tjåenieh

As previously stated, Katarina's style is distinct and consistent throughout her work. The first few posts on the Tjåenieh account are of items she has to sell, and they vary in their composition. Some of the greeting cards look more like stencils and/or have more bold, defined lines. For instance, one of her designs features multicolored reindeer pulling sleighs on a light pink background (Tjåenieh, 2018c). The bright, pastel colors are consistent with her work however, the lines she uses in drawing the reindeer are more straight, bold and geometric looking so that the pattern stands out against the brightly colored background.

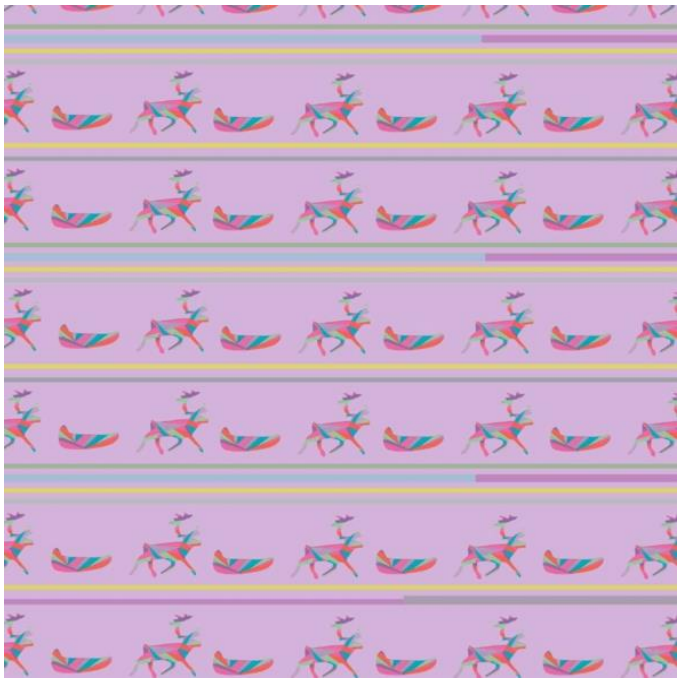

Figure 7 Tjåenieh Reindeer Print (Tjåenieh, 2018c)

In her later work, most of the illustrations have thinner, wavier lines that look as though they have been drawn freehand. The colors are bright but not as bold, similar to the visual effect of watercolors. The drawings are deceptively simplistic at a glance but are in fact quite detailed with clearly thought out overall composition. Most of the subjects in the illustrations represent general caricatures of people who could be from her local community or could represent her family members or herself. Some are even of Saemie versions of popular culture characters like Wonder Woman. Katarina's style is approachable and disarming. Her illustrations are unique and in some cases quite complex, but they are presented in a fun and engaging way with playful colors that do not always stay within the lines.

In many ways Katarina's style is important for the subject matter that she features in her work. The majority of her illustrations utilize humor to comment on a range of Katarina's life experiences, such as lifestyle changes as the result of having a child. Katarina also employs satire to make more social and political commentaries on sometimes controversial subjects, like the effects of industrialization on the South Saemie community (Tjåenieh, 2019c). In these posts the images are just as important as the words she uses, including a mixture of

South Saemie, Lule Saemie, North Saemie, Norwegian, Swedish and English. In doing so, she makes a commentary about a particular group of people to a particular audience.

Due to Katarina's use of illustration and multiple languages, I can understand some of her work without much context. However, many of her pieces are clearly directed toward a particular South Saemie audience with inside jokes and references only people within that community would understand. For instance, in one of her illustrations there are a man and a woman wearing gapta in a dance pose with the text, "Nobody Puts Baby in Korvkön" (Tjåenieh, 2018d). As an American who has seen the film, I immediately recognize that the illustration is referencing *Dirty Dancing*. However, I do not understand Swedish so I did not know immediately that "korv" means hot dog, nor did I have the same cultural understanding and life experience of what it is like to stand in a long line for a hot dog at a midsummer festival in Sweden (Blind, 2019a). The illustration is clearly fun and approachable in its subject matter, but also specific to a certain life experience. One needs to have the appropriate cultural and linguistic background to fully understand the joke. In this case being a South Saemie who attends festivals Swedish side of Saepmie (Tjåenieh, 2018d).

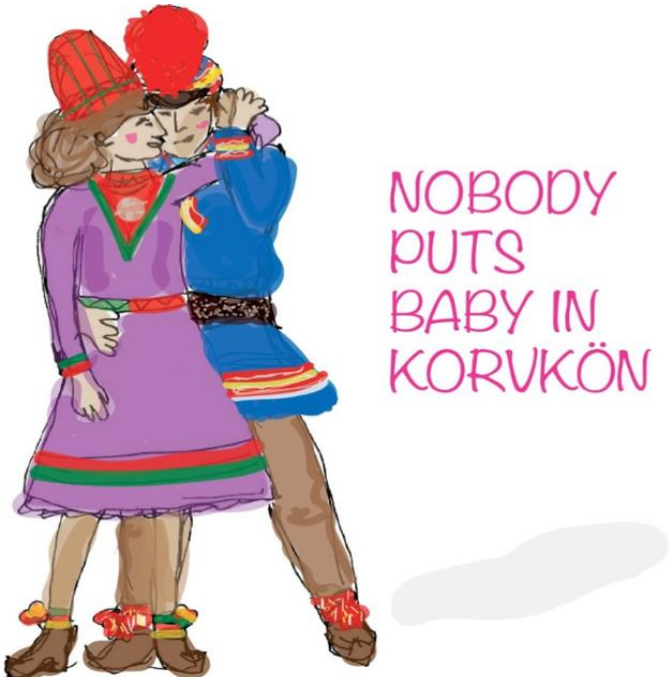

Figure 8 "Nobody Puts Baby in Korvkön" (Tjåenieh, 2018d)

This is a more general example, representative of the wider body of her work, to illustrate how Katarina uses a combination of her artistic style, humor, and subject matter (including language and cultural references) in order to convey a particular message to a particular audience.

6.2 Humor as Indigenous Efflorescence

Before going on to describe and analyze two of Katarina's illustrations pertaining to South Saemie language situation in the next chapter, I will first highlight specific ways in which Katarina's Instagram presence represents a practice of Indigenous efflorescence in itself. Starting with a more obvious feature, humor, Katarina's illustrations highlight her unique sense of humor and strategic use of satire. Generally speaking, Katarina's followers on Instagram comment on her various posts with statements of familiarity, that they can relate to the joke, or simply respond with laughing emoji faces or the two hands clapping emoji to show their approval (Tjåenieh, 2018a).

Discussing the ways in which Indigenous peoples' use social media, Wilson and his co-researchers contend humor is a valuable strategy of resistance because it challenges the representation of Indigenous peoples in mainstream media (Wilson et al., 2017). The YouTube comedy group *The 1491s* represent an ideal illustration of using humor as a form of resistance on a social media platform (Wilson et al., 2017). Since 2009, *The 1491s* have been posting satirical videos in an imagined time before European colonization begins in North America. The YouTube group is comprised principally of Indigenous comedians and activists from North America, including Dallas Goldtooth (Santee Dakota and Diné), Bobby Wilson (Sisseton Dakota), Ryan Red Corn (Osage), and Migizi Pensoneau (Ponca and Ojibwe) (Berglund, 2017). Professor of English from the University of Northern Arizona, Jeff Berglund contends more research needs to be conducted on Indigenous peoples' use of social media as a vehicle for social and political change (Berglund, 2017). Examining *The 1491s'* social media activities on YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, Berglund contends that the comedy troupe, "vigorously work[s] against this reductive take on Indigenous realities, not by ignoring truths, but by highlighting the everyday incarnations of beauty, intelligence, survival and wit manifest in the humorous scenarios they construct" (Berglund, 2017, p. 1).

Berglund's observations of *The 1491s* online activism echo Roche's statement on how quotidian practices of Indigenous efflorescence are framed both as the result of historical processes of colonialism and as political acts of Indigenous resurgence (Roche, 2018b).

In a TEDx Talk from 2013, Migizi Pensoneau, who self-identifies as Anishinaabe and Ponca, details *The 1491s'* aims and projects which, he sardonically states, includes the, "reclamation of Native American imagery because the colonial mindset has decided it would be a good idea to warp everybody's view of what Native America is" (TEDx Talks, 2013). Similar to the decolonial aims of Indigenous efflorescence, Pensoneau affirms that their comedy troupe seeks to, "reverse the dehumanization of Native America" and to highlight that Native American, "culture is alive, vital and thriving" (TEDx Talks, 2013). Pensoneau goes on to explain, "the big idea that we're trying to fight is, you know, go cry over somebody else's tragedy, 'cause we're alive and thriving, man… There is a lot of different issues going on, but the thing that gets forgotten in the middle of all those issues is that we're modern, man, we're human, we're here" (TEDx Talks, 2013). Pensoneau's powerful statement demonstrates the interplay of acknowledging colonial legacy and performing Indigenous political resurgence within practices of Indigenous efflorescence, as *The 1491s* undoubtedly also practice Indigenous efflorescence through social media. Another troupe member, Bobby Wilson, states that *The 1491s* began as an act of personal sovereignty, that they just made videos they thought were funny themselves (TEDx Talks, 2013). Then through their online activism, Pensoneau pointedly explains *The 1491's* became a way to address colonial narratives of poor, vanishing natives to humanize contemporary Native American tribes and highlight that they are still alive and thriving (TEDx Talks, 2013).

Similarly, Katarina utilizes humor in her illustrations to approach contentious sociopolitical topics within her community. For instance, in the illustration below Katarina exposes the ridiculousness of racism (Tjåenieh, 2019a). In the image, there is a rather sad looking Norwegian man dressed in a bunad, the Norwegian national dress, being harassed by a group of three Saemie. Each of the Saemie figures is wearing more 'modern' clothing, but they also have pieces of clothing that symbolically identify them as Saemie. Katarina explains she used these details so they would be easily recognized, "It's just something you can relate to. You can see it's a Sami group" (Blind, 2019a). The Saemie are all shouting slurs at the Norwegian based on ethnic stereotypes of Norwegians. The one on the far left donning a Saemie lijnie/

wool shawl and blue crocs asks, “Do you live in a barn?”[27] (Tjåenieh, 2019a). Interestingly, I found out by talking to Katarina that blue crocs are popular footwear among Saemie in Snåasa. Having some reprieve from the serious subject of racism, I asked about the crocs and Katarina laughed responding, “I think this is a Southern Saemie thing. I mean we are really good at wearing crocs… like they're some of the most fashionable shoes ever” (Blind, 2019a). The center figure has a sjielege/ Saemie silver necklace, which ironically is believed to ward off evil, and baarhkohkh/ Saemie leather boots. She is inquiring, “How many cows do you have?”[28] (Tjåenieh, 2019a). The final Saemie on the far right is dressed in typical Saemie reindeer herding work clothes with a soehpenje/ lasso, and is jeering, “Heey, look at the man in the bunad. Can you yodel?”[29] (Tjåenieh, 2019a).

Figure 9 Katarina humorously exposes racism (Tjåenieh, 2019a)

[27] My own translation from Norwegian: “Bor du i stabbur?” (Tjåenieh, 2019a)
[28] My own translation from Norwegian: “Hvor mange kyr har du?” (Tjåenieh, 2019a)
[29] My own translation from Norwegian: “Heey, se en mann i bunad. Kan du jodle?” (Tjåenieh, 2019a)

Role reversal represents a long-standing comedic device, just consider characters swapping gender roles in almost all of Shakespeare's comedies. The Saemie are the hecklers and the Norwegian is the target of racial prejudice. Though these questions by the Saemie in the image seem ridiculous, they are in fact based off of real experiences of Saemie people (Blind, 2019a). When Katarina and I discussed this image, she told me her reason for creating this illustration was to address widespread racism against Saemie. Katarina explains:

> I think every Saemie has said when he had a gapta on and then a lot of people, especially if they're drunk or you are in a big town and they are joiking[30] at you. And they are asking a lot of questions, and I just wanted to turn it because if you see it that way… it looks really stupid. It's like if you asked this question to a Norwegian today it is, Oh my God, what?! Are you stupid? What? But today there's a lot of Saemie getting those questions. When I was younger and today, it's normal. It's a part of our life (Blind, 2019a).

On one hand Katarina is exposing the ways in which colonialism still effects South Saemie peoples' daily lives negatively. But on the other, she uses her vibrant illustrations to comedically frame these issues. By adding details like the blue crocs, Katarina highlights and humanizes her South Saemie community and opens a space for people to recognize and deal with these kinds of challenges in contemporary Saemie society. Katarina's humorous way of flipping colonial narratives of Indigenous societal decline to uplift the vibrancy of her South Saemie community clearly represents a way in which she uses Tjåenieh to practice Indigenous efflorescence.

6.3 Self-Sovereignty as Indigenous Efflorescence

As beforementioned, Katarina told me that she creates her artwork for herself and illustrates what ideas and situations come to her[31] (Blind, 2019c). Katarina started her artistic career learning Saemie vætnoe, but then chose a less 'traditional' medium of Saemie creative

[30] Joik/ yoik is a traditional Saemie vocal artform, that is similar to singing but has greater metaphysical significance as one does not joik about a person, place or thing, but a joik artist evokes that person, place or thing.

[31] From another example of a practice of Indigenous efflorescence, *The 1491s* member Bobby Wilson expresses a similar sentiment when he explains, "A lot of the work we have done on the comedy platform has just really come out of us wanting to enjoy ourselves and put out things that we think are funny" (TEDx Talks, 2013).

expression and eventually broke out on her own to start her business (Blind, 2019a). Though she enjoys her other jobs, including working as a social media project leader at Gïelem nastedh, her business and sovereignty over her illustrative work is important to her (Blind, 2019c). Katarina has emphasized to me multiple times how she wants to be her own boss, and though she has been supported by her family and friends in starting the business, it is her business (Blind, 2019a). Katarina describes how she felt when she started illustrating, "I can do whatever I want… my mind was free" (Blind, 2019a). Clearly Tjåenieh represents Katarina's commitment to her own personal sovereignty, which Roche emphasizes as an important feature of Indigenous efflorescence in practice (Roche, 2018b). Indigenous efflorescence focuses on individuals' quotidian practices of being Indigenous and recognizing those daily acts as political statements of individual agency and Indigenous resurgence (Roche, 2018b). Not only do these individuals practicing Indigenous efflorescence want to see their Indigenous languages and cultures continue to thrive, but also Roche describes how they possess, "a conviction that this is possible, and a dedication to making it happen" (Roche, 2018b). Evidently, framing individuals within an Indigenous language community as practicing Indigenous efflorescence is a very different approach to understanding an Indigenous language situation compared to discourses of language endangerment that portray Indigenous communities as passive victims of language shift (Cameron, 2008).

For Katarina illustration represents freedom; it is her personal creative outlet. Tjåenieh allows Katarina to express herself in the way that she chooses, when she decides to and then makes it possible for her to instantly share the product of her creative process online. Beautifully summarizing how her personal agency represents a practice of Indigenous efflorescence, Katarina firmly asserts her creative independence when she tells me, "I can do everything when I can draw. Yeah, that's the magic about it. And I didn't have to ask anyone if it's possible or it's not" (Blind, 2019a).

6.4 Community Building as Indigenous Efflorescence

Though Roche does not theorize explicitly around community building in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, I conceptualize it as an important aspect of the processes of generativity and creativity Roche and the other co-editors are trying to highlight within contemporary

Indigenous societies. Building a virtual community is another way in which Katarina practices Indigenous efflorescence via Tjåenieh. Simply looking at Katarina's profile on Instagram, she has built up a sizable online following in just over a year and has generated over 200 posts (Tjåenieh, 2018a). Going through Tjåenieh image by image, there is an overwhelmingly positive response to Katarina's illustrations with numerous 'likes' and various user comments (Tjåenieh, 2018a). Several self-identifying South Saemie individuals have told me that they like Katarina's work because it is specific to her experience as a South Saemie living in a South Saemie community, and that other South Saemie people almost exclusively can relate to her work. Furthermore, Katarina contends she does not just represent her own life experiences in her work but also those of her family members. She even calls on her relatives for assistance in translating certain words and phrases into South Saemie for her Instagram posts (Blind, 2019a). In this way, Katarina builds a South Saemie focused community not only when posting her illustrations online, but also during the process of creating her Instagram posts. Given Steinfjell's research findings about the lack of South Saemie spaces in mainstream media, Katarina's use of social media addresses a significant need for South Saemie self-representation in online public domains.

In addition to Katarina's focus on South Saemie society, she represents various aspects of her North Saemie identity as well and illustrates scenarios with which a more general Saemie audience can identify (Blind, 2019a). In the October 2019 edition of the Saemie youth magazine *Š*, Tjåenieh was featured as one of the top 10 Saemie Instagram accounts alongside the personal profiles of internationally recognized Saemie artists like Sofia Jannok (Blind, 2019a). Katarina now regularly contributes her illustrations to be published in the magazine (Tjåenieh, 2018a). Though she likes the magazine and was happy to be included, Katarina expressed some feelings of alienation. Tjåenieh was featured in the magazine, but since *Š* is primarily written in North Saemie she was unable to read what was written about her work (Blind, 2019a). In November 2019, Katarina was invited to a national talk show called Studio Sápmi on NRK to discuss her growing Instagram following and the use of humor in her illustrations (Studio Sápmi, 2019). While answering questions, Katarina demonstrated her artistic skill and sense of humor by illustrating a portrait of Ánne Márjá Hætta, the Saemie woman interviewing her, on a tablet (Studio Sápmi, 2019). From what Katarina and I have observed, Tjåenieh is popularly received both inside the South Saemie and the larger Saemie community. However, since the greater Saemie community media is dominated by North

Saemie, there are some challenges for reflecting the diversity of Saemie languages in mainstream media (I. M. Steinfjell, 2019). Nevertheless, I submit people like Katarina and those who have invited her to contribute to their national media sources are up to the task.

Furthermore, Katarina told me during one of our conversations that a Norwegian woman from Snåasa had approached her saying that while she did not understand everything on her Instagram page she told Katarina that, "everyone should go in and see it because it explains a lot how the Saemie think, and she thinks it was a funny way to learn about a lot of Saemie perspectives, and yes the culture to some extent" (Blind, 2019a). This encounter vividly illustrates the kind of imagined community building Lindgren and Cocq discuss in how Indigenous peoples productively utilize social media platforms to break down old social barriers and create new virtual communities (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). Within an Indigenous context, they contend social media, "implies that members of a community do not only transfer information to an outsider audience but also articulate their perspectives and share insider knowledge that can reach out to allies as well as other policy makers, journalists, governmental bodies" (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017, p. 136). Representing an ongoing, generative and creative process, Katarina's work with Tjåenieh clearly represents a practice of Indigenous efflorescence according to Roche's definition (Roche et al., 2018). Moreover, I contend the virtual community Katarina is building now (and the future imagined community she could build) as the result of this process is in itself a way in which Katarina practices Indigenous efflorescence via Tjåenieh.

7 Analyzing Indigenous Language Efflorescence in Tjåenieh

Having established Katarina's Instagram account Tjåenieh represents a way in which she practices Indigenous efflorescence generally, this second part of the analysis will now elaborate on how Katarina practices Indigenous language efflorescence specifically. Due to the micro-level focus of the practices of Indigenous efflorescence analytical approach, the scope of the Indigenous language study shifts from the language itself onto the language speaker in how they *do* language and how that *feels*. Instead of asking about intergenerational language transmission based on the Fishman's GIDS scale[32] or determining the number of people who are enrolled in a language course, the Indigenous language efflorescence-based research inquiry becomes: what is the individual's experience learning the language? How *do* you connect to your Indigenous language, how does that *feel*?

This is not to say that other macro-level approaches to researching Indigenous language contexts within sociolinguistics and beyond are irrelevant. As I said before, some of these research projects have informed my understanding of the overall South Saemie language situation in order to explore how Katarina's individual situation fits in this greater context. Here I am arguing that a practices of Indigenous efflorescence theoretical approach is unique to Indigenous language research in both its micro-level scope and emphasis on subjective experiences of language.

In this second analytical chapter, I will perform a close analysis of two of Katarina's illustrations from her Tjåenieh Instagram page that we have talked about together in order to effectively illustrate a practical application of an Indigenous efflorescence analytical approach to an Indigenous language situation. In other words, this chapter explores how Katarina creatively practices Indigenous language efflorescence. I chose the two images below to prompt my conversational analysis with Katarina in November 2019, because they explicitly mention Saemie language in the illustrations' content.

[32] This is in reference to Joshua Fishman's GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale), which is popularly cited within sociolinguistic research for determining the vitality of a minoritized language based upon the rate of intergenerational language transmission (Fishman, 1991; Huss & Stånberg, 2018).

7.1 Dealing with the Gïelepolice

Similar to her illustration in the last chapter on ridiculous racism, each of Katarina's illustrations that reflect her experiences as a South Saemie language speaker not only highlight challenges of colonial legacy, but also create opportunities for reconciliation and healing. In this first illustration posted on August 28, 2019, Katarina pointedly addresses the challenge of internal language hierarchies and language policing within the South Saemie language community.

Figure 10 Katarina takes on the Gïelepolice (Tjåenieh, 2019b)

In the illustration, one South Saemie woman is driving another away in a truck marked, "Gïelepolice"- language police (Tjåenieh, 2019b). The women are both wearing South Saemie red hats, symbolically indicating their identities as South Saemie women. The vehicle they are in has a flashing blue light on top of the cab, like a police vehicle, and a covered bed with circular windows. Katarina playfully colors the truck in her signature palate with a pale pink cab and yellow bed. The woman driving in the cab is looking back at the South Saemie in the bed of the vehicle with a speech bubble that reads, "You have forgotten both dark ï's

and the hyphen in the word luvlie-bïegke. Hello?!?"[33] (Tjåenieh, 2019b). The woman in the back of the trailer merely looks back at the woman driving in confusion represented by three question marks above her head. In the Instagram post's caption Katarina writes a translation for the South Sami words in the illustration: "Giele[34] = language,[35] Luvliebiegke = east wind"[36] (Tjåenieh, 2019b).

During our conversation, Katarina states she wanted to illustrate something that many people in her community could relate to, an experience of dealing with the gïelepolice. She explains that the vehicle she illustrated is a truck typically used by Saemie herders in her community to transport reindeer. Katarina clarifies her intention is not to single out reindeer herders as language policers, but for the trucks to be easily recognizable by members of her local Saemie community, "I just took something that someone could relate to and it was funny to have this [vehicle], that you put the reindeers in. But there was one woman who said, 'Oh no, then everyone would think that the gïelepolice is for the reindeer herders.' But it's not… I was thinking of everyone" (Blind, 2019a).

Moreover, Katarina's language choice adds intricate layers of meaning to her illustration. Katarina seamlessly blends three different languages into a post about monitoring language use. The language police character is speaking primarily in Norwegian as she scolds the other Saemie woman about her use of the South Saemie language. She gives the 'correct' spelling of the South Saemie phrase for "east wind," with the added punctuation and accents. However, she finishes her statement with an English exclamation, "Hello?!?" (Tjåenieh, 2019b). There are two notable elements in this line of dialogue: one, the language police do not maintain consistent language choice and two, the corrections the language policer gives to a singular phrase are minute. As justification for detaining the language speaker, the gïelepolice shifts from using Norwegian, to South Saemie to English. As members of her local community speak at least some of all of these languages, as is the multilingual reality, the other character's confusion likely does not stem from the policer's language choice but

[33] My own translation from Norwegian: "Du har glemt både mørk ï og bindestrek i ordet luvlie-bïegke. Hello?!?" (Tjåenieh, 2019b)
[34] Katarina told me she intentionally left out the "ï" in "Giele" to protest language standardization (Blind, 2019a)
[35] My own translation from Norwegian: "språk" (Tjåenieh, 2019b)
[36] My own translation from Norwegian: "østavind" (Tjåenieh, 2019b)

rather why she is criticizing her language use and why the policer's reaction is so extreme given the minor nature of the spelling variation.

Katarina said that she intentionally exaggerated the idea of language policing, creating a fictional caricature and reindeer trailer to represent a real lived experience by many in her language community. Katarina again uses satire to inflate a social problem ridiculously out of proportion in order to make a safe space to criticize the real-life, difficult problems it represents. While there are no South Saemie gïelepolice patrolling the streets of Snåasa to arrest language speakers because of grammatical errors, the act of language policing is a common occurrence (Blind, 2019a). Personally, Katarina grew up in a household where her parents spoke South Saemie. However, she never learned to speak and write it fluently. As an adult she has tried several times to take courses and develop her command of the South Saemie language. Katarina has expressed to me the difficulties of learning a language that is personally very important to her and how fearful she has been of making mistakes (Blind, 2019b). Katarina also spoke about the standardization of the Saemie language in school and how there is some variation between what she learned at home and in courses, not seeing the sense in one strict way of using the language (Blind, 2019a). Today, Katarina continues to use her knowledge of South Saemie and learn new words from Gïelem nastedh, her family and her illustration work. Though Katarina continues to learn independently, she is still not removed from language policing. Katarina states that language policing is a daily occurrence within the South Saemie community. Katarina believes that language policers do not always have ill intentions when they correct someone's language use. However, their comments are often received as criticism and it fosters ill feelings. When we discussed the language policers' intentions and how it affects those being policed, Katarina explains from her perspective:

> I think they [the gïelepolice] are meaning it well. Well sort of from the inside, I think if you want to correct someone, I think you don't want to be mean or something. You just want to say to the person, 'Oh no, no it's not like that, it's this way.' But I think you're the one who's hurt… Oh my God, that would hurt the person who speaks it, and then the gïelepolice comes to you saying it's not this way. I think it's a critique... You will then take it as a critique, not something, 'Oh I was just meaning nothing bad,' but… (Blind, 2019a).

Katarina then goes on to describe her personal experiences with language policers. She does not point out individuals, but she does tell me how she responds to the gïelepolice. Looking at her gïelepolice illustration, Katarina thoughtfully relays:

> If you see in the top "Giele," it is my language. And I did not write the dark ï. I don't write the double [dots]. So I am a rebel, I don't want to do that. Because I didn't learn it so. So I just, oh my God, I think how important is that? I say I'm a rebel… I just don't write the two dots over the i, and I just whooo! It's easy then, it's easy to be a rebel (Blind, 2019a).

Katarina is not alone in her experience of language policing. As beforementioned, sociolinguists like Inger Johansen have conducted studies on language attitudes within the South Saemie community that have included the adverse effects of language policing (Huss & Stånberg, 2018; Johansen, 2019). More broadly, sociolinguists highlight how language standardization creates hierarchies and constructed conceptions of language 'purity' in other minoritized language contexts (Jaffe, 2008). Unlike in sociolinguistic studies, Katarina as an artist and member of the language community not only identifies the problem, but she also offers a solution: be a rebel (Blind, 2019a).

Through both her humorous illustration and our conversation, Katrina effectively relays her personal story of how she has experienced language hierarchies in her South Saemie language community and how it feels to be the recipient of language policing. At the same time, Katarina cares about everyone in her language community and continually emphasizes her intention is not to single out South Saemie language speakers, but to bring them together (Blind, 2019a). Owning her language use stating, "It is my language," Katarina practices Indigenous language efflorescence as an expression of self-sovereignty by humorously drawing attention to the greater sociocultural issue of language policing in her South Saemie community which invites discussion and community building on her social media platform.

From previous sociolinguistic studies, it is apparent that internal language speaker hierarchies and language policing are harmful residual effects of colonial assimilation policies in the Scandinavian countries (Johansen, 2019). Similarly, Katarina uses her illustrations to expose a colonial remnant of imposed negative social attitudes toward the South Saemie language that persist today, manifesting themselves in various ways in her community. Moreover, an Indigenous language efflorescence theoretical approach highlights how Katarina intentionally criticizes the toxic culture of language policing in the South Saemie community, but she does

it in a way that is fun, engaging and directed specifically at her South Saemie language community. She uses satire to open the door for laughter and critical thinking. Offering a solution to language policing, Katarina playfully recommends, “be a rebel,” encouraging her Instagram followers to take a more flexible and lighthearted approach to language learning and use (Blind, 2019a). From an insider perspective and with the distance from reality created by the illustration, Katarina can directly address a larger social issue in her language community and provide a platform to explore possible solutions and initiate communal healing.

7.2 Medicating Språksperre

Another major challenge Katarina identifies in her South Saemie language community is the “språksperre”- language barrier (Tjåenieh, 2019a). Katarina describes this as the feeling you get when you have difficulty speaking a language, “you're afraid to speak it [Saemie] because I think it's very normal that a lot of people that are afraid to use the language because they're afraid to say something wrong. And that's good enough. I can feel that” (Blind, 2019a). In this illustration, Katarina imagines being able to take medication to overcome this psychological language learning barrier, “so you can break down the wall, and you want to speak it [South Saemie]” (Blind, 2019a).

Figure 11 Katarina creates a cure for språksperre (Tjåenieh, 2019a)

Posted on August 23, 2019, the illustration features a medication box labeled, "Språksperrepillen" -language barrier pills (Tjåenieh, 2019a). In front of the box is a packet of pills in the typical Saemie national colors: red, blue, green and yellow. On the prescription label it reads that the medication is for a, "Sam Samesen" and the directions are to take one tablet in the morning one in the afternoon, and one at night (Tjåenieh, 2019a). During our conversation, Katarina explains the name Sam Samesen is her attempt at a generic name that could represent any Saemie person, like how Ola Nordmann is a popularly recognized name for a typical Norwegian in Norway that comes from the fictional characters Ola and Kari Nordmann (Blind, 2019a). When I asked her about very minor details like the prescribing doctor's name and the numbers on the sides of the box she replied that they did not have any special meaning in themselves, she just took a prescription medication from her own bathroom cabinet and used it as a model so it looked more realistic (Blind, 2019a).

The concept of a language learning barrier is also present in sociolinguistic studies from the South Saemie context. It is detailed by Saemie linguistic scholar Jon Todal in his 2007 article,

"Linguistic Vitalization- Factors we do not write about"[37] (Todal, 2007). More recently, Huss and Stångberg discuss how their research participants expressed almost contradictory negative and positive feelings toward learning South Saemie. Some describe it as a burdensome yoke because they feel obligated to learn the Indigenous language their parents were discouraged to use by the government (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). Others described the joy of reconnecting to the South Saemie language, comparing it to a bowl of candy (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). These cases effectively illustrate the beforementioned concept of language revitalization paradox, which Roche describes as an example of ongoing colonialism in modern Indigenous language communities (Roche, 2018b). It has only been within the last decade or so that scholars have begun to study the psychological impact of intergenerational trauma in Saemie communities as the result of racial discrimination and state assimilation policies which lasted until the late twentieth century (Huss & Stånberg, 2018).

Though Katarina recognizes that there is no miracle cure to help Saemie overcome the language barrier, she draws attention to this widespread phenomenon within her South Saemie language community that can prevent people like her from learning South Saemie to the extent they want. Reflecting on her personal struggle to learn South Saemie, Katarina contends, "if you want to speak the language you have to do it [break the language barrier] all the time. That's the problem, because I don't think the medicine would help you to get rid of the blockage... you have to work with your inside" (Blind, 2019a). Practicing Indigenous language efflorescence through this imaginative exercise, Katarina challenges herself and those in her South Saemie community struggling with language learning to look inside themselves and prioritize their own mental and emotional health. By discussing her own experience and using the generic name, Sam Samesen, Katarina is acknowledging that she and the other language learners in her community are not alone. Katarina creatively communicates how she and many in her South Saemie language community experience this together, creating the possibility to then cure their mental block collectively, even if it is not as simple as taking pharmaceuticals.

[37] My own translation from Norwegian: "Språkleg vitalisering- faktorar som vi ikkje skriv om" (Todal, 2007)

8 Outcomes of Indigenous Efflorescence

To evaluate the significance of Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical tool in Indigenous language research, this chapter will summarize and discuss the outcomes of my analysis of both Katarina's Instagram page Tjåenieh and our conversations about her work as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence. Addressing my initial inquiry from chapter one, this chapter answers: What exactly does Indigenous efflorescence do? Moreover, these final two chapters shall address the second research question: What can Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical tool contribute to Indigenous language research?

One of the main critiques of discourses of language endangerment within sociolinguistics is that it objectifies the minoritized language in question, and thus portrays the language community as passive victims of language loss (Heller & Duchêne, 2008). Moreover Indigenous languages are utilized in Indigenous rights discourses to formulate a moral appeal to social justice, which essentializes Indigenous languages, cultures and traditional knowledges (Patrick, 2008). The unintended and potentially harmful outcome of studies which frame Indigenous languages in this way is that they characterize Indigenous languages and the language community as static and self-contained entities (Jaffe, 2008). In past scholarship, Indigenous languages have been counted and classified, placed into Western-based research tools like quantitative data sets counting the numbers of language speakers or the Fishman's scale of intergenerational language transmission (Mæhlum, 2019). Though these research tools are not inherently problematic in themselves, this falsely objective research position obscures the historical role of colonialism in state assimilation policies and casts the Indigenous language community as passive victims of language and cultural loss (Cameron, 2008; Heller & Duchêne, 2008; Jaffe, 2008).

Language revitalization research within and beyond sociolinguistics has begun to address the more problematic aspects of a language endangerment approach through a focus on community involvement and empowerment (Hinton et al., 2018). However, as Katarina and I have discussed, these (re)work discursive frameworks are also problematic in that they reduce a complex language situation into a simplistic narrative of Indigenous language decline and recovery (Blind, 2019c; Roche et al., 2018).

This is where Indigenous efflorescence enters the picture, offering a way to highlight the important nuances of an Indigenous language situation as an ongoing and future-oriented process (Roche et al., 2018). In contrast to previous sociolinguistic studies, the analysis of Katarina Blind's Tjåenieh page as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence highlights several significant aspects of an Indigenous language situation: colonial legacy, agency of the language speaker and community building.

8.1 Exposing Colonial Legacy

In line with Linda Tuhiwai Smith's decolonizing methodologies, Indigenous efflorescence as an analytical framework exposes and engages with ongoing forms of colonialism (Roche et al., 2018). Roche contends Indigenous efflorescence provides a more nuanced view of the Indigenous language situation by, "uncovering concealed and interlocking historical processes (demographic increase, political change, economic change)'… for understanding the deeper historical roots of contemporary revitalization movements" (Roche, 2019). Analyzing Katarina's illustrations on her Tjåenieh profile, I further classify Katarina's work as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence. This means that during our conversations together, Katarina and I focused on how she *does* Indigenous efflorescence and how she *feels* about it. This also applies then to how Katarina observes and experiences structures of ongoing colonialism, colonial leftovers, within her South Saemie language community.

By examining Katarina's two illustrations having to do with her experiences within the South Saemie language community in Snåasa, our conversations and analysis demonstrate how Katarina practices Indigenous language efflorescence specifically. One of the first themes I noticed which emerged from our conversations about her work was colonization. Sociolinguists and South Saemie language scholars have pointed out various challenges to South Saemie language revitalization (Mæhlum, 2019; Todal, 2007). Their research has found that there are numerous social and psychological phenomena within the South Saemie community which has created internal strife, including the establishment of language speaker hierarchies and language policing (Huss & Stånberg, 2018; Johansen, 2019). Other linguistic

research has explained how negative perceptions of Indigenous languages constructed by colonial regimes continue to influence Indigenous people's perceptions of their own Indigenous languages, and the South Saemie language situation is no exemption (Mæhlum, 2019). In their article on differing views of South Sami language revitalization, Huss and Stånberg refer to the efforts of linguists and psychologists alike who are working to understand the emotional impact of language revitalization efforts (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). The authors specifically site a self-identifying North Saemie cognitive therapist Jane Juuso, who has developed a, "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy," specifically to address the emotional consequences of state assimilation policies, such as boarding schools (Huss & Stånberg, 2018, p. 137).

Though a variety of researchers from outside the South Saemie language community have begun to investigate the source of these harmful colonial remnants for supporting South Saemie language revitalization, it is important to acknowledge how members of the language community have *already* been addressing these issues from the inside (Huss & Stånberg, 2018). Katarina's språksperre illustration particularly highlights the negative impact of larger colonial structures on the individual, as residual trauma from Norway's assimilation policies make it a daily struggle to gain the courage to speak South Saemie (Blind, 2019a). Through the analysis of Katarina's illustrations as a practice of Indigenous language efflorescence, this study reveals how Katarina actively acknowledges and addresses these structures of ongoing colonialism within her language community. In situations similar to Katarina's, it is apparent there are more obstacles to language revitalization than what can be solely addressed on the institutional level. Of course, there are still larger structural challenges for the South Saemie language community however, institutions such the Saemie Parliament of Norway and the Norwegian Research Council has implemented policies to encourage South Saemie language research (Forskningsrådet, 2017). Despite these resources, this study points to other factors on the micro-level, the daily challenges individuals in the community face, that should be considered for continuing to encourage South Saemie language learning and research.

In summation, Katarina utilizes satire in her work, comically exaggerating common issues within her South Saemie community as an invitation to approach contentious topics that are painful to confront for her and many in her community. That is how a silly image of three Saemie heckling a Norwegian in bunad allows Katarina's Instagram followers to virtually

express laughter and relate to their personal experiences of racism (Tjåenieh, 2019a). By illustrating experiences of contentious, almost taboo sociopolitical issues within her South Saemie language community, Katarina practices Indigenous efflorescence in how she exposes and engages with pervasive colonial remnants.

8.2 Emphasizing the Agency of the Language Speaker

Examining Tjåenieh as a practice of Indigenous language efflorescence, this thesis illustrates how individual language speakers empower themselves and their language communities. This is accomplished within an Indigenous efflorescence analytical approach by shifting the focus of the study from the Indigenous language to the Indigenous language speaker.

Though I provide extensive background research on the concept of Indigenous efflorescence and the South Saemie language context, much of my research data is Katarina's Instagram profile and our conversations about it. This is because practices of Indigenous efflorescence, as I have interpreted it, highlights how individuals *do* Indigenous efflorescence and how it *feels* to participate (Roche, 2018b). Translated to an analysis of an Indigenous language situation specifically, the focus of the study is on how Indigenous language speakers connect to their Indigenous language and how that is an emotional process. Therefore, unlike problematic language endangerment discourses which invisibilize the Indigenous speech community, practices of Indigenous language efflorescence uplift the agency and lived experiences of Indigenous language speakers.

Accordingly, my analysis of Katarina's Instagram page highlights how Katarina herself connects to her Indigenous language and interacts within her Indigenous language community. This is not a quantitative study on the number of language speakers in the education system or even a qualitative study interpreting institutional language policies, the purpose of this analysis is to explore how Indigenous peoples experience their vital Indigenous languages in the present, to understand how that experience is influenced by historical processes, and to imagine how it could be experienced in the future. This thesis intentionally highlights Katarina, her work and our collaboration to investigate the ways in which she as an individual within her language community is empowered and utilizes her

agency on a daily basis to uplift the South Saemie language within her Snåasa community and beyond.

While some could argue that the micro-level scope of this Indigenous efflorescence analysis offers only a limited lens for understanding the overall South Saemie language situation, I would submit that first I intentionally focused the scope of my analysis on Katarina by examining how she *practices* Indigenous efflorescence, and secondly this research approach clearly reveals more than just the personal experiences of one person. To expand upon my first argument, Indigenous efflorescence is a complex, multi-faceted concept. Conceivably one could examine the *contexts* of Indigenous efflorescence for understanding the South Saemie language situation, that is the macro-level social, political and economic factors that permit or hinder Indigenous language efflorescence. Instead I purposefully chose to elaborate on the *practices* of Indigenous efflorescence I observed in the South Saemie language community, focusing on how individuals actualize and experience Indigenous language efflorescence. In so doing, this thesis highlights nuanced aspects of the South Saemie language situation. Though focused on an individual, Katrina's work and experience reveal larger concerns in the language community, such as the psychological effects of state colonial assimilation policies, that sociolinguists and other researchers are just beginning to explore in Saepmie.

Moreover, a practices of Indigenous efflorescence analytical approach does not exclusively focus on the individual level. As I demonstrate though my analysis of Katarina's illustrations, individuals do not practice Indigenous efflorescence in isolation rather they work to empower their Indigenous languages and cultures within a larger community. In the process of creating and distributing her work, Katarina considers her own experiences as well as those of her family, her Snåasa community, the larger South Saemie community and the general Saemie community. Katarina has a diverse multi-faceted Saemie identity and clearly listens to and respects the feelings and experiences of others based on her page's positive reception (Blind, 2019a). While it is true this particular Indigenous efflorescence analytical framework focuses on one individual within the South Saemie language community, the Indigenous research approach Katarina and I work within reveals the ways in which Katarina is relationally situated within her larger language community, as I will expand upon in the next section.

8.3 Building Language Community

As previously established, Indigenous efflorescence focuses on the generative and creative processes within contemporary Indigenous societies. Practices of Indigenous efflorescence highlight individuals' daily dedication to ensuring these processes continue within their communities. Through my interpretation of Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical framework, I primarily emphasize the actions and experiences of one individual, Katarina, within an Indigenous language community. However, I also endeavor to illustrate the diversity within the South Saemie language community in order to position the individual into the context of the greater Indigenous language community. As the result, the analysis reveals how Katarina, an individual, functions as part of her South Saemie language community in Snåasa and beyond. For instance, Katarina told me that her Mother supported her starting her own business and her friends and relatives in Snåasa and Plaassje help her publish her Instagram posts concerning language use (Blind, 2019a). Katarina and I also discussed people's reaction to Tjåenieh within and outside of the wider South Saemie language community online and sometimes in person (Blind, 2019a). An Indigenous research paradigm includes a holistic epistemology for generating knowledge (Kovach, 2010b). Accordingly, Katarina and I assume a relational, inclusive approach to our discussions and examination of her work to include not only how she feels about it, but also how others react.

Moreover, Katarina does not just consider the reception of her work after the fact, but she also considers others' experiences in the process of creating her illustrations. By intentionally adding details to her illustrations like the reindeer herder's truck in the gïelepolice image or attempting to make a generic Saemie name, Sam Samesen, in the språksperre post, Katarina invites the South Saemie community to practice Indigenous language efflorescence together. While she derives inspiration from her own life experiences, Katarina acknowledges that many in her South Saemie language community would recognize the situations and feelings she illustrates. Furthermore, Katarina publishes her work instantly and publicly via social media. On Instagram, Tjåenieh's social media platform represents a relatively new virtual, public space that circumvents other hierarchical mainstream media sources that marginalize Indigenous voices. Through Tjåenieh, Katarina owns and directly distributes her own voice through her illustrations. This bottom-up approach through social media generates not only

new language domains, but also new language communities. Aboriginal social media activist Theresa Petray relays her experience connecting with other Cherokee language speakers over Facebook and how downloading a Cherokee keyboard application impacted her personal experience of indigeneity, “engaging in an online community solidifies a certain understanding of yourself. By downloading the Cherokee language pack and typing osiyo, hello, into a status update on Facebook, I made it clear to myself and to my social network that this is part of who I am” (Petray, 2015, p. 24). Similarly, as many Saemie and non-Saemie individuals have expressed, Katarina is creating an inclusive South Saemie community online that promotes the diversity Indigenous languages and cultures in Saepmie. As I have repeatedly argued, Katarina’s inclusive approach to her Instagram posts opens a space to address oftentimes contentious colonial remnants and encourages her fellow language community members for communal reconciliation and healing. In this way, Katarina practices Indigenous language efflorescence through creatively generating a South Saemie language community, among other Saemie languages, through social media.

9 The Significance of Indigenous Efflorescence

Coming full circle from the beginning of this master's thesis, I have been addressing the first research question: How may this relatively new theoretical concept of Indigenous efflorescence be directly applied to a particular Indigenous language context, in this case the South Saemie language community? In the introduction, I began to explore this new concept of Indigenous efflorescence and introduced my project collaborator, South Saemie illustrator Katarina Blind, and myself as a Saemie American researcher. In the next two chapters, I detailed the conceptual scaffolding of Indigenous efflorescence and the current South Saemie language situation based on recent scholarship and my own experiences in Snåasa. Having established this study's context, I outlined my process for developing an Indigenous efflorescence research approach grounded in an Indigenous research paradigm, including decolonial and indigenist methodologies and methods in the fourth chapter. Then in chapters five through seven, I systematically detailed how I created and applied Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical framework to Katarina's Instagram page Tjåenieh, narrowing the conceptual, spatial and temporal scope of the study to Katarina's practices of Indigenous efflorescence. Specifically related to the Indigenous language situation, I further investigated the analytical framework of Indigenous language efflorescence when applied to two of Katarina's illustrations related to her experiences within the South Sami language community.

In the final chapters, I am addressing the second research question: What can Indigenous efflorescence as a practical analytical tool contribute to Indigenous language research? I discussed in chapter 8 the outcomes of my analysis of the Tjåenieh illustrations informed by my conversations with Katarina. Unlike the findings of past research depicting the dire situation of the South Saemie language, an exploration of Katarina's Instagram page as a practice of Indigenous efflorescence reveals the South Saemie language community to be a complex, vibrant and growing language community. Utilizing social media, Katarina addresses the lack of South Saemie representation in mainstream media and engages with social challenges relevant to her language community within new language domains. Now, I will continue to discuss the significance of this thesis, directly answering my second inquiry as it pertains to my research as a whole.

Traditionally, one explains the significance of a research project in the introduction to establish why the reader should invest the time consuming the remaining text. I endeavored in the first few chapters to emphasize the importance of Indigenous efflorescence for discussing both the South Saemie language context and evaluating the ways in which Indigenous language situations could be presented in scholarship. Moreover, I have written this final chapter detailing the overall significance of this master's thesis at the end of my text because I have broken with a traditional Western academic research approach in designing and implementing Indigenous efflorescence as a theoretical framework. To explicitly explain why this is necessary, I will continue practicing reflexivity and address some of the critical questions Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith encourages scholars to ask themselves throughout the Indigenous research process for decolonization, or at least more ethically conscious scholarship (Smith, 2012).

9.1 "Who will benefit from it [the research]?" (Smith, 2012, p. 10)

In the process of researching Indigenous efflorescence and collaborating with Katarina Blind, I consistently interrogated the purpose of this study, employing reflexivity. Throughout both the research and writing process of this Indigenous Studies master's thesis, I have remained reflective of my role and that of my research project within the greater context of Indigenous language research. A principal ethical value of Indigenous research is reciprocity; not only being responsible and respectful, but also giving something back to the Indigenous community with whom one is working (Kovach, 2010b). One of my main queries was what would Indigenous efflorescence mean for the South Saemie language community? For instance, would it make a difference if academics, such as myself, called their work South Saemie language efflorescence rather than language revitalization?

When I initially talked to Katarina about the term language revitalization, she seemed confused why I brought it up in the first place. I explained further that her Instagram account and work promoting South Saemie language at Gïelem nastedh could be described as a form of language revitalization. Then I asked her what she would call the work she and her colleagues do at the language center, and if she would consider it language revitalization. Her expression changed immediately from being puzzled to determined, and she said,

"revitalizing language, no"[38] (Blind, 2019c). Katarina explained that she has heard the term used before, but she does not define her and her colleagues' work as engaging in language revitalization at Gïelem nastedh, given she has a problem with the term revitalization itself (Blind, 2019c). Katarina said it assumes that something has died, and the South Saemie language has not died (Blind, 2019c). Instead of focusing then on the South Saemie language itself, Katarina went on to describe how some South Saemie families, like her own, did not pass as much of the language onto their children and now those South Saemie adults are trying to learn it or at least ensure that their children do (Blind, 2019c). During our next conversation, I asked Katarina again about how she would describe her work, but this time I explained the concept of Indigenous efflorescence and asked if she thought that applied to her situation (Blind, 2019b). Katarina politely replied that Indigenous efflorescence sounded better than revitalization for reasons she explained before, that it did not infer language death however, the term did not seem to have any more relevance in describing her work and that of the language center than revitalization (Blind, 2019b). Therefore, I have to concede that the concept of Indigenous efflorescence itself may be more relevant for me as a researcher than it is for those actually working within the South Saemie language community. That is, what researchers term Katarina's and her colleagues' work at Gïelem nastedh, be it language revitalization or language efflorescence, does not seem to have a significant impact on their current efforts. However, that does not mean Katarina as a member of the language community does not have an opinion about this academic discussion, as she clearly does not like the term language revitalization.

9.2 "Are they [researchers] useful to us?" (Smith, 2012, p. 10)

Though Indigenous language efflorescence may not be used any more than revitalization in a language community, my initial inquiries remained prominent in my mind, what does Indigenous efflorescence do and what does it mean for the future of Indigenous research? More importantly, could this concept of Indigenous language efflorescence give back to the Indigenous language community in some way, even indirectly? When I first began

[38] My own translation from Norwegian: «Nei, revitalisering av språk» (Blind, 2019c)

researching the South Saemie language situation, I was struck by the consistent disparaging ways in which the South Saemie language was described. UNESCO classifies the South Saemie language as, "severely endangered" (Moseley, 2010). In the newly published *The Indigenous Identity of the South Sami*, the South Saemie are described repeatedly as a "minority within a minority" with an estimated 500-700 language speakers (Hermanstrand et al., 2019, p. 4). Sociolinguist Mæhlum evaluates the South Saemie language according to the Fishman's (1991) eight-step scale for measuring the degree of language endangerment by analyzing intergenerational language transmission (Mæhlum, 2019). The South Saemie language has been placed between steps seven and eight,[39] meaning that it is, "very vulnerable" (Mæhlum, 2019, p. 19). Though Mæhlum points out that no one has conducted a comprehensive linguistic study in the South Saemie language community to accurately determine the overall health of the language or to what extent it is transmitted intergenerationally (Mæhlum, 2019). From the literature, it seems that the South Saemie language situation has been widely described by researchers and organizations outside the South Saemie community as endangered and vulnerable based on limited empirical data.

After attending Tjaktjen Tjåanghkoe, I learned that there are many individuals within the South Saemie and wider Sami community that have dedicated themselves to understanding and improving the South Saemie language situation. The theme of the 2019 festival was "gïele lea faamoe" - the power of language. I then understood that there is far too much going on in the speech community to thoroughly map the South Sami language situation within the scope of a master's thesis. I also realized that the diversity of people and projects within the South Sami language community is not adequately expressed and sometimes completely absent from the studies I have read in English. Though, as I found, it would be difficult to present a detailed overview of the South Saemie language situation within a shorter text, I still fail to understand why academic articles published as recently as 2019 portray the South Sami language in fatalistic and disparaging terms. The sociolinguists I have researched stress the importance of the Indigenous language's vitality and care for the speech community. Therefore, I can only conclude that these studies are simply still carried out within predominantly Western research frameworks that rely on colonial discourses of

[39] According to the Fishman's scale, North Sami is at step 4 and Lule Sami at step 6 (Mæhlum, 2019, p. 19)

endangerment. These studies are conducted within their respective academic disciplines on Indigenous peoples, which begs the question, does an Indigenous language community care how others represent them in research, and how does it affect them?

All the Indigenous research ethics articles and books I have read, including Smith and Kovach's works, emphasize how Indigenous research is carried out matters and how Indigenous peoples are represented in scholarship is important (Kovach, 2010b; Smith, 2012). As beforementioned, Indigenous research has a long and contentious history as research has been habitually weaponized against Indigenous peoples to dehumanize and disempower them as part of the colonial project (Smith, 2012). Smith emphasizes how Western research past and present impacts the internal and external perception of Indigenous communities, prompting her call for Indigenous peoples to decolonize research and recover their own humanity and sense of self (Smith, 2012). Smith describes how contemporary research continues to 'other' Indigenous peoples by presenting Indigenous communities as the problem and/or that Indigenous peoples are to blame for their own challenges (Smith, 2012). Smith bluntly states that from an Indigenous perspective, "the word research is believed to mean, quite literally, the continued construction of indigenous peoples as the problem" (Smith, 2012, p. 96). In a recent lecture on her decolonizing work Smith states, "the methodologies or theories and methods for how we come to know and recognize the known and as so, so deeply implicated in the production of colonialism and of what colonized people know even of themselves today" (Smith, 2019). Thus, Smith argues that the way in which research presents Indigenous peoples has a real effect on the perceptions Indigenous peoples have of themselves, hence the need for decolonizing research agenda (Smith, 2012). Focusing on quantitative data in research, Walter and Anderson assert that statistics on Indigenous peoples, given their high value in academia, politics and beyond, have the power to shape the realities of Indigenous peoples since it influences not only how academics and policy makers view Indigenous communities, but also how Indigenous peoples view themselves (Walter & Andersen, 2013). Therefore, from an Indigenous Studies perspective the way in which researchers frame Indigenous contexts is important both for how it can impact outsiders' view of a given Indigenous community, and how that community perceives itself.

9.3 "Can they [researchers] actually do anything?" (Smith, 2012, p. 10)

Given this ethical research consideration, I conclude it is important for Indigenous language researchers to constantly interrogate their research methodologies and consider how they are portraying Indigenous language situations. From a decolonizing perspective, Indigenous efflorescence represents a way to counteract colonial tropes of 'doomed natives' and provides a necessary alternative discursive strategy to language endangerment, and arguably revitalization (Roche et al., 2018). Though nebulous sociolinguistic terms such as language revitalization do not appear to hold a great deal of meaning for those within the South Saemie language community, the ways in which the language situation has been portrayed by mainstream media and academia clearly influences how members of the language community view the situation (Blind, 2019c; Mæhlum, 2019). Given the proliferation of nationalist and social Darwinist ideals in 19th century Europe, colonial state assimilation policies aimed at erasing Saemie language, culture and society (Mæhlum, 2019). In, but not limited to, Norway and Sweden the Saemie were systematically stereotyped and discriminated against to emphasize the superiority of the majority society. Mæhlum writes that the, "Saemie language came to be seen as one of the foremost symbolic expressions of belonging to what was perceived to be an inferior and anachronistic culture" (Mæhlum, 2019, pp. 21-22). Among others, Huss and Ståneberg's study from the Swedish side of Southern Saepmie reveals how members of the South Saemie community have internalized past stigmas, as South Saemie now work to revalorize their Indigenous language (Huss & Ståneberg, 2018). Though to my knowledge there has been no current study conducted on the effects of sociolinguistic studies[40] on the South Saemie language community's self-image, it stands to reason that members of the South Saemie community are aware of what research has been published on the South Saemie language and, given the arguments in favor of Indigenous research ethics,

[40] Sociolinguistics itself is a relatively new field of study which emerged in the 1960's (Bayley et al., 2013). To clarify, I am not stating here that sociolinguistic studies themselves have had positive, negative or other effects on the South Saemie language community. I am pointing out that the effects of such studies are undocumented and/or unknown as of yet.

these academic studies have the potential to influence how South Saemie view their own language situation.

In summation, using the term Indigenous language efflorescence in place of language revitalization does not seem to give back to the South Saemie community in a meaningful way in the short term. However, by challenging the way in which researchers frame Indigenous language contexts and exploring possible alternatives, my goal is for this project to benefit the South Saemie language community in the long term. On a superficial level, the abstract terms researchers use to describe and analyze an Indigenous language situation appear to have little significance for those working within the Indigenous language community. The South Saemie community is engaged in developing and strengthening the South Saemie language in various ways themselves through Indigenous language efflorescence, as Katarina's work exemplifies. Though, the Indigenous language community's role in research and how they are depicted in publications matters to the community. Therefore, I assert that the task of researchers, particularly those who do not self-identify as part of the language community, is to work alongside the Indigenous language community. Then research can not only identify obstacles, but also celebrate successes developing and empowering Indigenous languages within their respective communities. That is why the concept of Indigenous efflorescence remains so appealing to me, because it innately assumes Indigenous languages are not only recovering but thriving and encourages their ongoing transformative development into the future. Just as past research has been weaponized against Indigenous peoples to degrade Indigenous languages, perhaps scholarship can also be galvanized to support Indigenous communities in their own efforts to empower their languages on their own terms. Indigenous language efflorescence may not represent an immediate solution for how to frame Indigenous language research. However, I humbly hope that the overall significance of this study is that the representation of Indigenous languages matters and that there are choices researchers can actively make beginning at the epistemological level for how to influence the perception of Indigenous languages within and outside of their language communities. Indigenous research has an undeniable colonial history, but current scholars have the responsibility to ensure that it does not remain enthralled to that legacy but instead works toward multiple possible Indigenous futures.

Responding to comments assuming that she must have written *Decolonizing Methodologies* in anger, Smith asserts she instead wrote with passion and that her, "book does not write against knowledge or research, but for new ways of knowing and discovering, and new ways to think about research with indigenous peoples" (Smith, 2012, p. xiv). Similarly, this thesis is not meant to write against sociolinguistic research, but rather to explore ways in which that knowledge can be supplemented through an Indigenous efflorescence research approach, informed by decolonizing perspectives and anchored within an Indigenous paradigm. Generally speaking, researchers, especially from Western academic institutions, have a great deal of agency and social privilege. We as scholars, particularly in Indigenous Studies, can decide to interrogate the mainstream and be ethically reflexive allies to Indigenous peoples. As Katarina wisely advises, "be a rebel" (Blind, 2019a).

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Gïele lea
faamoe!