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## **”WE MUST GO IN THE SAME DIRECTION”**

Understanding the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in Gáivuotna/Kåfjord and Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino in a multi-actor and multi-level perspective

# ABSTRACT

Anna Terra Veloso Mendes: "We must go in the same direction" – Understanding the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in Gáivuotna/Kåfjord and Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino in a multi-actor and multi-level perspective

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The general endangered status of indigenous languages worldwide is a reality that demands quick action from authorities belonging to different governmental spheres to safeguard their use, protection and further development for the next generations. In view of the complexity of this issue, which stretches itself over public sectors such as health and education, public and private actors have sought to join forces to guarantee the promotion of indigenous languages. Hence, this thesis aims to understand how the existence of different actors within a multi-governance system can enable the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in the Norwegian municipalities of Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino and Gáivuotna/Kåfjord.

This work was mainly guided by two main theoretical approaches: the governance network theory, allowing the comprehension of the actors that take part into a system in which they interact with one another through the formation of networks and are affected by external factors in each municipality. Besides this, the concept of multi-governance was also used, in order to place these local dynamics into a broader arrangement that depends not only on the local sphere, but also on regional and national actors. In methodological terms, this is a comparative case study led mainly by qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

The investigation found similarities in terms of the type of actors involved in each of the local governance networks, as well as a general common goal in terms of the use and promotion of the Northern Sámi language. The networks are also comparable in size, density and governance mode, in view of the preponderance of the Sámi Parliament as a coordination and major funder, and the role of the municipalities as providers of public services and funds to other institutions in these systems. Despite the more prominent status of the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino than in Kåfjord, where it is mainly restricted to language courses, Norwegian and Northern Sámi are not fully equal languages, but Kautokeino is still closer to this status. Moreover, in the governance system towards the promotion of indigenous languages, external dimensions such as ethnicity, identity and demographics matter when public service provision and the implementation of policies are to be put forward in contexts dominated by societal conflicts or different ethnical groups.

Keywords: Actors. Northern Sámi language. Governance. Norway. Municipalities.

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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Everything started in 2005, when I first read *Sofies Verden* by the Norwegian author Jostein Gaarder. This was my first contact with the Norwegian alphabet and the year that would change my life forever. In between many readings about Scandinavia, the Sámi people found me. This encounter made me reconnect myself to my indigenous heritage, to my interest for Nordic and Finno-Ugric languages and to the Nordic region, which became my research field.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The expansion of globalization and transnational processes in the past decades has revolutionize politics and society, leading to a new global order. In this new system, municipalities have emerged as relevant actors in political and managerial terms, being compared to a national state in a small scale by scholars in the field. In the Nordic countries, municipalities often receive a great number of responsibilities from the central government, becoming key actors in the provision of public goods to local citizens (Brunsson, 2007; De Vries, 2016).

At the same time, nation states, despite detaining the power to design and implement policies in various levels, are no longer to be perceived as a single actor in policy processes. In this scenario, the flourishing of groups such as minorities, non-governmental organizations, lobbyists, activists and individuals has also changed the policymaking system, giving these stakeholders the possibility to impact policy arrangements to a greater extent (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007).

Even though the Nordic region is relatively homogenous in populational terms, the existence of ethnic groups with a peculiar culture, language and way of life within the Nordic countries requires the commitment of the governments in all levels to consider their demands and incorporate them into the policymaking process and into the welfare system. In Norway, the indigenous Sámi people and the Norwegian population coexist in various municipalities all over the country. In most of them – which are called *kommuner* in Norwegian -, the Norwegian are the majority of the inhabitants, while in others the Sámi community has this status instead (Broderstad, 2011).

The abovementioned demographical difference is visible in the municipalities of Gáivuotna/Kåfjord and Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino<sup>1</sup>, respectively, which will be used as cases in the present investigation. Despite belonging to different counties<sup>2</sup> and having contrasting demographical balances between the Sámi and the Norwegian populations, in both cities the Northern Sámi language is the variety used by the Sámi community in local communication, public administration, educational establishments and other societal contexts.

Apart from the multiple situations and institutions where the Northern Sámi language is used, it is classified by the United Nations (UN) as an endangered language. Aware of this condition, the Norwegian government has decided to set the Sámi languages as a high priority issue in the Sámi

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<sup>1</sup> These are the official names from the municipalities in Northern Sámi and Norwegian, respectively. In this work, the Norwegian version will be adopted for written purposes.

<sup>2</sup> While Kautokeino is located in the county of Finnmark, Kåfjord is situated in Troms.

policy agenda (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2009; NOU 2016:18, 2016). This status is frequently attributed to the Norwegianization policies – also called *fornorskningspolitikk* or *fornorskning* - put forward by the Norwegian government in the 19th century, attempting to forcibly make the individuals in this group adapt and adopt the Norwegian culture and language. This behaviour was a condition for obtaining access to public services at the time (Olsson and Lewis, 1996), leaving a remarkable heritage to the way the Sámi relate to the society nowadays and posing restrictions to the use and the access of Sámi languages in the Nordic countries, as well as in Russia (Albury, 2015; Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008).

Even though the end of the Norwegian assimilation policies was not enough to extinguish the discrimination against the Sámi (Hansen, 2016), their fight for autonomy and recognition over the centuries, allied with the support of civil society and international pressure, seem to have built a more favourable internal environment for the Sámi (Josefsen, 2007) when compared to indigenous peoples in other regions, such as Latin America. In the present days, the fact that the Sámi have the right to have a say in the policymaking process in Norway is guaranteed by law (Josefsen, 2007; Broderstad, 2011), as the next chapters will highlight. This receptive context for the flourishing of new policies also contributed to the emergence of other agreements and institutions, such as the Sámi Act, the Sámi Parliament - also referred to as *Sámediggi* and *Sametinget* - and the administrative area for Sámi languages, reflecting the existence of a new path in the relations between the Sámi and the Norwegian state.

Bjerkli and Selle (2015) go further and highlight the embeddedness of the Sámi and Norwegian politics, suggesting that at the same time that the Sámi are inserted into a Norwegian internal system, the governmental authorities that manage this environment cannot govern it without the consideration of issues that affect the Sámi in Norway. In these dynamics, where both groups are intertwined, it becomes necessary to investigate the patterns which emerge from their interactions and which consequences they bring to the Sámi and Norwegian societies in various policy fields. Thus, the present investigation is built on the assumption that there are a set of organizations working together locally to achieve Sámi goals in the language field, such as the promotion of the Northern Sámi language. In this regard, the title, «We must all go in the same direction»<sup>3</sup> was inspired in one of the interviews and derives from Informant TC (2019). The pronoun *we* refers to the joint action put forward by Norwegian and Sámi institutions toward *the same direction*, which denotes the existence

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<sup>3</sup> “Vi må alle dra i samme retning”.

of a common goal: protect, develop and guarantee the use of the Sámi languages in society for this and the next generations.

Thus, the adoption of the governance network theory seems appropriate to this study, as it sheds light on the interactions among actors within a specific network in order to produce public services and/or address policy problems that require attention in society (Stoker, 2002). These circumstances favour the establishment of networks which, according to Kilduff and Tsai (2011), can be fundamentally perceived as collections of nodes formed through the interaction of multiple actors, who would often not manage to address complex society problems by themselves, as single institutional units. In view of these circumstances, the present thesis will focus on the relationships between the different Sámi institutions, such as the Sámi Parliament, the municipalities and other actors that engage into cooperative arrangements to foster the Northern Sámi language locally.

More specifically, this work will aim to understand who are the actors involved in this multi-level and multi-organizational governance system, focusing on the internal horizontal and interdependent dynamics involved in the local networks in each municipality (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007) and on the way they are impacted by the external environment when attempting to develop solutions to the governance of the Northern Sámi language in the Sámi core area. This means that the actors who compose the governance networks in Kautokeino and Kåfjord are perceived as units of analysis and, therefore, objects of this thesis. It is equally relevant to consider, at the same time, that the municipalities have a dual role in this process: not only are they the external societal space in which the governance networks operate, but also a relevant political and managerial actor that composes the networks in each municipality. These municipalities are inserted into a regional sphere, being ultimately contained within the national level, which is ultimately responsible for the Sámi policy guidelines (Josefsen, 2015).

In the international level, 2019 was nominated by the United Nations (UN) as the year of indigenous languages. This designation is an opportunity to raise awareness and generate academic debates regarding what has been done within the state borders and beyond to guarantee the survival and development of indigenous languages. In line with the UN and other international bodies, the Norwegian government has recently acknowledged the necessity to treat the Sámi languages as a high priority issue on the indigenous agenda (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2009; NOU 2016:18, 2016). Hence, the study of the measures Norway has been putting forward to ensure the protection, use and revitalization of Sámi languages is considered relevant considering these circumstances.

## **1.1 Aim and research question**

The research question that guides this investigation is built on the assumption that there is a governance system for the promotion of indigenous languages, which comprises the international, the national, the regional and the local spheres of authority. Focusing on the local level, there are networks composed by Sámi and Norwegian organizations in the cities within the administrative area for Sámi languages in Norway, who work together to manage Sámi issues. Kåfjord and Kautokeino are, thus, examples of units where the promotion of the Northern Sámi language depends on the establishment of partnerships among relevant actors from different fields. Moreover, the existence of contrasting demographical situations in each municipality is an important factor that is likely to impact both governance systems in opposite ways, enabling fruitful outcomes for this research process.

Considering the acknowledgements above, the research question that guides the present investigation is: How can the existence of different institutions within a multi-level and multi-actor governance system enable the promotion of indigenous languages in Kautokeino and Kåfjord?

## **1.2 Organization of the study**

This study is organized in five chapters. After a brief outline of the background and aim, Chapter 2 will focus on presenting an overview of the main theoretical concepts and perspectives that guide the development of this work. They are related to the explanation of the notions of policymaking and public policies; governance; networks; the governance network theory and multi-level governance.

Next, chapter 3 intends to explain the method employed in the scope of this inquiry, presenting the relevance for the choice of the empirical cases of Kautokeino and Kåfjord, including the data which was collected from the interviews in these municipalities, as well as secondary source data from journals and other documents. This chapter will also have a section dedicated to the validity and reliability of the research undertaken.

Chapter 4 will be dedicated to an elaboration of the contextual background, prioritizing a description of Sámi history and policy throughout the centuries, since the assimilation days until the rise of the Sámi Parliament as a relevant political actor and the establishment of partnerships in the language field. There will also be an overview of the language and institutional situation in Kautokeino and Kåfjord. Finally, chapter 5 will present and discuss the empirical cases, focusing on the institutions who integrate the governance networks in Kautokeino and Kåfjord and how the local level is

articulated with other levels of authority in the language field, while the Conclusion will summarize the results and address how future research may advance on the topic.

### 1.3 Main concepts and terms

**Public policies:** Howlett, Ramesh and Perl (2009) state that public policies are, essentially, the solution to a public problem, which results from the interaction between state and non-state actors in an environment dominated by uncertainty and constraints. Dye (1972) affirms that policies may lead to a choice to act or not to act by the governmental authorities, who are responsible for their implementation.

**Governance:** In general terms, it can be perceived as the administration of public issues in compliance with the rules that emerge from a legal system. More specifically, it is an «organizing framework» that enables an understanding the outcomes that emerge from the interaction of different stakeholders towards the fulfilment of specific public and policy goals, according to Stoker (2002).

**Networks:** Following the conceptualization proposed by Kilduff and Tsai (2011), networks are fundamentally perceived as a collection of nodes formed by the interactions between multiple actors, who would often not manage to address complex societal problems as single units.

**Governance networks:** Sørensen and Torfing (2007) contend that governance networks are composed by a set of stakeholders gathered around the necessity to develop solutions for complex societal problems, who interact in an horizontal and interdependent way.

**Promotion of the Northern Sámi language:** In this thesis, *promotion* is a broad term that comprises the actions pursued by public and private actors as a means to safeguard the use, the protection and the development of the Northern Sámi language. This can be done in different ways: through the accomplishment of the legal framework that guides the management of Sámi issues in Norway; through the maintenance of the status of the language, in those cases where it is widespread in society; through the revitalization of the language, where it was lost or nearly extinguished; via the welfare system, in the educational, health and legal systems or in the contact with public authorities; in the establishment of language arenas, where kids and adults can practice the language; through the creation of workshops, festivals and cultural events, etc.

## **2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: POLICYMAKING, GOVERNANCE, NETWORKS AND THE GOVERNANCE NETWORK THEORY**

Governmental authorities are constantly pressed from several fronts to tackle public issues in a fast and effective way (Moran, Rein and Goodin, 2006). Even though the central level is responsible for passing laws, the outcomes that emerge from policymaking are not exclusively dependent on the central government. It is a product from the interaction between this instance and other actors, such as municipalities, private stakeholders, lobbyists, non-governmental organizations, etc (Rhodes, 2000). Therefore, the implementation of policies and the translation of the law into concrete practices is a process that can be perceived as a multi-level and multi-actor phenomenon in the present days (Rhodes, 2000, 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). Many are the subjects and theoretical approaches that highlight this assumption, such as notions of policymaking and governance within Public Administration; multi-level governance and governance networks.

These perspectives were chosen because they allow an understanding of the processes that involve different state and private actors in the Norwegian municipalities towards the governance of the Northern Sámi language. Thus, they will shed light on the role of different spheres of authority in the resolution of complex societal problems, which require the attention of actors from various public and private fields. When they overcome purely bureaucratic organizational frameworks and engage themselves into cooperative arrangements such as networks, the internal dynamics that characterize their interactions towards the achievement of a greater good is likely to influence the whole management system. The external environment, as well as factors such as history, demographics and identity also impact this process, as this and the next sections will show.

### **2.1 Policymaking and modes of governance in Public Administration**

Understanding the promotion of the Northern Sámi language as a policy object pursued by authorities from different sectors and governmental levels depends, firstly, on the conceptualization of public policies. In this respect, Dye (1972) puts the government at a central position, affirming that public policies are formed when this actor opts for action or inaction. Howlett, Ramesh and Perl (2009, p. 4) expand on this definition to include other stakeholders, meaning that there are «(...) constrained actors attempting to match policy goals with policy means in a process that can be characterized as ‘applied problem-solving’». From this emerge that the process of making public policies, or the

policymaking process, is essentially connected to the perception by the government that there is a problem that requires a solution (Dye, 1972; Howlett et al., 2009).

Besides the impact of internal stakeholders to the policymaking process, it is also necessary to consider the influence of international law and regimes on these dynamics. They are both capable of constraining governmental authorities at the national, regional and/or local levels (Howlett et al., 2009). The formalization of legally-binding international agreements is an example that illustrates this logic, because from this moment on the political actors pledge themselves to follow the determinations included in the document. In other words, this country commits itself in practice to align its internal law to the external provisions. The ratification of the ILO 169 Convention means that the national government recognizes, in practice, indigenous rights related to the natural resources within the Norwegian territory, giving the group a relevant legal tool to approach Sámi issues internally (Josefsen et al, 2015).

The centrality of the government in the policymaking process was in line with the mode of governance that dominated Public Administration (PA) from the beginning of 19th century until the 1950s. This paradigm was based on the bureaucratization of the policymaking process, the importance of rules in the administrative organizations, the professionalization of the service delivery scheme and a separation between management and politics within the public system (Osborne, 2006). Osborne (2006) identifies the rise of another perspective within the PA field in the 1970s that overruled the previous one. This approach is called New Public Management (NPM) and preconized principles such as the search for efficiency in organizations and public service provision, the transposition of private sector practices to public institutions, the necessity to establish control and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of management processes, etc.

Both abovementioned perspectives were challenged by the emergence of a third mode of governance in the end of the 20th century, called New Public Governance (NPG). This paradigm opposes itself to the hierarchical and highly bureaucratic character of the traditional view of PA. It also criticizes the allegedly inefficient character of the state and the excessively intraorganizational view of the managerial practices from NPM. Therefore, NPG would be a pluralistic approach anchored in the recognition of the policymaking process as a highly complex phenomenon, involving interdependent actors whose relationships produce relevant societal outcomes in terms of service delivery and public policies (Osborne, 2006). But how does this phenomenon relate to governance? What can be

understood as governance and how does it approach complicated issues in Social Sciences? These questions will guide the development of the following sections.

## 2.2 Governance

The governance field is anchored in the fact that the role of governments has been in metamorphosis on the past decades (Klijn, 2008). However, the concept of governance is not necessarily tied to the notion of government. According to Rhodes (2000, p. 5), it is generally related to “(...) a change in the meaning of government, referring to a new process of governing; or changed condition of ordered rule; or the new method by which society is governed”. Despite this redefinition, authors such as Sørensen and Torfing (2007) affirm that the role of local, regional and central spheres in the design and implementation of policies is still highly relevant, meaning that bureaucratic and hierarchical structures have not disappeared from the policymaking process, neither that the state actors are incapable of learning and adapting to new dynamics. Therefore, these actors have lost the monopoly of the governance operations, while still having a key participation in their dynamics (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007).

Rhodes (2000; 2006) calls attentions for the fact that governance is commonly studied by many different Social Sciences fields. Some of the most common conceptualizations found in literature are i) governance as a responsibility of public administration to run its activities in compliance with the rule of law, as well as with the respect to the citizens; ii) governance perceived through a NPM paradigm and tied to privatizations, the marketization of the state functions, the reduction of public interventions, the necessity to increase efficiency and control of institutions, etc; iii) an internationally interdependent framework that acknowledge the embedness of the actors in the international system and that allows states to cooperate; iv) governance as in governance networks, portrayed as local organizational arrangements involving private and public stakeholders, who work together towards service delivery (Rhodes, 2000; 2006). The last perspective will be prioritized as a main theoretical framework for the development of the present investigation.

In parallel with Stoker (2002), however, governance is not to be regarded as a mere mechanism used by public administration to deal with societal challenges; neither as an arrangement that enable the fulfilment of efficiency for the government and the citizens. Beyond that: it is to be perceived as an “organizing framework”, in the words of Stoker (2002, p. 18), that allows scholars to grasp how governance takes place in reality, as well as how various actors interact and shape it. Another relevant

perspective within this field is multi-level governance. Hooghe and Marks (2003) propose that modern governance is inherently dependent on multiple levels of authority, instead of an exclusive central dominating power. In view of this, they concentrate their analysis on how authority is organized within a multi-level governance system. A classical example is the European Union: there is no consensus among politicians to whether the internal decisionmaking and juridical processes in each European country should be standardized, allowing the central level to have greater participation on the local spheres, or if each European state should have the power to deliberate on this matter internally (Hooghe and Marks, 2003).

The example above illustrates a relevant type of discussion brought about by the multi-level governance approach, enabling its application to the domestic level as well. As Hooghe and Marks (2003) point out, the federalist school shows internal processes of diffusion of authority among different spheres of government, highlighting their interaction processes as a means to reach an ultimate goal: public service provision. In this respect while some multi-level governance scholars defend that the national government is still a preponderant political unit within a cooperative arrangement with non-governmental actors, others stress the existence of networks governed essentially by the participants in a more horizontal way (Hooghe and Marks, 2003).

Regardless of the chosen perspective, both variants support the idea that a diffusion of authority through different units produces more flexibility than the concentration of authority around a single power (Hooghe and Marks, 2003). This highly complex scenario is an environment which can be perceived in the light of and in connection with network theory, which focuses on the relationships between stakeholders and their outcomes. In line with the NPG paradigm, the flourishing of networks is an indication that a multi-actor and multi-organization approach may be an asset to the governance of various issues in public and private administration (Klijn, 2008), as the next section will highlight.

## **2.3 Networks**

The management of indigenous language issues is an example of highly complex issue that involves a multitude of stakeholders that, combining different abilities from various fields, strive to successfully deliver public goods to the community and produce governance. Therefore, besides the resolution of wicked problems that single actors would fail to address by themselves, networks also enable an adequate resource allocation, policy learning, increased efficiency in public and private service delivery, etc (Provan and Kenis, 2007; Rhodes, 2000; 2006). Networks are handled by a wide

range of subjects. Examples are policy networks in political science policy (Rhodes, 2006); social networks as a methodological and theoretical tool of analysis (Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell, 2014); networks in Sociology, focusing on their development in a globalized world (Castells, 2000), and many others.

A fundamental concept of networks is provided by Kilduff and Tsai (2011), conceiving networks as an array of ties and nodes, which may lead to a state of connection or conflict. As stable arrangements, the study of networks rely on a series of categories, such as “(...) density, hierarchy, multiplexity, interdependence and embeddedness” (Kilduff and Tsai, 2011, p. 87). Complementary to this definition is the conceptualization presented by Barringer and Harrison (cited by Provan, Fish and Sydow, 2007, p. 481), which state that networks are “constellations of organizations that come together through the establishment of social contracts or agreements”. Provan and Kenis (2007) adopt a rather narrow definition of networks, which involve the notion of clusters of three or more autonomous organizations that engage themselves in a partnership to fulfil individual and common objectives. Networks can emerge as an arrangement started by the members or even as an initiative from an external stakeholder (Provan and Kenis, 2007).

Within the literature about networks of organizations, two main perspectives can be highlighted: the network analysis framework and the governance network approach. On the one hand, the network analysis focuses on the actors that compose certain network and on their relations – also called nodes, ties or links. This perspective treats the micro level as a unit of analysis, attempting to describe and understand the network relationships and structures as a producer of specific outcomes. Hence, a possible result that may emerge from the application of this theory is the explanation of the success of certain partnerships, for example (Provan et al, 2007; Provan and Kenis, 2007).

On the other hand, unlike the network analysis, the governance network approach considers the whole network as a main unit of analysis, seeking to understand their internal dynamics and how they work in practice. A way to do this is by looking into the organizations which compose a network – also called nodes – and to the relations they establish with each other – known as ties – towards the achievement of a certain result (Provan et al, 2007). The genesis of this perspective is in line with the market and hierarchy failures that called for the appearance of a new kind of organizational arrangement. Common variables analysed in this framework are legitimacy, means to address wicked problems, conflict resolution strategies, etc (Provan and Kenis, 2007). Provan and Kenis (2007) propose the creation of an integrative framework that gathers both perspectives. Therefore, it perceives networks as the main analytical unit, while focusing on the internal management of the

network operations and how the set of nodes that emerge from the interactions among the members of a network vary in comparison to other groups. This framework will be incorporated to the next section, which focuses on the governance network theoretical perspective.

## **2.4 Governance network theory**

The governance network theory provides valuable insights to the understanding of the interactions among the state and non-state stakeholders involved in the governance of the Northern Sámi language and the results that emerge from these networks. Considering the horizontal character of these social webs, governance networks would complement the authority of the government and, in some cases, even overthrow it (Rhodes, 2000; 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). In terms of the genesis of the governance network theory, Sørensen and Torfing (2007) contend that the governance network perspective emerged in 1990s, when the public service provision and policymaking started being perceived through the interactions of actors within networks. These interactions happen when stakeholders engage in negotiations around their expectations, goals and beliefs, attempting to coordinate their individual or organizational schemes in order to achieve a greater objective (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007).

The members of a network also possess material and immaterial resources. These resources are one of the elements that motivate actors to establish social links with one another, which can be perceived as an interchange of aid, money, information, services, etc. These dynamics may be formal and governed by a legally binding contract or even informal, based on trust and the existence of underlying social norms (Provan et al, 2007). Another focal point of the governance network perspective is the environment in which the interactions unfold. In this regard, some of the general assumptions are i) that society is split due to the existence of several public and private organizational units and subsystems; ii) that society is characterized by the presence of wicked problems that cannot be solved by a single actors and demand a combination of capabilities and shared leadership; iii) the employment of several courses of action in various spaces and moments during the establishment of links between actors lead to the coexistence of procedures and mechanisms coming from a myriad of fields towards the resolution of a specific issue (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007).

Even though the governance network theory only rose as a framework within the PA field in the end of the 20th century, these phenomena have existed for way longer, but were not perceived by the scholars as an efficient way to approach policy problems. The argument is that the incorporation of multi actors from various levels and backgrounds to the governance of public issues helps to improve

democracy and legitimacy in the policy process (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). A general definition of governance networks as a specific way of governance is proposed by Sørensen and Torfing (2007). They consider that governance networks are composed by a set of autonomous units that are interdependent on each other, establishing horizontal connections based on negotiations. These interactions are framed by an environment characterized by normative and cognitive conditions that enable and/or constrain their action. Their relationships are self-organized, unfolding within specific boundaries and aiming at the accomplishment of a public good (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007).

However, it is necessary to point out that the establishment of horizontal relations between the members does not necessarily entail a same level of power or capabilities among all. At the same time, since they are interdependent, they often have low or no incentives to use their resources as a means to constrain other parties (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). In addition, another common misconception is that the actors that integrate a network have the same interpretation of reality and that it would be an easy task to reach a common understanding concerning the best strategy or course of action to follow (Klijn and Koppeniam, 2012). This is a key point in the theory and relates to the fact that the governance processes initiated by networks are not linear. Neither are they necessarily able to produce cooperative arrangements, especially if the network members do not succeed in communicating their individual frames of references to others or in understanding the visions of their colleagues (Klijn and Koppeniam, 2012).

Klijn and Koppenjam (2012) recognize the existence of three traditions that target different types of networks and, therefore, bring complementary contributions to this theoretical approach. They are i) inter-organisational public service provision ii) policy networks; iii) network management. The first tradition derives from organizational theory and focuses on how organizations interact and exchange resources as a means to provide society with public goods and to facilitate the implementation of policies. The employment of collaboration instruments towards the achievement of material outcomes and the attempt to overcome coordination problems is the focal point of this perspective (Klijn, 2008; Klijn and Koppenjam, 2012).

The second tradition emerged from the political science field and highlights the participation of different stakeholders within policy networks and their attempt to exercise power and influence decision-making processes. The main contribution of this approach is its capacity to explain the existence of policy systems and subsystems where actors are in constant interaction to put issues in the agenda and leave other outside the discussion table, shaping policy processes (Rhodes, 2006; Klijn, 2008; Klijn and Koppenjam, 2012). Finally, the third tradition relates to Public Administration

and the management of the relations within networks. Therefore, the key aspects of this perspective concerns the internal processes among the networks members, such as deliberation, conflicts and the alignment of values towards the achievement of greater and more beneficial results for all the parties (Klijn, 2008; Klijn and Koppenjam, 2012).

The three perspectives highlighted by Klijn (2008) and Klijn and Koppenjam (2012) provide valuable contributions in some way to the development of this investigation. However, the most relevant tradition for this investigation is the third one, as it captures how the connections established by the organizations may lead to the fulfilment of a common goal. Moreover, the fact that Provan and Kenis (2007) and Provan et al (2007) consider the whole network as a level of analysis is also relevant and applicable to the purpose of this thesis. At the same time, they acknowledge the presence of a series of internal elements which are capable of explaining a series of structural dimensions that shape the development and management of networks, as well as the establishment of links and exchange of resources among the participants. They are: i) goal consensus; ii) the characteristics of the duty; iii) size; iv) trust<sup>4</sup>; v) density; vi) Fragmentation; vii) power and viii) governance.

The goal consensus category assesses the implications of hierarchy in the accomplishment of common aims. Therefore, Provan and Kenis (2007) propose that the lack of hierarchy in the system brings more possibilities of collaboration for the employment of shared means to fulfil a final common goal. In other words, in conflicting and hierarchical environments, the achievement of a common goal may be more difficult.

The characteristics of the duty are an indicator of the necessity for the formation of a network. This means that the existence of complex problems that cannot be solved by one organization facilitates the development of networks. However, if the duty is highly specialized and calls for the interference of a specific actor with a particular set of capabilities, then the level of interdependency may be high, favouring a lead-organization or NAO model (Provan and Kenis, 2007).

As Provan and Kenis (2007) point out, the size of the network is also a key factor, since the bigger the network, the higher is the number of connections establish and, therefore, the greater is the risk of coordination problems. Based on this logic, shared governance would work better in smaller networks, while large networks might benefit more from the presence of a broker.

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<sup>4</sup> This will not be used as an element in the scope of this work, considering the difficulties in measuring it and the time constraints for the development of the thesis.

In line with the variable size, the presence of density also brings relevant insights to understand the internal dynamics of a network. This category informs researchers about the extent to which the members in a network are connected with each other. Hence, the more connections exist among the actors, the more dense is a network. As much as density can contribute to bring together different capabilities possessed by the members, it can also lead to failure to achieve common goals, especially if there are coordination or communication problems (Provan et al, 2007).

Fragmentation concerns how directly connected the members of a network are. The establishment of links can occur in a direct or indirect way. However, if the network participants maintain links with organizations that are unconnected, this may lead to the appearance of what Provan et al (2007) call «structural holes», which denotes the existence of a fragmentation in the organizational ties within a network.

Power concerns the extent to which the links are spread or concentrated in a specific network. By observing how centralized these dynamics are, how the decisions are taken and how the resources are distributed, it is possible to have an overview of the distribution of power among the actors (Provan et al, 2007).

Governance relates to the mode of governance adopted by a network to administer its internal operations, processes and goals (Provan et al, 2007). In terms of the management of the relations and processes within networks, Provan and Kenis (2007) propose the existence of three modes of governance: i) participant-governed networks; ii) lead organization-governed networks and iii) network administrative organization.

The first mode is characterized by a shared management of the network, which is made by the organizations involved in the collaboration. This mode is often characterized by a high level of decentralization, because the connections established by the actors occur in a rather horizontal way. This type of governance network requires a significant amount of commitment, since the members have the task to administer internal and external relations and processes towards the achievement of their common goals (Provan and Kenis, 2007). In participant-governed networks, the decision-making and power practices are relatively balanced, but this does not mean that one organization cannot own more resources than the others, for example. This process is conducted with the materialization of official meetings or informal events. It is also remarkable that, in this mode of governance, no member is to be perceived as the leader or spokesperson to the detriment of the others (Provan and Kenis, 2007).

Provan and Kenis (2007) contend that the second mode of governance, lead organization-governed networks is defined as a centralized way of managing the relationships among the members of a network, who are more likely to rely on a broker to lead the management processes. This actor is often the one who has the highest number of resources, detaining the capacity to deliberate and even to fund other members, as well as common projects. This means that the power is not equally shared. Also, the ultimate goals sought by the network are usually the same as the goals maintained by the lead organization. It is necessary to point out, however, that this mode of governance can be found in «horizontal multilateral networks» (Provan and Kenis, 2007, p. 7), meaning that it is not restricted to vertical forms of governance.

The third mode of governance, also known as Network Administrative Organization, is founded on the existence of a centralized procedure, in which an external party is brought in as a manager of the relations occurring within the network. This party, characterized as a broker, is responsible to harmonize and support the members as a means to enable an appropriate functioning of the network activities. The broker can encompass one or several organizations, depending on the complexity of the issue the network is managing (Provan and Kenis, 2007).

The conceptual discussion presented in this chapter is expected to enable an understanding of the promotion of the Northern Sámi language as a plural and, at the same time, multi-level process. Even if the organizations within the networks in each municipality have the general ultimate goal to promote the referred Sámi language, their internal dynamics are shaped by the different positions of each actor in society and by a broader environment which is dependent on the historical, cultural and institutional contexts of each *kommune*. In view of these circumstances, chapter five will be directed towards the operationalization of the conceptual framework formalized in this section. The discussions will be guided by a few questions that have emerged in this stage of the research process.

The first one is as follows: how preponderant is the role of the Sámi Parliament within the local networks towards the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in Norway? Similarly, what is the function of the municipalities in this process and how do both authorities interact with other stakeholders to fulfill Sámi language issues? To what extent are these dynamics framed by the external environment in each *kommune*? Another question relates to the role of governance in the administration of complex problems in society: is it really possible to promote governance without conceiving the government as a central actor, especially considering the existence of wicked problems in the present society? The last question relates to the previous one: which mode of governance has

the highest explanatory power and capacity to capture the internal dynamics of the networks established in Kautokeino and Kåfjord to the promotion of the Northern Sámi language?

## 2.5 Analytical model

This section intends to condense the relevant concepts and pieces of information present in this chapter in the form of an analytical model. The image below illustrates the existence of a multi-level governance system that encompasses three governmental spheres: the national, the regional and the local level. The focal point of this system is the local layer, in which two governance networks are identified: one in Kautokeino and another one in Kåfjord. Each of these networks are steered by a mode of governance, according to the framework proposed by Provan and Kenis (2007). The focal point is the actors operating within the governance networks in the local level, which are composed by private and public organizations who interact with one another as a means to achieve a common objective: the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in the municipalities. The process that leads to this outcome is symbolized by the category entitled *internal dynamics*. Following the indicators introduced by Provan and Kenis (2007), it will be possible to understand how the local networks in each *kommune* function. These are: power, size, density, fragmentation and characteristics of the duty (Provan and Kenis, 2007).



Figure 1 – Governance systems for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino and Kåfjord

Besides the internal dynamics and the mode of governance found in each case, the study of each governance system is expected to denote a specific governance perspective which may predominate in each municipality, such as New Public Management of New Public Governance (Osborne, 2006). Moreover, in parallel with Sørensen and Torfing (2007), besides focusing on the organizations within the governance networks and on the way these actors interact, it is also necessary to investigate and understand the environment in which they operate. In other words, not only is the operation of the governance networks in Kautokeino and Kåfjord influenced by the multi-level flows, but also by societal dynamics that are peculiar to each of these localities. They are symbolized by the category *external dynamics* and comprise factors such as group identity, ethnicity, history and demographics. The way authority is spread throughout the different levels of government will also be discussed with the help of the multi-level governance perspective (Hooghe and Marks, 2003), enabling a comprehension of the role of municipal and national authorities in this process. The next chapter will be dedicated to the methodological path that facilitated the completion of this work.

## 3 METHOD

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological steps that led to the development of this thesis, considering the selection of the topic, the research strategy and design, ethical principles, how data collection was conducted and what are the challenges associated with the process as a whole.

### 3.1 The position of the researcher

Being a non-Sámi researcher studying a Sámi object – or, rather, a collection of Sámi objects and subjects – may be perceived as a deranged event. Despite having an indigenous family background, the fact that I am not Nordic, that I do not belong to a university from the *Sápmi area* and that I do not have Sámi contacts may bring challenges in terms of the prospection of contacts and the prevention of the creation of an identification with possible Sámi informants. A deeper acknowledgement regarding the difficulties associated with the research process will be outlined in the last section of this chapter.

On the other hand, the foreigner character of the researcher may bring positive outcomes to the work, as it reduces the likelihood of a biased view. Another advantage is the possibility to overcome a limitation described by Lervoll (2007), which happens when the researcher is deeply connected with the object or the context studied. In this kind of situation, the interviewee might underestimate valuable piece of information or suppose the researcher already knows something. When the informant is in this kind of position, he/she may take the decision to suppress certain words, events or experiences. This kind of intervention, which may be done in a conscious or unconscious way, is a phenomenon the researcher has to be aware of and be prepared to encounter. However, the present investigation does not fall into this category, which broadens the scope for the free flow of information about the current topic.

### 3.2 Selecting the research topic

*A priori*, the idea to examine a topic related to the Sámi people came many years ago, when I was still a high school student in Brazil. Interested about language, minority issues and the Nordic region, the discovery of the Sámi people was to me an ‘aha moment’. The decision to pursue Sámi issues in my studies later on was, therefore, the culminance of an attempt to unite the three abovementioned categories in one study object. Moreover, being a student from Latin America in a program about

Public Administration made me curious about the different actors, within or without the public sector, imbricated in the management of Sámi languages and the outcomes from their interactions.

More specifically, the choice of the cases was guided by three unique criteria. Firstly, the decision to carry out this study in Norway was made because this country concentrates the largest number of Sámi inhabitants in the Northern region. Besides this, the fact that Norway has a significant concentration of Sámi language and education centres, as well as a significant number of Sámi political organizations, museums and other kinds of institutions, justifies the significant availability of information about the Sámi people in this territory.

Secondly, the selection of municipalities aims at addressing an existing gap in the debate concerning Sámi issues. Most of the literature available treats either the Sámi as main unit of analysis, the Nation state or both. Especially in the Nordic countries, where the central governments have traditionally delegated a great number of tasks to the local level (Brunsson, 2007; De Vries, 2016), a deepened study of the networks established between the *kommuner* with a myriad of stakeholders to fulfil a wide number of projects in different policy areas is needed, especially in a comparative way (Klijn, 2008).

Finally, the idea to work with the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord arose from the different demographics that both have. On the one hand, in Kautokeino, the Sámi are the majority of the population, representing over 50% of the population. Kåfjord, on the other hand, is classified as a Sámi minoritarian area, due to the fact that there is a smaller concentration of Sámi individuals in this municipality compared to the amount of Norwegians (Hansen, 2016).

### **3.3 Research strategy**

Following Bryman's (2008) ideas regarding the construction of a research strategy, it is undeniable that both qualitative and quantitative approaches provide valuable results in terms of gathering, analysis and generation of data, depending on the focus and the ontological and epistemological orientation of the investigation. On the one hand, a quantitative method prioritizes the measurement of phenomena through the assessment of quantity, employing a deductive lense towards theory testing and perceiving reality as external and objective. On the other hand, the qualitative method often embodies an inductive perspective dedicated to interpret phenomena and build theoretical premises

related to them, viewing reality as constructed and dependent on individual and societal impressions (Bryman, 2008).

Since the purpose of this investigation is to investigate the promotion of the Northern Sámi language as a broader outcome from the interactions of various organizations within the local networks in Northern Norway, the general strategy pursued by this work will be predominantly anchored in a qualitative approach. This choice is expected to enable the study of the ideas and perceptions from the actors that represent the organizations involved in the governance networks about the internal and the external dynamics that compose the governance system of the Northern Sámi language. These ideas involve the consideration of subjective categories, such as the assessment of the effectiveness of the network and the perception of how power is distributed, for example.

Therefore, the use of a quantitative method is not applicable to the present cases. Although the use of Social Network Analysis and other kind of quantitative approaches is frequently found in the literature about networks, this method will not be used in the present investigation, as the objective is not to measure or map the interactions of the actors in terms of intensity, frequency, etc. The aim of this investigation is rather to understand who these stakeholders are and how their interactions within the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord can be perceived as part of a broader governance system composed by different levels of government. This will be done following a qualitative approach.

Since this work is anchored in a qualitative method, the utilization of qualitative data will be prioritized. Both primary and secondary data will be gathered from semi-structured interviews and from the analysis of documents, such as official reports, statistics, laws and the media. This will be done to ensure that the information gaps left out by the use of document analysis can be filled by the employment of semi-structured interviews and vice-versa (Bryman, 2008). A few quantitative pieces of data will also be employed to illustrate the demographic imbalance and the language situation in each municipality, for example, as a means to complement the qualitative information provided by the interviews and the documents.

### **3.4 Research design**

The utilisation of a comparative case study design seems to be appropriate to this study, as it enables a description of a specific occurrence, an explanation of the underlying reasons that led it to took

place and the possibility to make generalizations and inferences using a case as a point of departure (Yin, 1981). Moreover, according to Yin (1981), the case study methodology examines, at the same time, a certain event and the general context in which it develops. Therefore, the impossibility to detach the formation of networks to the governance of the Northern Sámi language from the context in which it happens, as well as the fact that there are a myriad of complex interactions being carried out by a significant number of actors that are capable of impacting the internal network dynamics, as well as the general policymaking system, makes the case study methodology applicable to this topic.

### **3.5 Data collection**

As a means to ensure the conduction of a complete analysis and grasp the governance system that comprises the local governance networks for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language as a whole, both primary and secondary data were used. Firstly, an explanation of the circumstances that accompanied the collection of the primary data will be done, followed by a characterization of the choices related to the obtention of the secondary data.

#### **3.5.1 Primary data**

The primary data used in the investigation was obtained from semi-structured interviews done with Sámi organizations and the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord, actors who deal with Sámi language planning and implementation issues. This data collection method was chosen as a complementary arrangement to the secondary analysis, since it provides a contextual overview to the information displayed in the official documents.

The interviewees were chosen due to their professional connection with the governance of the North Sámi language. Roughly fifteen people from Sámi and Norwegian organizations whose work experience fit in this profile were initially contacted by email. The email was written in English and contained a brief description about me and the research project. Those who agreed to take part into the interview received a detailed information letter in compliance with the rules from the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD) informing them about the project, its outcomes, their rights as informants and my duties in terms of the data processing.

From the 15 emails sent, no more than six favourable responses were obtained. A major difficulty was identified when contacting individuals working with language issues in Kautokeino. There was a clear resistance from the majority of the contacted recipients belonging to this city, which was

probably due to the fact that I am not a Sámi researcher and that I do not speak Northern Sámi or Norwegian. After many attempts to contact informants in Kautokeino, another strategy was adopted: an email in Swedish, written by myself, was sent to some of the previously contacted individuals. Some responses were obtained then, although mostly declining their participation in the study. Therefore, most of the data used to understand who the actors involved with Sámi language issues and their joint work in Kautokeino relied on secondary data. The duration of the interviews ranged from 40 to 55 minutes in total.

A brief categorization of the interviews was made below, in order to guarantee the anonymity of all the informants, preventing them from being identified throughout the data collection and analysis process. The letters R, S and T represent different institutions, followed by a letter (A or B) or a number (1 or 2). The letters A and B represent people from analogous organizations in the same area, while the numbers 1 and 2 represent informants from distinct areas.

**Table 1 – Overview of the informants**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Language</b>
R1	Public sector	Consultant	By phone	English
SA	Public sector	Leader	By phone	English
SB	Sámi organization	Manager	By phone	English
R2	Public sector	Consultant	Face to face	Norwegian
TA + TB	Sámi organization	Advisor	Face to face, assisted by translator	Norwegian
TC	Sámi organization	Advisor/Leader	Computer-assisted	Norwegian

The interviews followed a predetermined standardised set of questions, which were asked in the same order to all the interviewees in a conversational style, providing the researcher with a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and its contexts (RAND Corporation, 2009). When the informant touched upon a point of interest that was connected with the establishment of networks and the interactions of different stakeholders for the governance of the Northern Sámi language, the informant was encouraged to talk more in-depth about a certain topic. Moreover, a number of follow-up questions were also asked to ensure that all the information was understood and explored by the researcher.

One of the interviewees requested the presence of a translator, in order to facilitate the transposition of technical terms from Northern Sámi to Norwegian. At a few moments, the translator was also invited by the main informant to take part into the conversation, also giving contributions in terms of data. Therefore, this person will be identified as TB, since it belongs to the same institution as TA, the main interviewee.

In spite of the benefits that emerge from the utilization of a semi-structured interview methodology, it is also necessary to acknowledge the challenges related to it. For instance, Barroso-Hoffmann (2008) mentions two categories which may impact the data collection process. The first one is the role of memory in the discourse and how diffuse a recollection of experiences of facts from the past can be for the interviewee. The second one is the position that the interviewee occupies at the moment of the speech, in terms of ethnicity and profession, for example. This can affect the way he/she inserts himself/herself and his/her narratives in the light of a specific subject (Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008).

It is also necessary to mention that the interviews were conducted in compliance with the regulations from the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD), which approved the execution of this research project and the data collection process. In accordance with NSD, a voice recorder was borrowed from the University of Agder Library. The same device was used for all the interviews, in an attempt to reduce the possibility of the emergence of any errors (Bryman, 2008). At the end, the resultant sound file was transferred to the University's cloud service, One Drive, and stored there, as a means to have it in a safe place for transcription. The original sound was then deleted from the recorder.

### 3.5.2 Secondary data

The secondary sources used were, as previously mentioned, mostly qualitative. Examples from sources include previous research and documents belonging to the Norwegian municipalities and Sámi organizations. According to Bryman (2008), carrying out a secondary analysis may be useful for a wide number of reasons. It is cost-effective in financial and time-wise terms, providing a considerable volume of data at a great quality. It also allows researcher to focus more on the analysis of the data instead of on the concerns involved with its obtention, providing him/her with future opportunities to proceed to a reassessment of the topic by comparing new information to previous data (Bryman, 2008).

There is a significant number of papers and documents available, both in English and in Norwegian, which can be found online, including on websites belonging to institutions such as Norwegian

ministries and Sámi organizations. They provide both quantitative and qualitative data, enabling an understanding of the relevant actors involved in the networks for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language, as well as the characteristics of their interactions.

Besides the use of data from online documents and from the literature on the topic, a series of relevant laws, governmental reports and statistics have also been analysed as a background for the analysis. A list of the main relevant documents is provided below, as an attempt to systematize the secondary data sources used in this research. It is also relevant to point out that most of the secondary data sources were found by myself while doing research on various online platforms, but a minoritarian portion of the documents were referred to by the informants throughout the interviews.

The next step in the process was the transcription of the data, as a means to standardize all the responses into the same online format. This was not only done with the data that emerged from the semi-structured interviews, but also from the information obtained from the secondary sources cited below. The next subsection will be dedicated to the transcription, organization and analysis of the general data.

**Table 2 – Main Secondary data sources**

Name	Year	Type	Language	Scope
Sámi Act	1987	Regulation	English	Provide a legal basis for the protection of the Sámi language, way of life and culture in Norway
Sámi Act's language rules and the administrative area <sup>5</sup> for Sámi languages	1992	Regulation	Norwegian	Provision of Sámi language responsibilities and rights in specific areas
Procedures for Consultations between State Authorities and the Saami Parliament	2005	Regulation	English	Regulate the provisions related to the establishment of consultations between the Sámi Parliament and the Norwegian government
Action Plan for Sami Languages	2009	Action Plan	English	Identify challenges and propose strategies to ensure the use and protection of the Sámi languages in Norway
Mapping of the Sámi perspective in the municipal sector <sup>6</sup>	2012	Report	Norwegian	Evaluate how the legislations concerning Sámi issues have been working in practice in different municipalities and sectors
NOU 2016:18 Hjertespråket	2016	Regulation/Report	Norwegian	Evaluation and recommendation of measures to enable the achievement of the provisions in the Sámi Act
Giellalokten <sup>7</sup>	2018	Action Plan	Norwegian	Present the goals and strategies related to the Sámi Parliament's language planning
Sámi Parliament's Budget	2019	Budget report	Norwegian	Statistics about the budget for the year 2019

<sup>5</sup> Original title: Samelovens språkregler og forvaltningsområdet for samisk språk.

<sup>6</sup> Original title: Kartlegging av samisk perspektiv i kommunesektoren.

<sup>7</sup> Translation to Norwegian: Språkløftet, meaning “the Language promise”.

### 3.6 Data analysis

As previously mentioned, most of the data gathered for the fulfilment of this research has a qualitative nature. As Bryman (2008) contends, the meanings that this kind of corpora evoke may not be as clearly spotted as the quantitative sets of data, requiring the establishment of an analytical strategy to interpret the information set and extract from it all its nuances.

In this thesis, inductive reasoning will be used as a tool to scrutinize the components of the data obtained from semi-structured interviews and from the secondary data that emerged from various documents. In this method, the investigator makes general observations from a specific empirical phenomenon. However, it is necessary to remark that making generalizations from one or two cases may not lead to a complete representation of reality. One way to reduce this problem is by making as many observations of a specific phenomenon as possible, as a means to guarantee that they lead to a general truth (Thomas, 2017).

Following Bryman's (2008) propositions regarding the use of coding as an analytic method, after the collection and organization of the whole data set into a standard format, all the information was coded, in order to interpret and understand what the corpora represents and how it leads to an explanation of the research problems proposed. Therefore, as soon as the data was transcribed online, the researcher submitted it to a thorough examination via reading and identifying relevant fragments.

These fragments were then highlighted and marked with one or a few key-words that informed their general content, as a means to identify similar patterns in diverse data sources. After that, the highlighted pieces went through a review to avoid redundant key words and promote a normalization of the information. Finally, the last step aimed to identify similarities among different codes, keeping the theoretical framework in mind and trying to use these concepts to produce new knowledge. As Bryman (2008) suggests, coding is only one of the stages of data analysis. When this step is concluded, it is then time to proceed to the interpretation of the information gathered and coded. While the findings will be presented in the next chapter, the next sections aim to describe the difficulties involved in the research process and the lessons learnt from it, respectively.

### 3.7 Challenges

In general lines, the challenges identified during the research process were the existence of language barriers, difficulties in approaching the informants, the lack of previous contacts, time and money. The next paragraphs will address each item in detail, exposing the struggles associated with each one of them and presenting a strategy used in an attempt to tackle it.

The most evident challenge in this research journey has been the existence of language barriers. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the choice to treat the Northern Sámi language as a general study object without mastering it brought expressive consequences to the data collection process, especially in the case of Kautokeino. A possible way of solving this issue would be to use Norwegian or Swedish in the communication with the informants, who were all bilingual or even trilingual. However, the fact that my knowledge of the Norwegian language is very limited required the consideration of alternative solutions to obtain data.

When it was not possible to use English as a mutual language in the communication via email and in person, two different scenarios took place: i) when available, an interpreter was arranged by the interviewee, who would then translate the information in both ways; ii) I made the decision to speak and ask questions in Swedish, which I speak at an advanced level, receiving answers in Norwegian. Ideally, the first scenario would avoid the risk of miscommunication or misunderstandings, but it would require a higher coordination effort among the researcher, the interviewee and the interpreter. This option was also subjected to the availability of the interpreter and, therefore, out of the researcher's control.

The transcription phase was, however, the most challenging part of the process. While being face to face with the informant gives the researcher the opportunity to ask follow-up questions and even clarifications, the transcription work is lonely and requires maximum attention to listen and write exactly what was said. Being a non-native Swedish speaker helped me to understand most of the information obtained through the interviews, but many specific and technical words from the language or policy field were difficult to reach at times. Therefore, I counted on my supervisor to decipher these, who is a native Norwegian speaker.

In parallel with the language issues, the fact that the author is an outsider also impacted the whole process, as stated in the first section of this chapter. On the one hand, this status may put the researcher

in a disadvantaged position when interpreting certain piece of data or when interviewing various stakeholders. Related to this, the inability to speak Northern Sámi or the Norwegian language required the employment of extra efforts from the researcher when attempting to connect with interviewees and understand not only what they say, but also what they do not say - as their cultural codes and habits, for example.

On the other hand, the fact that some of the interviewees made an extra effort to speak English or Norwegian in the interviews, even though these languages were not the first language of many of them, also deserves attention. It reflects the attempt to find a common communicative ground to channel information, allowing it to flow in both ways.

Another way of obtaining data, which was previously mentioned in this chapter, was through official documents from the municipalities, the Sámi Parliament and statistics. The language issue was also present throughout the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in these documents, which were mostly displayed in Norwegian. Once again, I had to use my Swedish language abilities and an online dictionary to fully understand and interpret the data.

This extra help was crucial in the data gathering and analysis process, because it prevented the existence of several gaps that would not have been addressed without checking the meaning of certain Norwegian words. At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge that this method slowed down the data collection, requiring the employment of extra time and effort to fully process all the information in an intelligible way.

Leaving the language challenges, another significant difficulty was approaching possible informants in both municipalities. Being an outsider to the Sámi community and approaching the informants in the English language are likely to be the main reasons why I did not receive any answers at first. Two weeks later, after an intervention of my supervisor, who contacted some of the informants in Norwegian, a more favorable general response was obtained, allowing me to start scheduling the first interviews.

This leads us to another challenge, the lack of Sámi contacts. Even though I had no contacts within the Sámi milieu at first, as soon as I started getting responses from the first informants I could perceive the formation of a micro network around me. This is due to the fact that one person referred to another person's work, enabling me to reach the right contact persons. However, not all of them agreed or

had time to talk to me throughout the data collection process, which means that time was another relevant constraint to the development of this thesis.

Even though the whole thesis process started in 2017, when I started thinking about the topic, only in the end of 2018 had I enhanced the sketch related to the purpose of the study, the research design and other methodological considerations. Therefore, having six months to refine these categories even more, find a theoretical framework that would suit the scope of the investigation, contact informants, collect and analyse data and submit the final version was a key constraint. As the next section will show, having more time to further improve and develop the study would give me the possibility to contact more informants, get access to more secondary documents and enrichen the analysis.

As a result of the time constraints and from the difficulties to obtain informants, especially in the case of Kautokeino, it was not possible to minimally precise the quantity, frequency and content of the interactions established by the organizations that compose the governance networks in the two municipalities. This challenge is expected to bring difficulties in the assessment of some of the categories proposed in the integrative framework of Provan and Kenis (2007), such as trust, size and density, which specifically tackle the interactional dynamics in governance networks. At the same time, it was possible to identify the presence of certain interactions when these actors take part into official and unofficial meetings, celebrate agreements, engage in workshops, etc.

Finally, money was also a crucial challenge in this process. Doing research about the Sámi community in Northern Norway while being in the Southern portion of the territory has been possible, especially through the use of different media technologies, such as Skype and cell phone devices and voice recorders. But these do not replace the uniqueness of tête-à-tête meetings, and the opportunity to do a fieldwork. Ideally, since this inquiry has Kautokeino and Kåfjord as study objects, a trip to both municipalities would certainly have added value to the whole research process, as the researcher's own observations about a specific context could also be treated as data pieces. However, the financial limitations only allowed me to do a short fieldwork in Finnmark, which is why my individual observations about the environment will not be displayed in this work, that has a comparative design.

### **3.8 Learning**

The purpose of this section is to reflect upon research process, highlighting the choices or actions that could improve the development of a future academic project. The first one concerns the chronological or sequential way of writing, which I followed in the beginning. In this method, the researcher must start by the Introduction and end with the Conclusion. However, the possibility of significant alterations during the course of the inquiry may oblige the investigator to rewrite the same chapter many times, especially the introductory one. In addition to this, it is undeniable that the researcher is likely to achieve a greater degree of productivity if he/she does not blindly focuses on one single chapter until it is finished. Having the possibility to work on two chapters at the same time, alternating when he/she cannot temporarily move forward, may also contribute to this practice.

Another relevant learning point was that it is never too early to start the process. One should not wait until he/she has the perfect research question(s) or interview guide to try to reach out for informants or relevant secondary data sources. Even though these methodological tools may not be fully developed, it is important to acknowledge that it may take time to obtain favorable responses from any contact persons, which would pose time constraints to the development of the research.

### **3.9 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the degree of trustworthiness of the results obtained at the end of the research process. One common point of concern among social scientists, especially when using quantitative data, is to guarantee that the indicators used to measure a specific phenomenon are stable and do not change throughout time. Besides this, it is also necessary to minimize the interference of the researcher's own subjectivity into the research process, particularly during collecting the data and coding it (Bryman, 2008). A few strategies were adopted to ensure that the present study is developed in a reliable manner. The conduction of semi-structured interviews with different informants is an example of this, since it followed a pre-designed set of questions that were asked in the same order to all the interviewees. Also, the follow-up questions were made in an objective way, avoiding subjectivity.

Moreover, despite the fact that I was the person involved in the collection and analysis of the data, these processes are also subjected to my personal biases and personal background. For this reason, it is ultimately important to be transparent about all the theoretical and methodological choices taken,

which have been justified in the previous and in this chapter. Finally, the fact that Norwegian was the official language of most official documents used during data collection, as well as some interviews, may also affect the reliability of the research process, considering that these pieces of data were subjected to my own interpretation and translation. As I am not a native Norwegian speaker, I have been in close contact with my supervisor throughout the whole process, who checked my translation and interpretation work and helped me to increase the degree of objectivity in this inquiry.

### **3.10 Validity**

Bryman (2008) contends that a study is valid when the indicators used to measure or conceptualize a phenomenon are successful in doing so. If it fails to do so, then the findings are neither valid nor reliable, because they do not correspond to reality. Validity also refers to the existence of consistency between the variables in the study, ensuring that the independent variable impacts the dependent variable chosen. A valid research is equally likely of generating generalizations from the specific cases scrutinized.

This thesis has a qualitative nature, employing an interpretivist approach in the analysis of data. In this kind of context, as Thomas (2017) points out, validity may not seem as evident as in a quantitative work. This does not mean, however, that it is not possible to verify if the research done was actually able to contribute to scholarship, finding new knowledge. Therefore, in order to be valid, a study should relate to previously obtained findings. Also, it should also be convincing and based on solid evidence, reducing the likelihood of error during the research process. These two ideas are categorized under the notions of plausibility and credibility (Thomas, 2017).

Hence, how to know if the analysis of the data lead to plausible, credible and, ultimately, valid results? Firstly, the investigation undertaken in the scope of this thesis is anchored in previous research, debates, theories and concepts. Also, it attempts to tackle a gap in the literature about Sámi and minoritarian issues, shifting the light from the national level and prioritizing the municipality as actor and environment for the action of local governance networks. It is equally important to highlight that transparency was frequently sought throughout the research process, as a means to make all methodological and theoretical choices clear and, therefore, reduce any possible biases.

Another strategy employed in this thesis that seeks to increase the validity of the investigation was the usage of a variety of data from different sources. This means that there was a major use of

qualitative data, while employing quantitative data in a minor scale, as a complementary tool, in an attempt to obtain a wider overlook of the interactions among different organizations towards the promotion of the Northern Sámi language. In addition to this, not only did this study focused on secondary data, but also on primary data, complementing the data repository and leading to a richer analysis. Finally, it is expected that the findings obtained after data collection and analysis will possibly be replicated in other areas where the establishment of networks for the governance of local indigenous languages are also in vogue, such as in other Nordic countries, where the Sámi are also present, but even in New Zealand and Latin America, for example. The next chapter will present an overview of the contextual and empirical background for this thesis.

## 4 THE SÁMI AND THE NORWEGIANS – HISTORICAL RELATIONS AND POLICIES

Norway is a unitary state divided into three levels of government: the central government, the regional layer or the Counties – also known as *fylker* – and the local level or municipalities – *kommuner* in Norwegian. As in the other Nordic states, the Norwegian municipalities have an important role in the provision of public goods to the citizens (Jacobsen, 2005). Even though the central government has an important position in the policymaking process for Sámi issues, this paper seeks to shed light on the importance of the municipalities as primary actors and as an environment in this dynamic, since the municipal sphere is frequently not as explored as the national level.

According to De Vries (2016), the local layer emerges from the impossibility of the national government to deal with all the issues and local variations related to a country. In the Nordic countries, the municipalities are endowed with a large degree of independence (Brunsson, 2007; Laitinen et al. 2015). Their strong local capacities, allied with the autonomy of the local level in the welfare states, also enlighten the central role of the municipalities in the provision of egalitarian and universal public services (Seller and Lindström, 2007). Despite the establishment of legal measures to tackle Sámi issues, such as the Sámi Act and the administrative area for Sámi languages, as it will be seen further, the accommodation of particular groups and minorities in the policymaking process has been constantly challenged by the universal-oriented approach of the welfare states (Olsson and Lewis 1996). This observation also relates to the previous assimilation policies<sup>8</sup> that characterized the relation between Norway and the Sámi.

As Nystad et al (2017) point out, the Norwegianization policies led to an unbalanced environment where the Sámi no longer felt encouraged or willing to use Sámi languages daily. The effects from this assimilation past are still present nowadays, especially in municipalities where they are the minority of the population. Therefore, in order to understand how the Northern Sámi language is governed in certain *kommuner*, all the actors that compose this governance system and the interactions among them, it is first necessary to define the characteristics of the Sámi and the areas where they have settled through the centuries. The description of these attributes will be accompanied by the historical trajectory of the policies put forward by the Norwegian state towards the Sámi, highlighting the consequences they brought to the Sámi identity, culture and language.

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<sup>8</sup> These assimilation policies are known under different terms, which will be interchangeably used in this thesis. These names are assimilation policies, Norwegianization policies, *fornorskningspolitikk* or simply *fornorskning*.

## 4.1 Who are the Sámi?

The Sámi<sup>9</sup> are an indigenous group who has historically been living in the northernmost portions of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, in an area called *Sápmi*. The concept of indigenous people entails that the Sámi descend from the populations that occupied the *Sápmi* region previous to the establishment of national borders, maintaining some of the traditional social, linguistic, cultural and political institutions from that time (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2014). Nowadays, it is estimated that there are approximately 80,000-100,000 Saami individuals in this portion of the globe, while around 50,000-65,000 are settled in Norway (Samer, n.d)<sup>10</sup>.

According to Josefsen (2007), there is no accurate method to precise the exact amount of Sámi individuals in the abovementioned area. This difficulty is related to the fact that identity is a flow and intangible concept, since it depends on variables such as the personal identification one has with a people, culture or language. In official terms, the Sámi Act defines a series of criteria that enables the identification of the individuals that belong to the Sámi group as someone who considers himself as a Sámi and: i) someone who speaks one of the Sámi languages at home or ii) someone whose father or mother is included in the Sámi electoral register (Sámi Act, 1987, § 2-6). Hence, Pettersen and Brustad (2013), when analysing the outcomes that emerge from the criteria established in the Sámi Act, conclude that the subjective criteria is not sufficient to legitimate one's belonging to the Sámi collective. Therefore, the objective dimension, which relates to categories such as ancestry and language, also matters.

The Sámi are not a homogenous people; neither is every Sámi a reindeer herder. Only 10% of the Sámi belong to this group, while the rest of the population is engaged in activities such as fishing, hunting, agriculture, craftwork, politics, etc (Josefsen, 2007). The Sámi also divide themselves in terms of the characteristics of the area they come from. An example that illustrates this categorization is the emergence of divisions such as coastal Sámi and mountain Sámi in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Eiermann *apud* Paine, 1957). Even though both groups belonged to the *Sápmi area* – which nowadays is part of the Norwegian territory -, their place of origin was a remarkable identity category that differentiated both groups. The fact that the mountain Sámi used to perceive the coastal Sámi as

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<sup>9</sup> Even though this paper does not aim to undertake a semantic study, it is worth mentioning that there are many ways to refer to the Sámi people, such as Sami, Saami, Sámi or Lapp. The last one is still used in Finland, but has become pejorative in the rest of Sápmi (Leonenko, 2008). In this paper, the spelling *Sámi* will be adopted.

<sup>10</sup> In this thesis, the abbreviation n.d will be used when no date was found on the document cited. The same will be done for the abbreviation n.p. when no page is found in the document used in a direct citation.

“outsiders”, calling them *dáčča*, while referring to themselves as *Sami*, meaning “those who speak the Sámi language”, (Eiermann *apud* Paine, 1957), illustrates how heterogenous the Sámi people are, indicating that there are also differences and conflicts among them.

Another factor that symbolizes the heterogeneity of the Sámi people is language. As Marjomaa (2012) points out, there are nine Sámi languages. Since Northern Sámi is the linguistic variety mostly spoken both in Kautokeino and in Kåfjord, it will be the focus of this work. In Norway, the amount of individuals who are able to speak Northern Sámi is uncertain, but estimated in over 15000 (Marjomaa, 2012), while roughly more than 23000 are estimated to speak at least one of the Sámi languages found in Norway to some degree (Johansen, 2018). The eight other Sámi languages are: Ter Sámi, Kildin Sámi, Skolt Sámi, Inari Sámi, Lule Sámi, Pite Sámi, Ume Sámi and South Sámi (Marjomaa, 2012). In Norway, the most spoken of these varieties are Northern Sámi, Lule Sámi and Southern Sámi (NOU 2016:18, 2016). In transnational terms, the Sámi languages also cross boundaries, being found not only in Norway, but also in Sweden, Finland and Russia (Albury, 2015).

According to Marjomaa (2012), in linguistic terms, the Sámi languages belong to the Uralic family, also known as Finno-Ugric. The Finnish language belongs to the same group. However, Norwegian and Swedish are classified as Germanic languages. This brings significant implications to these societies, considering that the Sámi are a minority in both countries, in general terms. This means that linguistic and cultural boundaries are more prone to emerge in both scenarios, opposing Norwegians and Swedes, on one side, and the Sámi people, on the other. Therefore, the creation of public policies to guarantee the protection, the use and the access to the minoritarian language is vital in this case.

## **4.2 Sámi policies in Norway: from assimilation to accommodation**

According to Hannum (1990), even though the Sámi never constituted a pan-Sámi state in the *Sápmi* core area, they were organized according to the *siida* system. In each *siida*, a large territorial portion was divided into Sámi families, as well as the natural resources found there. An administrative council composed by one representative from each family was also one of the basis of this ancient societal mode of organization. It had the function to legislate over judicial disputes and it was also responsible for the distribution of natural resources among the families in the *siida* (Hannum, 1990).

Despite the existence of a traditional system among Sámi societies, the establishment of the national borders between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries neglected these circumstances. The newly formed Nordic states and Russia, during the process of territorial exploration decided to expand to the northernmost

areas, where the Sámi were settled (Hannum, 1990). As Hannum (1990) points out, during centuries the Sámi were subordinated to a series of events such as the payment of taxes to different kingdoms and the attempts from the Church to Christianize them. This did not prevent them from moving across the *Sápmi* borders and practicing reindeer herding, though (Hannum, 1990). The right to move freely was acknowledged in the *Lapp Codicil Treaty* signed in 1751 between Norway and Sweden. The same document, however, brought limitations in terms of the right to own land, restricting Sámi subsistence to one or other country, depending on their choice. The relevance of this treaty resides in the fact that, for the first time, the Sámi became a formal target of national policies by the Nordic states (Hannum, 1990).

The next chapter in the relationship Sámi-Norway occurred parallel to development of the Nordic states and to the emergence of a nationalistic wave in Europe (Minde, 2005; Albury, 2015). Albury (2015) affirms that this movement preconized the necessity to form homogenous and powerful states based on a solid single nation speaking the same language. In view of these circumstances, the Nordic policies towards the Sámi in this period were guided by an attempt to assimilate this group to the majoritarian society, preventing them from expressing their own identity, culture and language (Josefsen, 2007; Broderstad, 2001, 2011).

Minde (2005) describes the characteristics of the Norwegian assimilation policies and the impact they had – and still have – among the Sámi society. The discrimination era was called *fornorsking* in Norwegian, which clearly denotes the aim to Norwegianize the Sámi. The author categorizes this period in four phases: a transition phase (between 1850 and 1870), a consolidation phase (between 1870 and 1905), the culmination phase (between 1905 and 1950) and the decay phase (between 1950 and 1980). The first stage, referred to by Minde (2005) as the transition phase, was characterized by a change of attitude towards the Sámi. If before 1850 they were allowed to use their language in certain public occasions, such as religious ceremonies, from this moment on the Norwegian parliament – also known as *Storting*, in Norwegian - decided to channel national funds to linguistic programs that had the objective to teach the Sámi the Norwegian language.

The next phase, called consolidation, deepened the assimilation practices. In this sense, the state employed measures such as the prohibition to speak any Sámi languages in the schools, a significant reduction in the number of scholarships to students with Sámi background and the establishment of boarding schools in Northern Norway, which removed young Sámis from their families and functioned as assimilation centres (Minde, 2005). In general terms, the *fornorskning* policies created a myriad of requirements and conditions that the Sámi had to fulfil if they wanted to access welfare

and public services. The most basic one was the necessity to know how to read, write and speak in Norwegian (Albury, 2015; Steilien, n.d.; Olsson & Lewis, 1996).

Following Minde's (2005) categorization, the culmination phase represents a continuation and a deepening of the assimilation policies in Norway. This period was based on the racial biology theories that believed that the Sámi were racially inferior to the Norwegians, allowing the state to use this as a scientific argument to justify the *fornorskning* process. Therefore, the Sámi were portrayed as a people who allegedly had mental deficiencies and would need help from the Norwegians to free them from the ignorance and the delay they were in (Albury, 2015; Minde, 2005). A series of secret commissions were created, such as *Finnmarksnemden*, with the objective to coordinate the assimilation of the Sámi and the *Kven*<sup>11</sup> in Northern Norway, avoiding criticism from sectors of the population (Minde, 2005). Until 1950, the Norwegian state had adopted measures such as the creation of massive propaganda aiming at stigmatizing the Sámi, as well as the efforts to encourage Norwegians to occupy traditional Sámi lands and use them economically (Hannum, 1990).

At the same time, authors such as Paine (1983), Barroso-Hoffmann (2008) and Albury (2015) contend that the Norwegianization policies had divergent impacts in different municipalities where the Sámi were settled. On the one hand, considering that the Norwegian population was mainly distributed along the coast, the *Fornorsking* policies brought more dramatic effects into this portion of the territory. The county of Finnmark, on the other hand, was relatively more protected by its geographic location, leading to a softer language shift than in the county of Troms, for example (Paine, 1983; Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008; Albury, 2015). However, the assimilation policies were not only responsible for reducing the amount of Sámi language speakers in the coastal areas (Paine, 1983), but also in Finnmark, the Sámi core area, where the number of Sámi speakers reached one third than what it was before the Norwegianization period (Albury, 2015).

The last phase was marked by a decline of the assimilation policies and a change of attitude towards the Sámi, who sought to redefine their position internally (Minde, 2005; Steilien, n.d.). Despite the slow pace of implementation of this new approach towards the relations between the state and the Sámi, it favoured the institutionalization of the Sámi demands (Steinlien, n.d.). The acknowledgement of the necessity to enable the participation of the Sámi in the Norwegian political institutions and the flourishing of new Sámi organizations occurred concomitant to the adoption of the UN Universal

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<sup>11</sup> The Kven are an ethnic minority in Norway that possess Finnish background. Like the Sámi, they have settled in Northern Norway.

Declaration of Human Rights after the Second World War. This period is a reflex of the change of attitudes of the European states regarding national minorities (Tomaselli and Granholm, 2011).

In view of these circumstances, the creation of the Sámi Committee in the Norwegian Parliament, in 1956, is a reflex of this moment of *détente*. The Committee promoted discussions regarding the integration of the Sámi to the Norwegian society in a non-assimilationist way. In addition, the members decided to put forward measures to ensure the revitalization of the Sámi languages and their use in public spaces, such as hospitals and schools (Steilien, nd). Besides the decision to include the Sámi into the existing political channels in Norway, it is also important to highlight the emergence of highly organized Sámi associations in Norway<sup>12</sup>, such as the Norwegian Reindeer Husbandry National Association (*Norske Reindriftssamers Landsforbund*), which was created in 1948 as a means to promote the interests of the reindeer herders on a national basis in academic, cultural, economic and social terms (Josefsen, 2007; Reindeer Heding, n.d.).

The materialization of several Sámi associations in different *kommuner* also contributed to shift light from the national to the local level. The establishment of the *Oslo Sámi Særv* as a knowledge-base institution created by Sámi researchers in Oslo in the 1940s (Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008) was followed by the appearance of local associations in many municipalities inserted in the Finnmark region (Norske Samers Riksforbund, 2003). The cooperation between the associations in Oslo and in Northern Norway paved the way for the creation of the Norwegian Sámi Association (*Norske Samers Riksforbund*), founded in 1968. This organization has sought to safeguard Sámi rights in Norway and in cooperation with other Sámi organizations in the Nordic region, pressing for political autonomy via the establishment of a Sámi elected body internally (Josefsen, 2007; Norske Samers Riksforbund, 2003). However, as Barroso-Hoffmann (2008) points out, this demand was perceived with scepticism by the government members at the time, who defended that Sámi political participation should happen exclusively through the traditional Norwegian political channels, such as the national Parliament.

The creation of the National Sámi Association (*Samenes Landsforbund*) in 1979 (Josefsen, 2007; Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008), in accordance with the Norwegian government's vision, highlighted the heterogeneity of the Sámi movement in Norway. This association refused the historical Sámi rights which had been claimed by the other Sámi organizations. Instead of the establishment of a Sámi

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<sup>12</sup> The appearance of the first Sámi organizations occurred already in end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 1900s. Not only did the Sámi organized themselves in central and Northern Norway through these smaller organizations, but also engaged into cooperative arrangements such as conferences within and without the Norwegian territory, with the goal to raise awareness about the Sámi cause. It was equally an opportunity for the Sámi to gather and exchange information among themselves (Norske Samers Riksforbundet, 2003).

parliament, the *Samenes Landsforbund* preconized that the Sámi people should use the traditional Norwegian channels. The support base of this association was mainly composed by Sea Sámi individuals from the Northern parts of Norway who, as mentioned before, had been exposed to heavier assimilation policies than the Sámi groups in Finnmark (Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008; Albury 2015). Thus, the existence of different political and institutional demands within the Sámi people in Norway is a crucial issue for the understanding of the contrasting Sámi dynamics in the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord. It is also relevant to mention that the emergence of the abovementioned organization happened in parallel with the Alta-Kautokeino episode, which will be examined in the next section.

The implementation of assimilation policies based on the stigmatization of the Sámi as a people has brought significant consequences not only to the generation who lived under this chapter of the Sámi history, but also to the current generations. After the *Fornorsking* period, researchers have pointed out the presence of a wide range of mental health issues among the Sámi population if compared to Norwegian individuals in the same area. These include depression, post-traumatic stress disorders, suicide, etc. (Hansen and Sorlie, 2012; Valeggia and Snodgrass, 2015). Despite this, the resilience of the Sámi period during and after the assimilation period has led not only to the creation of Sámi institutions and internal laws to safeguard Sámi interests and rights, but equally to the strengthening of the Sámi movement, as Josefsen (2007) and Broderstad (2011) highlight. These issues will be addressed in the following section. It has the purpose to propose a discussion regarding the redefinition in the relationship between the Sámi and the Norwegian state, marked by internal and external mobilizations and pressures for a Sámi policy based on the respect towards the culture, the rights and the languages of these people. From this moment on, despite the role of the state in the design and implementation of policies, the Sámi rise as a relevant actor in the policymaking dynamics, which will become clear in the section 2.3.

### **4.3 Sámi policies and institutions within and without Norway: recognition and empowerment**

This section will prioritize the contemporary attitudes of the Norwegian state towards the Sámi and vice-versa, focusing on the process that led to the recognition of the Sámi as an indigenous people and their right to political participation, as well as on their empowerment via the establishment of a series of legal and institutional arrangements inside and outside Norway. It is a consensus among the scholars from the Sámi field that the major event that took place in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

and shaped the state-Sámi relations was the Alta-Kautokeino episode. According to Paine (1982), the key element that motivated the whole controversy was a river with the same name. This watercourse is one of the most important natural resources in Finnmark, flowing into the Sámi cities of Alta, Masi and Kautokeino, where the Sámi were, at the time, the majority of the population.

In 1970, the Norwegian government decided to dam the river, which would lead to the submergence of large forest areas, as well as the town of Masi. A commissioned report showed that the establishment of this project would bring deleterious economic and cultural consequences to the Sámi livelihood, considering the fact that thousands of people and hundreds of thousands of reindeer lived and crossed those areas on a frequent basis (Paine, 1982). In order to call attention to the local impact that the project would cause, Sámi and environmental movements attempted to prevent its concretization by protesting and seeking to influence the Norwegian public opinion (Helle and Matos, 2018). This strategy was partially successful because the company responsible for the project, the Norwegian Hydro, made a series of concessions, which culminated into the non-submergence of the Masi area. On the other hand, the company did not give up, obtaining permission from the government to build an enormous hydroelectrical powerplant in the river during 1979 (Paine, 1982; Helle and Matos, 2018).

Differently from the previous strategy, Norwegian individuals from the civil society, members of environmental movements and the Sámi united themselves to carry out a series of civil disobedience and pacific resistance actions against the economic project, organizing hunger strikes and blockades around the river. At the same time, the head of the Norwegian Sámi Association (*Norske Samers Riksforbund*) held speeches in international organizations as a means to call attention to the Alta-Kautokeino issue. Despite the support from internal and external stakeholders to the cause, the Norwegian government was implacable, sending hundreds of policemen to the region. Approximately one thousand people were arrested and the truculent repression imposed to the protesters choked the country. However, this was not enough to stop the materialization of the project, which culminated in the construction of the hydroelectrical powerplant (Helle and Matos, 2018).

The Alta-Kautokeino case contributed not only to put Sámi issues in the national agenda, but also to raise an international debate on minority and indigenous affairs, gathering support around their cause. Internationally, it exposed the lack of alignment between the foreign Norwegian policy, based on human rights principles, and the harsh domestic policy towards minorities and indigenous peoples (Josefsen, Mörkenstam and Saglie, 2015). Internally, Josefsen (2007) affirms that, as a consequence, the Norwegian government faced pressure from different fronts, which led public authorities to

promote more policies and learning regarding the Sámi livelihood, culture and rights. Therefore, the abovementioned episode contributed to the institutionalization of Sámi rights. With the establishment of the Sámi Rights Commission – and, later, the Sámi Cultural Commission – in the 1980s, the Sámi were allowed to take part into the Norwegian decision-making process through the national parliament (Broderstad, 2001; Helle and Matos, 2018). A relevant outcome from the work undertaken by the Sámi Rights Commission was the the Sámi Act, elaborated in 1987 (Broderstad, 2011).

The Sámi Act constitutes the modern foundation of the governance of Sámi issues in Norway. It contains a wide number of provisions related to the institutionalization of Sámi rights, as well as specific determinations on Sámi language policy. The general aim of this Act is to enable the protection and promotion of Sámi language, culture and livelihood (Sámi Act, 1987, § 1-1). One of the main provisions stated in the document is the acknowledgement that the Sámi languages and Norwegian have the same value. In addition to this, the document also deliberates over the implementation of a myriad of concrete measures, being the creation of the Sámi Parliament in Norway in 1989 (Sámi Act, 1987, § 1-2) one of the most expressive actions because, according to Josefsen et al (2015, p. 35), “this new institution challenges prevailing social relations of power both within Sámi society and in the Norwegian”.

The Sámi Parliament is a direct elected body that has the responsibility to represent the Sámi people and managing Sámi affairs, promoting learning and information on matters that affect the Sámi people. Therefore, it has a dual role as a representative and administrative organization (Josefsen et al, 2015). This institution has the autonomy to establish relations with private and public actors in Norway and abroad, as well as to provide other authorities with its opinion and recommendations concerning Sámi related issues (Sámi Act, 1987, § 2-1). In the moment of its creation, the Sámi Parliament was perceived more as a consultative organization than a self-determination body (Josefsen et al, 2015). However, in 1992, the *Sameting* requested the delegation of managerial tasks from the Norwegian government to this institution, so that the Sámi Parliament would become a government agency with authority to govern specific matters. An example is the fact that, in the beginning of the 2000s, the *Sameting* received the task to manage a series of subsidies for Sámi language, culture and education projects. This organization even gained statutory responsibilities related to the Cultural Heritage Act, the Sámi Language Act, the Education Act and other laws (Falch and Selle, 2015).

Recently, the *Sameting* has developed into a relevant institutional actor in the political scene in Norway. As an autonomous organization, the Sámi Parliament has the prerogative to accept or decline

tasks delegated by the Norwegian government. This organ can also assign responsibilities to other parties in the scope of the annual budget, which is regulated according to managerial rules established by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation. Even if its autonomy is constrained by the budget it receives from the state, the decision on the allocation of funds is a competence of the Sámi authorities (Josefsen et al, 2015).

In 1990, the Sámi Act was amended with the objective to include a series of language provisions. One of them was the establishment of the *Sámi language administrative district* (Broderstad, 2001). This measure was implemented to safeguard the protection and further development of Sámi languages in Norway, acknowledging and giving the Sámi rights to use their languages in diverse public institutions (Hiss, 2013). While some determinations are restricted to the municipalities incorporated into the Sámi language administrative area, others are equally valid to counties and the state, who are obliged to provide Sámi citizens with information and translations in the judicial system, for example, as well as in the health and educational sector (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2009; Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2018).

In other words, in the municipalities and counties that belong to the referred administrative area, the Sámi have the right to contact public authorities and get answers in a Sámi language, use the Sámi language in the educational, social judicial and health sectors, as well as to experience church services in Sámi (Sámi Act, 1987, § 3-3). This brings concrete implications to the municipalities, counties and state in different sectors, which are, from this moment on, obliged to acknowledge and guarantee the right of individuals to communicate and obtain information in various Sámi languages (Broderstad, 2001).

The Sámi language administrative area seems to be the materialization of an attempt to leave the assimilation past behind, to overcome the superiority of the Norwegian language and to give the Sámi languages an equal position in the public sector and in society as a whole. According to the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, the resolutions from the Sámi Act are to be faced by governmental authorities as minimum obligatory requirements, which means that they are “encouraged to take into account users of Sámi languages beyond the law” (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2018, np, own translation)<sup>13</sup>. Therefore, stakeholders in different levels are legally compelled to facilitate the use of Sámi languages and the expression of the culture of these people.

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<sup>13</sup> Alle offentlige organ oppfordres til å ta hensyn til brukere av samiske språk utover lovens regler.

Many actions have been taken by various counties and municipalities within and without the Sámi language administrative area to safeguard these conditions. Among them are the establishment of Sámi language centres; the conduction of training in Sámi kindergartens, schools and universities for kids, adults and parents; the availability of Sámi language and culture services in the municipalities, as well as the creation of opportunities for generating and obtaining information about those; the installation of place name signs in the municipalities and on the roads containing the official Sámi and Norwegian names in the municipalities within the administrative area, etc (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2009; Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2018).

It is also important to mention that “when incorporated into the administrative area, the municipality receives resources for working with Sami languages. Furthermore, an incorporation entails greater focus on and awareness of Sami languages in the municipality and local community” (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2018, np, own translation)<sup>14</sup>. In other words, the municipalities in which the Sámi are present receive financial incentives from the Norwegian state to join the administrative area for Sámi languages, formally committing themselves to deliver welfare services in Northern Sámi, as well as to promote this language in society.

Another relevant event that also took place in 1990 was the Norwegian decision to ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention from the International World Organization, also known as ILO 169. As the first country in the world to take this step, Norway made a commitment towards the consultation and participation of the Sámi as an indigenous group. This means that the Norwegian government is now obliged to consult the Sámi authorities in matters that directly affect them (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2005; Broderstad, 2011; Josefsen et al, 2015). The country also committed itself to limit internal resource interventions (Broderstad, 2011).

The consultation procedures that the Sámi Parliament has formalized with the Norwegian government were a demand put forward by the former, in line with the determinations from the ILO 169 Convention (Broderstad, Hernes and Jensen, 2015). They were formalized in the document *Prosedyrer for konsultasjoner mellom statlige myndigheter og Sametinget* in 2005, regulating the consultations between state authorities and the Sámi Parliament. The consultation strategy puts the Sámi authorities in the spotlight of the political scene, differentiating the Sámi parliament from the municipal and

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<sup>14</sup> Med innlemmelse i forvaltningsområdet får kommunen tilført ressurser for å arbeide med samisk språk. Videre medfører en innlemmelse større fokus på og bevissthet rundt samisk språk i kommunen og i lokalsamfunnet.

county actors and focalizing it as a unique institutional player with collective interests (Falch and Selle, 2015).

According to Broderstad et al (2015), the consultation agreement formalized in 2005 gives the Sámi Parliament and the Sámi authorities the right to be informed by the Norwegian governmental institutions regarding relevant decision-making processes to the Sámi society. These Sámi actors can also engage in negotiations with Norwegian authorities and other parties to reach a common ground in matters that affect the Sámi. At the same time, as pointed out by Bjerkli and Selle (2015b), the consultation procedures between the Norwegian government and the Sámi authorities led to a reformulation in the position of the Sámi parliament internally. They gave this organization more possibilities to exercise self-determination, to influence the policy process and to talk to the Norwegian institutions in a more equal level in terms of issues that concern Sámi interests. To sum up,

“The Sámi Parliament emerges as something far more than an advisory organ or an interest representative in relation to the state; but as an informed formal participant in public decision-making processes. Generally, not only does this give the Sámi Parliament greater influence, but also a greater responsibility for the decisions that are made” (Bjerkli and Selle, 2015b, p. 22, own translation)<sup>15</sup>.

Even if this favourable scenario brings more opportunities for the Sámi to take part into internal decision-making processes, there still seems to exist an asymmetry in the relations between this group and the Norwegian government. An example resides in the fact that, after consultations and negotiations take place, the Norwegian authorities may alter the results at the expense of what had already been agreed by the parties (Josefsen et al, 2015). Another challenge is the existence of an immaterial border between Sámi authorities and the Sámi civil society in the core areas in Norway, who does not have the possibility to take part into the consultation procedures between the Sámi political actors and the Norwegian government. These circumstances reflect the highly specialized and elicited character of the consultation dynamics as a decision-making process, evoking questions about how democratic these rules are in reality. In addition, these dynamics are a reminder that the Sámi parliament is not only an elected body to represent the interests of the Sámi people, but also a state authority with administrative responsibilities (Falch and Selles, 2015).

Moreover, despite the close relationship between the Sámi and the Norwegian authorities regarding Sámi affairs, the fact that the former are not endowed with any veto power via the Sámi Parliament

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<sup>15</sup> Sametinget framstår som noe langt mer enn et rådgivende organ eller en interesserepresentant overfor staten; derimot som en informert formell deltaker i offentlig beslutningsprosesser. Generel gir det Sametinget ikke bare større innflytelse, men også et større ansvar for de beslutninger som tas.

is relevant (Semb, 2010). These circumstances are prone to influence the policy outcomes, indicating the sovereign position of the Norwegian Parliament as a primary decision-making instance. In addition to this, the article 110a of the Norwegian constitution is also in line with the ILO 169 Convention, which establishes that “It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Saami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life” (Koutouki and Farget, 2012, p.17). Ravna (2010) highlights that this provision also relates to the article 27 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) about the linguistic and cultural rights of national minorities. This means that the Norwegian state cannot legally design and implement Sámi policies that reject the principles established in both international treaties and transposed into the national law (Ravna, 2010). All these measures denote how the Norwegian government sought to incorporate international law to the domestic arena, signaling a more positive attitude towards Sámi rights (Josefsen et al, 2015).

Considering the endangered situation of the Sámi languages and in an attempt to ensure that Sámi language rights are safeguarded, the Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion established an Action Plan for Sámi Languages in 2008. This document contains a series of guidelines aimed at preserving and encouraging the use and learning of the different Sámi languages in Norway (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2009). The Action Plan was developed by the abovementioned Ministry in collaboration with the Sámi Parliament and other Norwegian ministries and Sámi institutions (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2009). The participation of Sámi organizations in this process was made possible due to the obligation of the Norwegian government to consult them on Sámi issues, which was institutionalized in 2005. This brings remarkable implications for the relations between the Sámi and the government, indicating that this group has now a say in the decision-making processes (Broderstad, 2011).

Shifting the focus from the domestic sphere to the transnational environment, another remarkable factor is the international action put forward by the Sámi institutions. The establishment of the Nordic Sámi Council in 1956 is an example of the cooperation between the Sámi national organizations in Finland, Sweden and Norway. In the 1990s, the Russian Sámi also joined the institutions, which is now called the Sámi Council (Josefsen, 2007; Seurujärvi-Kari and Kantasalmi, 2017). Therefore, the political relevance of the Sámi becomes apparent through the possibilities of engagement and participation that this group has via the Sámi Parliament and the Sámi Council. While the former is perceived as a domestic organization, its actions bring international implications, since this organ is a member of the latter. As a non-governmental supranational body, the Sámi Council is an important

actor in the international scene, as it takes part in governmental organizations and enables cooperation among the Sámi authorities from Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway (Bjerkli and Selle, 2015).

In the scope of the Sámi Council, Sámi language cooperation was made possible through the creation of the Sámi Language Board, ensuring the creation of guidelines to enable Sámi language planning in different Nordic countries, as well as a common orthography and written system for the Northern Sámi variety. This measure was taken to guarantee that this Sámi language would be used and understood by the whole Sámi population situated in all the territories where the Northern Sámi is found (Seurujärvi-Kari and Kantasalmi, 2017; Marjomaa, 2012). Therefore, considering the presence of the Northern Sámi language in a large Northern area that also comprises portions of the Swedish and of the Finnish territories (Giellagáldu, n.d), a Nordic cooperation in the language field seems to be an important step towards the development of the Sámi languages and in terms of the strengthening of a Sámi institutional cooperation in the transnational plan.

It is also relevant to mention that this organization not only has the support of the Sámi Parliaments in Norway, Sweden and Finland, but also from the European Union and counties belonging to the different countries (Giellagáldu, n.d). Both the formation of the Sámi Council and the Sámi Language Board demonstrate, once again, that the nation states are not single actors in the policymaking systems. In other words, there are a myriad of stakeholders gravitating around this system and impacting it in different ways, domestically and/or internationally. The next section will present a descriptive overview of the cases of Kåfjord and Kautokeino, focusing on the external dynamics that may affect the operation of Sámi and Norwegian organizations within the governance networks in each locality.

#### **4.4 Case presentation: a brief institutional panorama and the situation of the Northern Sámi language in Kåfjord and Kautokeino**

This section aims to present relevant contextual information regarding the municipalities of Kåfjord and Kautokeino, since they are the environment in which the governance networks operate and work towards the promotion of the Northern Sámi language. Thus, factors such as geography, historical elements, demographics, ethnicity and identity will be considered. Below, a map of the administrative area for Sámi languages situate both *kommuner* geographically. It is interesting to notice that, while Kåfjord is located at the coast, the geographical position of Kautokeino places it more inland. Despite

their proximity, both municipalities are located in different counties, as previously mentioned. In the following subsections, each case will be presented individually: first Kåfjord and then Kautokeino.

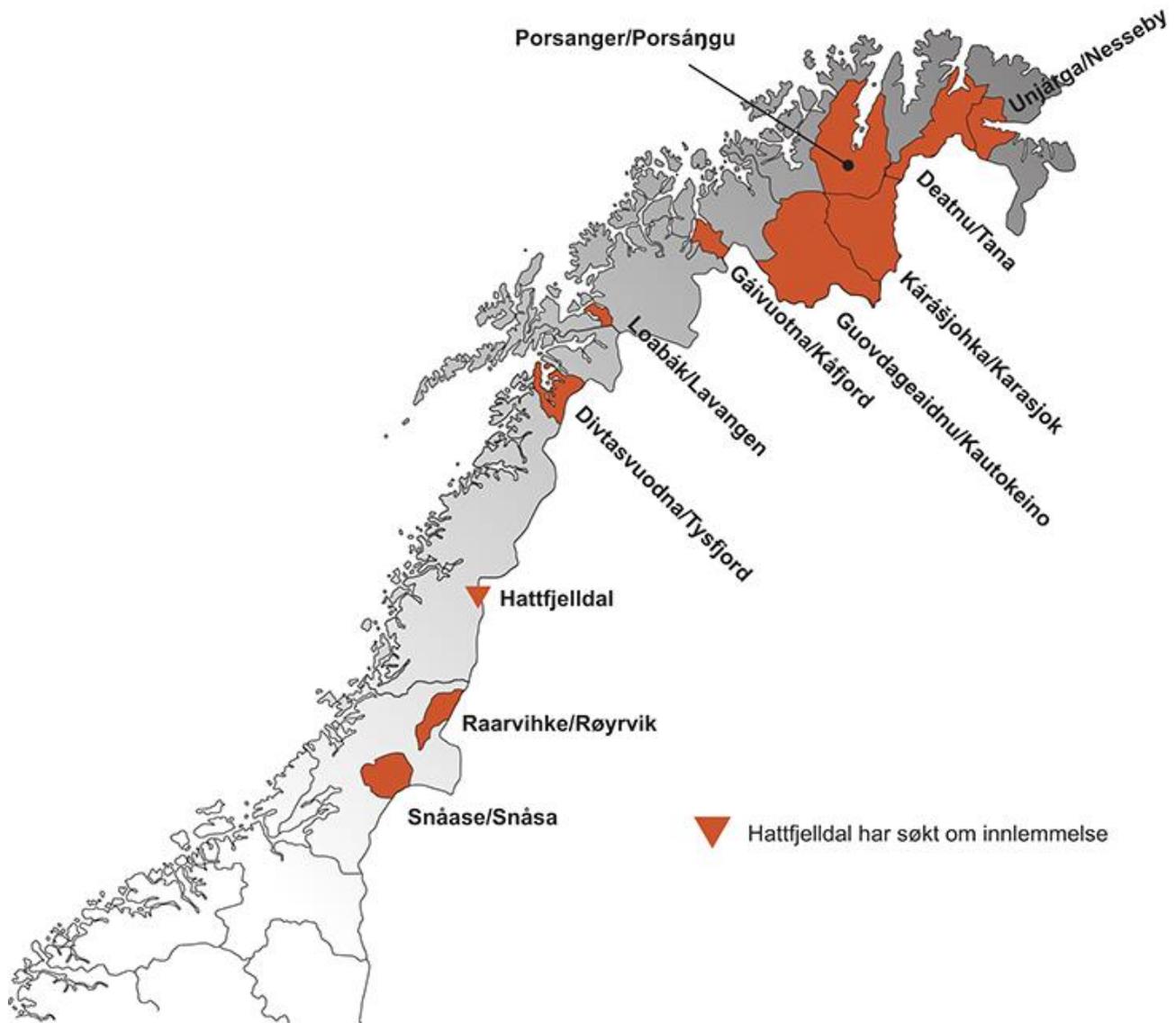


Figure 2 - Map of the administrative area for Sámi languages. Source: NOU 2016:18 (NOU 2016:18, 2016).

#### 4.4.1 Kåfjord: Northern Sámi as a minoritarian language

The municipality of Kåfjord is situated in the Troms county and extends itself across a vast area, among many fjords and districts. Nowadays, it has approximately 2100 inhabitants (SSB, 2019). Despite being considered today as a prominent Sea Sámi centre in cultural terms, the *kommune* has not always had this status. The main economic activity in the area, fishing, has gradually deteriorated, leading to unemployment and an exodus to other areas of Norway. Another relevant demographic factor is that Kåfjord is a point of contact between different people: Sámi, Kven and Norwegians.

The existence interactions between these spread communities make Kåfjord a unique cultural platform in Norway (Leonenko, 2008).

In spite of the minority status of the Sámi compared to the Norwegian population in Kåfjord, there is a significant presence of the Northern Sámi language in this municipality (Marjomaa, 2012), especially in the Manndalen district (Leonenko, 2008; Lervoll, 2007). According to Angell, Balto, Josefsen, Pedersen and Nygaard (2012), Kåfjord *kommune* was, in the 1930s, the largest Sámi municipality in Norway at the time, in which approximately 52% of the population declared to belong to this group in the census. The Northern Sámi language was then spoken by a large portion of the population of the city. In 2009, 20% of the residents of Kåfjord were registered in the electoral records of the Sámi Parliament, which denotes a sharp reduction in the numbers (Angell et al, 2012).

As mentioned in the third chapter, the *fornorskning* period had a particularly strong impact into the Sámi coastal areas, where Kåfjord is located. Not only was the language lost for many decades, but also the Sámi culture and way of life. In view of this, there was a general perception around the necessity to revitalize these elements that compose the Sea Sámi identity (Leonenko, 2008). But how? Who were the Sea Sámi and what were their peculiarities in comparison with the Norwegian population in the area and even with other Sámi communities?

These were the underlying questions to the revitalization process. According to Pedersen and Høgmo, (2012), the revitalization of the language and culture comprised elements such as the individual internalization of the Sea Sámi language and identity, as well as a collective identification within the Sámi group in Norway and the indigenous movement abroad. After the Alta episode, these matters were incorporated into the local agenda, «turning ethnicity into a public issue» (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012, p. 60, own translation)<sup>16</sup>, which consequently led to the flourishing of conflicts, heated collective debates and individual reflections in Kåfjord (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012).

Lervoll (2007) highlights that, even though a considerable portion of the inhabitants of the municipality have a Sámi background, many of them do not identify themselves with the Sámi community. The reason for that may be related to the general perception of the inhabitants in Kautokeino and Karasjok as “real Sámi”, opposed to the “non-real Sámi identity” in Kåfjord (Lervoll, 2007). This demonstrates the existing perceptions and divisions within the Sámi group, as well as the fluidity of ethnicity.

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<sup>16</sup> Da etnisitet ble et offentlig anliggende.

Moreover, the conduction of a Sámi census prior to the establishment of the Sámi Parliament in the 1980s is another fact that illustrates this scenario, leading to the emergence of clivages within and between the society in Kåfjord. Registering oneself as Sámi in that time was not only an individual choice, but a decision that affected and left a mark in one's whole family, for example (Angell et al, 2012).

In an attempt to overcome the negative heritage left by the assimilation past, a significant number of Sámi and Norwegian institutions from different levels of government started gathering efforts and working together in the 1980s, so that the Sámi community in Kåfjord could rebuild and regain their language and culture (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012). A few sectors of the civil society also had a prominent role in this process, notably the former elderly Sea Sámi generation and highly educated young individuals, creating a connection between the past and the future (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012). A more detailed panorama of the institutions and actors involved in this process will be outlined in the Discussion chapter.

#### 4.4.2 Kautokeino: Northern Sámi as a language of the majority

Also belonging to the administrative area for Sámi languages, the Kautokeino *kommune* is the biggest municipality in Norway in terms of size. The town is situated in the county of Finnmark, «in the middle of» Sápmi, as the name in Sámi denotes (Kautokeino kommune, 2017, p. 9). It has nearly 3000 inhabitants, of which almost 90% speak Northern Sámi as first language. In contrast with the situation in Kåfjord, in Kautokeino the Northern Sámi language is formally perceived and used as an official language in the city administration and also in the daily life by the society. The most widespread economical activity in this area is reindeer herding, which is also a symbol of the Sámi identity in the Finnmark region (Angell et al, 2012).

In ethnical terms, Leonenko (2008) contends that the Sámi herders in inner Finnmark have managed to maintain their language, lifestyle and culture to a greater extent compared to the Sea Sámi in Troms. In view of these circumstances, Leonenko (2008, p. 30) concludes that «thanks to this continuity of traditions the inland reindeer-herding Saami do not need to prove that they are the 'real' Saami: they just are, how it used to be for centuries».

Thus, after the *fornorskning* period, while the Sea Sámi were stuck in between two identities, a Norwegian identity and a 'fake' Sámi identity – if compared to the 'real' one from Kautokeino -, the

Sámi community from Finnmark has always been aware of the symbols, norms and traditions that conformed their identity (Leonenko, 2008). At the same time, as pointed out by Leonenko (2008), it is necessary to acknowledge that the *fornorskning* of the Sámi also left a mark in the Sámi core areas, leading to a perception of the urgency to preserve the Sámi language and habits in that region as well. Thus, it is also possible to talk about revitalization in Kautokeino, but as a means to enhance local and traditional symbols and hold the Sámi community together (Leonenko, 2008).

This process occurred in a different way compared to the one in Kåfjord, due to the fact that, despite the assimilation attempts from the Norwegian state, the reindeer herder Sámi traditions were not lost in the past, but evolved within the modern times. This means that being Sámi and speaking the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino was not perceived as a setback or an undeveloped attitude, but as a natural behaviour (Leonenko, 2008). In these circumstances, being a municipality in which the Sámi population is a majoritarian group has become so ingrained in the society that the Sámi perspective is automatically contained within the municipal activities and plans. Besides this, the establishment of the Norwegian Sámi Association, the NSR, already in the 1960s, may have contributed to ensure the maintenance of this mindset in society (Norske Samers Riksforbund, 2003; Josefsen, 2015). The general contexts from Kåfjord and Kautokeino will be further used as empirical background for the analysis of the findings, attempting to identify the presence of governance networks in both municipalities and their relevance for the administration of the Northern Sámi language in each area.

## 5 DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to present and discuss the most relevant findings that emerge from the data gathered and analyzed according to the research question proposed in chapter 1 and to the theoretical framework conceptualized in chapter 2, according to the purpose of this thesis, which relates to the understanding of the actors and their interactions within the networks for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in the municipalities of Kåfjord and Kautokeino.

The data collected through semi-structured interviews and secondary sources confirms the assumption regarding the existence of networks with the general purpose to promote the Northern Sámi languages in both municipalities, towards the fulfilment of the Sámi Act and public service provision connected with the use and development of this language. In both cases, there is an articulation of the local level of government with the Sámi Parliament and municipal and regional organizations working with Sámi issues. More specifically, this assumption was confirmed by several of the informants, as well as the NOU 2016:18 *Hjertespråk* report and the *Giellalokten* report. Both documents identify a myriad of actors that take part into this process: municipalities, counties, Ministries, the Sámi Parliament, the Norwegian government, etc (NOU 2016:18, 2016; Sametinget, 2018).

As it will be seen further in this chapter, other types of actors may also be involved in these dynamics, such as non-governmental organizations, private individuals and international organisms. Therefore, this is not a process restricted to the municipal level, but rather a complex system involving the participation of several actors from various sectors. The predominance of public authorities in this broad system seem to enable its characterization as a case of multi-level governance, in which there are specific networks within each municipality belonging to the administrative area for Sámi languages, the scope of this investigation. In spite of the choice of the municipalities as the environment in which the interactions unfold, they are not only a contextual background, but also central actors in this process. The section below proposes a discussion regarding the articulation among various state authorities as a means of handling Sámi issues domestically. It also suggests that there is a diversity in terms of the actors that compose this governance system.

### 5.1 Sámi policies in a multi-actor and multi-level perspective

Broderstad et al (2015) identify the relevance of the relationship between different government levels as a phenomenon that is constantly changing. In this scenario, they argue that partnerships have been

used more and more as a management tool that allows authorities to interact and achieve specific goals. In their study, Broderstad et al (2015) consider the interactions between the Sámi Parliament and government actors developed under the consultation agreement mentioned in the previous chapter. They conceive consultations based on two different approaches: “(...) as a type of interaction that emphasizes arguments, learning and dialogue versus consultations understood as an arena for state governance, regulation and the effective implementation of state Sámi policies” (Jenssen 2011 cited by Broderstad et al, 2015, p. 92, own translation).

As far as the Sámi authorities are concerned, Semb (2010) characterizes the relationship between the Sámi Parliament and the Norwegian state in terms of a partnership based on minimally equivalent parties embedded in a consultative relationship. According to this author, “the relevant political documents from the Sámi Parliament thus outline how, what is portrayed as, two separate political communities and corresponding political systems can and should co-exist (...)” (Semb, 2010, p. 81). This enables the perception of the *Sameting* as a relevant stakeholder in the national arena, co-existing side by side with the central government and developing horizontal relations with state authorities.

The municipal perspective, on its turn, is taken into account in the analysis proposed by Josefsen (2015) about the developments of the Norwegian Sámi policy. This is done through the use of the three main perspectives: the hierarchical management model, the co-management perspective and the civil society approach. Regardless of the viewpoint, this author discovered that the Sámi Parliament has a pivotal position in the domestic Sámi policy system. When it comes to the hierarchical management model, the municipal sphere is seen as one of the levels in which the Sámi policy is put in practice. In this process, the national layer delegates power and administrative responsibilities to the municipal authorities, who will then implement policies and projects taking into account the internal situation of a certain locality. Therefore,

«This perspective emphasizes that the Sami policy, which is conducted locally, reflects an overall and integrated state policy design. In this perspective, the Sami Parliament will not have a direct political role vis-à-vis the municipal or county municipal level, but will work to ensure that the state adopts laws and regulations that ensure Sami interests. In the governance hierarchy, the Sami Parliament will act as part of the state's administrative hierarchy, where the Sami Parliament has delegated administrative tasks on behalf of the state” (Josefsen, 2015, pp. 174-175, own translation)<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Perspektivet vektlegger at samepolitikken som føres lokalt, gjenspeiler en overordnet og integrert statlig politikktutforming. Sametinget vil i dette perspektivet ikke ha en direkte politisk rolle overfor kommunalt eller fylkeskommunalt nivå, men vil arbeide for at staten skal vedta lover og bestemmelser som sikrer samiske interesser. I styringshierarkiet vil Sametinget opptre som en del av statens forvaltningshierarki, hvor Sametinget har delegerte forvaltningsoppgaver på vegne av staten.

The co-management perspective highlighted by Josefsen (2015) seems to be analogous to the governance literature in the sense that both focus on the cooperation efforts multiple actors put forward in the public space, producing cooperative outcomes for society. In opposition to the hierarchical management model, the co-management perspective acknowledge the Sámi Parliament and the municipalities as actors who are in the same level in terms of autonomy, establishing a series of horizontal links with each other as a means to promote the governance of Sámi issues (Josefsen, 2015).

An example is the formalization of cooperation by the Sámi Parliament with many Norwegian *kommuner* and counties where the Sámi community is present, including Troms, in 2002 and Finnmark, in 2003. It is necessary to remember, however, that horizontal relationships do not necessarily mean that asymmetries do not exist. Rather, it is to say that the partners engaged in such a cooperative arrangement depend on each other in various ways. While the Sámi Parliament seeks to increase its role in the local sphere, the municipalities count on this institution to raise its knowledge and capacities, for example (Josefsen, 2015).

The last perspective taken into account by Josefsen (2015) is the civil society dimension, which focuses on the relations between the municipal level and non-state actors and the attempt by the latter to shape the decision-making processes via groups of interest or Sámi political groups. Since the Sámi Parliament is not only an administrative body, but also a politically elected organization, these interests are often represented within the *Sameting* (Josefsen, 2015).

In parallel with De Vries' (2016) and Brunsson's (2007) ideas concerning the role of municipalities in Public Administration, the fact that the Norwegian *kommuner* function as small scale representatives of the national government in the local sphere illustrates the great number of responsibilities in terms of public service delivery that these autonomous units have, especially in the Nordic countries (Seller and Lindström, 2007). This means that, in Kautokeino and Kåfjord, the municipalities strive to fulfill the juridical framework created by the Norwegian Parliament and the Sámi policy guidelines for which the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (*Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartement*)<sup>18</sup> is responsible.

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<sup>18</sup> It is necessary to point out the the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation is not the only Ministry the Sámi authorities are constantly in contact with to fulfil Sámi language policies. An example is the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, which developed the Action Plan for Sámi Languages, used as a relevant document for the analysis. Moreover, different ministries finance the work of the Sámi Parliament depending on the policy area (Samentinget, 2019b).

These two institutions have the power to design policies concerning the Sámi languages. These policies are based on societal problems or issues that demand a public response, as affirmed by Dye (1972) and Howlett et al (2009). Such problems concern many different areas covered by Norway's Sámi policy, language being one of them. In this respect, one vital issue would be how to guarantee that the Sámi languages achieve an equality status compared to the Norwegian language, as the law states. Another relevant issue relates to duty of offering Sámi citizens services in Northern Sámi – or other Sámi languages – in the administrative area for Sámi languages and outside of it, where there are diverse municipalities with various demographic and language situations.

It is also relevant to mention that the policies created nationally are anchored on international laws and regimes signed and ratified by the Norwegian state, such as the ILO Convention, and on the Norwegian constitution, which also has legal provisions regarding Norway's obligation to safeguard the Sámi language, culture and livelihood domestically. They are also based on consultation procedures with the Sámi Parliament, who receives funds and administrative tasks from the central level (Josefsen et al, 2015).

Despite the existence of constraints in financial and deliberation terms, some factors denote the institutional relevance of the Sámi Parliament in Norway: i) the fact that this organization has the right to be consulted on matters that involve the Sámi population and to engage into negotiations with public authorities; ii) the autonomy to decide how the received funds will be allocated; iii) the possibility to delegate tasks to other stakeholders according to the provisions of its annual budget (Josefsen et al, 2015).

As an administrative and representative organ of the Sámi issues and interests, the Sámi Parliament can be considered as the most prominent authority in terms of language management and development in Norway (NOU 2016:18, 2016). This was a unanimous statement in all the semi-structured interviews, showing that this institution is a general important player in the governance networks in Kautokeino and Kåfjord, but also nationally. In terms of the role of the *Sameting* in this process, Informants R1 and R2 attribute the professionalization of the Northern Sámi language to the work done by this institution. This is achieved mostly through the sponsoring of the generation of knowledge in Northern Sámi and about this language, as well the existence of incentives to use Northern Sámi in the workplace and to the formation of professionals with language capacity to work as public service providers within health, education, law, etc (Informant R1, 2019; Informant R2, 2019).

## 5.2 Internal dynamics

In terms of the internal dynamics of the governance networks in Kautokeino and Kåfjord, as a means to classify the data and find patterns in terms of the management of Northern Sámi, a few major categories were identified: relevant actors; goal consensus and characteristics of the duty; size, density and fragmentation; power and modes of governance. These categories were proposed in the scope of the integrative framework designed by Provan and Kenis (2007) and will be further applied to the empirical cases below. An additional category that does not belong to the referred theoretical framework, but which emerged as a recurrent theme from the semi-structured interviews was the existence of general and specific challenges. Hence, this dimension will equally be included in the analysis.

### 5.2.1 Relevant actors

This section intends to present the organizations that are perceived as members of the governance networks in each municipality and whose work is in consonance with the general goal to promote the Northern Sámi language in the local level. At first, the relevant actors connected to the Kåfjord *kommune* will be outlined, followed by the organizations belonging to Kautokeino.

#### 5.2.1.1 Relevant institutions in Kåfjord

The development of a Sámi organizational milieu started with the establishment of the first Sámi institutions in Kåfjord already in the 1970s. An example were the activities carried out by the University of Tromsø in the region, contributing to an increased awareness of the Sámi milieu. In addition, the emergence of branches of Sámi political organizations, such as the NSR and the SLF, also helped to put Sámi issues in the agenda after the occurrence of the Alta controversy (Angell et al, 2012).

As Angell et al (2012) affirm, it is equally relevant to point out that the flourishing of a youth organization in the heart of the NSR. These young Sámi individuals started questioning the effects of the *fornorskning* period on their identity as Sámi, deciding that it was time to promote a change of paradigm in the way Sámi viewed themselves and were perceived by the society. The creation of the Riddu Ridđu festival was a consequence of this attempt, in which «through music and culture they wished to turn shame into pride» (Riddu Ridđu, nd, np).

According to Leonenko (2008), Riddu Riđđu is a yearly event that occurs in the district of Manndalen since 1991, in the Kåfjord municipality. The name means «a small storm on the coast» (Riddu Riđđu, nd, np). Despite the initial lack of support, the festival has grown in size and capacity, welcoming local and national participants, as well as indigenous peoples from abroad and their sympathizers. Nowadays, Riddu Riđđu receives fixed term financial support from the Norwegian state, but also from the society and local authorities (Riddu Riđđu, nd).

Leonenko (2008) perceives the festival as a mechanism of cultural revitalization for the Sea Sámi people and a cultural platform for the indigenous people in the world. In terms of management, Riddu Riđđu functions as an organization with four employees and a staff of over a hundred people (Riddu Riđđu, nd). It is located in the facilities that belong to the *Senter for Nordlige folk*, the Centre for Northern Peoples, in Manndalen (Senter for Nordlige folk, 2019). During the semi-structured interviews, three of the six informants mentioned it as a vital Sámi organization in the Kåfjord municipality.

The Centre for Northern Peoples, formerly Ája Samisk Senter, was established in 1996, in the Kåfjord *kommune*. The centre has the purpose to gather and spread knowledge about the Sea Sámi people and also about indigenous people settled in the Arctic region. This institution not only works as a knowledge and information arena, but it also functions as the home of many Sámi institutions, such as the Sámi Parliament's administrative office in Kåfjord, the Sámi language centre, the Riddu Riđđu festival, the Troms county library, the Nord-Troms museum, the municipal library, NRK Sápmi, the youth club of Manndalen, etc. These and more organizations rent offices at the centre (Senter for nordlige folk, 2019).

The centre offers activities connected with art, language and culture. There are exhibitions, seminars, courses, concerts, films and others. These are the result of partnerships between the centre and the abovementioned institutions. The organization is owned by the Sámi Parliament, the Troms county, the Kåfjord municipality, the Riddu Riđđu festival and a few private actors. The centre is financed by the first two organizations (Senter for nordlige folk, 2019).

In the semi-structured interviews, both Riddu Riđđu and the Centre for Northern Peoples were pointed out as spontaneous outcomes from a grassroot movement that had the general objective to raise awareness about the Sámi culture, language and way of life by informant SB (2019). This person believes that, despite acting as single organizations working with their own projects in the same space, they are guided by the same general objective.

In addition, the organizations that are present in the centre have between 6 and 8 sporadic meetings every year about the management of the centre and its activities. Mutual projects have also emerged as a result of this local organizational ecosystem, such as the creation of events in the Sámi National Day in February. Some of the organizations involved were *Riddu Ridđu*, the Sámi language centre and the county library (Senter for nordlige folk, 2019). From the interviews, it emerged that, in spite of the fact that each of the members have their own organizational settings and individual projects, they also interact with each other and with the administration of the centre to achieve a common goal. In this cooperative arrangement, however, there is not a central authority in charge of ordering the conduction of a specific task or project, for example (Informant SB, 2019).

Another relevant actor is the University of Tromsø. Even though it is situated a few hundred kilometers from Kåfjord, it contributes financially and culturally to the development of the *Riddu* festival every year. Moreover, this higher education institution is located in an environment in which the Sámi community is very present, receiving visits from international delegations who want to have a glimpse of this research milieu (Tromsø Sameforening, 2002). Despite this, Tromsø is not a traditional Sámi settlement, leading the University to establish frequent contacts with the Centre for Northern Peoples as a means to ensure that the guests have a genuine experience. Therefore, they organize joint visits and seminars about the center, its work and about Kåfjord in a Sámi perspective (Tromsø Sameforening, 2002).

Another crucial organization for the management of the Northern Sámi language in Kåfjord is the *Giellasiida*/Sámi language centre. Located in the building ran by the Centre for Northern Peoples, «the Sámi language centre was established in 1994 as part of the implementation of the Sámi language Act. The language centre is a teaching and competence centre with a broad target group» (Angell et al, 2012, p. 52, own translation)<sup>19</sup>. It is equally relevant to point out that this was one of the first Sámi language centres established in Norway (Informant SA, 2019).

The Sámi language centre is owned by the Kåfjord municipality, receiving funding from the Troms county and the Sámi Parliament as well. As the abovementioned citation indicates, the language centre has a large target group, comprising adults and children from the whole Nord-Troms region and even from neighboring countries (Angell et al, 2012). Informants R1, SA and SB are unanimous in mentioning the role of *Giellasiida* in the development of the Northern Sámi language, due to its multiple functions and activities.

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<sup>19</sup> Sentret ble opprettet i 1994 som et ledd i implementeringen av den samiske språkloven. Språksentret er et undervisnings- og kompetansesenter med en vid målgruppe.

In this respect, informant SA believes that the general purpose of the language centre in Kåfjord is to save what is left from the language, focusing on the use of the local dialect by adults whose parents had Northern Sámi as their first language and also by kindergarten and schoolchildren. Through events and activities such as language courses, language cafés, translations, the production of teaching materials and seminars, Giellasiida aims at creating a language arena to guarantee the survival of Northern Sámi for the next generations, paraphrasing the words of informant SA (2019).

Angell et al (2012, p. 52, own translation) go further and portray the Sámi language centre in Kåfjord as «(...) without doubt the most important vitalizing institution within language and culture in the municipality»<sup>20</sup>. The centre also cooperates with a wide number of institutions locally, regionally and even internationally to fulfill Sámi language projects (Angell et al, 2012). An example is the promotion of language camps for families with language centres from other municipalities in the Troms county. These centres also have joint meetings every year in which the objective is to increase learning and exchange experiences (Informant SA, 2019; Informant TC, 2019). Another example is the establishment of a teacher and student network composed by Sámi students and teachers, as well as Finnish students and teachers in the Northern portions of the Troms county (Angell et al, 2012). Finally, it is also relevant to point out that Giellasiida and the Riddu Ridđu festival also work together, offering Northern Sámi language courses during the event (Informant SB, 2019).

As far as the cooperation with other organizations is concerned, the Sámi language centre in Kåfjord has yearly meetings with the other Sámi language centres in Norway, organized by the Sámi Parliament. At the same time, gatherings with other Sámi language centres in the Troms county happen nearly every month, as a means to coordinate common projects in the area (Informant SB, 2019). The centre reports their activities not only to the *kommune* and their political committee, but also to the Sámi Parliament, which is a major funder of Giellasiida. Therefore, the allocation of resources has to be aligned with the activity plans and the budget of *Sametinget* (Informant SB, 2019; Informant TA, 2019; Informant TC, 2019).

Despite the diversity and the high volume of activities offered in the scope of the Sámi language centre in Kåfjord, there seem to be significant challenges to the development of the Northern Sámi language in the municipality. According to informant R1 and to the *Primary Bilingualplan 2018-2020 (Overordna tospråklighetsplan)*, the main objective within the management of the Northern Sámi language in Kåfjord is making the *kommune* a bilingual place.

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<sup>20</sup> (...) uten tvil den viktigste vitaliserende institusjon innen språk og kultur i kommunen.

The founding principles for this goal are the *Sámi Act*, which states that the Sámi and the Norwegian languages have equal value; and the paragraph 108 of the Norwegian constitution, which indicates that the state authorities have the responsibility to ensure that the Sámi people can protect and develop their language, culture and livelihood (Kåfjord Kommune, 2017). The inclusion of this municipality in the administrative area for Sámi languages in 1990, established through the *Sámi Act*, is also a legal tool that gives public institutions a concrete mechanism in terms of the promotion of the Sámi languages (Angell, 2012).

As well as the other previously mentioned organizations in this section, Kåfjord *kommune* also receives funds from the Sámi Parliament as a means to support the work done by the municipality to lift the status of the Northern Sámi language and decrease the distance between this and the Norwegian language. As active members of the administrative area for Sámi languages, the *kommuner* have a preponderant role in the implementation of projects and policies, interacting on a daily basis with actors in the national, regional and local political fields (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012).

#### 5.2.1.2 Relevant institutions in Kautokeino

The first relevant actor that composes the governance network in Kautokeino is the municipality. According to the town's municipal plan, entitled *Kommuneplanens samfunnsdel 2017-2030*, the municipality brands itself and aims to be perceived as the *veiviseren i Sápmi*, which can be interpreted as a guide or a leader in the Sámi core area. This vision is also expressed in terms of the municipal goals for the promotion of the Sámi language and culture, in which Kautokeino aims to be a pioneer in this field (Kautokeino kommune, 2017), leading the other municipalities in the region innovatively and showing them the way. According to Informant TA (2019), Kautokeino was one of the first municipalities to initiate this public work with Sámi languages in the 1980s. This *kommune* claimed that it needed financial support to provide public services in two languages for the local citizens.

In this process, despite the status of Northern Sámi as a widely spread language in the society in comparison to Norwegian, one of the aims is to strive for a bilingual municipality. Therefore, all the staff employed by Kautokeino *kommune* should have linguistic competences both in Sámi and in Norwegian (Kautokeino kommune, 2017). This is in compliance with the *Sameloven* and the Norwegian constitution, that gives the inhabitants of the city the right to use Northern Sámi in the municipality, orally and/or in written form, which involves the educational, the health, the juridical and all the public sectors that have the mission to provide citizens with public goods.

In order to make public management and public service provision in different areas a more efficient process, Kautokeino cooperates with other Sámi municipalities, such as Karasjok and Porsanger, in terms of the administrative and economical system. This work is also aimed at translating webpages and online forms from Norwegian to Sámi, as well as what is written in the law. These three municipalities are also involved in a cooperative arrangement called Ávjovárri indigenous region to promote regional development in various fields (Nygaard, Nylund and Karlstad, 2016).

On the one hand, the municipal plan contends that «the municipality was for a long time the only one in the country that equated Sami and Norwegian in public administration» (Kautokeino kommune, 2017, p. 9). On the other hand, Angell et al (2012) indicate that, despite pursuing bilingualism as a goal, in public administration this status is not always accomplished. An example is the fact that the Norwegian language is frequently used in the administrative procedures and public documents. Hence, in line with Angell et al's (2012) thoughts, even if in the implementation level the municipality succeeds to offer municipal services in Sámi, especially orally, the Norwegian language remains preponderant in a few sectors.

In the semi-structure interviews, Informant R2 (2019) called attention to the fact that the central government has the power to decide over the kinds of services which will be provided by the municipality to the people. The problem, according to this interviewee, is that the central authorities do not take this responsibility themselves: «They just decide how it is going to be and forget that there is one more language in Norway. Not only bokmål and nynorsk, but also Sámi. And not only one Sámi language, but three» (Informant R2, 2019, np, own translation)<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, in different online systems and teaching materials, these are frequently translated to diverse immigrant languages, but rarely to Sámi (Informant R2, 2019; (Nygaard, Nylund and Karlstad, 2016). This is seen in the online application *Salaby*, which is displayed in bokmål, nynorsk and fifteen languages, but none of the Sámi languages (Informant R2, 2019).

Informant R2 goes further and exemplifies this by mentioning a speech given by the county governor (fylkesmannen), in which the municipality is often treated as a state translation office. The reason behind this is that a lot of important information is usually received by the municipality in Norwegian, meaning that the central authorities do not take into consideration that Northern Sámi is the main language in this area (Informant R2, 2019). Informant R1 (2019) expresses a similar opinion,

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<sup>21</sup> De bare bestemmer hvordan det skal være og de glemmer at de finnes et språk til i Norge. Ikke bare bokmål og nynorsk, men også samisk. Og det er ikke bare et samisk språk, men tre.

indicating that it is more expensive for a municipality to be bilingual, in view of the extra expenses with translations, personnel and language training.

Besides the situation of the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino, it is also necessary to identify which institutions shape the governance of this language and their role in this broad system. The existence of this governance system would not have been possible without a mix of variables. Pedersen and Høgmo (2012) argue that this process was facilitated by the formation of a Sámi knowledge platform from the 1970s on; a highly educated and professionalized elite and the growth of various Sámi institutions not only on the language field, but also within education, culture, public administration and public service provision. In view of this,

«Through the rise of a modern Sámi institutional network in the central, regional and local levels has the Sámi society become visible again in Sea Sámi districts and more visible in the traditional Sámi core areas, both through material symbols and via the development of a Sámi public space, where local and regional institutions play a key role» (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012, p. 76, own translation)<sup>22</sup>.

The kommuner and other local actors have a crucial function in the abovementioned dynamics, functioning as a link between the decision-making processes in the administrative area for Sámi languages and the local networks (Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012). In Kautokeino, specifically, there are a significant number of relevant institutions that contribute to the development and promotion of the Northern Sámi language.

In addition to the municipality, they are the Sámi Parliament's offices for education and language, the former Nordic Sámi institute, the Sámi Allaskuvla or the Sámi University College, the Sámi giellaráđđi or Sámi language council, the Giellagiisá or the Sámi language center and Gáldu – competence center for indigenous rights. Cultural and media institutions located in the municipality also contribute to the visibility of the Northern Sámi language, such as NRK Sápmi, the Sámi music festival, the Sámi international film festival and the Beaivváš Sámi National Theater<sup>23</sup>(Leonenko, 2008; Angell et al, 2012; Pedersen and Høgmo, 2012).

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<sup>22</sup> Gjennom framveksten av et modern samisk institusjonsnettverk både på sentralt, regionalt og lokalt nivå, er det samiske samfunn igjen blitt synlig i sjøsamiske distrikter og mer synlig i de tradisjonelle samiske kjerneområdene, både gjennom materielle symboler og gjennom utviklingen av en samisk offentlighet der lokale og regionale institusjoner spiller en nøkkelrolle.

<sup>23</sup> Understanding the existence of various actors within governance networks at the local level is a process that depends on many factors, being time one of them. Due to the limited number of months to the development of this investigation, one strategy adopted was to focus primarily on the institutions that were referred to by the informants as members of broader cooperative arrangements for the management of the Northern Sámi language. The abovementioned cultural institutions were not mentioned by any of the informants and, therefore, will not be prioritized in the analysis, in spite of their recognizable importance in mobilizing efforts for keeping the language alive and visible. However, it is interesting to acknowledge that these cultural organizations also emerged as a result of the cooperative work among different

In parallel with the Centre for Northern Peoples, in Kåfjord, *Diehtosiida* or the Sámi science building in Kautokeino is also a living Sámi organism that comprises a variety of institutions working with Sámi issues. Some of them are the *Sámi Allaskuvla*, the offices belonging to the Sámi Parliament, the Gáldu centre, the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry and the Sámi Archive (Varsi and Solbakk, 2006a). The former Nordic Sámi Institute was also part of this institutional team before its merger with the Sámi University College in 2005 (Samas, n.d).

According to Varsi and Solbakk (2006), the Nordic Sámi Institute was established in 1973 by the Nordic Council in partnership with the Sámi community, as a platform for the development of Sámi expertise in different knowledge sectors, including language. The research projects undertaken in the scope of the Institute were made possible through the establishment of partnerships with external organizations from the education field. The Nordic Sámi Institute had its own publications database, entitled *Dieđut*, which is still running under the administration of the Sámi University. Another important source of knowledge in the language and in other areas is the *Sámi dieđa-laš áigečála*, a journal in Sámi that results from the cooperation among the former Nordic Sámi Institute, the Sámi University College and the University of Tromsø (Varsi and Solbakk, 2006a).

The Sámi University College, on its turn, was created in 1989, «to offer Sámi teacher education – and after that also higher-level studies – in Sámi language and in a Sámi language environment» (Samas, n.d., n.p). This institution also has the goal to contribute to the further development of the Sámi language, culture and livelihood. Therefore, the University is a relevant language arena in Kautokeino and an important knowledge base for indigenous people. Moreover, SUAS integrates the indigenous network of the University of the Arctic, cooperating with other higher education institutions in the circumpolar area. (Samas, n.d).

The Sámi University is financed directly through the Norwegian state, but this higher education institution also develops partnerships with the Sámi Parliament in the language and educational field. This cooperative work is aimed at the formation of Sámi speaker teachers and the promotion of Sámi language and culture in the kindergartens. A concrete example is the SáMOS project, which focuses on kindergartens (Informant TA, 2019; Informant TB, 2019). In the scope of SáMOS (*Sámi mánát ođđa searvelanjain*), the Sámi Parliament and the Sámi University College join forces to «make

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stakeholders. In general lines, the Beavvváš Sámi National Theater, for example, is owned by the Norwegian state, Kautokeino *kommune*, the Norwegian Sámi National Association (NSR) and the Sámi National Federation (SL). The Sámi Parliament is one of the major funders of the Theater's activities. (Sametinget, 2008).

kindergartens more Sámi»<sup>24</sup> (Sametinget, 2019a, March 14, n.p, own translation). In order to accomplish this goal, both institutions will aim their attention at the recruitment of teachers, the safeguard of competencies and research based on the kindergartens' needs and the promotion of seminars (Sametinget, 2019a, March 14).

*Gáldu*, the competence center for indigenous rights, was created in consonance with Norway's Sámi and human rights policy. The word *Gáldu* mean «source» in Sámi, which reflects the goal of this institution to be a driving force in terms of knowledge and research for indigenous issues in the national and international plan. Therefore, the centre is an information source not only regarding the Sámi people, but also on additional themes that are connected with indigenous peoples worldwide (Norwegian Centre for Research Data, 2002; Varsi and Solbakk, 2006b).

*Gáldu* has a publication journal for indigenous rights called *Gáldu Čála* which, according to Varsi and Solbakk (2006b), has an academic status and a high level of expertise is developed under its auspices. The centre is financed by the Norwegian government who, together with the Sámi Parliament, is responsible to point out the board members, composed by individuals coming from Sámi and Norwegian institutions. Recently, *Gáldu* was incorporated by the Norwegian national institution for human rights (NIM) by an initiative of the Norwegian Parliament, endowing NIM with a higher expertise in indigenous research (Norwegian Centre for Research Data, 2002).

Also previously located in Kautokeino, the *Sámi giellaráđđi* or Sámi Language Council was created in 1992 and functioned as a public organ dedicated to Sámi language matters. In 2002, this institution was incorporated into the Sámi Parliament (Duolljá, 2014). Even though the central administration of the Sámi Parliament is situated in Karasjok, the language and teaching departments are present in Kautokeino. Another relevant institution present in Kautokeino is the Norwegian Sámi Association (NSR), founded in the end of the 1960s as a non-governmental organization that gathered local Sámi associations in Norway. With the purpose to defend Sámi interests in the civil and political arena, its action contributed to the creation of the Sámi Parliament, where the NSR has representatives nowadays (Norske Samers Riksforbund, 2003). According to Josefsen (2015), the NSR has also had a primary role in the institutionalization of cultural and language affairs in the municipalities, working to strengthen the resource allocation for the Sámi language centres locally and for the fulfillment of the NOU 2016:18 *Hjertespråket* (NSR, n.d).

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<sup>24</sup> (...) å gjøre samiske barnehager mer samiske.

As Informant TA (2019) explains, the structure of the Sámi Parliament and the history prior to its establishment allowed this organization to be present in many different municipalities across the administrative area for Sámi languages. Similarly to the incorporation of the Sámi Language Council, the Sámi Parliament also overtook other previously independent Sámi institutions located outside Karasjok, which then became offices affiliated to the Sámi Parliament. Despite this geographic spill-over, these units are all subordinated to the Sámi Parliament's central *bureau* in Karasjok (Informant TA, 2019). A more detailed explanation regarding the key role of the Sámi Parliament in the governance networks of Kautokeino and Kåfjord will be done in the next chapter.

The Sámi language centre in Kautokeino, also called *Giellagiisa*, was established in 2015 by the municipality (Pulk, 2015, October 13). The language and culture department is responsible for the centre's activities, which have the goal to safeguard, systematize and manage the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino. Its projects are concentrated in different areas, such as the creation of language arenas and camps for kids, youngsters and adults; language courses, etc. The language centre cooperates with the Culture School as a means to offer educational services about the Sámi language and culture for kids and the youth in the town (Kautokeino kommune, 2018).

In the local plan, the centre is to work together with the municipality to guarantee that the Northern Sámi language develops daily as technology and the professional tasks also evolve, contributing to update the vocabulary with new words that may not exist in this language and come from Norwegian or English, for example. At the same time, this work can also help to keep the ancient vocabulary alive through the activities offered by the language centre. The centre also aims to be a reference institution nationally, offering distance learning courses in Sámi (Pulk, 2015, October 13). Besides the *kommune*, *Giellagiisa* also receives funds from the Sámi Parliament in the scope of the bilingualism grants or *tospråkligheitskudd* (Kautokeino kommune, 2018).

In the educational system, as the statistics report *Sami Statistics Speak* highlight, when comparing the figures related to the number of secondary school students learning Sámi increased by approximately 75% between the 1990 and 2011. This does not mean, however, that there was a stable increase, since there were fluctuations from year to year. While the number of children learning Sámi as a second language increased by 50% in the same period (with remarkable fluctuations between 1990 and 2005), the amount of kids studying Sámi as first language rose by 58% in this time (Johansen et al, 2018). These statistics do not differentiate, however, between Northern Sámi and the other Sámi

languages found in Norway, which means that it is not possible to precise the exact proportion of children learning Northern Sámi.

In Kautokeino, about 90% of the school students have Sámi as first language, but also learn Norwegian during their school life. In the secondary schools it is common to experience a class in Norwegian and Sámi at the same time when the classrooms have a mix between students who have different first languages (Angell et al, 2012). However, there are challenges in terms of the recruitment of teachers in Sámi and Norwegian (Kautokeino kommune, 2017), as well as in terms of the availability of teaching materials in Sámi, so students are sometimes compelled to using Norwegian books and learnings resources (Informant R2, 2019).

### 5.2.1.3 Summary

As previously mentioned in this section, the governance systems for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino and Kåfjord can be perceived as examples of multi-level governance, with the participation of authorities from various levels. Therefore, it appears that these dynamics follow a general framework, which is illustrated in the figure below. Similarities were found in terms of the spheres of government involved in the process, as well as in terms of the types of organizations that take part into the governance system. Even if this investigation focused on the municipalities as the environment in which two different governance networks emerged, it is undeniable that there is an articulation between the local, regional, national and international level towards the promotion of the Northern Sámi language. In an attempt to systematize the general multi-level and multi-actor governance system which can be applied to both cases – and, possibly, to other Nordic countries where the Sámi are present, the table below was elaborated. It also has the purpose to represent the diffusion of authority among various levels (Hooghe and Marks, 2003), as mentioned in the theoretical chapter.

**Table 3 – Multi-level governance system and organizations**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Organizational types</b>
Local	Municipalities, Language centres, Cultural Institutions
Regional	Counties
National	Norwegian Parliament, Sámi Parliament, labour, Universities, Research Centres
International	UN, Sámi Council

It is also remarkable that there is a mutual influence flow within this system, meaning that what happens in one level is likely to cause impacts on another. As the focal point of this work are the municipalities, it is interesting to see how their actions, mainly on the implementation level, are indirectly shaped by the dynamics that affect the international level. The international level produces laws and regimes that may be legally binding for the states who commit themselves with the incorporation of these determinations into national law. Or, in the case of the Sámi council and the Sámi language Board – which belongs to the former -, it has the capacity to strengthen the development of the Sámi languages, via the establishment of joint projects, the normalisation of terminologies, etc (Giellagáldu, n.d.).

In view of the abovementioned circumstances, the local sphere has to adapt its work and actions to the national and international provisions, creating strategies and projects that fit into the specific reality of the municipality, at the same time taking into account the existence of a general legal framework. However, what happens in the local level can also cause reflexes in the national level and, ultimately, in the international environment, as the Alta-Kautokeino episode demonstrated. This provoked a change in the Sámi policy domestically, but also called attention to the Sámi and to the broader indigenous cause internationally, involving the participation of the international society and putting this issue in the international agenda (Minde, 2005; Barroso-Hoffman, 2008; Albury, 2015). This process denotes the importance of the articulation between different levels and actors to handle a specific policy or societal problem. Following table 3, that represented the existence of a general multi-level governance system for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language, tables 4 and 5 present a more detailed overview of the actors that compose the networks in each municipality, the organizational type and their level of action.

In specific terms, the the tables illustrate the existence of two separate – yet similar, in institutional terms - governance networks in the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord. The images are simple

representations of the main organizations found in this broad cooperative arrangement for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in each municipality, as a result of the conduction of semi-structured interviews and the prospection of secondary data. It is necessary to mention, however, that the category *level of action* is a complex dimension. The reason for this is that, even though most of these organizations are located in the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord, respectively, they may have a broader scope of action, transcending the local level and reaching other spheres.

**Table 4 – Governance network in Kautokeino**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Level of action</b>	<b>Location</b>
Kautokeino kommune	Public sector	Local	Kautokeino
Sámi language centre	Public sector	Local	Kautokeino
Diehtosiida	Knowledge centre	Local/National	Kautokeino
Cultural institutions	Theater/Festivals	Local/National	Kautokeino
Other kommuner	Public sector	Local/Regional	Porsanger, Karasjok
Other language centres	Public sector	Local/Regional	Various <i>kommuner</i>
Finnmark county	Public sector	Regional	Finnmark
Sámi Parliament	Representative and advisory body	National	Local office in Kautokeino/Karasjok
Norwegian Sámi Association	Interest organization	National	Kautokeino
Sámi University College	University	National	Kautokeino
Gáldu/NIM	Research centre	National	Kautokeino

**Table 5 – Governance network in Kåfjord**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Level of action</b>	<b>Location</b>
Kåfjord kommune	Public sector	Local	Kåfjord
Sámi language centre	Public sector	Local	Kåfjord
Centre for Northern Peoples	Knowledge and cultural centre	Local/National/International	Kåfjord
Riddu Riddu	NGO	International	Kåfjord
Other kommuner	Public sector	Local/Regional	Various <i>kommuner</i>
Other language centres	Public sector	Local/Regional	Storfjord, Tromsø
Troms county	Public sector	Regional	Troms
University of Tromsø	University	National	Tromsø
Sámi Parliament	Representative and advisory body	National	Local office in Kåfjord/Karasjok

Examples are Diehtosiida and Centre for Northern Peoples, for example, which are organizations that comprise a myriad of institutions. Despite their close collaboration with the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord and the fact that they offer services to the local Sámi community, the actors

located within Diehtosiida and Centre for Northern People are not restricted to the municipal sphere. The Sámi Parliament is a stakeholder that illustrates this fact, since it has a central office in Karasjok, but even local offices in Kautokeino and Kåfjord. At the same time as being inserted in the central level, this organization actively partners with the organizations cited in the abovementioned tables to fulfil Sámi language projects and promote the Northern Sámi language locally.

The same logic can be applied to the University of Tromsø and the Sámi University in Kautokeino. Even though both are autonomous actors, they offer services to the community and are in close collaboration with the municipalities and other local institutions, showing that the diffusion of authority highlighted by Hoogh and Marks (2003) is a reality in these governance systems. Also, the case of Riddu Ridđu is also relevant, since it started as a local institution which has evolved over the decades and nowadays has reached the international level, congregating indigenous peoples from various countries and promoting the Sea Sámi language and culture (Riddu Ridđu, n.d). It is equally important to mention that this is a compilation of the most evident actors found throughout the research process, which happened under specific time constraints. This means that undertaking the same analysis without the existence of this kind of challenge might lead to the discovery of additional stakeholders that also take part into this system.

### 5.2.2 Goal consensus and characteristics of the duty

Provan and Kenis (2007) affirm that the existence of hierarchies in the system may pose obstacles to the achievement of an ultimate common goal. In view of this assumption, a few questions may be posed: is there really a goal consensus within the governance networks in terms of the promotion of the Northern Sámi language? How does hierarchy impact this process? Why were the governance networks formed? While the two first questions relate to the category entitled *goal consensus*, the last question may enable an understanding of the category *characteristics of the duty*. Both were referred to by Provan and Kenis (2007) and explained in chapter 2.

The interviewees were unanimous in mentioning that the organizations involved in the promotion of the Northern Sámi language, both in Kautokeino and in Kåfjord, have the same general goal: to promote, develop and guarantee that this language is alive through its use and public service provision. Therefore, there seems to be a general concern to adequate organizational goals and processes to the fulfillment of the determinations that emerge from the Sámi Act, the Norwegian constitution and other relevant public documents legislating about Sámi language issues.

However, it is necessary to point out that the formation of these networks occurred in a rather spontaneous way along the time, which means it was not a mandated arrangement. In this respect, Informant TC (2019) mentions the first organizational meeting in 1917 for all Sámi organizations in Norway, which took place in Trondheim, as a mark for this cooperative work. According to this interviewee,

«Of course there must be a lot of cooperation, otherwise we would not have had a Sámi Parliament nowadays. It was local interest, it was the organizations..I mean that there has always been cooperation because one wishes to promote the Sámi interest and to implement arrangements so that the Sámi [languages] get the status they need. And that one gets the same rights as each Norwegian has» (Informant TC, 2019, own translation)<sup>25</sup>.

In Kåfjord, the results from the primary and secondary data indicate that this collaboration started in the end of the 1970s, with the emergence of grassroot movements from Sámi youth organizations and highly educated individuals. Their goal was to eliminate the negative stigmatization heritage left by the *fornorskning* period, portraying Sámi identity, culture and language as unique and positive elements. The Riddu festival is a non-governmental institution that embodied these values, claiming that the Sámi people should proud to belong to this community (Riddu Ridđu, n.d; Informant SB, 2019).

At the same time, the fact that the Kåfjord *kommune* was one of the first municipalities to join the administrative area for Sámi languages and its commitment to make the city a bilingual place denote an effort to keep the language alive. This also seems to be the goal of the Sámi language centre in the municipality, that strives to create language arenas for children and adults through language courses, language camps, cafés, etc. This means that there is not only a movement towards preventing that the language disappears again (Informant SA, 2019), saving what is left from it (Informant R1, 2019), but also to revitalize it and guarantee its maintenance for the next generations (Leonenko, 2008).

Kautokeino, on its turn, was not impacted by the *fornorskning* in the same way. Therefore, the start of collaborative actions among different institutions in this case did not aim to restore pride or to make the language and culture visible again, because these elements were never lost to the same extent as in Kåfjord. Being Sámi and speaking the Northern Sámi language seems to be so ingrained

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<sup>25</sup> Selvfølgelig må det finnes mange samarbeid, ellers så hade vi ikke fått en Sameting idag. Det var ju lokal interesse, det var organisasjoner...Jeg mener at det har alltid funnet et samarbeid fordi at man ønsker å fremme den samisk intressen og å få på plass ordninger som gjør at samisk får den status det behøver. Og at man får like rettigheter som hver nordmenn har.

in the society that belonging to this community becomes something trivial. When asked about the existence of Sámi schools in the municipality, one of the interviewees became perplexed, replying that they were not Sámi schools, they were just schools where Sámi was the main language spoken by the students and the teachers.

It is a consensus among the informants that there is a lack of professionals in the Sámi area who are capable of speaking Northern Sámi. In Kautokeino, this situation is not as visible as in Kåfjord, especially in view of the existence of kindergartens, schools and higher education institutions where Northern Sámi is the official language. This means that, in Kautokeino, the majority of the kids and teenagers inserted in the educational system not only have Northern Sámi as their first language, but were also educated in this language and used in on a daily basis. These will be the professionals of the future, enabling the perpetuation of this majoritarian language status that Northern Sámi has in the municipality, as well as the existence of workforce with language capacity (Informant TC, 2019). However, even in Kautokeino, there still seems to be challenges in finding bilingual public service employees to execute a myriad of tasks (Informant R2, 2019; Informant TC, 2019).

Therefore, it is undeniable that in the governance networks in each municipality the same general goal stands out: to promote, develop and safeguard the use of the Northern Sámi language. However, there are differences in terms of specific goals. In Kåfjord, there is a general attempt to make the city a bilingual arena, keeping it alive through the creation of opportunities for youngsters and adults to speak the language daily. If in the past the language was commonly spoken and heard in the streets (Informant SA, 2019), this is no longer the case. Even if Northern Sámi is not equal to Norwegian in the municipality, since Norwegian is widely used by the majority of the population, the joint efforts of the institutions in the network have contributed to guarantee that the language is not forgotten.

In Kautokeino, even though the municipality also mentions in its municipal plan the pursuit of bilingualism as a goal, the Northern Sámi language has a very consolidated status in the city, being heard everywhere. Therefore, unlike Kåfjord, it appears that it would not make sense to create language arenas for children and adults in the same way, because Northern Sámi is used by the majority of the population. The general concern is to guarantee the maintenance of the status of the language in the municipality, but also providing education in Norwegian in the educational system.

With the support of the knowledge-based institutions in the city, such as *Gáldu/NIM* and the Sámi University College, for example, Northern Sámi is used as an academic and professional language in

Kautokeino. Partnerships are also established among municipalities to enable the development of the language, so that new terms are incorporated to the vocabulary as they appear. There is equally an attempt to keep the continuous formation of bilingual professionals educated in this language, as informant R2 (2019) mentioned. Many professionals from Kautokeino that have Northern Sámi as first language are hired by other *kommuner* within and without the administrative area for Sámi languages, as a means to offer public services to the Sámi population (Informant TC, 2019).

For the Sámi Parliament, these clearly different language and demographic situations in each case would require diverse responses in terms of strategies and goals (NOU 2016:18, 2016); Informant TA, 2019). The main goal pursued by *Sametinget* in terms of the Sámi language policy is the development of Sámi languages through the augmentation of the language use and the number of speakers (Sametinget, 2012). The *Hjertespråket* report presents suggestions for changes in the administrative model for Sámi languages, considering the particularities of each municipality. This measure has the purpose to give the Sámi population more possibilities to use Sámi languages locally and to facilitate public service delivery by the municipalities (NOU 2016:18, 2016).

In view of these circumstances, three categories were created to differentiate the cases: i) language conservation municipalities (*språkbevaringskommuner*), in which the Sámi languages are perceived as widely present and functioning in society and public administration, such as in Kautokeino; ii) language revitalization municipalities (*språkrevitaliseringskommuner*), where the majority of the population has limited competences in the Sámi languages. Therefore, the work should be aimed at increasing the number of speakers, focusing on individuals with Sámi background and promoting a vitalization of the language. This is the case of Kåfjord; iii) urban municipalities (*storbykommuner*), which are large cities such as Oslo, which need to facilitate the use of Sámi languages in view of the considerable amount of Sámi language speakers (NOU 2016:18, 2016).

Based on these categories and each case, the municipalities would receive funds accordingly. The Sámi Parliament has proposed even further complementary categories to the three abovementioned ones, which illustrates the diversity of contexts manifested by different *kommuner* where the Sámi languages are present in Norway. This administrative framework is still in progress and requires the achievement of a common ground between the Sámi Parliament and the Local government and Modernization Ministry before it can effectively be implemented by and within the municipalities (Informant TA, 2019).

In this framework, the Informant TC (2019) highlights the role of municipalities such as Kautokeino and Karasjok, in which Northern Sámi is used daily and the Sámi people constitute the majority of the population, in the maintenance of the language for the future generations. These *kommuner* are vital for the rest of the Sámi area, «because it is them again who can help other municipalities. They can be as language arenas. These municipalities can be cities where people can come and learn Sámi just by living there. One cannot do this in any other cities» (Informant TC, 2019, own translation)<sup>26</sup>.

As it has been discussed in the previous chapters and in this section, apart from the diffusion of authority among diverse governmental spheres, the central government does have a preponderant goal in designing policies for the Sámi area and population, but so has the Sámi Parliament. In the abovementioned administrative model for the management of the Sámi languages this becomes evident, highlighting the Sámi Parliament as an organ that actively participates of the governance of Sámi issues in Norway, being perceived as a major funder in Sámi language administration and as a delegator of tasks to the municipalities, important partners and effective implementators of policies in this system.

Thus, it seems reasonable to affirm that the existence of hierarchies do not prevent the fulfillment of common goals, regardless if they are related to language revitalization, as the case of Kåfjord shows, or to the maintenance of the language level, as in Kautokeino. These seem to be the specific internal goals shared by the actors that compose the governance networks within each municipality. The reasons behind the existence of different goals seem to be related to the diverse historical paths, demographic balance and language background in both cities. These external dimensions will be further discussed in the last part of this chapter.

On the one hand, since the promotion of Sámi languages is a public issue that demands the combination of tasks from different knowledge and professional areas, a network is needed in both of the cases analysed in the scope of this investigation. However, as the next subsections will highlight, there is clearly an imbalance in terms of the possession and use of resources by certain actors, which is prone to raising the level of interdependency internally.

### 5.2.3 Density, size and fragmentation

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<sup>26</sup> For det er de igjen som kan hjelpe andre kommuner. De kan være som språkarenaer. De kommunene kan være steder der man kan komme for å lære seg samisk bare med å bo der. Det kan man ikke noen andre steder.

According to Provan and Kenis (2007), density is a category that verifies how connected the members of a network are, considering the role of coordination in this process. Similarly, fragmentation informs scholars about how direct these links are. As previously mentioned in the Method chapter, the challenges and limitations which emerged throughout the research process prevented a deeper analysis of the interaction flows between these actors. Despite the impossibility to minimally identify all the nodes, it was still possible to observe the existence of certain interorganizational relations within the networks in the forms of formal and informal meetings, workshops, joint celebrations, cooperation agreements and common projects, which have been described throughout this section. This observation confirms, therefore, the fact that these organizations interact with the general aim to promote the Northern Sámi language.

In terms of density, both in Kautokeino and Kåfjord, it seems that the Sámi Parliament acts as a point of contact among the organizations, since it is responsible for establishing meetings among the language centres in different cities and also from municipalities within or without the same county. It can also be perceived as a general coordinator of this whole system that aims to manage the Northern Sámi language throughout local networks. This regulative attribute of the Sámi Parliament will be more explored in the next section. At the same time, no coordination problems were found in this system, but rather the opposite: all the informants from the interviews affirmed that the work developed by the networks in both municipalities was successful, enhancing the position of the Sámi Parliament as main coordinator. Therefore, in terms of fragmentation, the Sámi Parliament can be perceived as a connector or facilitator of the interactions in the language field.

Another example is the fact that the University of Tromsø and the Sámi University College are connected with each other through Gáldu/NIM. They also engage in cooperative arrangements with kindergartens, as the SÁMOS project shows, and Sámi institutions, such as the Centre for Northern Peoples. Likewise, the municipalities play a crucial role in these dynamics. Besides funding local institutions such as the Sámi language centres, the kommuner have the responsibility to implement laws and projects, ensuring the use of the Northern Sámi language for all the citizens who wish to. This duty extends itself across many public areas, since language is used as a means of communication, work, knowledge production and, more simply, human interaction daily in public life.

Therefore, the municipalities, as public administration units, are in constant relation with educational, health, social, cultural and political institutions to safeguard the right of its citizens to use Northern Sámi publicly and to further develop this language. This means that the municipalities, like the Sámi

Parliament, are a vital point of contact among different actors in the governance system. Hence, even though there are not direct links among all the stakeholders involved in each of the governance networks, it is remarkable that both the kommuner and Sametinget may be perceived as propellers which fuel the whole governance system, facilitating the formation of links among local organizations and even with regional stakeholders, for example, such as the counties.

Another relevant category proposed by Provan and Kenis (2007) is size, which assesses the extension of a governance network. Size has a direct correlation with the number of connections established among the network participants, meaning that a large network may have a great number of links. In this scenario, coordination problems may arise. On the one hand, the impossibility to meticulously map all the links established between these institutions poses difficulties in terms of the estimation of the size of the network. The present investigation chose the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord as focal points for the analysis, but at the same time it is undeniable that this system has a broader scope that reaches other governmental spheres and even the international level. Therefore, considering this entire system, the local governance networks appear as a small part of a broader multi-level dynamics. On the other hand, if the analysis is restricted to the municipal level, it seems that the networks found in Kautokeino and Kåfjord have similar sizes and similar types of organizations. However, it is not possible to affirm whether these local networks are small or large, since an external network was not used as a comparison basis and since it was not possible to effectively measure all the links established among the organizations.

#### 5.2.4 Power

The dimension of power concerns the distribution of the links within a governance network. This category assesses how centralized the connections are around one or more actors, who detains the resources and how decisions are made. In both scenarios, the Sámi Parliament is generally perceived by the informants as a key actor in this process. Informant R1 (2019) presents an overview of the decisionmaking process within one of the networks, portraying the Sámi Parliament as a major funder of the language projects and policies in the local level.

The bilingual grant or *tospråklighetstilskudd* is one of the most expressive funding tools from the Sámi Parliament as a means to foster the development of the Sámi languages in Norway. It is mostly aimed towards the counties and the municipalities. The amount of the funds depend on the work of these actors in relation to the fulfilment of the Sámi Act and on the extension of public service

provision. There are also annual administrative and political meetings to verify the development of the agreements in practice (Sametinget, 2012).

In this respect, Informants R1 (2019) and SA (2019) mentioned the existence of a Sámi political committee in the municipality, which has the power to decide how the bilingual funds received from the Sámi Parliament will be allocated. The *kommune*, then, makes an activity plan to inform the Sámi Parliament about proposed activities and projects and how the funds will be used in each case. The Sámi Parliament will, finally, approve or reject the plan, allowing the municipality to go further and implement it or requiring it to change the plan, if needed.

The abovementioned process highlights the existence of a hierarchy within the management system in the municipality, showing that the administration of Sámi language issues does not only belong to the realm of Public Administration, but it also has a political component that affects the allocation of resources according to the political affiliation of each individual. According to Informant SA (2019), the achievement of concrete results in the language field depends on the political will, which impacts directly the implementation phase of the policymaking process.

Despite the existence of diverse actors that combine their resources – in terms of information, people, money and time – to promote the Northern Sámi languages at the local level, the Sámi Parliament stands out in these dynamics. This organization was often pointed out as the main partner of the institutions presented in the previous sections, indicating a centralization of the links established within the networks towards this figure. The cooperative work between the Sámi Parliament and other institutions are formally governed under an official agreement signed by both parties or informally steered via meetings or dialogues (Sametinget, 2012). It is also pertinent to notice that no traces of apparent conflict were found in any of the municipalities investigated. On the contrary, there seems to be a good general communication among the organizations, as stressed by Informant TA (2019).

Besides this, the Sámi Parliament is also seen as an authority endowed with enforcement capacity, at least to some extent, as in the following example illustrates: «Another aspect with the Sámi Parliament is that we need someone who can obligate us to do what we are doing» (Informant R1, 2019). As a leader in the language field, the Sámi Parliament has the power to set goals that are to be reached by those institutions receiving funding from the *Sametinget*. Therefore, «year by year the goals from the Sámi Parliament are being more specific. In the beginning, it was more as a general

goal. It was very wide. But now it is more and more concentrating on developing the Sámi languages» (Informant R1, 2019).

Moreover, it emerges from the *Hjertespråket* report the existence of a series of prioritarian areas that the municipalities have to take into account when making their activity plans. Children and young people are currently the top priority, which means that projects that choose them as target group are more likely to receive funds for to implement those (Informant TA, 2019). Based on the work developed by the Sámi Parliament and its primary role on the management of the Northern Sámi language, it becomes evident that the pluralization of the governance processes did not lead to the disappearance of hierarchical elements, as Sørensen and Torfing (2007) pointed out. In other words, the existence of stakeholders from different fields taking part into governance networks and dealing with public issues, such as language planning, do not invalidate or deligitimize traditional organization systems, such as bureaucracies. When talking about the asymmetries in terms of institutional size and resources, one of the interviewees affirms the following:

«When you put all these organizations together, I would say we have moved mountains. But you might also say we have become more bureaucratic. Because we have become bigger and we are also publicly funded, so many of us. So each individual organization has achieved many things, but you also have the Sámi Parliament, which is purely bureaucratic» (Informant SB, 2019, n.d, n.p).

Therefore, it seems reasonable to affirm that the general model which guides the governance networks in Kåfjord and Kautokeino towards the management of the Northern Sámi language is New Public Governance, with the presence of certain characteristics from New Public Management. Following the explanation made by Osborne (2006) about the first perspective, it is possible to understand that, in both cases, the Northern Sámi language is promoted collectively by various actors affiliated to the public sector or not. These stakeholders are interdependent, exchanging resources and relying on each other to promote and develop this language. The results from this collaboration are the production of services to the Sámi population, the development of the language and an increased visibility of the Northern Sámi language locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally.

At the same time, these dynamics are punctuated by a search for efficiency, the establishment of specific goals and the assessment of results. As previously mentioned, the Sámi Parliament has a leading role in the language policy area, having a considerable funding capacity. In terms of the Sámi Parliament's financial resources, Table 6 demonstrates the financial instruments divided by area and the funds allocated to each one in the last two years. It is visible from the data that language and

culture are key funding areas compared to the other ones. Both areas are interrelated, as language can be perceived as a channel for the expression of a people's culture and identity. In addition, the funds destined to the language field are expressive in relation to the total sum, accounting for almost 1/3 of the entire budget from the Sámi Parliament.

**Table 6 – Sámi Parliament's budget divided by financial instruments in 1000 Norwegian kroner. Source: Adapted from Sametinget (2019b).**

<b>Financial instruments</b>	<b>Budget 2019</b>	<b>Budget 2018</b>
Language	95 583	91 731
Knowledge	46 571	46 170
Environment	2 563	1 500
Industries	33 650	34 776
Culture	134 981	129 344
Culture heritage	9 087	7 487
Health and social	3 000	3 131
Indigenous rights, international cooperation and equality	2 065	2 030
Cooperation agreements	2 000	2 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>329 500</b>	<b>318 169</b>

In 2019, the total budget allocated to the language field was divided in three areas: projects and activities that fostered the use of the Sámi languages, language development and the fulfilment of the *NOU 2016:18 Hjertespråk*. The total sum for the present year was over 95 million Norwegian crowns, showing a slightly increase in comparison to the year 2018.

**Table 7 – Current budget destined to language areas in 1000 Norwegian kroner. Source: Adapted from Sametinget (2019b).**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Use of Sámi languages</b>	43 809	40 648
<b>Development of Sámi languages</b>	47 774	46 783
<i>Hjertespråket</i>	4000	4 300
<b>Sum</b>	<b>95 583</b>	<b>91 731</b>

The table below shows the direct bilingual grants destined to the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord based on the Sámi parliament's budget for 2019. These grants are related to the first area and have the objective to help the *kommuner* safeguard the right their citizens have to use Sámi languages in the welfare and public system. The counties that belong to the administrative area for Sámi

language are also encompassed, meaning that Finnmark and Troms receive the same grant (Sametinget, 2019b).

**Table 8 – Direct bilingual grants to the municipalities in 1000 Norwegian *kroner*. Source: Adapted from Sametinget (2019b).**

	2019	2018
<b>Kautokeino municipality</b>	7023	6679
<b>Kåfjord municipality</b>	2867	2785

These figures illustrate the economic status of the Sámi Parliament as a major funder of the *kommuner* when it comes to the promotion of the Sámi languages. It is also relevant to point out that the funds allocated to ensure the development of the Sámi languages relate to a myriad of activities: the Sámi language centres, Sámi language projects, study grants for students in high school and higher education institutions, international projects, etc. The funds allocated to the achievement of the *Hjertespråk* concern the design of concrete strategies for the fulfillment of the legal frameworks that protect the Sámi languages in Norway (Sametinget, 2019b). Hence, the economic authority of the *Sameting* is well-defined and has a large scope, extending itself through municipalities, counties, language and cultural centres and even to the international field. At the same time, receiving these grants entail the existence of responsibilities in terms of accountability, leading the receiving institutions to develop activity plans and reports informing the Sámi Parliament of how the grants have been used (Informant R1, 2019), which approximates the action of the Sámi Parliament within the governance networks to a New Public Management paradigm.

The discussion between the referred paradigms was also made by Falch and Selle (2015), which highlight the ideological settings that accompanied the establishment and development of the Sámi Parliament as an organization. These authors consider that, after the Alta-Kautokeino episode, there was the predominance of a democratic atmosphere in the institutional and political field, with a focus on decentralization and on the local level as a relevant actor. However, the creation of the Sámi Parliament occurred in a scenario dominated by New Public Management ideas. This shaped the operation and the orientation of this institution, leading it to pursue a goal-oriented, efficiency-based administration, following decentralization and delegation principles, but also surveillance and control (Falch and Selle, 2015).

The findings attributed to Falch and Selle (2015) touch upon a relevant point in the governance network literature. On the one hand, the governance networks theory relates to the New Public Governance paradigm, presenting itself as an alternative to the New Public Management practices. On the other hand, some scholars, such as Klijn and Koppeniam (2012), do not believe in the suppression of the New Public Management approach by the emergence of pluralistic theoretical traditions such as the governance networks perspective, but rather in the incorporation of both to a hybrid system. Characterized by interaction, trust and the search for efficiency, this would call for the study of new institutional structures in which these features co-exist. This might be the case, therefore, of the paradigm that guides the action of the Sámi Parliament nowadays.

It is important to consider, however, that the municipalities in the administrative area for Sámi languages are not in the same level when it comes to the fulfillment of the Sámi Act. As proposed in the *Hjertespråket* report, despite having common objectives in terms of the promotion of the Sámi languages, the *kommuner* have different language situations and challenges. These circumstances are made explicit by one of the interviewees, who declares that «I feel that we work towards the same goal. Because we have cooperation agreements and everyone knows what is expected, but it is clear that we have different conditions» (Informant TA, 2019, own translation)<sup>27</sup>. This entails that, in this search for the achievement of a common concrete goal by the network participants, which is based on the Sámi Act, there are clear expectations, but also different circumstances in terms of resources and historical paths in each municipality.

On the one hand, considering the management of the Northern Sámi language in a multi-level context, the Sámi Parliament has been portrayed as an important *player* capable of engaging in negotiations with the central government and representing the interests of the general Sámi population in each municipality. In this respect, Informant R1 (2019) affirms that «*Sametinget* is, in a way, our government» and that «we need one voice and the Sámi Parliament is providing that voice towards the (national) government».

On the other hand, despite acting as a coordinator of this system that aims to strengthen and manage the Northern Sámi language, as well as a representative of the society, the Sámi Parliament does not have real formal authority to design or change laws, for example. Also, it is important to remember that the Norwegian state, through the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, is the

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<sup>27</sup> Jag føler at vi jobber mot samme mål. I og med at vi har samarbeidsavtaler og alle er klare om hva som forventes, men det er klart at vi har forskjellige forutsetninger.

primary responsible for the policymaking process in the Sámi language field. However, this does not prevent Sámi authorities from taking initiative and engaging in conversations with the Norwegian government about Sámi language policies or any other issue (Informant TC, 2019).

The *Sametingsmelding om samisk språk* is an example of action that illustrates this scenario. In 2011, the Sámi Parliament wrote a report to the Norwegian government in which this organization makes a series of propositions regarding the division of tasks between itself, the government and the Norwegian Parliament, as well as guidelines concerning Norway's Sámi language policy. The Sámi Parliament also claims to exercise the right of self-determination that emerges from the Norwegian constitution and international laws (Sametinget, 2012). In this regards, the report states that

«(...) the Sámi population has the right to determine the direction of future language policy. We also have the right to training and use of Sámi language. Despite national and international regulations, there is still a huge gap between the right to use the language and the real ability to use and develop the language of society” (Sametinget, 2012, p. 4, own translation)<sup>28</sup>.

In other words, the Sámi languages in Norway are governed under a legal framework that guarantees a series of rights to the Sámi population in connection with the use of Sámi languages. In order for these rights to be exercised in practice, the Sámi Parliament, as an organization that represents the Sámi community, claims that the Norwegian government should accept its propositions towards the Sámi language policies, giving it the right to steer the policymaking process that affects the Sámi people directly.

Therefore, considering the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in a multi-level system, it is possible to identify the existence of a broader cooperation arrangement, in which the Sámi Parliament and the Norwegian government establish close contacts with each other. This national dimension, inserted into a broader network, is the source of the financial and social capital that will then spread and feed the entire system (Informant TC, 2019). Hence, even though most of the actors who compose the governance networks investigated in the scope of this thesis are located at the local level, it becomes evident that this sphere depends on the work developed at higher spheres to sustain and pursue the promotion of the Northern Sámi language.

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<sup>28</sup> den samiske befolkningen har rett til å bestemme retningen av fremtidig språkpolitikk. Vi har også rett til opplæring og bruk av samisk språk. Til tross for nasjonale og internasjonale bestemmelser er det likevel et stort sprang mellom retten til bruk av språket og den reelle muligheten til bruk og utvikling av språket i samfunnet.

In addition to the importance of the Sámi Parliament in this system, the municipalities are also relevant actors due to the following reasons: i) they implementing agents at the local level, translating the laws and determinations from the national sphere into practice; ii) they provide public services to the population; iii) they act as funders of projects and other institutions that also integrate the governance networks; iv) they engage in cooperative arrangements with other municipalities within the administrative area for Sámi languages.

Hence, it becomes evident that the Sámi Parliament emerges as a preponderant organization in the management of the Northern Sámi language within the municipalities. Despite the fact that the municipalities, the language centres and other organizations have autonomy to deliberate on the allocation of the funds received by *Sametinget*, this institution has the power to ultimately approve or not how the grants are to be spent, what activities are developed and whether they are in conformity with the Sámi Parliament's goals in the language field. This means that, even though the participants of the governance networks in both municipalities cooperate with each other to promote the Northern Sámi Language, their relations are intermediated by the Sámi Parliament, who acts as a centralizing partner in these dynamics.

#### 5.2.5 Governance mode

Governance modes are the last category proposed by the integrative framework of Provan and Kenis (2007). This indicator informs how governance networks are managed internally, enabling an understanding of the processes and interactions that characterize these cooperative arrangements. The analysis of the governance networks present in Kautokeino and Kåfjord has shown that, in both cases, there is a predominance of the lead-organization mode.

As Provan and Kenis (2007) have shown, the lead-organization mode is characterized by a leading stakeholder that acts as a broker. In both governance networks, the Sámi Parliament performs this role, funding most of the participants and establishing goals and priorities that are to be followed by them. Therefore, the objectives pursued by the whole network are in conformity with the goals selected in the heart of the Sámi Parliament. In other words, the governance of the Northern Sámi language in Kautokeino and Kåfjord happen in a system characterized by cooperation and the establishment of horizontal relations among different stakeholders.

However, the existence of power asymmetries in this framework, as well as the prevalence of the Sámi Parliament as a broker inhibit its categorization as a participant-governed network. In this mode of governance, no participant is to be regarded as the primary leader of the entire network (Provan and Kenis, 2007). Even though the Sámi Parliament may not formally have this status within the governance networks in the municipalities cited, it is clearly perceived in this way by the informants. Moreover, the fact that the organization which performs this leading role is an internal member of both governance networks prevents its characterization as a Network Administrative Organization mode, in which the broker is an external actor (Provan and Kenis, 2007).

### 5.3 External dynamics

Following the analytic model proposed in chapter 2, after the presentation of the internal dynamics that compose the governance systems in Kåfjord and Kautokeino, where the general aim is to promote the Northern Sámi language, this section will focus on the external dynamics that affect the actors within the governance networks and their interactions. As previously mentioned, this is in line with the ideas of Sørensen and Torfing (2007) about the relevance of the external environment on governance networks and their internal dynamics. The categories contained within the external dimension are history, culture, ethnicity and identity, which will be explained in the following subsections.

#### 5.3.1 History and path dependency

A key discovery from the research process was the observation of a gap in terms of the level of use, protection and development of the Northern Sámi language in public administration and in society as a whole in Kåfjord and Kautokeino. In this regard, Kåfjord is perceived by informants R1 (2019) and SA (2019) as a city where Northern Sámi is not heard nearly as much as Norwegian. A comparison is then made with Kautokeino: «These two municipalities are on different levels in the Sámi language. And as you know, historically, we have had *fornorskning* and in coastal areas it has been very harsh. And we have lost the language in a great degree, but we are working to regain the language» (Informant R1, 2019).

As the quote above illustrates, even though Northern Sámi has the status of official language, as the law determines, the Norwegian language is still dominant in reality, which poses challenges to the achievement of the goal to turn Kåfjord into a complete bilingual *kommune*. Despite the existence of a juridical framework that guarantees Sámi language rights, these are not necessarily fully achieved in practice. This piece of data highlights a phenomenon which was not previously acknowledged in

the theoretical framework but that emerges as a recurrent topic: path dependency. According to De Vries (2016, p. 46), “the essence of this theory is that the best way to understand the situation in a nation is by investigating its past and that the remnants of this past will always be visible”. This may be done through the inspection of the institutions, norms and rules which are rooted in the current system (De Vries, 2016).

Paraphrasing De Vries (2016), as a means of tackling societal challenges, governments may establish institutions that reinforce themselves when they repeatedly generate expected outcomes in the system. However, this self-reinforcement process may lead to a state of lock-in, in which the institution becomes trapped in these dynamics. Overcoming this state is not an easy task, meaning that organizations may turn into an inflexible structure, where incremental change is more likely to be performed than radical change (Sydow et al, 2009). In spite of this rigid scenario, the dissolution of a certain path may happen provided the system receives disruptive inputs that manage to open up the institutional structure, initiating a flexibilization process. As an example, it is possible to cite the emergence of unprecedented forces that arise from outside and proceed to a disruption in the system (Sydow et al, 2009).

Transposing the path dependency logics to the relations between Norway and the Sámi people enables a comprehension of the present. The perception of Sámi culture and language as different compared to the Norwegian ones and, therefore, negative, was for many decades constant in the Norwegian Sámi policies. Hence, the Sámi seemed to be locked into these dynamics, posing difficulties for their participation in the Norwegian politics and society, as well as for the use and learning of the Sámi languages. Norway, in its turn, had clear expectations regarding how the Sámi should act and behave, establishing these as conditions for the provision of public goods towards them.

An event responsible for the disruption of this traditional path that marked the dominance of the Norwegian language and culture over the Sámi was the Alta Kautokeino episode during what Minde (2005) called the «decay phase» of the *fornorskning* period. Even though it put the relations between the the state and the minority into a new track, the effects from the assimilation period are still felt today by the Sámi authorities and population (Barroso-Hoffmann, 2008; Albury, 2015). This is acknowledged by informants R1 (2019) and SA (2019) in different moments of their speech and treated as a condition which poses challenges to the further development of the Sámi languages in public administration and society as a whole.

### 5.3.2 Culture, ethnicity and identity

Ethnicity and identity are also relevant elements in this system. According to Barth (1969), it is only possible to conceive ethnicity if one human being establishes interaction with another. Therefore, it has an inherent relational dimension in which one perceives oneself via the perception of the others. This is a dynamic and constant changing process that allow the discovery of a *self* which is different from an *alter*, or from someone else, allowing the flourishing of an individual or group identity. Culture is seen as an important element of group identity which, through symbols and norms, are prone to uniting and representing a people (Barth, 1969). In view of this, Albury (2015) contends that the Sámi languages are a vital marker of Sámi identity, which becomes even apparent in localities where the Sámi are in bigger numbers compared to Norwegians (Salvensen, 1995 cited by Albury, 2015).

Assuming that people belonging to different cultural and identitarian groups would have diverse and sometimes conflicting interpretations of reality, how would Norwegian and Sámi organizations engage in cooperative arrangements with each other? Do they have to negotiate on a constant basis or is it possible to easily achieve a common ground in terms of a management system that equates Northern Sámi and Norwegian? And how do they interact taking these identity and ethnical dynamics into account? For Klijn and Koppeniam (2012), the members of a governance networks not always have the same interpretations of reality, which may lead to conflicts. However, the literature about governance and networks does not seem to consider these factors as crucial challenges that affect the internal interactions of stakeholders within partnerships and governance networks. Therefore, fully grasping the relations between organizations depends as well on categories such as language, ethnicity, culture and identity.

## 5.4 Challenges faced by governance networks

The specific challenges that emerged from the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in Kåfjord are: i) the lack of inhabitants having Northern Sámi as their first language; ii) the fact that the language is not commonly used and heard in the daily life; iii) the absence of professional staff from various areas who are capable of speaking Northern Sámi; iv) the difficulties to promote and increase learning among Sámi institutions; and v) globalization and the demographic imbalance, which are commonly pointed out as the most recurrent challenges to the accomplishment of the language policy goals in the municipality.

In respect to the last point, the migration of foreign groups of individuals to work in the fishing farms, which was traditionally an activity dominated by the Sámi, has posed new demands to the municipalities. These demands are connected with the necessity to integrate these people to a Norwegian and Sámi society, bringing a need to inform them not only about the Norwegian language and culture, but also about the Sámi (Informant SB, 2019). In the long run, with migration and the emigration of young people to bigger urban areas, Informant SB (2019) acknowledges the likelihood of a scenario in which a deeper demographic gap may oppose Norwegians, Sámi and immigrants in terms of language and culture.

In Kautokeino, besides the lack of availability of teaching materials in Sámi and the difficulty of finding professionals who are able to speak the referred language, another challenge concerns the interplay between Northern Sámi as a majority language and Norwegian as a minority. Debates in the media have shown that implementing policies and offering public goods in a multilanguage context is a not an easy task for public administrators, who have to deal with confrontations among ethnical and linguistic groups from time to time. Examples of this are the complaints received by the municipality that too much Norwegian was being taught in a secondary school in Kautokeino (Isaksen, 2015, October 26). On the other hand, being a Norwegian-speaking child in a society where most people speak Sámi, or even a Sea Sámi in a reindeer herding area may also bring challenges in the interactions with the majority (Larsen, 2016, Jan 26).

In general terms, the delivery of welfare services in Northern Sámi is still a main problem shadowed by the lack of professionals who are able to speak this language along with Norwegian. In addition, the existence of demographical differences in both cities, opposing different identitarian groups in linguistic and ethnical terms, also emerged as a common challenge for public authorities in both municipalities.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this work was to present an overview of the actors that compose the networks for the promotion of the Northern Sámi language in the municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord, understanding their internal dynamics and the broader external context in which they take place. The combination of the networks and the sociolinguistic background in which they are inserted in are perceived as a system that has the promotion of the Northern Sámi language as ultimate goal. This investigation prioritized the local level of government as its focal point, seeking to identify the main actors that compose these two separate cooperative systems, characterize their interactions and contextualize their language situation, taking into account categories such as history, ethnicity and demography.

It was verified that the categories that compose the external dynamics in the governance system have a direct impact into the internal dynamics, affecting the operations of the governance networks in each municipality. The fact that these dimensions matter and are prone to influence public service delivery and the relations among various stakeholders means that the scholar debate will benefit provided they are to be encompassed by perspectives such as the governance network theory, as well as multi-level governance. Moreover, it is also recommendable that scholars consider the challenges brought by globalization and migration as a research agenda in the governance process. Verifying how these dynamics work in municipalities in the south Sámi areas and even outside the administrative area of Sámi languages may also bring interesting insights to this research field, due to the endangered status of the language in the South Sámi areas, in opposition to a Norwegian majoritarian population and the inflow of foreign migrants. Therefore, understanding how multiple actors can mediate this process of negotiation of different identities and languages and, at the same time, implement policies in a place where immaterial boundaries may gradually emerge is a relevant theme.

In addition to the abovementioned categories, the major concepts utilized to explain this system were: public policies and policymaking, modes of governance, multi-level governance and governance networks. In terms of policymaking, the Norwegian state, through the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, is responsible for the design of laws and policies that relate to Sámi issues domestically. Language planning and administration is one of the areas of deliberation. The framework that governs the Northern Sámi language is formed by a set of national regulations, such as the Norwegian constitution and the Sámi Act, according to which the state must ensure the protection and promotion of the Sámi culture, language and lifestyle. Other important provisions are

the equality – at least in theory – between Norwegian and the Sámi languages, as well as the obligation of counties and municipalities in the administrative area for Sámi languages to delivery public services in Sámi languages to the citizens within this administrative area. International agreements ratified by Norway, such as the ILO 169 Convention, give the Sámi, as indigenous people, the right to self-determination over issues that directly affect them.

The governance network perspective was used to enable an understanding of the internal dynamics of each network, their characteristics of the actors involved and how their interactions contributed to the governance of the Northern Sámi language. A few major categories were used to identify and describe each local system: relevant actors; goal consensus and characteristics of the duty; density, fragmentation and size; power; and governance mode. Besides the centrality of the national government, the abovementioned framework also sheds light on other two important actors in this process.

One of them is the municipalities, which provide public services locally in many different areas, especially in connection with the Sámi language centres and with educational and health institutions. Another one is the Sámi Parliament, acting not only a representative of the interests of the Sámi community, but also as a coordinator within the local governance networks and as a national *player* who takes part into the policymaking process. Despite its limited authority in terms of the creation and modification of laws domestically, in the municipal plan Sámi Parliament can be seen as a broker in the governance systems of Kautokeino and Kåfjord, due to its capacity to set goals, connect other organizations that take part into the management of the Northern Sámi language, provide actors with funds and monitor their activity and the fact it detains a large number of resources in terms of money, information, personnel and expertise.

Regarding the participants of the governance networks in each municipality, some patterns were found. Firstly, it is possible to mention the existence of common types of institutions in both cities, such as municipalities, language centres, higher education institutions, cultural actors and single organizations gathering multiple actors. Secondly, the size of the networks is also comparable, not leading to coordination problems in any of the cases. Thanks to the Sámi Parliament, who connects these actors especially through meetings and workshops, no indices of fragmentation were found, contributing to maintain the density and integrity of these systems.

Thirdly, both the Centre for Northern Peoples and the *Diehtosiida* can be perceived as loci that enable the materialization of local networks in each *kommune*, considering the various organizations

working in the same place. Even if they carry out individual functions separately, joint meetings and projects still happen, contributing to the promotion of the Northern Sámi language. Another relevant pattern was the existent of general aims guiding the work of the organizations towards the management of the language systems in Kautokeino and in Kåfjord: safeguarding the use, promotion and develop of Northern Sámi locally. Finally, the same mode of governance can be found in both cases: a lead-organization network, with the presence of a leader that regulates the dynamics within the cooperative arrangements.

In spite of these similarities in terms of the relevant actors; size, density and fragmentation; goal consensus and mode of governance, there seem to be many differences in other aspects. For instance, the characteristics of the duty, which informs us about the underlying reasons for the establishment of the networks, indicated the presence of specific internal language situations and historical paths. In Kåfjord, the flourishing of grassroot movements after the *fornorskning* period led to the establishment of a network towards the revitalization of the Sea Sámi language and culture, striving for a bilingual society in which the Norwegians are the majority nowadays and for the survival of the language. The *fornorskning* did not have the same effect in Kautokeino, were the Sámi managed to maintain their language and culture, which are reinforced by the reindeer herding practice. Therefore, the emergence of a cooperative arrangement among different institutions seems to have been a more natural process in this society, having the specific aim to maintain the status of the language, ensuring its majoritarian position in the society and the formation of bilingual children and professionals as a means to guarantee the development of the language.

Power is a rather complex dimension. Within the networks, the Sámi Parliament has a leading role, as previously mentioned. The municipalities are also important stakeholders, as they also detain resources and act as funders of local projects and the responsibility to provide citizens with public services. The different demographics, ethnic and language status in Kautokeino and Kåfjord are background elements that reflect the internal power struggles in terms of the use of and the development of the Northern Sámi language in each case. There is an interplay between a majority and a minority in each municipality: in Kautokeino, the Sámi majority is in constant interaction with a Norwegian minority; while in Kåfjord, the opposite happens. In these scenarios, language is a recurring theme in society, as well as a mechanism that allows individuals to express their own frames of reference and relate to others. At the same time, it is interesting to notice that, even in Kautokeino, the Northern Sámi language is not completely equal to the Norwegian language, in view of the challenges to use it in information management systems within public administration and the lack of variety in terms of teaching materials in the Sámi languages.

Different power statuses pose challenges to the implementation of language policies locally. This situation highlights, once more, the preponderance of the government authorities in the design and implementation of policies. This shows that different spheres of government matter in Public Administration, despite the recent debates proposed by New Public Governance (Osborne, 2006) and the governance theory regarding the centrality of non-governmental actors in this process (Hooghe and Marks, 2003). In the management of the Northern Sámi language, there is a combination of resources and capabilities among state and non-state authorities to raise awareness, produce expertise and keep the language in use. Therefore, Kautokeino and Kåfjord can be framed as multi-level governance systems.

Without the networks and in a broader perspective, the fact that the Sámi Parliament does not have the power to legislate over Sámi issues brings threats to the exercise of indigenous self-determination within the language field, as authors such as Josefsen (2007) and Broderstad (2008) have pointed out. This means that, when the national government is considered as part of this system, there is a division of the leading position that would otherwise belong to the Sámi Parliament in Norway.

Thus, the possibility to grasp the institutional and policymaking dynamics around the Sámi affairs in the Nordic region is a unique opportunity that enables the promotion of learning around minority and indigenous issues not only in this geographic area, but equally worldwide. In the domestic level, understanding the formation of local networks as part of an indigenous language management system gives political actors the possibility to grasp how to implement national policies in areas where different social and ethnic groups co-exist. Internationally, the cooperation among Sámi parliaments belonging to different states highlights the emergence of transnational actors into the policymaking scene to fulfill the interests of national minorities in the international arena.

It is also relevant to mention, once again, that the Sámi are not only present in Norway, but also in Sweden, Finland and Russia, which means that undertaking studies in the Norwegian territory can bring insights for public administrators dealing with Sámi issues in these other states. Therefore, applying the governance networks theory and the multi-level governance perspective to the management of the Sámi languages existent in Sweden and Finland, which also are Nordic states, seems plausible, in view of the indigenous presence in higher education and political institutions, for example.

The similar historical past marked by the assimilation of the Sámi in the Nordic countries is also a reality in Latin America, where there also is a gap between what is written in the law and what is

done in practice to safeguard and promote indigenous languages (Leitão, 1994). This means that understanding and fostering local networks for the development of traditional culture and identity can help scholars and politicians to rethink the insertion of indigenous people into internal policymaking and welfare systems, towards the transformation of indigenous rights into concrete measures.

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## ANNEX

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What do you work with?
2. Who are the actors your organization partners with to fulfil Sámi language projects in the municipality? Are there any external actors involved (for example, from the regional or national level)?
3. What are the objectives of this collaboration?
4. What is the function of your organization in this partnership for the development of the Northern Sámi language? Describe the participation of your organization in the partnership.
5. How often do you meet with other organizations to handle Sámi language projects?
6. For how long have you been working together with the organizations you named in the Sámi language field?
7. How are the responsibilities shared by the institutions you mentioned to promote the Northern Sámi language?
8. Are there any challenges or constraints to the development of the collaboration?
9. Describe the process in the partnership. Which organization makes decisions about which projects to create and/or implement?
10. Can you name some of the outcomes of this partnership (such as North Sámi language projects, policies, etc)?
11. Is there a periodical evaluation of these outcomes? Who is responsible for this? How are they measured?
12. Do you think this collaboration is successful? Why?