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ABOUT TIME
Sámi concept of time in a Finnish curriculum

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines how the cyclical conception of time characteristic of Sámi culture is supported or, respectively, how it is limited in the Finnish curriculum traditionally based on linear views. The research data is formed from the curriculum of Pasila Primary School and the aim is to reveal the negotiation and validation of different time-concepts by Foucauldian discourse analysis. The analysis finds that Sámi cyclical time is unmet in the curriculum in ways that can be divided into three discursive themes. Most dominantly the curriculum contains *assumptions of linear time and learning*, which impede the cyclical construction of time and the Sámi students' connection to the customs of their own culture. Linearity is intertwined in the Finnish curriculum structures. However, the curriculum also offers some meanings that can be interpreted to make *room for cyclical conceptions*. A conscious teacher can implement teaching that recognizes more diverse concepts based on these connotations, albeit still within the constraints of linear baseline. The analysis also found statements showing *general respect for flexibility and diversity* that do not take a concrete position on school structures. The conclusion from these findings is that the remains of long-term colonization and assimilation of the Sámi are still visible in the dominant positioning of the mainstream culture's perspective and the marginalization of Sámi consideration. Even though the growing international appreciation of multiculturalism has been seemingly linked to Finnish education policy, the curriculum has not been fundamentally changed to negotiate with diverse conceptions.

Keywords: Sámi education, concept of time, linear time, cyclical time, curriculum analysis

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1 INTRODUCTION

*and time does not exist, no end, none
and time is, eternal, always, is
rises, falls, is born, dies
thus, days, years are rounded.*

Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (1997), 566.

The above excerpt from the poem by the award-winning Sámi poet and artist Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (1943–2001) reflects the unique concept that the Sámi, the North-European indigenous people, have about time. The Sámi time is not a clear-cut concept, but above all, it is cyclical, rounded, traditionally linked to the cycle of nature and the relativity of all phenomena (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012, p. 126–127). Even though this exceptional conception is identified, Sámi pupils are currently obliged to operate in a Finnish school system according to the linear practices of the mainstream culture (Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011, p. 57).

According to Keskitalo (2019) “current school schedules, physical arrangements and learning methods socialize pupils for the needs of modern national state society” (p. 570). This refers to so-called closed solutions of education, which are formed based on Western, linear concepts and values and are traditional for the Finnish school. Closed solutions include, for example, emphasizing authorities’ position and systematic subject-distribution. This limits the processes of enculturation and holistic, cyclical meaning-making of Sámi students (Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011, p. 58–59). Holding on to the strict linear scheduling can cause narrowing or even complete loss of meaning of the cyclical aspects in Sámi’s concept of time (Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 235).

As the linear order of the school is often taken for granted (see Farquhar, 2016; Gordon et al., 2007), it can be concluded that the imbalance of conceptions is engrained on broader dimensions of education than just teacher or school-specific attitudes. The common history of the Sámi and Finnish mainstream

culture has been colored by colonization and the Sámi assimilation policy, in which education has been, and still is, strongly involved (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 49–51). Due to the prevailing power-structures, it is especially important to shift the focus on the macro-level guidelines and emphasis of education so that the micro-level can genuinely function better (Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011, p. 62–63). For these reasons, I examine in my thesis how the Sámi conception of time is negotiated in a Finnish curriculum document.

Since power and the unquestioned stance of certain constructions are essential to my research topic, I approach the subject from the point of view of social constructionism (see Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009, p. 12). I carry out this research using the methods and concepts of Foucauldian discourse analysis. As a framework, it makes it possible to critically examine how the language of the curriculum addresses or excludes the Sámi time, and to interpret how it creates the reality of Sámi education (e.g. Foucault, 1990; Hook, 2001). The analysis focuses on the curriculum of Pasila Primary School, a school located in the Finnish capital, Helsinki. It forms an interesting research object, as the school offers Sámi class education but is based on a very different environment than the schools in the official Sámi area (see Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 47).

I approach this study based on both Finnish (e.g. Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b) and international (e.g. Botha, 2018) ideas of how indigenous culture should be genuinely integrated into education, but how several structures rooted in the school system inhibit required reforms to realize that integration. It will be interesting to see whether Pasila's current curriculum, which was only implemented in 2016, responds to the widespread criticism of the indigenous issues in educational policies. Before I go deeper into the analysis itself, I discuss the background and features of Sámi education, Finnish curriculum, and different conceptions of time, as well as the purpose and execution of this thesis, to prepare and lay the foundation for the analysis.

2 STATUS OF SÁMI EDUCATION

This chapter examines the educational and social position of the Sámi as an indigenous group in Finland. I will discuss Sámi history and the background factors that have affected the development of Sámi education up to the present day. This chapter also addresses the situation of indigenous education in an international context, as several indigenous groups are in a similar position and have undergone similar processes as the Sámi (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 48). Central to this chapter is to define concepts and context relevant to this thesis.

2.1 *The Indigenous Sámi*

Successors of societies that inhabited and governed their native lands before cultural migration and colonialist rearrangements are called *indigenous people*. Today, indigenous groups are forming non-dominant communities in their home nations and trying to preserve their unique lifestyles, social systems, and cultural traits within the ever-expanding mainstream culture (Cobo, 1986). The descendants of the people that inhabited the Northern parts of Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Russia before the state borders were established are called *the Sámi* (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 13).

The International Labor Organization (ILO) (1989) has set criteria to facilitate the identification of indigenous peoples, which confirm the status of the Sámi as an indigenous people. The Sámi have preserved, at least in part, their cultural, social, economic, and political ways and institutions. Also, subjective experience – the group identifying as indigenous people – is a fundamental criterion of the definition (ILO, 1989). No authoritative or straightforward definition of indigenous people has been made since the United Nations (2007) declared that people have the right to determine whether their own identity is indigenous. The features that are used to define and recognize indigenusness are only

directional but generally accepted, and thus the Sámi are considered to be the only indigenous people in the region of the European Union (Aikio, 2012, p. 5).

As the definition of indigenusness, the definition of Sámi is not straightforward. The Sámi are a very heterogeneous group, within which a variety of linguistic, regional, and livelihood-related differences can be identified. Today, there is a total of nine different Sámi languages, with an estimated total of 30,000 to 40,000 speakers (Saarikivi, 2011). Three Sámi languages are spoken in the Finnish territory: North Sámi, Inari Sámi, and Skolt Sámi. Studies and historical documents show that the number of Sámi languages or dialects has been much higher in the past, but they are now considered dead languages since no more native speakers or communities are using them as the first language (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011). In addition to languages, the occupations of the Sámi have also gone through a change. Although traditional trades, like reindeer herding, are still considered very important for the Sámi culture, today many Sámi earn their living in an urban day job (see Nickul, 1970, p. 5). Sámi people are now more diverse than ever (Rasmus, 2010, p. 69).

In the Act on the Sámi Parliament (Laki saamelaiskäräjistä, 1995) the definition of the Sámi is two-fold. The central criterion in the definition is that the person subjectively self-identifies oneself as a Sámi (see also Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 13). In addition to the subjective criterion, the official Sámi status requires that at least one of the three objective criteria is fulfilled. One of the objective criteria set by the act considers the Sámi language, stating that at least one parent or grandparent of the Sámi status candidate must have learned the Sámi language as their first language. Also, a descendant of a traditional Sámi tradesman or someone who has the right to vote in the Sámi Parliament elections can qualify for a Sámi status (Laki saamelaiskäräjistä, 1995, 3§).

During the long history of indigenous peoples, processes of colonization and assimilation are universal. They are so common, in fact, that sometimes the experience of cultural domination is even considered to be a criterion in the definition of indigenous people (Botha, 2018, p. 21). Seurujärvi-Kari (2011) states that historically, colonial conquerors have felt entitled to inhabit and take control over the “empty space” and cultivate “primitive” peoples to a higher level of education, to assimilate them to the conquerors’ worldview without regard to the cultural features and systems already prevailing in the area. The most striking

feature of the colonialist process has been the de-identification of the oppressed peoples, including the replacement of indigenous ideas with new concepts provided by outsiders (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 24–26). In such a process, the linguistic and cultural diversity of different indigenous peoples is neither valued nor understood. Education is one of the most influential institutions that has been used in the implementation of indigenous oppression and “otherness”, and the change in educational values and structures is slow (Anttonen, 2000).

The development of Sámi education has been deeply affected and slowed down by the history of colonialism and assimilation. Oppressing the Sámi people through education has been going on for decades: special nomadic schools in the beginning of 20th century for just Sámi children, who were considered to need less education than the children of the majority culture, is just one example of what kind of ambiance Sámi people have faced (Anttonen, 2000, p. 265–267). Persistent efforts and policies to adapt and “civilize” the Sámi people into the mainstream culture with education took off in the 17th century, and it was not until the 1970s that the educational needs of the Sámi themselves were taken into consideration (Aikio-Puoskari, 2001, p. 225).

The situation has improved, thanks to the growing international emphasis on indigenous rights and equality (e.g. UN, 2007). The key message of the indigenous movement is that indigenous peoples must not be treated as just one minority group, but they have a right to self-determine their own affairs. (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 32, 48). The status of the Sámi, their right to maintain and develop their own culture and language, and their right to non-discrimination have been secured by the Finnish Constitution (Suomen perustuslaki, 1999, 17§). Still, the relationship between the Sámi and the mainstream culture remains unbalanced on several levels: that is reflected in the frameworks of Finnish school and Sámi education.

2.2 Frames of Sámi education

The education and schooling of the Sámi have been influenced by several factors built on social and historical processes. Some of the phenomena restrict and some enable taking Sámi culture and knowledge into account in the field of education, and they are in dynamic flux with each other (see Aikio-Puoskari,

2015). It is important to grasp these influencing concepts for a true understanding of this study, both its subject and its analysis.

The phenomena that create a context for understanding Sámi education have been summarized in the form of a figure by Keskitalo, Määttä, and Uusiautti (2013b). In the figure, both internal and external factors that affect the situation and further development of Sámi education are set in an illustrative manner. I attach the figure constructed by the authors of *Sámi Education* below (Figure 1) so that it can be used to support the understanding of the contextualization process and interpretations of this study.

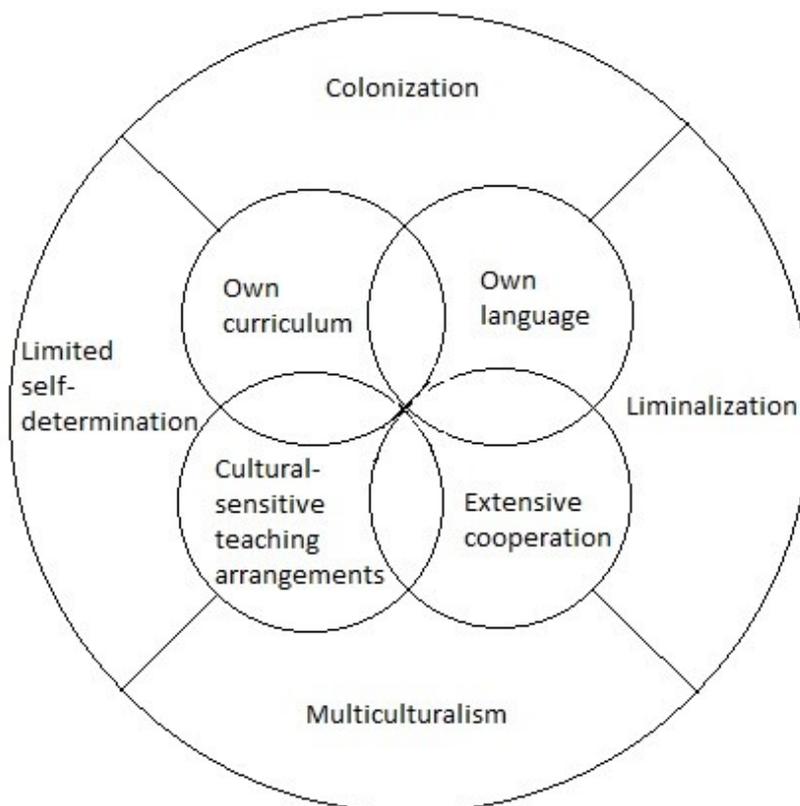


Figure 1. The practical framework of Sámi Education (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 49)

Four internal factors are placed at the center of Figure 1: own curriculum, own language, cultural-sensitive teaching arrangements, and extensive cooperation. They are issues that can be reviewed more concretely than external phenomena. The internal factors have been touched upon in this study when reviewing

practical solutions. However, special attention is paid to the external factors depicted at the outer edges of the figure.

Four external phenomena provide context for Sámi education as “umbrella terms” of socio-historical factors that are crucial for my research topic. The background phenomena – colonization, liminalization, multiculturalism, and limited self-determination – are fundamental structures that are essential for understanding the premises on which Sámi education is based on (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 49). These four background phenomena are immensely extensive and complex, and a thorough description of any of them could run the length of this entire thesis. However, I seek to provide a short definition of each external factor.

The effect of *colonization* is difficult *not* to find in the features and models of Sámi education today. With the Christian church, the school was the strongest implementer of colonization, which was related to the colonialist goal of controlling their subordinates (see Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011). The concept of otherness, which has “justified” the subordinate treatment of the Sámi in relation to the dominant culture is a straightforward colonialist vestige (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 50). The colonialist processes that appear in the background of this study are, for example, the assimilation processes that sought to integrate the Sámi into Finnish mainstream culture and force Western concepts and customs on them. The influence of colonialism refers not only to territorial and physical domination but also to the goal of controlling ways of thinking. The impact of colonization can be witnessed in basically all indigenous peoples’ education on different continents (Smith, 2012, p. 61–62).

Colonization and the liminal position of Sámi education are interrelated. The phenomenon of *liminalization* refers to a certain positioning of the Sámi that occurs in both physical and mental sense. Sámi as a people, with their languages and culture, are divided into the territory of four countries, being both Sámi people and people of their home state at the same time (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011). However, the biggest issue in Sámi education is that the customs, languages, and understanding of time learned in the Sámi home culture do not fit into a West-centered school (Keskitalo, 2019). Instead, Sámi students are required to adapt to foreign school culture and thus operate in between the school’s views and their own inherent ways. The “normative” position of Western culture can mean that

teachers and education providers cannot even understand the liminalizing effect of the prevailing language and customs (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 50–51).

The notion of Sámi education represents a rather strong *multicultural* view. The goal of a Sámi education is not to create a school only for Sámi students, but a suitable school for all, regardless of background or ethnicity (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 51–52). Multicultural education is an idea of educational reform that seeks to give everyone equal opportunities and make school an environment that reflects diverse perspectives in all contents and starting points (Banks, 2003). Multiculturalism is a process: education should be thoroughly and continuously reviewed and developed to suit the diversifying societies. To improve Sámi education, the Sámi should have room for their own concepts and culture so that the mainstream culture and minority culture would be equally considered in schools (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 52).

Genuine and large-scale *self-determination* in education is still out of reach for the Sámi, although it can be considered a direct requirement in the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN, 2007). The Sámi's real opportunities for influencing educational standards that affect them, such as the curriculum, are limited (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015). The fact that the Sámi perspective is heard in a policy-making process to an inadequate extent, or that decision-makers choose to ignore the consultation, is an abuse of structural power (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 52). Enabling the Sámi to have stronger educational self-government would require a fundamental change, but it should be seen as an important step for the development of the welfare state and undoing the effects of colonization.

I will return to these processes framing Sámi education several times during this study in a circular manner. The phenomena presented here have influenced Sámi education historically, but they are just as topical and prominent today. The special features of contemporary Sámi education and the challenges it faces are discussed in the next section – within the frames portrayed in this one.

2.3 Sámi education today

While the protection of indigenous peoples' rights and the revitalization of indigenous cultures and languages have become international objectives (e.g. ILO, 1989), the indigenous students are still placed on the margins in which they experience how the school continues to respond better to the concepts of the dominant culture (Banks, 2003, p. 243). There have been several international studies that have exposed this issue. For example, alarming results on poor school performance, school engagement, and dropout rates have been found in studies of Chilean and Australian indigenous peoples (Song, Perry, & McConney, 2014; Stavenhagen, 2008), as well as native American and native Alaskan students (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). A curriculum and a school culture that do not resonate with the indigenous treatment of knowledge become meaningless and alienating for the indigenous student (Botha, 2018, p. 24).

The ambiguousness of this phenomenon has been dealt with transparently: there is no denying that, for example, the socio-economic status of families or effects of ever-increasing standardization of education may have some effect on the apparent performance of indigenous pupils (Botha, 2018, p. 24–25). But the social injustice of the Western school system cannot be denied. The Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Education (2006) strongly expresses that indigenous peoples around the world are collectively demanding reform of education, and justifies it as follows:

The need for such an instrument is self-evident. Over the last 30 years, Indigenous peoples throughout the world have argued that they have been denied equity in non-Indigenous education systems which has failed to provide educational services that nurture the whole Indigenous person inclusive of scholarship, culture, and spirituality.

The Sámi are no exception to other indigenous groups in their special educational needs (e.g. Keskitalo, 2019). The global similarity of the different indigenous groups' situations is regarded to be a consequence of universal colonialist aspirations and suppression (see Cuban, 1993). A society operates and is organized in a way that is generally consistent with the customs, traditions, and views of the dominant group. The schools around the world have been organized in surprisingly similar ways, meaning that the view of the mainstream, Western culture is repeated in terms of school structures and objectives (Keskitalo &

Määttä, 2011). These homogeneous solutions are problematic for all cultures attending those schools (Banks, 2003, p. 242).

In Sámi culture, the ontological and epistemological reality – the concepts of time, place, and knowledge – are different from those of the Finnish majority (Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011, p. 57–58). This means that even today when Sámi culture has drawn closer to the Finnish culture and many Sámi people have contact with the mainstream culture on a daily basis, the behaviors that are natural and innate to them may take shape differently (see Weinstock, 2009, p. 3). The Sámi perceptions of time and place are cyclical and holistic: understanding them as phenomena that could be controlled or detached from other elements or the subject experiencing them is a foreign notion for the Sámi (Keskitalo, 2019). The perception of knowledge is also relative, it is seen as something that is actively constructed and intended for practical applicability (Helander & Kailo, 1999). Education should recognize that these conceptual differences affect the construction of knowledge and priorities that become visible in the Sámi students' actions (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 566–567).

The mismatch of concepts and views has led to the phenomenon of liminalization and structural constraints of Sámi education (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 49). Therefore, it is important for the development of Sámi education to carry out critical research regarding the Finnish school system. Individual researchers have taken up the subject (e.g. Aikio-Puoskari, 2015; Huuki & Lanås, 2019), but a small core group of Finnish researchers is especially active in researching and promoting Sámi education (e.g. Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013a). These three Sámi researchers have outlined an approach to teaching called Sámi pedagogy, in which learning is based on concepts drawn from the Sámi culture. Sámi pedagogy enables Sámi students to not only learn *about* their own culture but also *in accordance* with their values and customs by, for example, dropping the linearly sequenced 45-minute lessons to empower the cyclical concept of time (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b). This thesis often relies on the ideas of these scholars.

To sum it up, Sámi education today is still facing issues caused by the effects of colonization and the definitions of the dominant culture. Sámi scholars are stating that these issues would be met by changing the school and the curriculum so that they would truly incorporate the features of Sámi culture (e.g.

Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011, p. 48–50). This view is a representative of an educational approach known as culturally responsive education. Culturally responsive education is an approach to multicultural education that has been advocated for over 40 years. According to it, grounding the frameworks in the local language and culture is essential for the school to identify appropriate methods and qualities (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). In Finland, too, the importance of the Sámi languages has already been realized, and resources and guidelines have been used to secure the teaching of Sámi languages (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015). However, there are several other influential features of Sámi culture that shape Sámi's educational needs. An approach to Sámi education cannot be considered a committed one unless the curriculum is fundamentally changed to address concepts, temporal solutions, and pedagogy from several perspectives (see Banks, 2003, p. 246).

2.4 Sámi and the Finnish curricula

The curriculum plays a very central role in the development and organization of teaching (Kivioja, Soini, Pietarinen, & Pyhältö, 2018, p. 311). Local curricula, which are influencing and guiding practices of a school level, are based on nationally accepted curriculum principles – the Finnish national core curriculum for basic education (Opetushallitus, 2014). The core curriculum is renewed approximately every 10 years, and its main objective is to broadly define the aims of teaching and to provide a baseline for equalized teaching validated throughout Finland (Pyhältö, Pietarinen, & Soini, 2018, p. 2).

The Finnish National Agency for Education (Opetushallitus) approved the latest core curriculum in 2014, and local curricula were implemented in primary schools from that foundation in 2016. The status of the curriculum is comparable to a legal document as it governs the norms of and gives guidelines to teaching (Lahtinen & Lankinen, 2015). The organizers and institutions of education, like schools, cannot by any means disregard these standards in their actions and planning (Hätönen, 2006, p. 18–26). The objective of the curriculum is to define how to teach, what is important to teach, and why (Kivioja et al., 2018, p. 311).

The current core curriculum is a much broader entity than its predecessors, even the previous one that was approved in 2004 (Kivioja et al., 2018). The core

sections have remained somewhat like they were in the previous versions, but the newest curriculum includes unifications and connections between different subjects (Lahtinen & Lankinen, 2015, p. 146–148). This means that in the latest curriculum, the emphasis has shifted towards more “phenomenon-based”, applied learning, even though a clear division between different subjects and lessons still exists (Opetushallitus, 2014).

As Lahtinen and Lankinen (2015) state, Finnish curriculum documents are divided into two parts based on the matters they include. The first section contains the general part, the framework for education’s foundation. The general section defines the overall objectives and functions of education, value-based policies, and principles that guide the activities and practices of schools’ everyday life (see Pasila Primary School, 2016). This section also defines some broader and more cross-cutting entities and objectives that need to be addressed at different grade levels. The second section focuses more specifically on the different school subjects and subject-specific objectives. The subject descriptions have been narrowed down since the previous curriculum to support the processing of local content (Lahtinen & Lankinen, 2015, p. 148).

The curriculum always negotiates the goals of the current political climate and the school system is a popular target for political influencing (see Goodson, 1985). The curriculum design process is shaped by a number of officeholders, not just education professionals, and the curriculum must please several parties so that it can be widely adopted (Sumsion et al., 2009). Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (1995) point out that the curriculum is one special, multi-layered, institutionalized debate (p. 848). The complex nature of the outcome is predictable since the curriculum design process is also a long negotiation of what values it can adopt, what it should savor, and what should be renewed (Kivioja et al., 2018, p. 311).

Indigenous communities, including the Sámi, have raised concerns about the narrowing of the curricular horizon (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008, p. 964). Most Western countries in the Americas and Europe have a curriculum that centers on the mainstream culture’s ideas and ignores the customs and experiences of other cultures (Banks, 2003). These structures do not provide social equality nor motivate as strongly as a curriculum reflecting a diverse range of perceptions. A curriculum that only negotiates the concepts of the mainstream population

creates a deception of the superiority of the dominant culture and does not allow students to consider their views from new perspectives (Banks, 2003, p. 246–248). Therefore, change is needed to achieve a multicultural curriculum. It does not mean that consideration of diversity is attached to the core of mainstream-centered frames or that every culture in the society is directly included in the curriculum. It means that the curriculum is transformed from a structure level so that it does not exclude cultural explanations, but encourages taking action to understand diverse views (Banks, 2003, p. 242).

Forming a multicultural curriculum in Finland is considerably hindered by the fact that in the process of developing the curriculum the Sámi have little say in the matters (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 51–52). Although Finland is known for taking many parties into account in the curriculum design process (see Kivioja et al., 2018), the Sámi community's voice has hardly been heard. This is reflected in how only some overall goals and minimum hour-distribution for teaching Sámi languages have been added to the curriculum since the first core curriculum was published in 1985, although the Sámi Parliament has called for wider improvements (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015). Proponents of Sámi education make it clear: the Sámi should have self-determination in the design process of a document that affects them greatly, and a consultation that is handled as a superficial formality is not enough (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 52).

Unlike in Norway and Sweden, in Finland Sámi students do not have their own curriculum based on their own culture. It is considered important that Sámi students would have their own curriculum in Finland too (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013a). The Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN, 2007) is binding to the contracting states, including Finland, and according to it the states should guarantee the indigenous peoples' educational autonomy. The state must ensure that indigenous children receive education in their own culture and their own language, and UN (2007) claims that indigenous groups have the right to organize their own schools and educational systems that implement teaching methods appropriate to their culture. This is a rather significant argument for the advocates of Sámi education.

3 CONCEPT OF TIME

What is time? It is a question that has been debated for at least two and a half thousand years by philosophers and physicists, scientists and non-scientists alike. According to Heidegger (2001) the philosopher Simplicius, who lived 500 years before the Common Era, stated that if the question *what is time in itself* was asked, even the wisest man could hardly answer (p. 36). In our everyday lives, we take time for granted, and when we talk about time we rarely get confused or contemplate what we mean (Kakkori, 2013, p. 571–572).

In a culturally diverse world, different concepts that we describe the society with are born in socio-cultural functions. Cultures based on different places, customs, and values may have adopted very different views of the time (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012, p. 135). In this study, I use an existing, theory-based division into the *linear concept of time* and *cyclical concept of time* when considering different conceptions – they are two distinguishable, universal, and much-researched ways of explaining time (e.g. Janca & Bullen, 2003; Keskitalo, 2019; Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012; Weinstock, 2009). These two concepts represent the time perceptions of the Finnish majority population and the Sámi community.

This chapter offers definitions for the linear, Western concept of time and the Sámi culture's traditional, more cyclical concept of time. I want to note that a varied, subjective phenomenon, such as the concept of time, does not naturally occur in an as black and white dichotomy as is presented in this study for the sake of clarity. In many cultures, several perceptions of time may exist simultaneously. The same person may experience "religious time" and "practical time" differently because they have different characteristics (Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 40). As I describe the two conceptions of time focused on in this study, it is good to keep in mind that an individual's understanding of time is not clear-cut nor immune to influences of the environment (see Weinstock, 2009).

3.1 The linear concept of time

The linear conception of time has had an immense influence on Western thinking and life: its impact is seen through thought processes, structures of communication, views, and other social organization in our culture (Farquhar, 2016). The Western relationship to time implies that life's events are components of time, and if time is not used, it is lost (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012, p. 135–136). Linear time is seen as its own, ongoing, separate element, and these assumed qualities have generated the ideas of control and maximum utilization of time (see Janca & Bullen, 2003). Some communities and cultures place more value on temporal efficiency than others, committing to a mechanical, structuring “clock-time” (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012). A Finnish school is one broad institution that is committed to the linear time (Hohti & Paananen, 2019).

The linear concept of time is based on the scientific way of thinking used in natural sciences (see Weinstock, 2009). For science, measuring, concreteness, and homogeneity of concepts are typical features. Linear understanding of time is also characterized by calling it the “general” or “objective” time, since time is considered to be fully calculable, with periods and specific moments of it being generally accepted (Heidegger, 2001). For example, the year in the child's life, an hour in the workplace, or the date marked as 11.11.2019 are commonly understood concepts. If the experience of time is different, as when time seems to slow down or move faster, in a linear timeline this is not a real change in the flow of time: time flows in the same, objectively measurable and clock-tied manner, it just feels like it does not (Kakkori, 2013, p. 571).

In the linear concept of time, the most distinctive feature is seeing the passage of time as having one-way and chronological flow (Weinstock, 2009). When visualizing linear time, there is a clear distinction between the past, which is already behind us, the future that is yet to come, and the present where we are right now (Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 40). Because it is possible to classify and define time for certain purposes, to measure it, for example, linear thinking makes it possible to define exactly how far any given moment is from the present (Gell, 1992). “Objective” concepts that express and handle time, such as an hour or a year, make it possible to manage, plan or share time, basically enable us to “catch” time as if it were any external factor in the environment (Kakkori, 2013).

There are several explanations about when and where the linear concept of time has originated. The prevailing assumption is that humans have observed themselves and each other as evolving, aging individuals over time (Geertz, 1973). Therefore, time is concluded to have ongoing, progressing nature. In ancient Greece, where life and time were inherently cyclical, philosopher Aristotle was already raising ideas of how time constantly flows forward, in relation to both the past and the future. His thoughts have been one of the first records in history that mention the core idea of the linear concept of time (Lestienne, 1990, p. 6–7). Also, Christianity is considered to have a role in why the West shifted from the cyclic time to the linear worldview. In the religious writings that have formed the West, the resurrection of Jesus was described as a unique event that could never occur again, so time "must be linear, not cyclic" (Whitrow, 1972, p. 14).

Most of the major theories about development and education take the linear concept of time for granted. It is a basic presumption (Kakkori, 2013, p. 571, 579). Given how Heidegger (2001) has also called linearity a "vulgar concept" because it leaves no room for other possible explanations at all, it can be concluded that it is not the most appropriate starting point in today's diverse school. Linear starting points create closed models for the school: at the end of the lesson, the topics of the previous subject are closed for discussion as teaching moves on to the next, and different solutions for learning are overlooked (see Keskitalo, 2019, p. 569). A monopoly position of linear concepts in education has been strongly criticized (e.g. Hohti & Paananen, 2019; Keskitalo, 2019; Reeves, 2006). From the point of view of Sámi pedagogy, closed time frames are a key issue slowing down the consideration of Sámi culture in schools. The current, closed patterns of lessons and semesters of Finnish schools make it difficult to act and teach by a different concept of time (Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 447).

Interestingly, the "truthfulness" of the linear time, which relies on scientific concepts, has been questioned even in the realm of measurable, "objective" physics. According to Lawson (2013), who has translated the world-famous physicist's thoughts on relativity, a young Albert Einstein was very interested in the importance of expression of time for the individuals' worldview. When examining the properties of the speed of light, Einstein discovered that time does not behave in the same way as we had assumed: he even used the term "naive"

to describe the common view according to which time has a permanent nature and one absolute way to flow (Lawson, 2013).

Whether it is the cause or consequence of linear time, or a little bit of both, in the Western culture man has distanced himself from nature and natural phenomena. People have been socialized in "logical", linear thinking processes and seeing time as a tool for organizing human life (Weinstock, 2009, p. 11). Helander and Kailo (1999) raise concerns about how linear time-philosophy affects human action: when achieving as much as possible in a certain time becomes an inherent value, it strains natural resources as well as people (p. 234). Living in a so-called *circle of action* would create more opportunities to live in a sustainable relationship with the environment and let go of linear pressures (Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 233). Such a circular framework is based on the Sámi cyclical perception of time, as it will be discussed in the next section.

3.2 Sámi concept of time

The Sámi concept of time is very diverse and unique by nature. Like most other conceptions of time in indigenous cultures, it is a fundamentally *cyclic* notion (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 570). Cyclic time offers a strong contrast to the linear concept of time in the sense that, by its very definition, it forms cycles in relation to its experiencer. The time that has passed is not "gone and lost", but the opportunities that existed in the past may present themselves again (Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 234). Time is a part of life's events, not the other way around. Cyclic time is connected to natural phenomena that reflect recurrences, such as the seasons, the lunar cycle, or animal behavior (Ruscher, 2012, p. 322).

Cyclical time is sometimes referred to as the "old time" as most historical societies have lived according to a cyclic worldview – however, the cyclical concept of time is also a contemporary phenomenon, as many indigenous cultures and ontologies still view time as cyclic (Weinstock, 2009, p. 5). Arguably, cyclical time still exists in countries with a mostly linear worldview too. Every year, some states in the USA prepare for the hurricane season, and the seasons of various sports begin and end at the same time, often based on cyclically recurring conditions (Ruscher, 2012, p. 322). The cyclic and linear conceptions of time can

coexist in a society, although every group and individual has a certain viewpoint on how time flows, what time means, and how we are positioned in time.

The unambiguous, uncontrollable progression of time is an essential feature of cyclical time. From the perspective of the cyclic concept of time, time itself does not proceed and it cannot be separated from other aspects of life or environment (Helander & Kailo, 1999). Cyclically defined time is constantly present, surrounding and connecting to an individual, and time itself does not move anywhere (Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 40–41). In comparison, in linear discourses, time is often referred to as a separate phenomenon, and there are many ways for grasping the idea of time on its own (see Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012). In Sámi culture, the phrase "no beginning, no end" is used to describe the cycle of life. There are concrete cultural manifestations of this philosophy in the Sámi traditions, like the *yoik*, special vocal music of the Sámi, which is considered to have no duration nor an endpoint (Weinstock, 2009, p. 12).

In addition to the circles in nature, there is another explanation for what the "cycles" of cyclic time are constructed from. Among Australian aboriginal culture, a person is seen "in the middle" of time, that is, life events and phenomena are placed on several time-circles surrounding the person according to their importance and meaning (Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 41). The more significant the events are, the closer and more meaningful they feel in time. Time conception is seen as a fundamental factor in how things become meaningful for a person (see Botha, 2018). In cyclical time, things are prioritized according to the present moment. This can be seen, for example, in the fact that stockpiling material or building monuments for future recognition is not important for Sámi people, and that learning processes seek to test the competences instantly rather than in the unknown future (Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 233).

The line between different concepts of time is not static or unchanging. Cultures and philosophies around the world encounter and interact with each other, and when they do, their own features can be influenced or reinforced (see Neelameghan & Raghavan, 2009). For example, it was not long ago that Finland was a country based on agriculture, and therefore the Finnish majority was also dependent on following the signs and cycles of nature. As wage workers and labor mobility became more widespread, Finnish society went through the same transformation as many other urban, Western states before it (Kivinen & Rinne,

1998, p. 42). The natural, cyclical time was replaced by linear time in most parts of the country, creating a greater cultural gap between the Finnish majority and the Sámi. The Finnish school institute was a special tool for spreading this new, linear culture and the new values related to it (see Kivinen & Rinne, 1998).

The influence from other cultures may be the reason why scholars, when describing the Sámi concept of time, have slightly different perceptions. A Sámi scholar Pigga Keskitalo (2019) is one of many professionals that have described and defined the Sámi concept of time as inherently cyclical (see also Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012; Rasmus, 2004). Weinstock (2009), however, addresses the fact that the Sámi have been in contact with the mainstream population for a long time, and this has affected the "indigeneness" of their concepts. The Sámi have been resilient in preserving their own relationship with time, even though they have been under immense pressure to abandon their views (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011). However, the long period of colonization and contact with the dominant culture has shaped Sámi concepts, and the Sámi time is not, according to some interpretations, as purely cyclical as that of many other indigenous peoples (Weinstock, 2009, p. 15–16).

The Sámi conception of time is a rather unique phenomenon and subject of research. The contradictions of its definitions highlight the dynamic nature of time. But one thing researchers agree on: the Sámi concept of time has roots in a strong relationship with nature (see Keskitalo, 2019; Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012; Weinstock, 2009). This significance is reflected, for example, in Sámi languages where the months are named after natural phenomena. For example, May, *miessemánnu*, translates directly to *the reindeer-calf-month*, since at that time the year the reindeer herds give birth to their calves (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012, p. 127). The views that follow from observing nature can also be seen in the more specific seasons of the Sámi. Traditionally, the Sámi have eight seasons: in addition to the four universally known seasons, the Sámi views include four middle-seasons, such as spring-summer and autumn-winter, with their own features and special events (see Rasmus, 2004, p. 131).

For the sake of ethical reporting, I must make it very clear that by this description I do not mean to create stereotypical connotations in which the Sámi would appear as nomads still living according to the cycle of the sun, for whom it would be impossible to understand linear time. Like Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, a Sámi

poet whose poem served as the first words of this thesis, states in his interview, he does not find the difference between the Sámi and mainstream concepts of time to be shocking. He says that he is accustomed to acting accurately and being always on time for meetings, but he still strives to live "without time" whenever possible (Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 127). The problem with linear structures is not that people with inherently cyclical time would not be *able* to act on a Western schedule, but there can be a great deal of resistance towards seeing timeframes and schedules as the dictator of life (Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 41). It is also problematic that through the colonization of concepts, notions of time that do not value rushed work and clock-bound living like the linear view does are set to be inferior, interpreted to mean laziness or poor work ethic (Smith, 2012, p. 56).

If the teaching and timetables were to be determined so that they support Sámi cyclical concept of time, the lessons, breaks, and semesters would be organized on a student-oriented manner (Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 447). Also, education should shift from strict subject-division toward a focus on more open phenomenon-based learning (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 568). Teaching should be adapted to the Sámi yearly cycle: the eight traditional seasons and all the traditional work related to them, as reindeer-roundup, should be considered (Rasmus, 2004, p. 130–131). An "easy" way to incorporate Sámi time in education is to include it as an interesting content or addition to the Finnish traditional baseline. However, this level does not truly encounter a cyclical worldview. In order to maintain and really negotiate Sámi cyclicity, consideration of different perspectives must be supported and encouraged by reconstructing the current, excluding structures and objectives (Banks, 2003, p. 250–253).

4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the objectives, purpose, and methods by which this study was conducted. I begin by describing the basis of the study, starting with the intentions and the research question guiding the analysis. After this, I present the research material, as well as the methodological framework of discourse analysis applied in this thesis. At the end of the chapter, I define how the analysis process evolved and took place in practice.

4.1 Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is, above all, to shed a light on the meanings and explanations of time offered in the curriculum of Pasila Primary School. With this thesis, I aim to join the expanding discussion on the structural obstacles that multicultural consideration confronts in education. I think it is a significant research goal to point out that an authoritative, “truthful” document (see Simola, 2015) such as a curriculum is not completely neutral nor immune to interpretation. As the curriculum reflects and constructs the meaning networks of its subjects and environment, it is not completely objective or appear in the same way for everyone (see Autio, 2017, p. 24–27). The frame of this constructionist research is aware of this premise and questions curricular statements that appear as the “truth”.

With a Foucauldian discourse analysis, I aim to reveal existing power relations and time-related, biased assumptions that form education. According to Smith (2012), Foucault has found these “rules of practice” to be often invisible to Western actors as we take them for granted in our own lives (p. 46). I think that making inequitable systems visible is highly important in educational discussions because societal change cannot confront or improve issues that it is not aware of. This thesis is also a part of my teacher education, and I find that the layout

and implementation of this research can support me in my goal of being a culturally sensitive and conscious teacher. A critical examination of the curriculum helps me form an informative relationship with it and makes it possible to direct my own teaching in the conscious direction.

The purpose of this study is not to add yet another Western assessment and interpretation of the Sámi culture to the field of indigenous research (see Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011; Smith, 2012), nor it is to generalize or try to describe the Sámi worldview or meaning systems impeccably. Strictly speaking, the object of this research is not the Sámi culture and the Sámi concept of time in itself, but the Finnish Pasila curriculum document. Thus, I do not aim to create new interpretations of cultural aspects, Sámi nor Western. Although my starting point for the curriculum analysis is critical, my aim is not to judge or criticize the authors of the curriculum or to evaluate the document's goals: in this study, the meaningful language itself is at the center (see Parker, 1992, p. 6–7).

4.2 Research question

The Sámi's unique concept of time has been researched by others (e.g. Weinstock, 2009), but according to my searches in several databases only one research deals specifically with the Sámi concept of time in the context of current Nordic basic education. This work by Pigga Keskitalo (2019) created a theoretical overview of Sámi school's time and place based on ethnographic and observational studies in Sámi education. There has been little interest in analyzing the Finnish curriculum from the point of view of Sámi culture so far. My research aims to follow this interest in order to provide an answer to my research question:

How is the Sámi concept of time negotiated in a Finnish curriculum?

4.3 Ontological premises

This study falls within the broad framework of qualitative research. Qualitative methods are particularly appropriate and useful when there is only little prior knowledge and theory about the research subject, or when the aim is to explore the subject from a new angle, as is the case with this study (Peer, Hakemulder,

& Zyngier, 2012, p. 54–55). My research question explicitly asks, *how* the Sámi concept of time is negotiated in the curriculum, therefore the question directs the data analysis toward a descriptive reading, rather than a quantitative form (Eskola & Suoranta, 2008, p. 15–19).

Ontologically this study leans to a viewpoint of social constructionism. Social constructionism as a term refers generally to ontological assumptions and research trends that view reality and its meanings as a socially founded construct (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009, p. 12). The basic idea of social constructionism is that descriptions of reality are shaped by interpersonal social processes in which language, conceptual structures, and other forms of representation play a central role (Burr, 1995). In the tradition of social constructionism, there is no one correct method for analyzing data: however, due to its emphasis on perspective and the concept of power, scholars leaning on social constructionism often use discourse analysis as their method (see Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009). Discourse analysis is considered to have a theoretical basis in social constructionism (Jokinen, 2016, p. 252).

According to social constructionism, the world can never be encountered as purely something, an unequivocal truth, but the reality is created from a particular point of view (Burr, 1995). Language-based and dynamic conceptions of reality – of the world, objects, and people – are the products of historical and cultural processes. Reality is constructed in the views and descriptions that hold power over their objects, and if a new view takes on a stronger position than the old one, it changes the reality around it (Jokinen, 2016, p. 252–253). Social constructionism aims to disclose and critically evaluate the position of views that are unquestioned and taken for granted. For example, questioning the power that Western culture has on declaring the “true” knowledge and concepts has been part of social constructionism since its early days. Not all people adopt a Western view of “truth” (Burr, 1995, p. 15–16). Simola (2015), defines that the Finnish curriculum is systematic truth-constructing in its strongest form, expressing thoughtfully what school is and what is important (p. 22). Thus, the position and object of my analysis place this study at the heart of social constructionism.

The object of this study is related to the starting points of indigenous research. Respecting these premises, the research seeks to counterbalance the colonizing angle, so-called “research through imperial eyes”, which does not

criticize Western assumptions nor is beneficial for indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012, p. 44). Thus, this study is linked to a post-colonial research trend that draws attention to events and phenomena still lingering on from the colonization processes and aims to direct critique and change towards them. Post-colonialism is reflected in this study in prioritized concepts and theories that reinforce indigenous peoples' own redefinitions and critically recognize unbalanced elements in structures that we are accustomed to (Keskitalo et al., 2016).

4.4 Curriculum as research material

The data of this research is formed from the public, local, school-level curriculum document of Pasila Primary School (2016). Although the national core curriculum is more extensive and more widely influencing document in the context of the Finnish education system, the content, objectives, and guidelines at local and school levels are more specific compared to the national level. The more specific level demonstrates educational practices and values more clearly than the general one because the core curriculum intentionally leaves room for local emphases and contents (Lahtinen & Lankinen, 2015, p. 148). Therefore, the local level was perceived as a more fruitful starting point for this study.

Curriculum research can be viewed as its own scientific trend, so it is useful to start with presenting its common focus points and special features. After this, I describe the Pasila curriculum in more detail to justify why this particular document was selected as the research focus. Other material that has been used in one way or another for the purposes of this research process will be reviewed at the end of this section.

4.4.1 Curriculum research

Curriculum research engages in understanding the diversity and discussions surrounding the field of education. It crosses the boundaries of specific disciplines and seeks to encompass complex entities related to the values and interests visible in educational guidelines (Autio, 2017). It can support educational development, improve teacher education, and spread comprehension of teachers' day-to-day commitments and principles (Hakala, Maaranen, & Riitaoja,

2017, p. 163). As the Finnish curriculum is renewed only once a decade and it has a way of reflecting society (see Autio, Hakala, & Kujala, 2017a), it also has historical value. This makes it a document that warrants professionals and researchers to make a careful, critical appraisal of it (Sumsion et al., 2009, p. 4).

The curriculum is often seen as a politically impartial and value-neutral norm and as such it is reviewed in most research literature (see Pinar et al., 1995). Hakala, Maaranen, and Riitaoja (2017) state that assuming and reproducing the notion of neutrality is an unsustainable approach to curriculum research: presenting the curriculum as a politically neutral guideline shapes the research toward asking purely methodological questions, like what are the most successful means to teach its contents (p. 161–162). The effects of educational frameworks go beyond day-to-day interests and struggles, and this can be recognized only through curriculum research that considers the broader structures the curriculum is situated within. However, regrettably often the genre of curriculum research is about reporting current policies in a way that does not connect to theoretical and historical aspects, limiting critique to a superficial level (Autio, 2017, p. 21). Well implemented, contextualizing curriculum research can offer insights on what values, traditions, and concepts education is based on, and what could it be based on in the future (Autio, Hakala, & Kujala, 2017a).

As described by Autio (2017), the notion of the curriculum as an organizational, objective, and efficient educational element, that is oblivious to its own interpretability, is related to a traditional Anglo-American curricular tradition. Awareness of the complexity of education was reflected in the curriculum after the 1970s, rising with the “post-development psychology” approach, and it also influenced the practical positioning of educational policies and teachers (Autio, 2017, p. 24–27). Aikio-Puoskari (2015) observes this same shift, adding that drawing near the 1990s, curriculum policies became more open and unspecific, reflecting the general goal of reducing administrative control in education.

Autio, Hakala, and Kujala’s work (2017b) explores Finnish institutional education as a political and socially constructed system rather than a value-neutral, administrative, and uncontextualized “machine” as seen in the Anglo-American view. The authors highlight the complex and dynamic aspects of the curriculum (Autio, Hakala, & Kujala, 2017a, p. 10). In my analysis, I take a similar stance toward the current Finnish curriculum, being aware of its political

complexity and the baseline of values and larger contexts that lie beneath the seemingly neutral surface. I approach the research with the assumption that it is possible to interpret the influence of prevailing discourses on the curriculum text.

In Finland, the curriculum has been studied from different perspectives, although research has mostly focused on the historical development of the curriculum or factual explanations on how the curriculum texts were created (e.g. Kivioja et al., 2018). Apart from the historical and developmental perspective, interpretive or explorative research about the curriculum is significantly less common (Vitikka, 2009, p. 282). For Sámi education research, the importance of shifting focus to the curriculum is emphasized in several Sámi studies carried out by other methods (e.g. Keskitalo, 2019, p. 560; Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 446). There is only a small body of systematic Finnish curriculum research that has had Sámi issues as a subject of interest. When mapping the field of Sámi research, I found a single Finnish curriculum study by Aikio-Puoskari (2015), in which the focus was on how the status of Sámi language teaching has developed in legislations and core curricula since the 1970s. The main finding of the study was that the consideration of the Sámi languages has steadily improved but is still differentiating students based on whether they live in the official Sámi area or not (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015).

I am aware that in some situations, the concept of curriculum includes the so-called "hidden curriculum", i.e. the teaching and learning of things outside the formal education objectives (e.g. Broady, 1986). The "hidden curriculum" emphasizes mastery of different practices and behaviors that are adopted from the school environment. Pupils, for example, learn to wait for their turns and to start and finish their work within school schedules (Keskitalo, 2019). Although the issues related to the conception of time are no doubt often realized on the hidden curriculum level, in this study I am focusing on the official, written, normative curriculum. It is important to critically examine how the macro-level frameworks of basic education restrict or enable choosing culturally negotiating solutions: does the curriculum encourage teaching that is suitable for all, or do educators need to choose between negotiating Sámi culture and the compulsory curriculum?

4.4.2 Pasila and Helsinki curricula

The research data of this study consists of a public curriculum document, the curriculum of Pasila Primary School located in the Finnish capital, Helsinki. For the purposes of this study, I will sometimes use the shorter term "curriculum" when referring to this specific material, especially in the section handling analysis where this exact data is discussed frequently. The basic principle of the Pasila school-level curriculum is the same as that of the national, general curriculum: it is a guideline that directs and expresses the role and objectives of education (see Pinar et al., 1995).

An important thing to understand about the school-specific curriculum of Pasila is its structure. Pasila curriculum has been implemented and written "inside" the local curriculum of the City of Helsinki, in a way that the school-level sections are made in color-highlighted additions and refinements to the Helsinki curriculum text. Thus, Pasila's curriculum document contains both local and school-specific curriculum (see Pasila Primary School, 2016). This more detailed curriculum aligns with the definitions and values mandated by the national core curriculum and reflects its general appearance and division into a general part and subject and age-specific guidelines (Opetushallitus, 2014).

The main reason behind selecting the Pasila Primary School curriculum as the objective of this study is that both levels of the curriculum, Helsinki area and the Pasila School, are special for the Sámi education. As in Norway and Sweden, the capital of Finland – Helsinki – has a large residential concentration of the Sámi community, now that a great part of the Sámi population lives outside the official Sámi territory (Roto, 2011). Helsinki is also a big, urban city in Southern Finland, and thus differs in many ways from the traditional Sámi environment in the northernmost parts of Finland (see Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 126).

Helsinki's local curriculum could have been studied on its own, but I felt that a school-specific curriculum, the structure of which includes both Helsinki and Pasila school guidelines, offered more value for the interpretation. From 2018, Pasila Primary School has offered its students an opportunity to study in a bilingual Finnish-Sámi class. Half of the teaching in this class is carried out in a Sámi language and organized by a Sámi teacher (Pasila Primary School, 2016). This opportunity is exceptional because the Sámi class in Pasila is the first of its

kind outside the official Sámi area (Nieminen, 2019). I believe that these local and school-specific features together form an interesting research data.

Local and school-level curricula are important for the realization of Sámi education, as the curriculum structure has altered since the 1990s and the guidance of the core curriculum has been intentionally loosened (see Lahtinen & Lankinen, 2015). The reduction of national-level requirements aims to make space for the incorporation of local emphases to the teaching. These loosened definitions are considered to enable the inclusion of Sámi culture in teaching as a local element (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015, p. 34–35). When it comes to Pasila school and city of Helsinki, there is a public awareness that their internal activities and cultures involve, and thus also affect, students rooted in Sámi culture (Nieminen, 2019; Roto, 2011). The school's Sámi class and all other classes are equally obliged to act according to the guidelines, values, and assumptions of the local curriculum (see Pasila Primary School, 2016).

The final data, from which the results and conclusions considering the research question were established, was formed from the general part of the Pasila curriculum, including chapters 1–11. The thorough analysis did not include the subject or age-specific refinements and goals: rather, these sections were read to support the overview and to reinforce themes that had already been formulated from the basis of the general part. When examining the subject-specific section, the discursive elements started to repeat the aspects of analysis already identified from the general section. The general part contains very comprehensive descriptions of principles, values, and overall goals of both the Helsinki region and Pasila School, so the general part alone provides extensive and functional research material.

For this study, focusing on the curriculum was a carefully considered choice in a number of ways. What is most essential in the selection of the material is how it works with the research problem (see Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 160–164). At the present situation of Finnish Sámi education, it's important to focus research and attention on the policy level in order to unify the currently fragmented consideration of Sámi culture in schools (Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiantti, 2013, p. 446). Curriculum research from this perspective also corresponds with a need in the field of Finnish research, as Sámi concepts in education have only been studied by methods of ethnography (Keskitalo, 2010)

and teaching professionals' interviews (Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013) but not by analyzing policy guidelines.

4.4.3 Supporting material

In this study, the most considered research material was the Pasila curriculum presented in the previous section. However, other documents were used in priming the analysis, forming frames of interpretation, and supporting the research process. Thus, this supporting material contributes to the results of this study and should be considered as part of the research material.

As the Finnish curriculum system is hierarchical, and the Pasila Curriculum has not been formed arbitrarily, it was important to get acquainted with its origin. This origin is formed by the national core curriculum (Opetushallitus, 2014). The strong link between national and local curricula is, in my view, a somewhat self-validating reason why the core curriculum was considered to support this research. Since my goal is to understand and interpret the school-level curriculum, and the interpretation of discourses is related to the conditions of their existence (Foucault, 1982, p. 107), it is important to look at the document it is mandated to be based on.

Sometimes, to see behind the language that seems objective, it is necessary to look at alternative ways to construe and express meanings (see Parker, 1992). Therefore, in this study, the Norwegian Sámi curriculum has been read parallel with the Pasila curriculum. No systematic analysis was formed of the Norwegian Sámi curriculum, but it was read carefully, comparing it with its Finnish counterpart. With this, I aimed to sensitize myself to alternative guidelines, to become a more critical reader of the Finnish curriculum regardless of my Finnish premises. An accessible contrast based on Sámi culture can help to identify differences and similarities between language use and meaning-making, suggesting discourses that could have been invisible to me otherwise (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 168).

The Norwegian Sámi curriculum is based on the principles of Sámi culture, valid in all the schools in the Sámi administrative area. In 1997, Norwegian education policies underwent a reform in which the Sámi curriculum was created alongside the Norwegian national curriculum, and the two curricula have since

been developed as separate, parallel documents (Szilvási, 2016, p. 85). Sámi curriculum has been developed for several subjects: Sámi as a first language, Sámi as a second language, Norwegian, specialization studies, religion, beliefs and ethics, natural sciences, music, food and health, and *Duodji*, Sámi handicrafts. In other contents, the Norwegian core curriculum applies (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019).

Supporting documents were only used as an aid and background information in the analysis, except for one legislation. Finnish Government's Decree 422/2012, which defines the nationally valid lesson-distribution and school subjects, has been focused on as a part-object of the analysis. Decree 422/2012 was systematically analyzed alongside the Pasila curriculum since it was directly stated to be the basis of the Pasila lesson structure (Pasila Primary School, 2016). I discuss the hour-distribution more in section 5.1.1.

4.5 Analysis

At the beginning of an analysis phase, it is essential to choose how to approach a volume of text as large as the curriculum. From the basis and needs of the research question, I decided to use an approach of *Foucauldian discourse analysis*. There is no single unambiguous “recipe” for implementing discourse analysis, as is common in all qualitative analysis methods (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 124). Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009) define that discourse analysis is a broad and interdisciplinary method, but mainly it refers to the study of language and language use. The underlying assumption of the analysis method is that language and the meanings it contains and statements that it makes – discourses – do not merely mirror, but create reality and social structures (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009, p. 163). Discourse analytical research does not examine objective facts or universal commonalities, but the relationship between the subject and the researcher is constructive, forming findings in a reflective process (Jokinen, 2016, p. 253).

The difference between discourse analysis and content analysis used in, for example, historical research is that in discourse analysis the aim is not to create a coherent, logical overall picture of the reality behind the text. The text is not viewed merely as a description from which conclusions about the studied

phenomena can be drawn (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 173). The focus is on the discourse itself, what it does and where does it draw its power from, and the analysis highlights something that does not automatically arise from the text (Parker, 1992). This section examines the methodological features of the applied view of Foucauldian discourse analysis and describes the course of the practical analysis process. But first and foremost, I focus on a concept that is very central for this analysis and describe how I understand *discourse*.

4.5.1 Discourse – just text or much more?

Discourse as a concept is complex to define unequivocally, but in short, it is used to describe the relatively intact meaning systems of language that take shape in social reality (Jokinen, Juhila, & Suoninen, 2016, p. 34). It also regards the habit of constructing an image of the world from a particular social perspective (see Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012, p. 81). Discourse extends beyond language because it contains socially influential functions (Simola, 2015, p. 18). Discourses are not “just talking and writing”, they have a strong purpose and are both the object and the medium of power in society. Their ability to construct reality is the reason why they are seen as interesting and necessary subjects of research (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009, p. 53).

The systems of meaning that are intertwined with language are sometimes called *repertoires of interpretation*, instead of using the concept of discourses. In this study, I use the concept of discourse since, as Jokinen, Juhila, and Suoninen (2016) state, it is more operational when the research is related to institutionalized practices and power relations (p. 34). In some places, the concept of discourse may be paired here with a term *system of meaning*, for it is the indispensable essence of discourse (see Parker, 1992).

Discourse analysis mostly includes an understanding of a broad spectrum of meanings that are intertwined around the same phenomena. Thus, in this study, it is not practical to assume that a straightforward conclusion could be drawn from the curriculum discourses, as the same text may show several different meanings (Jokinen, Juhila, & Suoninen, 2016, p. 33). Discourses allow us to see and understand something that is not “really” there, such as abstract

parts of reality related to attitudes and practices, which are given form through language (Parker, 1992, p. 5).

In this study, a definition of discourse by Ian Parker, a Foucauldian theorist, is particularly central, as his model is used in the analysis phase to identify discursive language. Parker (1992) summarizes the most fundamental nature of discourse being "*systems of statements that form an object*" (p. 5). Parker has compiled a seven-point list of criteria for identifying discourses, the goal of which is to help the researcher engage with the analysis and the discourse itself. He defines discourse with the following characteristics:

1. Discourse is realized in text.
2. Discourse is about objects.
3. Discourse contains subjects.
4. Discourse is a coherent system of meanings.
5. Discourse refers to other discourses.
6. Discourse reflects on its own way of speaking.
7. Discourse is historically located. (Parker, 1992, p. 6–17).

Parker's (1992) first criterion, discourse is realized in text (1), means that the discourse is not found in the text as such, but formed through "fractions of discourse", implications and individual statements (p. 6–7). Analyzing discourses is always linked to the text and it does not make interpretations of, for example, the authors behind it (Parker, 1992, p. 7). Discourse is about objects (2), on the other hand, brings to light that by naming the object the discourse creates it – either so that the object would not exist outside the discourse at all, or the meanings define it in a new way. Discourse also contains subjects (3), meaning that the discourse places both the user and recipient of the language in a particular position in a context-dependent manner (Parker, 1992, p. 7–9).

Criteria 4 and 5 – discourses are coherent systems of meaning and at the same time related to other discourses – together form an essential issue in the identification of discourses (Parker, 1992, p. 10–15). Criterion 4 emphasizes that when forming a view of the discourse, it should create a unified whole. This does

not mean that a discourse could be regarded as a very clear-cut phenomenon, but that there are no major contradictions or gaps within a single discourse. However, Parker (1992) also reminds that discourses borrow ideas and analogies from each other and may construct the same object in different ways (p. 14). Thus, discourse analysis will in any case face multiple, possibly contradictory meanings and involves not only the identification of individual discourses but also the inter-discursive relationships.

The fact that the discourse comments on itself and its own concepts (6) is a complementary feature to the previous two criteria. As Parker (1992) argues, the discourse may be aware of its own concepts forming causality or contradiction with other views (p. 15). The last criterion, historical feature of discourse (7) points out that discourse and its development cannot be viewed as detached processes but must be linked to a specific time and place. This is not always easy, as on some level researchers have to distance themselves from the material in the discourse identification phase so that the researchers' conventions do not guide them to take some familiar features for granted (Parker, 1992, p. 15–16).

This study is very interested in the appearance of so-called “dominant discourses” or “strong discourses”. They are the result of uneven positioning of competing discourses – as one discourse becomes a determinant of its object, it also excludes alternative explanations. Dominant discourse arises if the common atmosphere and the promotion of certain meanings give a discourse such a strong foothold that it becomes unquestioned, and this leads to the marginalization of other ways of constructing meaning (Fairclough, 1995; Foucault, 1982). What is interesting for this study is whether the Western conception of time can be identified in the curriculum as a dominant discourse.

4.5.2 Foucauldian discourse analysis

Most research in education is based on a methodology and analytical premise where the school's linear time is not problematized at all: it only frames “self-evidently” the practices and knowledge formation that is under examination (Farquhar, 2016). It is important to understand time and practices as discursively produced – rather than being purely essential and neutral – as only then the expressions of time can be critically accessed (Duncheon & Tierney, 2013). In

this study, it was considered essential that the starting point of the analysis negotiates critical reassessment of existing assumptions, and Foucauldian discourse analysis fits well into that definition.

Michel Foucault (1926–1984) was a French philosopher and historian focused on the structures of thought, and one of the key figures behind the concept of discourse and its rise to the scientific discussion (Simola, 2015, p. 17). The Foucauldian discourse analysis is a branch of discourse analysis that is based on the concepts he established in his extensive life's work. According to scholars who have considered the methodological dimensions of Foucault's work (e.g. Hook, 2001; Isaksson, 1993), discourse analysis can be classified as a point of view that interprets the text and examines the procedures of both expression and suppression. In Foucauldian tradition, the subjects that express the discourses inside the language are called *statements*, and a discourse analyst aims to interpret the obvious or hidden rules that the statements adhere to (Ahonen, 1993, p. 323).

Foucauldian discourse analysis always involves a certain criticality and attention to a broader context (see Hook, 2001). Criticism, however, is not useful on a level that just states that things are “wrong” as they appear – it is more about showing what kind of unchallenged assumptions or ways of thinking persist behind the actions we adopt (Foucault, 1990, p. 154). Foucault's work is applicable in the research of sensitive or complex matters, such as the experience of otherness presented in this study, and when the aim is to broaden the research perspective (Isaksson, 1993, p. 270–280). Thus, Foucauldian discourse analysis is a well-founded approach when proceeding to critically interpret the curriculum.

An openly critical position toward the text makes it possible to recognize that even neutrally portrayed language most likely contains discourses. Foucauldian discourse analysis allows for an intellectually meaningful way to identify and deconstruct a power-saturated text and prevailing discourses of truth. The position toward essential and truthful language is, in short: “what is considered as truth is only true within a certain discourse” (Nieminen, 1990, p. 118). According to Foucault (1982), the text reflects expressions whose conditions of existence can be determined, that is, it is possible to critically evaluate what factors have caused the discourses to emerge (p. 107).

It has not been possible to operationalize a precise methodological framework or step-by-step approach to discourse analysis from the base of Foucault's work, but the philosopher's ideas have been used as a template by discourse theorists who have formed their own applicable models (see Gutting, 1989, p. 249). Of theorists using the Foucauldian concepts of discourse, who have created their own "model" for approaching analysis, Potter and Wetherell (1987) and Parker (1992) are often mentioned in the methodological literature of discourse analysis (e.g. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Wood & Kroger, 2000). In the analysis of this study, the course of which I will describe in the next section, I utilized the models of these researchers as applicable.

4.5.3 Analysis process

The analysis process of this study began with a close familiarization with the curriculum text that serves as research material. I read the text carefully and sought to identify elements that stated something about the research topic, i.e. concept of time and temporality. By adopting the discourse analysis model created by Potter and Wetherell (1987), I aimed to identify patterns, similarities, and differences between the statements I had identified and organized them accordingly into *themes* (p. 167). In this study, three distinguishable, time-related themes emerged based on the statements: *Assumption of linear time and learning*, *Room for cyclical conceptions*, and *General respect for flexibility and diversity*.

The reading of the curriculum and the formation of the themes progressed in a cyclical manner, meaning that I returned to modify the outlined themes if the text expressed new patterns. At this stage, all statements, including those only vaguely relating to time and the research problem, were involved in the themes as the body of meanings is not sought to be limited (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 167). Thus, the formation of discursive themes was based on data, but the theory was used to guide the interpretation by an accessible conceptual system (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 127). I did not create a pre-existing frame or form for the analysis, but, for example, the arguments of Keskitalo (2019) and Hohti and Paananen (2019) were used to support the understanding of how linearity appears in the curriculum.

In practice, the curriculum statements that I considered to represent a theme were copied and pasted under the corresponding theme's title in their own document. Thematization process was useful in forming an overview of the surfacing discourses and it was easier to go into more detail on the statements when they were organized according to their qualities. Once the themes were formed, I started to go through them applying the criteria for identifying and approaching discourses defined by Parker (1992) (listed in section 4.5.1). Following the criteria, I examined how direct and indirect statements about time formed an understanding of a larger discourse, as well as discourses' relationships and contexts. Interpreting references of these broader elements of the language happens through the lens of the research question and the position of the researcher, and it is the primary stage in discourse analysis (Parker, 2005, p. 253).

The models developed by Potter and Wetherell (1987) and Parker (1992) serve as an important starting point for the implementation of this discourse analysis. However, the approaches have been criticized on how they take little or no position on how discourses should be viewed critically on a larger scale. According to Hook (2001), neither of these systematic models link the discourses to a context, which is central in a Foucauldian view (p. 525). For this reason, I do not tie my analysis completely to existing models, but take an additional step based on my own critical thinking and understanding of theories constructed by other scholars.

I have outlined a figure of how the different steps of the analysis process relate to each other and what key aspects each step brought to the analysis. The steps are presented in a circumferential pattern, as they are not purely chronological but overlap and follow each other. The figure (Figure 2) is attached below.

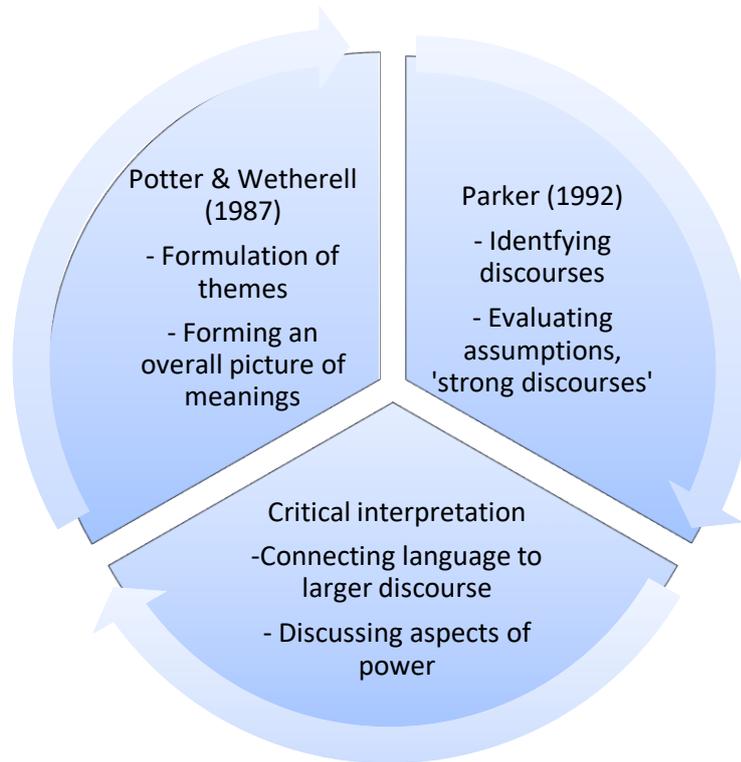


Figure 2. Analysis process

In Figure 2, two steps of the analysis have been named after the theorists whose approach has been applied at that stage. The third step is called “critical interpretation”. Although critical thinking has been used throughout the whole process, the third analysis stage links discourses to the larger context and requires a critical understanding of the phenomena and power-relations related to the statements. Context and power relations cannot be distinguished from discourse analysis (see Jokinen, Juhila, & Suoninen, 2016, p. 36–38) and in this analysis they are formed by the unique position and concepts of Sámi education and the subordinate, colonized status historically experienced by the Sámi (e.g. Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011).

Not all discourses are available to everyone, because of the indirect manner they often appear in. Cultural, critical understanding is essential in cracking the discursive nature of some statements, as the reader views the text “prepared” to see certain meanings (Parker, 1992, p. 7). To reveal discourses that often go unnoticed, it was important to cyclically return to the data, analysis models, critical reflection, and cultural information which is provided by, for example, the Norwegian Sámi curriculum and existing post-colonialist literature. Reviewing all

elements regularly during the analysis can produce the most reliable and convincing results possible, even if the subject and method are from the most subjective end (Vilkka, 2015, p. 180–183). This was an effort to minimize the distortion that the researcher's personal views have on the interpretation and the analysis (see Parker, 1992, p. 7).

Writing this research report is a part of the analysis, confirming and evaluating the performed procedures. An accurate description of the interpretation and its foundation is a part of forming the results of the analysis and central to their reliability. The part of the research report that deals with the analysis results becomes relatively longer and broader in discourse analysis than in studies performed with other qualitative methods, as the analysis is linked to numerous samples of data and the interpretations and related background information are written open in detail (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 172). With this assertion, I move on to the next chapters that handle the outcomes of the analysis process described in this section – the results of this study.

5 PROBLEMATIZING THE ASSUMPTION OF LINEAR TIME AND LEARNING

In the next two chapters, I will present the analysis, interpretations, and findings of this study under the three main themes formed during the analysis process. The three themes of the analysis are the *Assumption of linear time and learning*, *Room for cyclical conceptions*, and *General respect for flexibility and diversity*. Because *Assumption of linear time and learning* appeared as the broadest and most common theme in the analysis, it is addressed in its own chapter here first. A thorough analysis of the two other themes, *Room for cyclical conceptions* and *General respect for flexibility and diversity*, is examined in Chapter 6.

In my analysis, all text highlighted as paragraph quotations is considered as research data and is retrieved from the curriculum of Pasila Primary School (2016). I will not refer to this source for each statement separately from now on. I will, though, mark each statement with a statement number in the form (S5.2), meaning here the second statement of the fifth chapter of this study, and the number of the curriculum section from which the statement is taken from (for example section 3.3.4).

The Assumption of linear time and learning -theme and thus this chapter includes three sub-themes that I created through the interpretation of the data: *Linear characteristics and organization of time*, *Linear values and priorities*, and *Childhood and learning as linear phenomena*. Each sub-theme addresses a particular area of the discourse of linear time or its derivatives. The different features of the sub-themes indicate that linearity is replicated in the curriculum in diverse ways. In this chapter, I intend to shift critical focus on what this dominant linearity means for Sámi education.

The linear temporality of the curriculum and the sequenced manner of its objectives can be observed in the document at an inter-statement, even

intertextual level, for linear requirements are created in the curriculum together with legal regulations. This overall “time-attitude” is reflected in a cumulative increase in the depth of objectives, the number of subjects and hours, and implicitly required cognitive skills as progressing through the primary school grades. It is possible to observe these hierarchical constructions in relation to the hour-distribution of basic education (422/2012), and therefore the analysis of the hour-distribution is discussed first under this theme.

5.1 Linear characteristics and organization of time

The sub-theme of *Linear characteristics and organization of time* was formulated by interpreting the wording of statements and parts of the curriculum that in some way made a direct or indirect assumption of time as a phenomenon that has a linear nature. These interpretations consisted of statements that actualized or described the construction of time into sequences or other linear features of time defined in time-theories. Such include, but are not limited to, the hierarchy of time and seeing time as measurable, discrete, and unanimously advancing phenomenon (e.g., Kakkori, 2013; Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012; Weinstock, 2009). Viewing time as a steady, one-way flow and arranging school according to it can be considered an “obvious” part of a school. Everyday actions in schools are most often structured by the linear concept of time (Gordon et al. 2007).

5.1.1 The national, linear hour-distribution

One of the most central and classic time-structures associated with the school world is the schedules. In class-context, the central schedule is referred to as the timetable (see Keskitalo, 2019), and it defines which subject contents or tasks of education are taking place at a given time (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012, p. 158). The organization of these timetables is based on the Finnish Government’s decree that determines the minimum hours a given subject must be taught in Finnish schools at each age-level (422/2012, 6§). Darnell and Höem (1996, as cited in Keskitalo, 2019, p. 567) summarize that a strict division of subjects and timetables forces individuals to adopt linear and mechanical ideas in education, which is problematic for Sámi students as it excludes the consideration of their

more cyclic view. The hour-distribution is mentioned in almost all the prior findings on education's concept of time presented in this study (see Hohti & Paananen, 2019; Keskitalo, 2019; Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012). Thus, it can be considered a fundamental manifestation of linear time in education.

The distribution of hours involves a certain prioritization in decisions like which subject is seen as most important to invest time resources in, and how the hour-distribution aims to maximize learning and performance. Making changes to the lesson-distribution is not done on light grounds, as it would require considering its implications for the entire national education policy (Lavonen, 2009, p. 11–12). This hour-distribution is binding for all Finnish schools, with a chance of flexibility only if a student's first language is other than the school's language of instruction, or in cases in which adapting is essential for student's special needs or school's assignments (422/2012, 8§, 9§, 10§).

In general, the fact that time is seen as a resource that can be used efficiently and similarly as, for example, money, reflects linearity. The distribution of lessons is a strong guiding statement that prioritizes "efficient, adequate use of time" (Rose & Whitty, 2010, p. 264). Achieving the most efficient use of an existing resource is a Western ambition, in line with the values of linearity and future-orientation – from a neoliberal perspective, it is necessary to establish any remedies that enable making the most out of a resource, such as time (Klees, 2020, p. 14).

The national hour-distribution is not directly part of the Pasila curriculum document, but the decree is referred to as the direct foundation of organizing teaching in Pasila and is therefore analyzed as a part of the curriculum. A table presenting the hour-distribution legitimized by the Finnish Government (422/2012) is attached below. The table was not available on the Finnish legislation webpage in English, so it is attached here in Finnish.

Table 1. The official hour-distribution by grade and subject (422/2012, 6§)

| Aine | Vuosiluokka | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | Yht. | |
|---|-------------|-------|---|----|---|----|------|---|----|-----|------------|------|
| Äidinkieli ja kirjallisuus | | 14 | | | | 18 | | | 10 | | 42 | |
| A1-kieli | | ----- | | | | 9 | | | 7 | | 16 | |
| B1-kieli | | ----- | | | | | | 2 | | 4 | | 6 |
| Matematiikka | | 6 | | | | 15 | | | 11 | | 32 | |
| Ympäristöoppi | | 4 | | | | 10 | | | | | | |
| Biologia ja maantieto ¹ | | | | | | | | | 7 | | | |
| Fysiikka ja kemia ¹ | | | | | | | | | 7 | | | |
| Terveystieto ¹ | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | |
| <i>Ympäristö- ja luonnontietoaineet yhteensä</i> | | | | 14 | | | | | 17 | | 31 | |
| Uskonto/Elämäkatsomustieto | | 2 | | | | 5 | | | 3 | | 10 | |
| Historia ja yhteiskuntaoppi ² | | ----- | | | | 5 | | | 7 | | 12 | |
| Musiikki | | 2 | | | | 4 | | | 2 | | 8 | |
| Kuvataide | | 2 | | | | 5 | | | 2 | | 9 | |
| Käsityö | | 4 | | | | 5 | | | 2 | | 11 | |
| Liikunta | | 4 | | | | 9 | | | 7 | | 20 | |
| Kotitalous | | ----- | | | | | | | | 3 | | 3 |
| Taide- ja taitoaineiden valinnaiset | | | | 6 | | | | | 5 | | 11 | |
| <i>Taide- ja taitoaineet yhteensä</i> | | | | | | | | | | | 62 | |
| Oppilaanohjaus | | ----- | | | | | | | | 2 | 2 | |
| Valinnaiset aineet | | | | | | 9 | | | | | 9 | |
| Vähimmäistuntimäärä yhteensä | | | | | | | | | | | 222 | |
| (Vapaaehtoinen A2-kieli) ³ | | ----- | | | | | (12) | | | | | (12) |
| (Vapaaehtoinen B2-kieli) ³ | | ----- | | | | | | | | (4) | | (4) |
| -- = Oppiainetta voidaan opettaa asianomaisilla vuosiluokilla, jos opetussuunnitelmassa niin määrätään | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ¹ Ainetta opetetaan osana ympäristöopin opetusta integroidusti vuosiluokilla 1–6. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ² Yhteiskuntaoppia opetetaan vuosiluokilla 4–6 vähintään 2 vuosiviikkotunti ja vuosiluokilla 7–9 vähintään 3 vuosiviikkotuntia. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ³ Oppilas voi kielestä riippuen opiskella vapaaehtoista A2-kieltä joko valinnaisena aineena tai B1-kielen sijasta opettavana yhteisenä aineena. Oppilas voi opiskella B2-kieltä valinnaisena aineena. Vaihtoehtoisesti vapaaehtoiset A2- ja B2-kielet voidaan järjestää perusopetuksen tuntijaon vähimmäistuntimäärän ylittävänä opetuksena, jolloin niiden opetusta ei voida järjestää käyttäen tässä pykälässä määriteltyjä valinnaisten aineiden tai B1-kielen kaikille yhteistä vähimmäistuntimäärää. Kielestä riippuen oppilaalle opetetaan tällöin B1-kieltä tai sen sijasta valittavia valinnaisia aineita. Vähimmäistuntimäärän ylittävänä opetuksena A2-kieltä opiskelevan oppilaan kokonaistuntimäärä olisi yhteensä vähintään 234 vuosiviikkotuntia ja B2-kielen valinneen oppilaan yhteensä vähintään 226 vuosiviikkotuntia. Vähimmäistuntimäärän ylittävänä opetuksena sekä A2- että B2-kieltä opiskelevan kokonaistuntimäärä perusopetuksen aikana olisi yhteensä vähintään 238 vuosiviikkotuntia. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

The hour-distribution table shows the subjects of basic education (in their own horizontal rows) as well as the minimum teaching hours for that subject per week for each grade unit (in vertical rows according to the grades). The table can be used to observe the linear augmentation of hours that is taking place through the age groups. For example, after grade 6, the subject of environment studies (*Ympäristöoppi*) is further divided into three separate subjects (physics and chemistry, biology and geography, and health sciences). As a result, the teaching of environmental studies and natural sciences also increases in terms of the

number of hours. Linearity can thus be interpreted to surface in assuming an age-related chronology on how specified contents and how many weekly hours a given age student can master.

The core of linearity associated with the national hour-distribution and its relation to the needs of Sámi education is interesting. A strictly structured hour-distribution both describes and constructs a Finnish school committed to *clock-time*. Clock-time refers to the attitude in which it is crucial to grasp the exact moment in the continuum of time indicated by the clock, and through which the clock has become the dominant shaper of daily activities (Rose & Whitty, 2010). Living tied to a clock is not inherent in the indigenous, cyclic conception of time. It is understood, but it does not easily become motivating or meaningful (Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 41).

Clock-time is sometimes used as a synonym for linear time, and they do have similar elements such as the idea of measurability and discrete unity of time (see Weinstock, 2009). I would not use them as completely comparable concepts, but understand them both as dynamic, broad phenomena that are fundamentally intertwined. For example, a person does not need to have an internal linear conception of time to be socialized to the rhythm determined by clock-time: clock-time means a Western way of life that is defined and dominated by the clock (see Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 41). Clock-time is reflected in education, for example, as precise clocking practices, in which the positions of the teacher and the student are also formed in relation to the clock. Clocking practices include the exact starting and ending points of lessons, through which the activity does not end naturally when a task is completed, but when the clock says that it is necessary to do so (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012, p. 156).

When looking at what the hour-distribution says about the meaning systems present in a Finnish school system, it is good to ask: is there another possible way to express or organize this (see Parker, 1992)? As Keskitalo, Määttä and Uusiautti (2013b) admit, one of the challenges of developing a school from a truly multicultural foundation is that the organizers often question whether it is even possible to organize one (p. 52). The consistent and historically quite static Finnish hourly distribution (see Lavonen, 2009) can be considered to be a mark of a “dominant discourse”, that is, that school’s linearity and structures are taken for granted, so it is difficult to think of other alternatives to them (Hook, 2001).

When observing the Norwegian Sámi curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019) to critically assess if it was possible to create culturally responsive alternatives for a basis for teaching, I found two significant aspects. Although the Norwegian curriculum has an hour-distribution framework comparable to the one in Finland, much broader opportunities for flexibility are automatically offered to all teaching providers. Not only are there 38 “Flexible hours” available in the minimum hours that could be used for any suitable content, but there is also a 5% margin in each subject’s set of hours that could be used for another subject if deemed necessary. This flexibility was set up to allow local topics to be emphasized in schools (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019). At least in Finland, Sámi culture as a teaching content is classified as a local topic (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015), so allowing room for locality would be more than a significant development in the Finnish hourly distribution as well.

In addition to the generally more flexible framework, there is another aspect of the Norwegian lesson distribution that is interesting for this study: Norway has its own lesson distribution for Sámi students. This hour-division emphasizes the contents of Sámi culture by, for example, defining the syllabus for Sámi as a first language and Sámi handicrafts, *duodji* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019). Constructing Sámi’s own curriculum and lesson distribution is a significant effort to strengthen their educational autonomy and form a multicultural, more equitable school system (see Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 49).

Although the Norwegian curriculum, in practice, divides teaching into lessons too, and thus reproduces the discourse of clock-time, its considerable investment in flexibility and active consideration of Sámi culture is, in my opinion, a major step forward compared to Finland. The *inflexibility* of school time-frames specifically gives currency to the strongest form of clock-time that could be unprofitable for everyone (see Rose & Whitty, 2010), and therefore allowing local flexibility could make all the difference.

5.1.2 Linear properties of time

The national hour-distribution is not the only linear system of describing time that emerged in the analysis. As presented in Chapter 3 of this study, it is impossible to define concepts of time seamlessly and objectively, but a linear concept of time

has been found to have several identifiable features. In this sub-theme, I detect and analyze curriculum statements that in one way or another assume, describe, or create a connotation of the composition of linear time.

The statements related to the organization and sequencing of the academic year, school day, and teaching are a very fundamental example of the power of linear meaning, as they are manifestations of perceiving time as a measurable, discrete, and segmented phenomenon (see Janca & Bullen, 2003). I will now present two statements about the properties related to the nature of linear time so that I can present the interpretations drawn from them in more concrete terms.

In Pasila Primary School, the school year is divided into five periods. This provides an opportunity to have common themes for the whole school. The themes are defined each year in the yearly action plan. (S5.1) (5.5.5)

Teaching is implemented in accordance with the Basic Education Regulation, so that at least 45 minutes used for teaching per hour and the time is divided into appropriate teaching periods. (S5.2) (5.5.5)

Both excerpts above show a very classic feature of the linear conception of time, i.e. the possibility and ambition of dividing time into shorter periods to create units for learning that accumulate as time passes. In statement 5.1 the temporal division refers to the school year and in statement 5.2 to smaller time units, in this case, periods used in teaching.

45-minute lessons are quite classic elements of a Finnish school (see Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013). Pasila curriculum differs from a classic lesson model, as in Pasila the duration of primary school students' lesson is 90 minutes. In practice, this extended lesson structure has a potentially deviating effect on realized time frames in school compared to the ones with 45-minute teaching. During a longer lesson, it may be possible, for example, to implement more diverse student-centered work methods that negotiate with Sámi pedagogy. However, dividing time and establishing timetables shows a linear attitude toward time, whether the divided units are common or not (see Keskitalo, 2019).

The significance given to time units forms a large part of this sub-theme. The meanings given to the school year, in particular, arose from the language of the curriculum: the yearly planning mentioned above in statement 5.1 is just one side of the phenomenon. Consider, for example, the following statements.

A student may move on to the next year-grade level even if his or her achievement on some subject has been failed, if it is assessed that he or she is able to cope with studies successfully in the next grade level. (S5.3) (6.4.3)

The possibility of studying according to one's own study program should be considered in particular when the student is in danger of quitting his or her studies. When a student progresses according to his or her own study program, studies in different subjects are pursued according to the individual study units instead of the curriculum tied to the annual grades. (S5.4) (5.4.1)

Goals and organization of teaching are presented here as something that is tied to the annual grades, and the transition from one yearly grade level to the next is emphasized as quite important. Statement 5.4 brings out that there is a possibility in the Helsinki curriculum that the student can also learn according to an individual system. However, this solution is a less preferred approach and is related to special conditions. The assumed premise is that everyone progresses according to a year-bound curriculum.

Statements 5.3 and 5.4 show how the division of school time into school years is not just a practical solution, but the yearly units are also given additional meaning in how they form a hierarchical system over time. The levels formed by the school year are shown in statement 5.3 to be directly linear with each other: if the contents of the previous year are not fully acquired, it is necessary to carefully assess whether the student would succeed in the next one and thereby whether they can move on to the next grade.

The time units of education made meaningful by the first four statements are interesting, because academic years, periods, and semesters are not natural cycles, but social constructs used to organize schools. The power and widespread acceptance of linear structures can be seen concretely in the fact that similar semester models following a modern concept of time and progress are used around the world without any questioning. Modern order is associated with the ideals of linearity, efficiency, and the functionality of Western institutions (see Weinstock, 2009). Could the school year just as well be built around the eight seasons and important traditions of the Sámi, if a power-holding party decided so? The current annual school cycle, despite being a circumferential, recurring phenomenon, cannot be considered to genuinely negotiate the Sámi culture, as the school year is not attached to core points of the Sámi time, but has been created according to dominant institutional reasons (see Rasmus, 2004).

Emphasizing the importance of socially constructed time frames has a limiting effect on Sámi teaching practices. In their study, Määttä, Keskitalo, and Uusiautti (2013) explicitly emphasized the concerns of the surveyed teachers had about the temporal policies in the context of Sámi education. The teachers who participated in the study stated that the time structures and mandatory hour-distribution (see 422/2012) limited their possibilities and made it difficult to adopt the Sámi culture and unique perception of time as a natural part of their teaching (Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 447).

The division and periodization of time are associated with continuous series of timely periods “beginning” and “ending” one after another, which for the Sámi culture and cyclical time is not an inherent concept (Helander & Kailo, 1999). The concepts of basic education alone, such as “päättötodistus” (direct translation *finishing diploma*, handed to the students when they have completed the mandatory basic education) and “alkuopetus” (*beginning teaching*, the teaching of first and second grade), expose the underlying idea that school and learning are composed of smaller entities that have a beginning and an end, rather than learning being a unified, holistic and circular experience. Terms like this are a very common feature in the language of the curriculum.

Your finishing assessment is based on your skills in the finishing stage of primary school, i.e. in grades 8-9. (S5.5) (6)

In the finishing stage, the emphasis is also placed on getting to know the secondary level educational institutions. (S5.6) (5.4.4)

The linguistic concepts and frameworks of beginning and ending in school are not the only way in which where they appear. In a way, beginnings and endings can be seen in the curriculum as underlined or having special meanings. These three statements are used as a base to analyze this.

At the beginning of primary education, there must be particularly strong grounds for individualizing the subject curriculum. (S5.7) (7.4.4)

At the end of the academic year, the student receives a diploma, which contains verbal or numeric assessments of how the student has achieved the objectives in the subjects or study units included in his/her study program in that academic year. The yearly diploma includes an assessment of behavior and also includes a decision of whether or not to transfer the student to the next grade. (S5.8) (6.4.2)

As a primary school student, at the end of the period you will receive an assessment of how well you have understood the issues and phenomena covered in the period. (S5.9) (6)

The statements highlight that temporally constructed ending- and starting-points are not abstract but act as an invisible background in education. Statement 5.7 places the beginning of primary school, the first and second grade, in a special position in the sense that the first grades' significance in subject management is directly stated. S5.8 and S5.9 bring up how periodization is accentuated by assessments and certificates that "close" a given academic period. At some level, statement 5.9 is referring to how a certain period "covers" certain learning contents, and the assessment of learning at the end of the period also marks the end of the contents' systematic teaching and shift of focus to the next ones.

From the point of view of the Sámi way of knowing and building understanding, it is problematic to emphasize the beginnings and the ends and to define the education's subjects as linked to the teaching periods. It is natural for the Sámi information system to form information through observation, forming an image of the target phenomenon and discussing it, often in the long run, and repeatedly returning to it. The *nomadic circle* defined by Helander and Kailo (1999) shows that it is natural for Sámi culture and knowledge to see all events and living things connected, and phenomena become central topics of learning when they naturally arise in communities or environment (p. 226). In many statements of the Pasila curriculum, through the thinking processes founded by the Western Academy, phenomena are separated from each other and linked to an externally defined period or lesson which begins and ends at a certain moment. This structure is contrary to the natural Sámi conception of knowledge (Helander & Kailo, 1999, p. 214, 228).

The linear concept of time can be seen in more than just the ways of organizing teaching methods, school timetables, and actions of the school community. As a document, the curriculum is more focused on guiding aspects beyond practical arrangements: the goals, missions, and principles of teaching (see Opetushallitus, 2014). At the level of educational goals, the characteristics of linear time are reproduced, especially concerning the use of time.

The curriculum refers to the action of time management, which is quite solely an idea of the linear concept of time and is based on a notion of time as

something that can be observed out of a context, measured, administered and almost concretely handled (see Janca & Bullen, 2003). The curriculum uses the term time management in itself, but also the concept of everyday management, which the following statement emphasizes to include a temporal component.

They (students) also learn time management, which is an important part of everyday management and self-regulation. (S5.10) (3.3.3)

Everyday management which, as seen above, includes an aspect of time management, was constructed important in other direct statements too.

The goal of all studying is to promote your health, well-being, safety, and everyday management. You will also have the courage to be critical of the old and create new. Everyone should have resources for a good life. (S5.11) (3.2)

Schoolwork aims at predictability and everyday management. (S5.12) (4.1.2)

Time management and everyday management are considered in these statements as very important learning objectives and valuable skills for a good life. Statement 5.11 even emphasizes that the development of everyday management is the “goal of all studying”, which is quite an extensive granting of meaning. The same statement concludes with the implication of the relationship between everyday management and good life. Statement 5.12 can be interpreted to emphasize time management because it is essential for the ideal of efficiency, in a similar way as the school schedules (Rose & Whitty, 2010, p. 264).

The basic idea of time management is linked to the notion of clock-time which was discussed earlier in this chapter. This same notion, that people should define their activities according to time and that they can use time as a concrete feature in education, was reflected throughout this sub-theme: in the hour-distribution and its inflexibility, the construction of time units and the adaptation to the systematic series of these units beginning and ending. Regulations and being in control were echoed in this sub-theme as positive attributes of education. This is related not only to a linear timeline but also to linear values, which are focused on in the next sub-theme.

5.2 *Linear values and priorities*

The perception of time in Western culture is strongly connected to the increased efficiency of daily life caused by industrialization: it provided people room and possibilities to divide their time between work, leisure, religion, and education (Smith, 2012, p. 57). This is the main reason behind the Western admiration of productivity seen today, as well as the so-called *protestant work ethic*. It is a term originally used by Max Weber (see 2002), meaning that the emphasis on planning, discipline, organization, and hard work has been influenced by the values of the Protestant faith. This emphasis is reflected, for example, in the rise of capitalism, and even today these aspects form the basis of what Western, linear discourse signifies as priorities and human virtues (Weber, 2002).

Planning is seen as an important, even crucial part of a Finnish school. The linear concept of time is at the center of making it possible to set long-term goals for education and learning, and planning is seen as a key factor in making education effective (Hohti & Paananen, 2019, p. 36). In the Pasila curriculum, planning is brought up in many contexts – even the term *curriculum* translated to Finnish means “teaching *plan*”. Consider the network of plan-related meanings in the following cluster of statements.

The school plans and evaluates its functions every academic year by forming the action plan and action report. (S5.13) (1.2)

Evaluation and feedback practices are planned and implemented according to the age and conditions of the students. (S5.14) (6.2)

Breaks, morning assemblies, and other school activities are planned and implemented in a way that promotes inclusion and community, as well as healthy growth, development, and learning. (S5.15) (5.5.5)

The statement 5.13 is drawn from the very beginning of the Pasila curriculum document, titled as the *fundamentals of the curriculum*. Thus, the ideal of planning is factually fundamental in Pasila Primary School. Statements 5.13 and 5.14 highlight planning as part of key areas of education, teaching, assessment, and school functions that are comparable to the planning ideas presented by Hohti and Paananen (2019). Interestingly, however, the idea of planning is not only related to the basic missions of education but also extends to breaks and other non-teaching activities, as statement 5.15 shows.

Systematic planning as a feature is not dedicated just to the organization of teaching. Planning-related skills are also considered crucial to be passed on to students. This gives them meaning within school structures and as a generally important skill and value, and this is reproduced, for example, in the following statement.

In addition to gaining knowledge, you will practice punctuality, planning, initiative, collaboration skills, reliability, and perseverance during your school days. They are important skills in school, leisure, and working life. (S5.16) (3.3.6)

Statement 5.16 brings up, in addition to planning, many other meanings that reflect linear values. Punctuality, for example, becomes an appraised feature especially in the frameworks of clock-time and time management discussed under the previous sub-theme. Practicing these skills is a valued part of school, as their level of meaning is compared to the knowledge acquired in lessons.

Abilities listed in statement 5.16 were considered universal by nature. These abilities include co-operation skills and reliability which are important in all communities, not just linear ones. However, these abilities are linked at the end of the statement to the demands of working life. Both the concept of systematic planning and the implied idea that the goal of education is to produce individuals suitable for working life comes from the same discourse that capitalism draws from (see Weber, 2002). An educational perspective oriented in answering the needs of the labor market is a fundamentally Western and linear dominant discourse: it assumes and sets everyone's desired path of life to be a straight line from school to work, and forms learning contents as if everyone were sharing labor market's priorities (Klees, 2020, p. 10–11).

The ideal of planning and setting objectives is strongly related to how important the future is in the linear worldview. The future is an interesting concept when studying perceptions of time, as its value and meaning vary greatly from culture to culture. Seeing oneself on a linear timeline, the future becomes a natural and "clear" destination, something that is purposeful to work towards (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012). In the cyclical experience of time, the significance does not grow to be so unambiguous (see Weinstock, 2009).

I think it is important, for the sake of understanding the significance of this discourse, to mention that the Pasila curriculum mentions the concept of future 227 times. The future is even mentioned as a key mission of basic education.

Basic education has a teaching mission, a social mission, a cultural mission, and a mission of the future. (S5.17) (3.1)

I did not consider each appearance of the word “future” to be based on a linear set of values. Thus, not all of the more than 200 future-statements were analyzed as part of this theme. Doing that would be stating that the future as an idea was outside the cyclical concept of time. This would be drawing an erroneous and quite black-and-white line between time concepts. Instead, statements were considered to have linear values if they indicated a perspective where the future is described as certain or as a main motivator for action.

During basic education, students develop confidence in their own opportunities for influence, as well as motivation and the ability to act to promote a sustainable future. (S5.18) (3.3.7)

Effective collaboration between home and school is important. When cooperation with home is functional, it will help your studies and increase your future opportunities. (S5.19) (4.1.3)

When you take care of yourself and others, you will also learn to count on your own studying abilities, and you can trust the future. (S5.20) (3.3)

A sustainable future is a value that is strongly present in the curriculum, as in statement 5.18. I do not seek to deny the global importance of this value to all cultures per se, but I bring the interpretative attention into the way in which the matter is expressed in the statement. The excerpt does not state that there is an “aim” to create motivation and skills for students to support a sustainable future, but the emergence of motivation to work for the future is expressed as certain. Bearing in mind the meaning-level of future to different conceptions of time, this is a strong statement.

At the same time and in a similar manner, the assumption of the future as the motivator behind the action appears also in statements 5.19 and 5.20 – the latter validating the future in a particularly interesting way. Taking care of oneself and others is justified in S5.20 by the “trust” one can have on the future, rather than present-day well-being or social relations.

I will look at one more statement that interestingly motivates acquiring extensive skills with the concept of the future.

Phenomenon-based learning promotes the wide-spread skills required in the future as well as the core skills needed in society and future working life. (S5.21) (4.3)

Phenomenon-based learning, which is mentioned as a method in S5.21, is in fact very distinct from linear discourse (see Chapter 6), but the clear future perspective of the statement places it under the theme of linear values. The statement also stresses the capitalist, western goals of working life discussed earlier in this chapter.

As Weinstock (2009) points out in his essay, Native Americans and Western settlers of the American continent have historically had contradictions in shared work projects, as the indigenous idea of a *future* reward may not be as motivating as one concretizing in the present moment (p. 5–6). Although the future as a temporal period can be considered to exist in some form in all cultures, it is considered the most obvious in a linear time view compared to others. It is quite natural that if the subjective conception of time is linear, according to which time moves forward, without exception, with equal certainty, the future can be considered as relevant as the present (see Weinstock, 2009).

The linear values of the Pasila curriculum that are presented in this sub-theme were the value of planning, ideals of capitalist discourse, as well as the emphasis on the future. It is widely understood within the critical education theories that capitalist meanings do not benefit from genuine equality of the world and therefore do not seek to reinforce it (e.g. Klees, 2020). Therefore, the reproduction of its values in the curriculum is questionable. A strong emphasis on the future is not problematic just in the context of Sámi students with a more cyclical worldview – students who grew up in inherently linear time and culture can also see the future as a less concrete concept than the present or the past (Hohti & Paananen, 2019, p. 37). It is not the children's main interest to wait for the future, even though it is how childhood and development are positioned in the linear tradition (see Lee, 2001). This tradition is discussed in the next section.

5.3 *Childhood and learning as linear phenomena*

In educational research, identifying ideas of development and learning based on the linear concept of time is just as central as the assumptions about the timeline itself. Linear time as a phenomenon can no longer be separated from Western thought structures and conventions because it has had such a great impact (Hohti & Paananen, 2019, p. 36). "Normative" assumptions, guided and spread by the West, have directed the prevailing theories about development and learning on which the idea of educational development hangs on (Burman, 2017, p. 10).

In linear discourse, where everything is seen as periodic and planned, a temporal frame of reference has been formed to answer the question of what is a "normal" pace and way to develop and learn. This is reflected and, on the other hand, strongly implemented by, the school's broader assessment practices and goals. Thus, reality has been created where a student is considered to be "age-level" when he or she achieves the externally set learning objective in a certain time (Farquhar, 2016).

The students learn to develop their study skills and interaction skills according to their age level and development. (S5.23) (5.1.1)

Teaching ensures that students master the concepts in Finnish language and that the comprehension and production of texts develop to an age-appropriate level also in the teaching of different subjects. (S5.24) (10.1)

The statements 5.23 and 5.24 describe a curriculum that assumes or even requires particular levels of achievement according to age level, and how years of students' age are a temporal measure by which goals and subjects are set. Prevailing development theories based on a linear concept thus create an image of the "normal." With this, they also create the concept of "abnormal" and shift critical attention to a child who does not develop at the age-appropriate level (Farquhar, 2016).

A student has the right to receive support, part-time special education, guidance and other support he or she needs, in a situation where he or she has missed or is at risk of falling behind in his or her studies due to illness, learning difficulties, poor attendance due to a difficult life situation or any other reason. (S5.25) (6.4.3)

This statement highlights the *risk of falling behind* in learning, which raises a question: falling behind compared to *what?* Because the curriculum itself

emphasizes that learning assessment of students is not done by comparing students to each other (Opetushallitus, 2014), it can be concluded that the desired pace of development referred to in this statement is determined by assumptions based on pre-designed development framework.

The three statements about development related to age-level and normality replicate the system of meaning that there is one normal, straightforward way of learning. Given the understanding that exists today of the diversity of learning-concepts and cultures and the individuality of learning, this seems a rather old-fashioned discourse to the critical eye (e.g. Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b). However, the fact that such a view emerged from the Finnish curriculum is in line with Farquhar's (2016) definition of a linear, Western school, where it is implied that it is more important to learn the topic at a right moment than to learn it at all.

The linear conception of time has also defined childhood more generally, not only relating to development but on how the child is positioned (Hohti & Paananen, 2019, p. 37). During the Enlightenment, philosophers emphasized child primarily as a blank canvas, someone who is progressing toward adulthood, creating a necessity for upbringing and education for the child to become a desirable, socially fit adult, marking out a progressive developmental trajectory (Darling & van de Pijpekamp, 1994). The understanding of childhood's main mission to be "a journey into adulthood" remains the strongest perception characterizing childhood to this day: this idea is considered to have its roots in the linear concept of time and has been labeled as the "dominant theory of childhood" (Lee, 2001).

The dominant theory of childhood can be interpreted to be quite assertive in the Pasila curriculum. In the following cluster of statements, the dominant theory can be identified in the background (see Lee, 2001).

A school culture of inclusion, human rights, and democracy creates the basis for the student's growth into an active, hands-on, cooperative, and participatory citizen. (S5.26) (4.1.6)

School gives you the opportunity to learn and supports your growth into a balanced and self-confident person. In school, you learn how to be a thoughtful and expressive member of society who values oneself, others, and the environment. (S5.27) (3.2)

Balanced and diverse abilities of thinking are called wisdom and that is the goal of learning. You grow to become wise by learning and studying in versatile ways. (S5.28) (3.2)

These three statements use a future-based language in which the goal is for the student to *grow into* a certain kind of citizen, i.e. the student is only “becoming something” in basic education. This view is denying the child a present, interestingly positioning children in a liminal space – at the threshold of adulthood. When this cluster is linguistically compared with the following statement, identified from the same chapter as statements 5.27 and 5.28, the different basis of meaning is visible.

You are encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the community so that you understand the need to take care of yourself and your living environment. (S5.29) (3.2)

Use of the words “to be” instead of “grow into” or “become” in S5.29 constructs a meaning that the student or child is seen as a legitimate part of the community with inherent qualities right now, unlike in the previous cluster of statements. Wording like this, that is aware of childhood as an active stage in the individual’s life at the present moment, was seen in the curriculum far less often than the dominant discourse of childhood linked to futurity (see Lee, 2001).

The statements 5.26, 5.27 and 5.28 do not directly declare becoming an adult per se, but the phrasing creates an assumption that the student does not inherently have qualities of an active, participatory, thoughtful, or wise citizen. Schooling is validated as necessary for the child to have such good qualities, and the child is positioned as the object of upbringing (Darling & van de Pijpekamp, 1994). There is a need to critically consider what this positioning entails: does it unilaterally justify giving all the power over information systems to adults, or ignoring all of the children’s own knowledge and views? Many critical views (e.g. Burman, 2017, p. 35; Keskitalo, 2019, p. 562) claim that such positioning and assumptions are not warranted in a contemporary school.

In this third and final sub-theme of the *Assumption of linear time and learning*, two linear key ideas can be summarized. Analysis brought up an assumption of a linear, normative way of learning and reproduction of out-of-date developmental and childhood theories. Although the content of this sub-theme is small in quantitative terms, linear developmental and childhood theories have had

a major impact on current concepts of education, in Finland and internationally (see Hohti & Paananen, 2019; Janca & Bullen, 2003). The discourses produced by this and other sub-themes and their background factors are discussed in a larger context in the next section, concluding this main chapter.

5.4 Discussion of the linear findings

My analysis under the theme *Assuming linear time and learning* shows that the curriculum of Pasila and Helsinki contains a strong foothold on linear discourses. Elements, connotations, and underlying assumptions that lead the school to a linear time are dominant characteristics of the document. The curriculum language and logic gave value to linear, Western discourses and units through reproducing the linear and accumulative use of time (organizing, managing and sequencing time), demonstrating linear values (labor market intentions, planning, future-emphasis) and linear perception of childhood (dominant theory, defining age-appropriateness).

The properties of language linked to the detection of the linear assumption of time originate from several intertwined historical processes. One of the most important and evident of them is the colonization, framing the Sámi status and education to this day (see Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 49). The underlying phenomenon of colonization has been interpreted to influence both discourses about time in the education system and the concept of childhood.

Colonized concepts are often encountered in the discourses affecting indigenous education, meaning that explanations are provided in schools in a way that is appropriate to the dominant culture and way of life (e.g. Botha, 2018). Based on the analysis presented here, the effect of colonization surfaces in the Finnish curriculum in parts where the linear time is justified as a basis for actions and values, even though it does not negotiate with the Sámi worldview. The fact that the dominant culture has nearly all the power in dictating the basic pillars of curriculum that affect everyone is a classic subordination of non-Western culture. This leads to the liminalization and marginalization of minority peoples (see Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 49–53).

Defining normative childhood by Western, linear concepts and seeing children as “savages” that need hierarchical guidance, education, toward a true,

Western civilization is a very similar power-process than that encountered by indigenous peoples (Burman, 2017). These prevalent ideas were visible in the sub-theme *Childhood and learning as linear phenomena*. As Pacini-Ketchabaw (2012) and Hohti and Paananen (2019) argue, linear outside factors have placed children in schools under the power of the clock, in addition to developmental theories and definitions that affect their position. Thus, from the perspective of power, this theme was interesting. Linear definitions construct the school so that the educator is set at the center, holding all the power of learning (see also Keskitalo, 2019). However, the strict frameworks of time and schedules also limit and mandate teachers and organizers, i.e. in places the power lies not with the educator or the student, but with the clock (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012, p. 155–156).

The phenomenon of clock-time can be considered as a discourse on its own, but it can also be seen as one manifestation of the discourse of colonization. The discourse of clock-time appeared vividly in statements related to the organization of time (section 5.1), but also in the positioning of childhood and students. The fact that the curriculum and the education system are set in a way that obligates everyone is to grasp the same, “right” temporal structures, and how time management has the power to position people, makes colonization of time not very different from the colonization of knowledge or physical environments.

The results identified and formed under the theme *Linear assumption of time and learning* were in line with several other research projects studying school time frames. Together they reveal that the linear time is a dominant baseline in the Western school system (e.g. Hohti & Paananen, 2019; Keskitalo, 2019; Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012). Although making an actual hypothesis is not necessarily central or appropriate in qualitative research (see Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018), based on this undisputed literature, it was expected that the linear theme would emerge in a dominant manner in this analysis too.

6 CONSIDERING DIVERSIFYING DESCRIPTIONS

In this chapter, I present the analysis and interpretation process reflecting the second and third theme of this study: *Room for cyclical conceptions* and *General respect for flexibility and diversity*. These themes were considerably narrower than the first theme, *Assumption of linear time and learning*, addressed in the previous chapter. Despite their relatively small extent, the themes highlight important aspects of how temporality is comprised in the curriculum.

Central to both themes discussed in this chapter is their view of every-day actions of education as more diverse elements than the linear, mainstream-centered discourse constructs and describes them to be. However, the two themes are not similar. In the *Room for cyclical conceptions* -theme, which is considered here first, the statements set ideas into the curriculum which can be interpreted to include open spaces for cyclicity. The approach of the *General respect for flexibility and diversity* discussed in the second half of the chapter is decisively more non-specific. This difference is visible in the excerpts of the data, statements, which are inserted in the analysis text as in the previous chapter.

6.1 *Room for cyclical conceptions*

Despite the dominance of linear systems, the Pasila curriculum was also interpreted to state notions and solutions that may offer openings for differentiated actions and cyclical time. Ideas that move away from linear, closed solutions, such as teacher-centredness and strict subject-distribution (see Keskitalo, 2019), are considered under this theme as possible spaces for including more cyclical and holistic approaches. The set of statements and meanings that link to these ideas formed the theme of *Room for cyclical conceptions*. Cultural knowledge acquired from the Norwegian Sámi curriculum

and the theories about the cyclical concept of time supported the formation of this theme, directing what contents were identified under it.

This theme is further divided into two sub-themes: *spaces for cyclical time* and *room for cyclical learning*. First, I present and analyze curriculum statements that process solutions that can be interpreted to be open for cyclical concepts by, for example, expanding school practices and timeframes. After this, I address ideas about students' position and the learning process that contrast the linear, dominant assumptions presented in the previous chapter. At the end of the section, before moving on to the third theme, I discuss the analysis done under this theme and consider its connections to cultural-historical phenomena.

6.1.1 Spaces for cyclical time

Among many other international scholars, Botha (2018) and Demmert and Towner (2003) have highlighted the great importance that including spaces for diverse perspectives in pedagogy carries for indigenous teaching. The consideration of indigenous perspectives has been implemented, for example, by solutions that incorporate the language, views, or customs of culture in the teaching practices (Demmert & Towner, 2003). These solutions have had a positive impact on indigenous students and the school community (Botha, 2018).

In the context of Finland and the Sámi, Keskitalo (2019) has agreed with the international view: she states that actions that take place in schools should consider different cultural concepts and recognize how they are reflected in the Sámi student's actions, values, and constructions of knowledge. All dimensions and solutions of education should be actively re-evaluated so that they recognize the norms of different groups and are open to different experiences. Only when experiencing acceptance towards one's background can a student feel a sense of inclusion and security in the school (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 564). Examining whether the Pasila curriculum meets these demands for indigenous education motivates the analysis of this thesis.

During the analysis, I recognized that the Pasila curriculum acknowledges the diversity of students and concepts in a broad manner. Most of the diversity discussion is done on a very general level and therefore cannot be viewed as actually negotiating other conceptions (see section 6.2). However, the teaching

in Pasila is specifically committed to being aware of the Sámi students' position. This is insisted on by statement 6.1.

The school considers the position of the Sámi as an indigenous people and supports the Sámi student's possibility to adopt the Sámi cultural heritage by guiding and encouraging the student to participate in the Sámi language teaching. (S6.1) (9.1)

Statement 6.1 highlights the key idea summarized by Keskitalo (2019) that the most important thing in Sámi teaching is to consider the special features of Sámi culture. The idea is not just a general declaration, as at the end of the statement the intention is attached to a practical approach: encouraging students to attend Sámi language teaching. Reinforcing Sámi culture in school through language is not an unexpected solution, as language programs have been used successfully to strengthen the education and identity of other indigenous peoples as well (e.g. Smith, 2012). The agenda of revitalizing Sámi languages may have contributed to this emphasis too (see Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 47).

Taking Sámi culture into account is done best by incorporating its norms into the everyday life of the school, making it a visible element in the activities (see Keskitalo, 2010). It is possible to interpret that the following statement enables taking place for cyclical Sámi ways in teaching practices.

Teaching in the Sámi language is part of the Pasila Primary School. The Sámi language and culture are visible in the school to all students. Common events and knowing and understanding the Sámi calendar as well as celebrating Sámi holidays are common to all students in the school. To support shared events and your schooling, the school cooperates with many Sámi communities. (S6.2) (10)

In S6.2, the mention of Sámi holidays and the Sámi calendar can be considered an open space for negotiating Sámi concept of time. Understanding the Sámi calendar could mean, for example, learning and using the Sámi's traditional eight seasons in the classroom (Rasmus, 2004, p. 131). The statement also expresses that these practices do not only apply to Sámi students, but that participation in them is common to all students and extends to cooperation with the Sámi communities. This subscribes to essential ideas of Sámi pedagogy, by which the Sámi culture and community could serve as a resource when creating a unifying school culture for all students regardless of background (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 94).

The direct statements considering Sámi culture were very central to my research question. However, the Sámi concepts as such were not discussed further in the research data. Most of the findings under this sub-theme were more general, but they were determined to offer possible openings for arrangements that suit the cyclical timeline better than the traditional closed solutions (see Keskitalo, 2019).

You will learn different ways of studying and you can choose the ones that are right for you. This is how you learn to take responsibility for your own learning. The teacher is the supervisor of learning who will help you choose your own working methods. (S6.3) (2.2)

There is a time-related aspect to the *ways of studying or working methods* in school, for example, in the pace of doing tasks and the transitions between activities (see Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012). The fact that the students have a say in their study methods opens possibilities for acting in a way that is naturally suited for one's innate concept of time. Understanding the subjectivity of temporal actions contrasts linear conceptions that see time as an objective element: based on the linear view, the same timeframes are assumed to be equally functional for all (Kakkori, 2013, p. 571).

The most prevalent solution that I interpreted as open to cyclicity is the interest in phenomenon-based learning. What is meant by the concept *phenomenon-based* in the Pasila curriculum is reviewed in statement 6.4.

In Helsinki, phenomenon-based learning entities refer to holistic, integrated learning of knowledge and skills, which examines the phenomenon of the real world across subject boundaries. Each student will study at least two such inter-subject, long-term multidisciplinary learning units during the academic year. (S6.4) (4.3)

This definition illustrates an alternative for linear, closed learning structures. Its long-term and cross-curricular characters place it outside the divisions of hours and subjects that were problematized in Chapter 5. The idea of phenomenon-based learning is discussed from several perspectives in the curriculum.

The studying process uses a variety of flexible teaching arrangements and allows students of different ages to work together. Each student can progress according to their own abilities. (S6.5) (4.3)

The student learns different ways of thinking, acting, and looking at the world, as well as finding connections and meanings in the phenomena and themes under focus. (S6.6) (4.3)

Schoolwork is organized appropriately and flexibly by working together and sharing work. Cooperation is especially needed in the planning and implementation of interdisciplinary phenomenon-based learning entities, in the assessment and support of learning, and in the implementation of student care. (S6.7) (5.2)

This cluster of statements replicates how phenomenon-based teaching solutions challenge traditional, linear frameworks: endeavors are described as flexible, not age-bound, collaborative, and understanding of subject relationships. Making connections between phenomena, emphasized in statement 6.6, is considered important in indigenous teaching, so phenomenon-based learning can be seen as giving room for Sámi perceptions. Relationships are paramount in more cyclical knowledge-making, and therefore education should move away from a hierarchical and atomized understanding of the world (Botha, 2018, p. 29). Keskitalo (2019) directly states that open teaching solutions that respect Sámi concepts should be centered on phenomenon-based approaches (p. 568).

In the context of this whole theme, it is important to realize that not all solutions and notions interpreted as open to cyclical concepts have necessarily emerged because they intentionally consider diversity. In practice, only the first two statements of the chapter (S6.1 and S6.2) can be stated to be aware of the Sámi students. Even though it suits cyclical concepts, phenomenon-based learning has been realized in the curriculum mainly because it is seen as a good pedagogical approach for learning the so-called 21st-century skills, such as criticality and application of technology (Häkkinen et al., 2016, p. 7). In discourse analysis, the focus is not on the intentions, but what the text ultimately expresses (Parker, 1992, p. 6) – however, it would be misleading to assume that all the inclusive solutions aimed for an active negotiation of Sámi culture.

Solutions that gave room for the Sámi cyclical time appeared in the curriculum as the consideration of Sámi language and calendar and teaching arrangements that emphasize subjectivity and phenomenon-based approaches. Teaching solutions that are accepting of a cyclical timeline are associated with a certain perception of the child's position and the process of learning. These concepts are discussed in the next section.

6.1.2 Room for cyclical learning

The notion of learning that is culturally responsive, acknowledging of indigenous heritages, is defined as that “generally validates the cultures and languages of students and allows them to become co-constructors of knowledge in the school setting” (Belgarde, Mitchell, & Arquero, 2002, p. 43). By Sámi pedagogy, learning does not limit to the classroom and above all, the children are seen as active subjects and participants in building knowledge and school culture. Methods that emphasize student activity are the focus of learning rather than stressing teacher and textbook-based knowledge (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 97).

In the Pasila curriculum, the perception of knowledge that is constructed through the learner’s own activity can be identified. This definition is reproduced in the position that the curriculum takes on learning, expressed as follows:

An individual constructs his or her own unique perception of the surrounding world and the laws that prevail in it. This construction takes shape all the way through life and happens in interaction with one’s environment and other people. (S6.8) (2.2)

According to this statement, the Pasila curriculum takes a stance on recognizing the student as an active constructor of ideas and knowledge, not just a passive recipient. The statement also emphasizes the lifelong process of learning, indicating that learning does not end when the student is given the final diploma of basic education.

Even though there was a noticeable amount of underlying assumptions of linear development in the curriculum (see section 5.3), this more active view that gives room for Sámi concepts of learning was featured amply too. Student activation and participation were mentioned several times.

Together with the students, the teacher creates a learning environment in which the student actively guides and reflects on and takes responsibility for his or her own learning. (S6.9) (2.2.4)

The school has an open, communal, and interactive operating culture in which students are actively involved and their opinions are valued. (S6.10) (4.1.6)

Students are actively involved in the design and implementation of assessment. Students are instructed to observe their own work individually and with others and to give constructive feedback to each other and to teachers. (S6.11) (6.1)

These three statements show that students' activity is not limited to their own learning. It is also related to assessment practices (S6.11) as well as school operating culture (S6.10). Placing the students in an active position where they can influence their surroundings empowers the theory of *expansive learning*, through which in a multicultural school it is possible to expand practices and goals to ones that do not intersect with different cultures (see Botha, 2018, p. 28). Expansive learning is based on Vygotsky's ideas on active resolving of an educational contradiction, like the limiting timeframes in this study: its basic idea is that individuals can reform education through their own activity and critical thinking (Engeström & Sannino, 2016).

In addition to students' activity, the concept of learning that opens possibilities for including Sámi time contains an idea of diverse learning processes. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on versatile, practical, and student-centered approaches to learning (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 43). During the analysis process, I recognized that the diversity of learning has been in some way understood at the curriculum level.

The learning community recognizes the diversity of learning and knowledge constructions and operates flexibly. It encourages experimentation and provides space for practical methods, creative work, movement, play, and experiences characteristic of different ages and learners. (S6.12) (4.1.3)

Play, games, physical activity, experimentation and other action-based ways of working, as well as various forms of art, promote the joy of learning and strengthen the conditions for creative thinking. (S6.13) (3.3.1)

These two statements subscribe to open principles that are also essential in Sámi-based learning, as they describe learning that is not tied to a classroom, textbooks, or teacher's authority. The statements offer space for diversifying learning methods, more holistic and experimental ones that could include, for example, closeness to nature, storytelling, and discussion important for the Sámi knowledge-making (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013a, p. 102).

The understanding of appropriate learning methods described in the previous statements has a lot in common with, in addition to Sámi pedagogy, experimental learning theory. As a pedagogical approach, it moves away from the linear conception of development and focuses on action and experience in learning. This theory is centrally developed by David Kolb (e.g. 2014) who,

interestingly, refers to this concept of learning as the *cyclical model of learning* – as even etymologically challenging the notion of a linear model. According to the cyclical model of learning, experimental, hands-on learning methods create deepening cycles of learning: the learner’s action leads to learner reflecting the action process, which in turn leads to a more abstract understanding (Kolb, 2014). The experimental model of cyclical learning is enabled in the statements 6.12 and 6.13 but also restated on the curriculum’s concept of learning processes.

A good learning process is inspiring, playful, experimental and it arouses curiosity. Students are encouraged to come up with original ideas, ask questions, and form arguments. (S6.14) (2.2.1)

Statements that emphasize experimental and diverse ideas of learning make space for natural Sámi knowledge-construction much better than the closed, linear frameworks. Abstract, theoretical knowledge is not the main goal in Sámi notions per se, as it is in linear learning processes, but practical experiences aim to create comprehensive and meaningful information of the learning subjects (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 46).

The ways in which I interpreted the research data to make room for the cyclical learning perceptions were the ideas of students’ active role and diversifying, experiment-based learning models. Relationships and connections between different learning contents are also important for cyclical learning (see Helander & Kailo, 1999), and this was acknowledged under the previous section as a part of phenomenon-based learning solutions. Thus, the cyclical concept of learning presented in this chapter is strongly linked to the solutions that can be interpreted creating openings for cyclicity.

6.1.3 Discussion of cyclical openings

Since discourses are always in a relationship with each other or negotiate with other discourses (Parker, 1992, p. 10–15), the theme *Room for cyclical conceptions* can be considered to offer a counter-discourse to the *Assumption of linear time and learning*. The linear conception of time and dominant theories of normative learning exclude other possible explanations and models (see Heidegger, 2001). Thus, all systems of meaning that enable implementing other conceptions and perspectives contrast the prevailing, linear discourse. Meanings

that I interpreted to offer openings for cyclical time and development appeared in several forms: consideration of the Sámi's special position, understanding of learning as a subjective process, the emphasis on phenomenon-based learning, and encouraging active and experiential learning.

The statements placed under this theme are differing from the linear, authority-based, and hierarchical status quo in schools. The power-relations between the school actors change in the more cyclically oriented ideas, as they direct power over one's own learning to the student (Häkkinen et al., 2016, p. 14). Also, the hierarchy and division between school subjects based on the Western academic system are undermined by inter-disciplinary teaching solutions (see Keskitalo, 2019). Blurring the hierarchies between school concepts shifts the curriculum closer to "the nomadic circle" of Sámi worldview defined by Helander and Kailo (1999): the learning topics are cyclically, equally connected to each other, and that is the basis of constructing knowledge (p. 226).

While open solutions and concepts of learning that enable cyclical ideas, such as cross-curricular and student-empowering approaches, are not as dominant in the curriculum as linear, closed ones, they can be interpreted to be on the rise (see Keskitalo, 2019). The large-scale ideal of open, phenomenon-based learning is an element featured in educational discussion very recently (see Häkkinen et al., 2016, p. 7). School reform, with increasing inclusion of diverse concepts and solutions, draws its strength from the process of decolonization – a universal action and principle focused on dismantling the effects of colonialism (Smith, 2012). In the analysis of this theme, decolonization was linked to the discourse of redesigning education (see Botha, 2018, p. 25).

Underlying the discourse of redesigning education is an emerging understanding that societies and schools are now more complex and culturally diverse than ever. As a result, constructing learning and institutions from the perspective of just one culture is not socially justified anymore, if it ever were (Botha, 2018, p. 25). The concepts of learning and competences are redefined, and the current frameworks are seen as limited, outdated traits that should be substantially changed (Smith, 2012). Redesigning-discourse relates to the phenomenon of multiculturalism, which has cleared space for diverse solutions and theories, which I interpreted here as the incipient "negotiation" with Sámi notions (see Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 51).

From this and the first theme together, it can be concluded that the discourse of redesigning education has not yet penetrated to the deeper structures of the curriculum. The teaching solutions and learning, and even the direct consideration of Sámi culture, are add-ons to guidelines that maintain their inherent linearity. For example, recognizing and celebrating Sámi holidays (see S6.2) is only scratching a surface of how the Sámi time-culture could be included in schools (Banks, 2003). The "thin layer" of multiculturalism attached to the curriculum has been interpreted to occur because the school system strives to appear as keeping up to date with the demands of society, which is why issues are sometimes dealt with in a fragmented, fast or superficial way (Salminen & Sääntti, 2017, p. 123). The following third analysis theme addresses the outcomes of this phenomenon more broadly.

6.2 *General respect for flexibility and diversity*

The third and last theme of this analysis overlaps slightly with the other two themes, or perhaps it is situated between the two. *General respect for flexibility and diversity* reproduces the same background discourses as the previous two themes and in places combines ideas in interesting ways. The importance given to multiculturalism is vivid in this theme, especially related to the students' different backgrounds, which highlights similar meanings as the theme *Room for cyclical conceptions*. However, the theme also provides value to the linear baseline of education, assuming it as the starting point for flexibility.

Ambiguous and general language is common under this theme. The curriculum is a very specific type of text for discourse analysis, as its language is striving for neutrality and anonymity (see Kivioja et al., 2018). The curriculum is also idealistic, and, at times, intentionally superficial document as directly expressed values and goals may be considered "controversial". The curriculum is a political text, and to be universally accepted and having educational actors committed to its objectives it must satisfy as many parties as possible (Sumsion et al., 2009, p. 9). This political nature influences all the data of this study but is particularly central to this theme.

In this analysis, I positioned my interpretation so that general declarations were not read as potential openings for Sámi perceptions. If a statement showed

a positive but unspecific attitude towards cultural diversity, I placed it under this theme. I loosely outlined this theme during the analysis as “statements that may aim to satisfy the growing multicultural appreciation discourse, but do not take an actual position on the linear organization of the Finnish school”. Consider these statements that invest in this phenomenon.

Our school is changing with society. It is important that you learn to understand and appreciate cultures, both your own and of others. (S6.15) (2.1)

The cultural responsibility of primary education is carried out by promoting diverse cultural competences and supporting students in building their own cultural identity and cultural capital. (S6.16) (3.1)

We guide you to respect diversity and different cultures. (S6.17) (3.2)

These statements are very diversity-positive by nature. Nevertheless, the statements’ language is very general in tone and does not give guidance on the identification of cultural features – even though it would be necessary for genuine consideration of diversified norms and expectations towards school and learning. The statements do not comment on the linear basis of education, or how it is reflected in relation to the highlighted respect for diversity.

Although a positive attitude towards cultural diversity in schools is one of the main goals of multicultural Sámi education, the general attitude is not enough to deconstruct prevailing, non-negotiating frameworks. The lack of concrete direction and support at the policy level leaves the teachers alone with their great responsibility for implementing culture-conscious approaches (see Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 445–446). Too ambiguous curriculum changes fail to affect the practical level (Salminen & Säntti, 2017). It takes a lot of personal effort on the teacher’s part to plan culturally considerate teaching if the level of instruction is very general since it is a lot “easier” to replicate the linear model which many have been accustomed to (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 562).

Flexibility as a commonly used concept in the curriculum was, in my interpretation, related to the appreciation of diversity as a similar general value. An ambiguous concept such as flexibility allows curriculum solutions to seem like considerate and understanding of diversity, while not indicating the subject, object, quality, or quantity of flexibility. See the statements 6.18 and 6.19.

The learning community recognizes the diversity of learning and knowledge construction and operates flexibly. (S6.18) (4.1.3)

Learning environments form a pedagogically diverse and flexible entity. (S6.19) (4.2)

The general level of these statements becomes problematic due to their unspecific guidance. Based on these statements, the concept of flexibility could be interpreted as being just small adjustments in strict, linear ways of organizing, which in practice does not call existing practices into question. In the next statement, the ideal of flexibility was indeed reflected in the text in this manner.

Teaching is organized according to the age and conditions of the students and in such a way that it promotes the students' health, growth, and development. (S6.20) (2)

In statement 6.20, the concept of flexibility has not been used directly, but its process is referred to in the fact that teaching is required to be organized according to students' "conditions". A linear nuance underlining this flexibility is noticeable, for example, as the standard of age-bound teaching (see section 5.3). The generality of the statements presented here creates an essential question: does the curriculum design process that works under the political, complex pressures (see Sumsion et al., 2009) prioritize steadiness and uncontroversial goals over genuine equality of education? If it does, it indicates a skewed perspective on educational issues and lack of active involvement in creating multicultural environments, curriculum, and pedagogy in Finland.

The Sámi premises are not mentioned often in the curriculum, and I interpreted most of the related statements as having potential for creating space for the Sámi concepts. However, it is essential to consider what one statement forming guidelines for the bilingual Sámi class brings to the analysis of this third main theme. I will present the statement and then unravel why I interpreted it to differ from the Sámi consideration I placed under the second theme.

Different cultures, customs, and languages together form the basis of your schooling, due to which you can grow by learning new things in both Sámi and Finnish. You will learn and study the topics, subjects, entities, and concepts on this curriculum in both Sámi and Finnish language. (S6.21) (10)

The first part of S6.21 shows a willingness to negotiate with different cultures and guides the schooling of the Sámi class to recognize diverse customs.

Nevertheless, the statement directly articulates that despite the bilingualism and the generally expressed multicultural basis, all teaching must still follow the objectives, concepts, and frameworks of the Finnish curriculum.

According to the goals of genuinely recognizable Sámi pedagogy, it is not enough to sprinkle small, superficial fragments of Sámi culture and consideration of diversity here and there, and otherwise let the teaching continue on the Western, linear line. The general level attention addressed to diversity and flexibility, as well as the Sámi teaching’s fundamentally unaltered starting point, are too cautious approaches and clearly aim to not destabilize the prevailing Finnish education system too much (see Salminen & Sääntti, 2017). A genuine recognition of Sámi culture and the real inclusion of Sámi concepts require a proper reform of the curriculum. Cyclical time cannot simply be incorporated as an exotic topic, trivial “addition” to the current form of Finnish curriculum (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 90–91).

6.3 Summary of the three themes

In this section, I sum up my analysis of the Pasila Primary School curriculum. In the analysis, the curriculum language indicating time-related discourses was divided into three themes based on the nature and perspective of the meanings they implied. In Figure 3, I recap what meanings each of the three themes contained and reinforced.

| Assumption of linear time and learning | Room for cyclical conceptions | General respect for flexibility and diversity |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of hours and subjects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequencing and managing time • Future-emphasis • Western and capitalist ideas of virtues • Age- and authority-bound learning • Defining normative development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing Sámi language and calendar to the school culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guiding toward phenomenon-based teaching • Student as an active subject • Learning as diverse and experimental process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonspecific appreciation of diversity • Nonspecific appreciation of flexibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sámi culture as an addition to Finnish basis |

FIGURE 3. Summary of analysis findings by theme

The *Assumption of linear time and learning* was revealed to be the broadest and most prevailing theme in the analysis. This means that in the light of this study, linear, Western perceptions of time can be understood to be dominant in the Pasila curriculum. The *Assumption of linear time and learning* contained statements that described the concept of time, educational values and learning processes to be homogenous, detached, and one-way, as is characteristic to a linear worldview (e.g. Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012).

Assumption of linear time and learning was interpreted to draw from notions of colonialist processes and clock-time. Western ideals of efficiency and resource utilization "justify" the organization of time by the Western power-culture. The fact that Western definitions dismiss other explanations or consider them "wrong" is not questioned, and this is typical of colonialist premises (Smith, 2012, p. 44–45). Clock-time is a part of the Western way of life, in which time management and dictating one's actions by the clock become priorities (Neelameghan & Narayana, 2012). Implementing such strong linear models in school does not negotiate with the cyclical notion of time and can even create resistance towards the school's time frames (see Janca & Bullen, 2003, p. 41).

Awareness of the monopoly of Western conceptions and existence of structures that sustain colonialism in education has gained strength in research. Criticism and demands for alternative solutions and fundamental change have been brought up (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 563; Botha, 2018, p. 25). The discourses of redesigning and decolonizing education are reflected in the background of the theme *Room for cyclical conceptions*. This theme stationed new ideas and solutions to the Finnish curriculum that may create openings for challenging linear assumptions. *Room for cyclical conceptions* raised an idea of subjective and diverse learning alongside dominant normative development theories. It provided solutions for teaching which could make linear, closed systems, such as the distribution of lessons and subjects, unnecessary.

The ideal of valuing multiculturalism is related to the discourse of redesign, a new international buzzword that has become more recognizable in Finland too (see Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011). In addition to the *Room for cyclical conceptions*, this value is also relevant in the theme *General respect for flexibility and diversity*. These themes can thus be considered to give value to the same phenomenon, even though their ways of answering the research question were different. The

language in *Room for cyclical conceptions* creates some openness for cyclical concepts, while the *General respect for flexibility and diversity* does not reference linear or cyclical concepts at all. At best, it might create a more positive atmosphere for diversity and Sámi students.

The limited consideration of diversity is partly due to the complex curriculum design process (see Sumsion et al., 2009) but it is also related to the imbalance of power. In this analysis, it can be concluded that linear, Western discourse is a dominant discourse in the curriculum, meaning that its status has gained superiority over other explanations and it is taken for granted (Foucault, 1982). Thinking of other alternatives is perceived as difficult, if it is the intention at all (see Parker, 1992, p. 18–19). The powerful and “self-evident” discourse of linear time limits the cultural consideration to the superficial level and it is precisely this kind of structural imbalance that prolongs the liminal status of the Sámi.

A linear discourse reproduces a more hierarchical and unequal distribution of power than that which recognizes cyclical concepts. Cyclical solutions share power and responsibility of learning between the student and the authorities (teacher, curriculum), rather than viewing the student as incompetent, passive, and in need of the teacher’s guidance. If cyclical views were adopted in schools instead of reinforcing a linear discourse, teaching would not rely on external, theoretically constructed hierarchies, but emphasize holistic approaches and the relativity of all phenomena (see Helander & Kailo, 1999).

The three themes of this analysis form three different points that answer the research question: *how is the Sámi concept of time negotiated in a Finnish curriculum?* The dominant, most common theme of *Assumption of linear time and learning* shows that the current Pasila curriculum still builds an education that mostly does not negotiate with the cyclical Sámi time. The statements on the theme *Room for cyclical conceptions*, on the other hand, show that the curriculum includes some ideas and guidance on solutions that enable recognition of Sámi concepts, even if mostly superficial. The curriculum cannot, therefore, be interpreted as strictly non-negotiating. The third theme, *General respect for flexibility and diversity*, does not take a position on concepts of time. Still, it indicates a positive attitude toward diversifying education, which may, on a conscious or unconscious level, build a foundation for a stronger negotiation of the Sámi concept of time in future policies.

7 DISCUSSION

The discourses that are discovered in a Finnish curriculum do not simply reflect the ideas of temporality that have prevailed at the time the curriculum was designed, but the linguistic descriptions also construct the reality of education (see Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 6). Marginalizing Sámi understanding of time and learning by linguistic meanings may have many types of consequences that are visible in the school world. In this chapter, I begin with critically discussing and reflecting on what the results of my analysis mean for the reality of Sámi education and the Finnish school system. I then consider the reliability and ethics of this study, before moving on to my closing remarks.

7.1 *Study findings and Sámi education*

Behind what discourse is reinforced is always a fact that some party or institution benefits from certain meanings (Parker, 1992, p. 11). The current curriculum supports and benefits Finnish mainstream ideas, socializing students with Western values such as efficiency, planning, and time management. However, building a reality that benefits one often oppresses the other. Coercion of linear systems not only marginalizes Sámi experiences and views, but also jeopardizes the Sámi students' enculturation – the process by which a person learns to be a member of his or her own culture (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 40–41). Thus, this study determines that the Finnish curriculum creates a temporal reality suitable for Finnish mainstream people at the expense of Sámi culture.

Keskitalo (2010; 2019) uses the term *rituals* for social rules and events by which curricular meanings are reflected in the reality of the school system. Time is one crucial element that builds school rituals. Rituals become ingrained in students' minds and habits as they are repeated every day, year after year, and they also have the power to reinforce stereotypes and exclude certain ideas (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 568–569). The meaning systems revealed by my analysis

guide the rituals of the Finnish school to include, for example, the hierarchical shift from grade-level to the next, and strict transitions to the next activity prescribed by the school schedule. These rituals, which socialize students to linear view and clock-time, are central examples of reality-constructions that endanger the Sámi enculturation (see Keskitalo, 2010).

Sámi pupils are not the only ones who have to learn a new sense of time-bound activities when adjusting to school rituals. This applies to all children, although those with a Western, linear home culture may experience a much smaller contrast. Children are rarely accustomed to such scheduled expectations before they start school (Farquhar, 2016). The critique of dominant, linear notions of learning is not limited to non-Western communities: the importance of subjectivity and student activity is recognized in Western circles too (see Kolb, 2014). It is central to question, does the school reality created by strictly linear assumptions suit anyone, as it seems that its frameworks are not natural to the students of the mainstream culture either.

I do not argue that teaching tied to linear time cannot have positive aspects. Certain stability and predictability are important for the children's sense of safety and they can be realized in temporal rituals (Hohti & Paananen, 2019, p. 38). However, the issues may outweigh the possibilities. Allowing timeframes to dictate actions closes doors for different cultural conceptions and limit holistic ways of creating knowledge (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 569). It can also create stress and, in the worst case, chaos and poor quality of learning, when staying at the pace set by the schedule becomes an overruling priority (Rose & Whitty, 2010, p. 264).

Apart from its control over the realization of teaching, the curriculum has also a great influence on textbooks and materials that are used in schools. If Sámi concepts do not have a role in the curriculum, the learning materials also reproduce a reality in which Sámi cultural features are not considered (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015). The materials that indigenous students are exposed to might be trivializing, even stereotypical, and teaching by textbooks that ignore indigenous worldviews does not relate to the students' every-day lives nor validate their cultural identity (see Powers, Potthoff, Bearinger, & Resnick, 2003).

It is not unrealistic to deduce that the reality of Sámi education and negotiation of cyclical conceptions in Finland could improve. Sámi consideration

has been gradually upgraded in Finnish core curricula and educational objectives in recent decades, and this rising curve can be expected to remain steady (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015). Also, although the analysis of this study questioned whether the more negotiating approaches are genuinely derived from the concept of diversity, the partial reform of teaching solutions has taken place for one reason or another. These new conceptions, like phenomenon-based learning, are more appropriate for the Sámi view. Since the linear development theories and colonizing educational designs have not been properly challenged in educational research and discussion until the late 20th century, the discourse-shift in education may be so novel that it is still shaping and strengthening its position (see Hohti & Paananen, 2019, p. 37; Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 32–33).

The current curriculum is more open for the consideration of multiculturalism compared to the previous one, which was perceived as almost exclusively limiting (see Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 446). A teacher who is willing to implement culturally conscious Sámi education can find openings in the curriculum to justify and support its execution. However, statements that can be read as considering different concepts are unspecific, and that creates a dilemma. If interpreting the value of diversified education depends mainly on the teachers' premises, it creates an unequal reality for different groups of students – especially when teacher education is perceived to provide insufficient capabilities for multicultural teaching (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 46).

From the four approaches to a multicultural curriculum defined by Banks (2003), of which levels 3 and 4 are active, transformative approaches, this study uncovered that Pasila's curriculum falls into the first, least considerate level. At this level, details (holidays, legends) of culture are sprinkled on as a "spice" on top of the mainstream curriculum. Minimal inclusion of other perspectives does not transform thinking or the basic construction of the curriculum (Banks, 2003, p. 247). The lack of commitment to the multicultural approach has serious limitations, as the first level of multiculturalism still socializes students to see the reality of Sámi culture as an add-on to the main story of the dominant culture, something less significant. The highest multicultural level, a genuine multicultural school, has been out of reach for indigenous peoples more generally, even

though it would be vital for providing equal opportunities and promoting enculturation in schools (see Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011, p. 49).

The Finnish curriculum must strengthen its multicultural approach, and that is not only an ideological goal. The vast impact that including their own concepts to the school rituals has on indigenous peoples' reality has been proven worldwide. The effects have been found, for example, in the reduction of indigenous pupils' dropout statistics (Demmert, 2001, p. 17) and higher academic performance (e.g. Demmert, 2001; Demmert & Towner, 2003; Klump & McNeir, 2005). Changes in educational representation have a significant impact on indigenous pupils' other areas of life as well. Culturally recognizing school methods have led to a healthier, more holistic formation of individual identity (Trujillo, Viri, & Figueira, 2002), stronger self-esteem (Cleary & Peacock, 1998), and even reduction in behavioral issues and clinical symptoms (Demmert, 2001).

With this thesis, I aim to contribute to the conversation about the Sámi education and to challenge some prevalent notions of current Finnish educational policies. This aim was based on an initial assumption that this study proved to be accurate: the Sámi are still subjected to external, culturally foreign definitions in education. Still, the goal of genuinely negotiating Sámi education is realistic. Achieving it requires a political as well as an attitudinal change, and therefore decision-makers, communities and researchers must not give up on their pursuit of better education (see also Määttä, Keskitalo, & Uusiautti, 2013, p. 451).

7.2 Reflection on reliability and ethics

Critical evaluation of the quality of research is often done by reflecting on concepts of validity and reliability. Validity is used to assess whether the study has examined what is intended. Reliability, in turn, means the trustworthiness of the findings, often evaluated by if another researcher could achieve similar results when repeating the research design (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 163–164). However, the use of these terms in qualitative research has been criticized for their quantitative nature (e.g. Potter & Wetherell, 1987), as qualitative methods are often not intended to achieve objective, repeatable results.

Repeatability is not a viable indicator of the reliability of discourse analysis as it is a method based on a researcher-specific interpretation process (see

Jokinen, 2016). In this study, I aim to strengthen the validity and reliability of my analysis by describing the research steps and the choices I have made as precisely as possible. By presenting a wealth of extracts of the data to which I anchor my analysis and conclusions, I seek to confirm my interpretation and make it transparent so that the reader can evaluate its legitimacy. I am aware that another researcher might make different interpretations of the same statements, and therefore validating my understanding by reasoning and descriptions is essential for reliable research (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 172–173).

Qualitative research that deals with the meaning systems of education carries ethical responsibility in the researcher's starting points, methodological and theoretical choices, and in the results it creates (Varto, 2005, p. 49–50). During this study, I followed the principles of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK, 2012), respecting the parties involved in the research as well as previous work produced by other scholars, referencing carefully the ideas of others. I conducted the analysis by using scientific, defined methods, and reported the research findings following the principles of openness and honesty, characteristic to ethical scientific research (Kuula, 2011, p. 26).

Since the curriculum is a public document, it does not contain sensitive information or aspects linked to an individual person. Thus, it also avoids ethical issues related to the anonymity and informing of the subjects (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 128, 155). Still, the material had to be handled responsibly. I documented statements from the data comprehensively so that the reader can evaluate the entire interpretation process from discursive data to conclusions and validate the accuracy of my take on the data (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 172). In practice, I excluded analyzed statements from this report only if they did not add a new perspective to the appearance of discourses. For example, the future-emphasis was reinforced in numerous statements, but I felt that including three or four of them in the report already provided a good understanding of their contribution.

In studies related to indigenous peoples and in the processes of disassembling colonialist methodologies, it is relevant to critically evaluate the sources from which cultural information is sought. Prioritizing information that is produced within the indigenous culture is an effort to create a knowledge base of genuine descriptions of culture rather than reinforcing outsider, possibly even stereotypical, evaluations (see Smith, 2012.) Although theories applied in this

study have been partly produced by Western researchers (e.g. Hohti & Paananen, 2019), most value has been given to the information produced by scholars based and familiarized in Sámi culture (e.g. Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013a; 2013b).

This research is a master's thesis and I as a researcher have been socialized within Finnish mainstream culture. I need to address that these premises, grounded on Western culture and institution, can influence this research. Avoiding language and meanings that reproduce dominant dichotomies is only possible to some extent since I am not able to detach myself completely from my cultural background – even if my research and the concepts I use seek to question accustomed structures (Jokinen, Juhila, & Suoninen, 2016, p. 33).

By the requirements of the faculty, this thesis relies primarily on information and methodologies considered “valid” in Western academies and is written in English. I am aware that it would be suitable to use a Sámi nation's official language, so the Sámi community would have a greater opportunity to evaluate this work. Despite Western influences, I seek to position myself as a researcher, as well as this research, to match the description that Smith (2012) uses of a sustainable and ethical way to be involved in indigenous research. I understand my non-Sámi starting point and execute the research following the Indigenous agenda so that it “addresses the prevailing ideologies of cultural superiority which pervade our institutions” (Smith, 2012, p. 186).

7.3 Conclusion

The linear discourses of time, values, and conceptions of learning are still the most recognizable and common in the current Pasila curriculum. This is evident, even though the school provides Sámi education that needs diversifying approaches. The remnants of colonization and the Sámi people's lack of power over the education system form a monoculturally legitimized mold for education, to which everyone must adjust to (Aikio-Puoskari, 2015; see also Smith, 2012). Thus, Finnish education, as it appears in the light of this research, still keeps school actors who are not subscribing to the mainstream view in a liminal position, pushing them to act at the interfaces of one's own and the school's culture (see Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 50–51).

It is typical for the Finnish school system to change slowly (see Anttonen, 2000), and therefore the rise of the ideal of diversity and multiculturalism has not yet led to more negotiating concepts and solutions surpassing old norms. The reform of the curriculum is guided by educational ideologies that are rigid and reluctant to include new ideas. In practice, Western educational reforms of today are mainly related to the needs of the state or the economy and ignore notions that do not benefit those viewpoints (Hovdenak, 2004, as cited in Keskitalo, 2019, p. 571). Decolonizing ideas are needed to expand the notion of possible directions for education reform.

In pedagogy and educational solutions, different perspectives and discourses always race for the dominant status as the correct and best one. For the sake of equality, Finnish education should remain impartial and always offer alternative solutions and explanations, not legitimize one specific view (Keskitalo, 2019, p. 571). If, when developing the curriculum, Finnish policy-makers are not ready to fundamentally change the framework so that it negotiates sufficiently with the spectrum of cultures, a strong option is to develop a separate curriculum for the principles of Sámi education, as is successfully done in Norway and Sweden (e.g. Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 53). A productive topic for future research would be to document how prepared would the Finnish school and society be for the autonomy of Sámi education and the Sámi's own curriculum.

The Finnish education system is respected and even imitated globally, and therefore it has developed an apparent status of not holding reasons for criticizing (Sahlberg, 2015). However, in terms of the educational situation of its indigenous people, Finland lags behind its neighbors Norway and Sweden, not to mention New Zealand, where Maori community has reached encouraging achievements in realizing its own culture and self-government in every sector of education (Keskitalo, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2013b, p. 48). Finnish education policies are cautious and set in their traditional, linear ways. This slows down the development of indigenous Sámi education and multicultural schools. The time frames and temporal assumptions of education are significant examples of how Finnish principles still refuse to negotiate with the Sámi culture – even though it would be about time to do so.

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