Official Status for Indigenous Minority Languages: Does It Help?

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ABSTRACT

In the 1990s, Inuktitut in Canada, nine non-colonial languages in South Africa, and the Sami languages in Nordic nations received official recognition from their governments. Several decades later, this paper explores what effect official status (OS) has had on revitalizing these languages through a review of the literature. It approaches OS as part of language planning and policy from a historical-structural perspective (McCarty & Warhol, 2011), arguing against what May (2005) terms resigned language realism. It examines these case studies for evidence that the languages' positions within society have improved since gaining OS. Cooper (2007) and Minogue (2017) show that Inuktitut is declining and has not taken over expected domains of government and education. Evidence from South Africa suggests that giving OS to nine non-colonial indigenous languages was symbolic, as English continues to advance in many domains, despite being the native language of less than 10% of the population (Alexander, 2001). Although Norway, Sweden, and Finland have strengthened protection of Sami, the languages continue to lose domains and speakers (Pietikäinen et al., 2010). The paper concludes that while OS does not seem to provide much protection, culturally appropriate education in the minority language is imperative to maintain and revitalize these languages.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Languages are disappearing rapidly. Ethnologue (2020) estimates that 41% of the world's languages are endangered, just under 3000. Many of those are expected to no longer be actively spoken by the end of the century. Efforts to document those languages before there are no speakers left were estimated to cost $64,000 per language in 2002 (Crystal), which is almost $92,000 in today's dollars. The global

forces that imperil these languages also marginalize their small numbers of speakers, thus limiting resources available for documentation and revitalization. Additionally, as Benedicto and Salomón (2019) point out, documentation and revitalization are separate and possibly conflicting goals. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize wisely and put effort into what helps revitalize endangered languages the most.

Joshua Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS, 1991) in which lower numbered stages are better, suggests a best-case scenario for an endangered language in Stages 1 and 2. In Stage 2, speakers can receive some governmental services in their language, while at Stage 1, there is essentially full autonomy. Speakers can obtain a college education using their language, all governmental services are available in the language, and it can be spoken freely. In Stage 1, a language would be a "recognized co-language of its region" (p. 107), but as Fishman points out, this situation "does not represent the end of…problems and concerns" (p. 107).

The relationship between being a thriving language and having OS has not been examined to date. While one might think an indigenous language would have OS by virtue of its predating the relevant nation-state, this is not usually the case. Indigenous languages with OS generally have won it through long, hard political fights. What happens afterwards? Does gaining OS help protect indigenous languages?

In the 1990s, Inuktitut in Canada, nine non-colonial languages in South Africa, and the Sami languages in Nordic nations received official recognition from their governments. By using them as case studies and examining their post-OS situations several decades later, we can see what effect official status has had on revitalizing these languages. This investigation explores the dynamics and theoretical meaning of OS, then its practical effects on the minority languages that have gained it, and finally, takeaways for indigenous language maintenance and revitalization, plus a brief analysis of the role of education within language revitalization.

2. OFFICIAL STATUS WITHIN LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY

Having official status is defined as being acknowledged formally by the government as a legitimate language within its borders and suggests that a citizen should be able to use that language for most, if not all, purposes. Before considering official status per se, the concept needs to be situated within a historical background. Two of the three cases considered in this paper are remnants of colonialism and imperialism (South Africa and Nunavut), while the issue of the Sami is one of an ancestral homeland being carved into four different nations, thus making Sami and its varieties minority languages in their own land. In that way all three cases are similar. In their book chapter, "The Anthropology of Language Planning and Policy [LPP]," McCarty and Warhol (2011) explain that when departing colonial powers turned over control, many times it was expedient to continue using the colonial languages as common languages, since the national boundaries that had been drawn did not usually correspond to one indigenous language. While on the surface this plan makes sense, its effect was to continue superimposing colonialism even after it ostensibly ended.

In considering what LPP actually is, they describe two approaches to it, a neo-classical one in which LPP is seen as ideologically neutral, and a historical-structural one, in which LPP is situated within the historical context. These approaches are underpinned by two orientations, language-as-problem and language-as-resource, and these approaches and orientations interact in many ways with the planning that needs to be done in order to revitalize a minority language. The language-as-problem orientation, which is very prevalent, does not value bi- or multilingualism in individuals or society as a whole.

The issue is further elucidated by May (2005), who discusses three problematic features of what he terms resigned language realism. The first is a presentist approach that corresponds to McCarty and Warhol's neo-classical approach, in which a language is examined "in isolation from the social and political conditions in which it is used" (p. 321). In the second feature, the language histories are "sanitised [sic]" and the majority language(s) come to be seen as "inevitable, unproblematic and crucially, uncontested...a natural, evolutionary and seamless

march to linguistic victory" (p. 324). The last feature of resigned language realism is that this process is over. It is a fait accompli, exemplified in the typical statement, "We may well regret the past, but there is nothing we can now do about it, so it should not, nor can it, usefully inform our present. What is done is done" (p. 325).

These false ideas are like a three-legged stool that keeps minority languages languishing on the floor, while the majority language sits happily on the seat. If a society subscribes to resigned language realism, gaining official status will not improve the minority language's chances of survival. Official status is not powerful enough to counteract these forces and the language-as-problem orientation. Minority languages cannot be considered apart from the historical context, as a neo-classical/presentist approach to which languages seem practical and useful will necessarily devalue the minority languages, which were made less useful by the historical background in which they became endangered.

According to May (2005), these attitudes prevent society from the possibility of "rethinking the nation-state in more culturally and linguistically plural ways" (p.325). He also argues that it is not enough to just appeal to morality but to stress the benefits society receives from implementing minority language rights, and that "support of linguistic diversity can be regarded as simply good public policy" (May, 2005, p. 327). Within the legal framework, Tetley (2003) argues persuasively that a mixed legal system, which arises when "its force is derived from more than one legal tradition or family" (p. 182), such as in Quebec, allows people within the legal system to develop their ability to consider the law from both perspectives, and seeing how both sides solve problems can be helpful. Therefore, the argument needs to be made that accepting minority languages and cultures as part of society will only strengthen the society, not weaken it.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research was inspired by Nunavut, wondering if the language situation had improved once the territory was created, which led to the overall research question: does gaining official status help a language become less endangered? A case

study approach that examines several different languages was decided on. Since the Sami languages and the South African languages also gained OS in the 1990s, they were good choices to compare to Inuktitut in Nunavut. No original research could be conducted for this analysis, so the most feasible approach was a thorough literature review, including legal documents such as constitutions and government acts, about each language situation, looking for evidence about how endangered the languages seemed after two decades of having OS.

4. RESULTS

Case Study 1: Inuktitut

Historical background. Turning now to the first of three case studies, Nunavut was created as a new territory of Canada in 1999 as part of a negotiation between the Inuit peoples and the government of Canada. Nunavut, which means "our land" in Inuktitut, is a sparsely populated area the size of Western Europe, in which 84% of people are Inuit. There are four official languages: Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun (an Inuit language spoken in the western part of the territory), English, and French. However, despite having official status, Inuktitut is still subordinated to the colonial languages in the Nunavut Act, which states that the legislature may make laws relating to, "the preservation, use and promotion of the Inuktitut language, to the extent that the laws do not diminish the legal status of, or any rights in respect of, the English and French languages" (Chapter N-28.6, Part I, Legislative Powers 23.1.n, 1993). Inuktitut is visible in many domains, such as signs, publications, websites, and primary education. The Inuit population is quite young overall, with three-quarters under 40 years old. According to Jull (2001), the creation of Nunavut did not stem from separatism but from the Inuit viewpoint of "regional autonomy as both desirable in itself and necessary for participating equally in national society" (p. 7).

Findings. In her article Resilience and Language, Daveluy (2007) attempts to apply the resilience model to the Arctic situation. She explains resilience as a "dynamic process...[with] phases of growth and renewal, which ensures systemic stability through time" (p. 89). Daveluy then describes a life cycle in which children are spoken to in and speak Inuktitut, and then go to school where they begin to speak English more, then become parents and speak Inuktitut to their children, while always speaking Inuktitut to the elderly. She considers this a pragmatic, diglossic, age-segregated, positive situation in which Inuktitut is a stable home language, in other words, resilient. While she states that "both the implementation of Nunavut and the prestige of Inuktitut as one of the official languages...have had positive symbolic effects" (p. 90), however, "official status...is not sufficient to circumvent linguistic insecurity" (p. 91).

Research done around the same time as Daveluy's resilience analysis seems to both reflect the resilience model but also show cause for concern. Cooper (2007) looked at the domains in which both Inuktitut and English are used in Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, as well as the interlocutors with whom they are spoken. In addition, she surveyed attitudes toward both languages. She divided her participants into six groups by age, in roughly ten-year increments. In analyzing the balance between Inuktitut and English in various domains, she determined that Inuktitut use is declining across the board. The eldest group uses Inuktitut the most and each successive group uses it less (p. 46).

The youngest group, who were currently in third grade and still immersed in Inuktitut at school, and the teen group are the only ones who do not fit this pattern. While all of the third graders completed the survey in Inuktitut, the high schoolers all chose to complete it in English (p. 39), even though they did score a bit higher in Inuktitut use than the next higher age group in some domains (p. 48). As Cooper notes, "[t]here appears to be a resurgence of the use of Inuktitut in the two youngest groups, although never a complete recovery and [it] does not exceed the 40-50 year-old group" (p. 48). Cooper questions whether this seeming evidence of increasing Inuktitut use will hold, claiming that "it shows that Inuktitut is being used more

frequently while in the Inuktitut stream at school but slowly is eroded away once students enter the English stream and then into the work force" (p. 49). More current research would show if indeed these groups kept these gains, or if their Inuktitut use declined as well once they left school.

Therefore, approximately ten years after gaining official status, Inuktitut was still endangered, losing ground to English across all domains. Having official status should mean that all functions of government can occur in that language. However, Cooper (2007) points out that while the Nunavut government is committed to that goal and advertises positions with Inuktitut as either an asset or a requirement, which has "raised the perception of importance of Inuktitut...I would have to say from personal experience that Inuktitut is rarely used in the government when discussing day to day work or issues...it is perceived as very important to use Inuktitut to get a job, [but not] to keep a job" (p. 62-63).

Even worse, the government announced in 2017 that the promise to provide all schooling in Inuktitut by 2019, twenty years after the creation of Nunavut, would not be kept. The newly revised goal set the deadline back another ten years to 2029 for grades 4-9 and postponed the deadline for grades 10-12 indefinitely. Former Nunavut languages commissioner Sandra Inutiq responded, "What was the point of Nunavut, if it was not to protect language, and not to protect Inuit cultural rights, if we're to go down the path of what's being proposed, the creation of the territory was pointless" (Minogue, 2017, Taking Away Rights section, para. 5). It seems clear that official status alone will not protect Inuktitut and that more needs to be done, especially in the area of education. This recurring theme of educational systems will be discussed further after all the case studies are presented.

One advantage for the future of Inuktitut is that most Inuit in Iqaluit have good attitudes toward Inuktitut and think it should be preserved and used. Cooper (2007) found that all six of her groups "were generally consistent in agreeing with the positive statements [about the use and importance of Inuktitut] and disagreeing with the negative statements, except in the importance of speaking and writing in English.

All groups saw this as important" (p. 69). Although there is no quantitative evidence that official status was responsible in part for this attitude, it is reasonable to conclude that the creation of Nunavut, with Inuktitut officially recognized, and the inclusion of Inuktitut in the schools have had good results. Now these positive attitudes must be combined with further action to ensure the survival of Inuktitut.

Case Study 2: South African Non-Colonial Languages

Historical background. The second case study is South Africa, which in 1997 declared in its new post-apartheid constitution that there were now eleven official languages: Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Afrikaans, and English, with the first two having the highest number of native speakers. Not only are the indigenous languages supposed to have equal status, the constitution also states, "Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages" (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Ch. 1.6.2, 1996). In practice, however, it seems that these goals are not being met.

While English and Afrikaans are minority languages by the numbers, they are high-status and the non-colonial indigenous ones are low-status, terms that Alexander (2001) prefers as more reflective of the linguistic situation than majority/minority. However, since Afrikaans was associated with apartheid (Webb, 1999), many people prefer English. Kamwangamalu (2000) claims that, despite the constitution, "language practices in virtually all of the country's institutions point to a different reality: the languages are unofficially ranked hierarchically and constitute a three-tier, triglossic, system, one in which English is at the top, Afrikaans is in the middle, and the African languages are at the bottom" (p. 50).

Findings. English is the native language of less than ten percent of the South African population (Alexander, 2001). Furthermore, the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), which is tasked with monitoring language use, found in their 2002 survey of English use that only 22% of the population could fully understand political, policy

and administrative speeches and statements made in English (Olivier, 2009). Although it is not clear what exactly is meant by understanding, this survey showed that the people with the highest level of understanding English were native speakers of Afrikaans at 50%, a group that is already linguistically advantaged, followed by native Zulu speakers at 32%. Only 40% of the population use English in interactions with their supervisors, meaning that English is not essential in the workforce (Olivier, 2009).

Despite these percentages, English is the dominant media language, both print and television, and is also dominant in the government and administration (Kamwangamalu, 2000). Kamwangamalu writes that, "contrary to the constitutional principle of language equity...language practices in virtually all of the country's institutions point to a different reality" (p. 51). The situation has not improved since then. PanSALB recently issued a statement noting their concern about a resolution adopted in March 2017 “by the heads of courts declaring English as the only official language of record in all courts in the Republic of South Africa" (Nkosi, 2017). In that statement multilingualism is suggested as a requirement for newly appointed judges as one means of ensuring linguistic rights. Dr. Rakwena Mpho Monareng, CEO of PanSALB, is quoted as saying, "If our languages are to survive, an urgent radical legislative intervention is needed to ensure that we do not continue to undermine and marginalise African languages" (Nkosi, 2017, para. 3).

Clearly, declaring the non-colonial indigenous African languages of equal status in the South African constitution has not protected them from erosion, just as Inuktitut being an official language of Nunavut has not protected it. Webb (1999) states plainly, "the increasing dominance of English in a country in which it is the second (or third) language of 90% of the inhabitants, is, surely, an unequivocal denial of the Constitution and its underlying philosophy" (p. 355). Despite this, Alexander (2001) says that "except for the endangered Khoisan languages, none of the indigenous languages display any sign of lack of vitality...the constitutional obligation of equal treatment is being openly and deliberately flouted by people in government" (p. 362).

Kamwangamalu (2003) argues that there are many factors "that interact in complex ways to accelerate language shift in urban Black communities...among them the economic value and international status of English, the perceived lower status of the indigenous African languages, the legacy of apartheid-based Bantu education [for background, see Heugh, 1999], the new multilingual language policy, the linguistic behaviors of language policy makers, etc." (p. 225). Of particular concern in this list is the negative attitude towards the indigenous languages displayed by the native speakers, a legacy of apartheid. "[M]other-tongue education will not appeal to black communities because... [it] was synonymous with inferior education...[and used] as a lure to self destruction [sic] and as a trap by the apartheid government to prevent the oppressed majority from achieving higher education. This stigma lingers on and has hindered efforts to promote African languages as languages of learning and teaching" (Kamwangamalu, 2000, p. 54).

In addition, South Africans have the typical lack of confidence in their languages that colonized people display, exemplified by the belief that their language cannot handle modern concepts. As Alexander (2001) states, this "resultant loss of self esteem [sic] and of a dignifying self image [sic] is fatal" (p. 362). Again, just as in Nunavut, the question of education is of utmost importance if historical wrongs are going to be redressed. The indigenous African languages are not currently in danger in terms of numbers but will continue to lose ground to English if the situation is not changed. Official status alone obviously cannot change the situation; as Webb (1999) notes, revitalization lies with the "presence or absence of a political will among the people of a country and its leadership, and...policies...are direct reflections of the presence or absence of this political will" (p. 366).

Case Study 3: The Sami Languages

Historical background. The third case study in this investigation of the effects of official status is the situation of the Sami languages in the Nordic countries. The Sami languages seem to be part of the Uralic language family, as is Finnish. The Sami people are a traditionally nomadic indigenous people who live in an area that today is part

of four different countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia, with the majority in Norway. There are an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 Sami people, about half of whom speak one or more Sami dialects (Pietikäinen et al., 2010), and none are monolingual, that is, none speak only Sami.

There were ten dialects of Sami that existed in a continuum through the Sami region, with neighboring dialects mutually intelligible but more distant ones not mutually intelligible; however, only nine dialects are still being spoken. North Sami, spoken in Norway, has the greatest number of speakers. Each country has its own unique situation and attitude toward Sami, which are reminiscent of the experiences of the indigenous peoples in the other two case studies, even though the Sami situation stems from nationalism, especially the "one nation, one language" construct, instead of imperialism or colonialism. Therefore, each country is discussed in turn below.

NORWAY. Two-thirds of the Sami people are in Norway, where historically they were subject to harsh repression and discrimination. For example, Moyers (2005) notes that "in 1902, one could not sell land to a citizen who did not speak Norwegian well and did not use the language daily. Such rules indicate that strong 'one-state-one-culture' sentiment and the fear of spoiling that nationalism" (p. 365). Not surprisingly, "the eradication of the aboriginal languages of the home and community was a deliberate educational policy in Norway as late as the 1970s" (Corson, 1996).

In 1988 the Sami gained constitutional protection with a provision that stated, "It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life" (Constitution of the Kingdom of Norway, Article 110a). While this gave some protection, it was not specific and did not provide for penalties, or even ways to determine if the authorities had not created such conditions. In 1987, the Sami Act defined who counted as Sami, and in 1990, the Sami Language Act granted the Sami languages "equal worth" and "equal status" to Norwegian in theory, if not in practice.

SWEDEN. The situation in Sweden is one of pressure: pressure on Swedish by English, and pressure on minority languages within its borders by Swedish. Hult (2004) states that "Sweden is currently faced with balancing this delicate position in its language policies," (p. 181), but it seems that the balance is more heavily weighted towards protecting Swedish at the expense of minority languages. Moreover, the government addressed immigrant language rights, with the Home Language Reform in 1977-1978, before it ever addressed the linguistic rights of the indigenous peoples who had been in the country since its creation.

It took until 1999 for the Swedish government to recognize Sami in the bill entitled National Minorities in Sweden. "This bill grew out of pressure on Sweden to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities" (Hult, 2004, p. 186). It granted five groups official minority status and recognized their languages as official minority languages, with rights as outlined by the European documents. However, this bill did not have universal support, especially from Swedish speakers who worried that the bill threatened their language (Boyd & Huss, 2001). Causing additional international pressure, Sweden, as well as Norway and Finland, had also ratified the United Nations' International Convention of the Rights of the Child, which supports minority language rights in a more indirect way. This pressure, then, was a decisive factor in Sweden granting minority language rights at all (Pietikäinen et al., 2010).

In 2010, Sweden passed an updated Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages, in "response to the deficiencies that were found in Sweden's implementation of its international obligations to protect national minorities and their languages" (Zimmerman, 2010, Minorities and Minority Rights in Sweden section, para. 1). In general, reports by the Council of Europe found that Sweden did not have adequate education in the minority languages, nor access to government in those languages, nor adequate participation of the Sami Parliament. While this new act does set out an overall strategy for minority languages and their speakers, Zimmerman believes that "the law's wording is weak at some points, indeed weaker

than the respective laws in Norway and Finland, and leaves a far too extensive discretion to the local municipalities" (2010, Assessment section, para. 1).

FINLAND. The situation in Finland is perhaps the most favorable for the Sami people overall. In 1992, Finland also recognized the Sami languages as official languages with their own Sami Language Act. A Sami parliament has been in existence in Finland since 1973. In addition, in 2000, Finland adopted a new constitution, which "provides broad support for the Sami and their language...Demonstrating the country's support of the Sami people, the Finnish Constitution has also been translated into Sami. The linguistic rights of the Sami...are expressly protected... Furthermore, [it] grants autonomy to the Sami municipalities" (Moyers, 2005, p. 377).

In 2004, Finland passed a Sami Language Act that "creates a more extended protection of the Sami language than the legislation found in either Norway or Sweden" (Moyers, 2005, p. 380). As Moyers indicates, "[t]he key is not simply that persons in Finland are able to speak Sami or that they have that right, but rather that the legislation encourages them to speak their language in different settings, and with many people, despite their being proficient in another common language" (2005, p. 380). This encouragement to use Sami in different domains is in line with language revitalization efforts that recognize that domains of use are essential in maintaining a minority language.

Greater support for the Sami and Sami languages in Finland may stem from its unique history. Finland only became an independent nation-state in 1917; it had previously belonged to both Sweden and Russia. There are Swedish-speaking Finns (Raento & Husso, 2002), and the country has been officially bilingual in Swedish and Finnish since its inception, precluding the one-nation, one-language orientation. All children study both languages in school. This tradition of accommodating other languages may contribute to its openness, as well as the fact that Finnish may be related to the Sami languages, unlike Norwegian and Swedish. In addition, Finnish culture strongly stresses the equality of all citizens, as seen through its educational system, in which all children receive the same education.

Findings. Even though all three countries have increased their protection of the Sami people and languages since the early nineties, the languages are still endangered "in terms of the number of speakers, variety of domains of language use and skills in using them" (Pietikäinen et al., 2010, p. 2). Since the situation for the languages is still perilous, one can question "how much of the needs and practices of the speakers of these languages are actually met by the strengthened top-down support" (Pietikäinen et al., 2010, p. 19). One aspect of "top-down support" is official status; therefore, this third case study again shows that having official status is nowhere near sufficient to guarantee a language's survival.

However, just like the situation in Nunavut, as seen in Cooper's (2007) survey about the use of Inuktitut, attitudes towards the Sami culture and language are generally positive. Kvernmo and Heyerdahl (1996) found that about half of all Sami adolescents learned to speak Sami at home and that those who had done so had "the strongest ethnic identity as compared to those who learned only the majority language" (p. 523). In addition, they found that "attitudes toward the Sami language and ethnic paraphernalia [like clothing]...were generally positive but more positive and prevalent in the highlands [where there are a majority of Sami people] than at the coast [where cultural Norwegians dominate]" (p. 461).

This finding is concerning, as most of the top-down support for the Sami language is concentrated in the traditional Sami geographic regions. For example, most of the Finnish support exists only in the Sami Domicile Area in northern Finland. As Pietikäinen et al. (2010) indicate, "mobility of people and their languages, in this case the rapidly growing number of indigenous and minority language speakers who have permanently left their traditional areas for studies, work or other reasons, also calls for new and innovative measures to give those groups access to these languages and innovative measures to give those groups access to these languages and cultures" (p. 19).

However, Kvernmo and Heyerdahl (1996) also found that "Sami adolescents in the medium-density context reported significantly lower scores [for ethnic identity

and behavior] than peers in the high-density and low-density contexts" (p. 525), who had essentially the same scores. They speculate that this surprising finding is due to a "large cultural distance between the family and the local community...[which] provide[s] a strong in-group coherence, strong family influence, and, thereby, strong ethnic identity" (p. 528). That study, however, is a bit outdated, and it would be informative to see if attitudes have changed significantly in the last twenty years, especially with outside influences on adolescents such as the Internet.

Perhaps one of the innovative measures that Pietikäinen et al. (2010) call for is exemplified in the music of Amoc, who raps in Inari Sami, one of the most endangered dialects of Sami (Ridanpää & Pasanen, 2009). In the mid-nineties, it looked like Inari Sami would die out, but then a language nest was created and some children began receiving their education in Inari Sami, despite the materials being in Finnish. In 2009, there were only about 350 speakers left. In 2005, one of the sons of Matti Morottaja, the primary Inari Sami advocate, got media attention for making a rap album in Inari Sami. "[H]e became very popular among Inari Sami youngsters, increased their motivation to learn the language and strengthened the ethnic identity of the whole community" (p. 221). Amoc, who loved rap music in other languages, realized that Inari Sami would work well in the genre, and with his father developed new vocabulary to use in his songs.

Ridanpää and Pasanen (2009) write of the "emancipatory potential of music, and thereby the preservation of the Inari Sami heritage and language" (p. 216). This potential may have the power to change attitudes about Sami, both within the group and by outsiders, more than official status has. They frame this emancipatory potential as breaking out of deeply held, insulting stereotypes of the Sami as northern people embedded in nature "who should not have anything in common with the cultural practices of a modern urban world" (p. 226). They argue that Amoc's importance lies not just in maintaining Inari Sami, but in helping young people "to understand how a small marginalised language under the threat of extinction may be an important cultural resource, something to be proud of" (p. 227).

Another way that Sami has been revitalized is in connection with the Disney movie Frozen 2, released in late 2019. Disney signed a contract with the Sami people to represent their culture faithfully and made a North Sami version which was released in theaters (Fouche, 2019). From these examples, we see that creative use of the culture and language can be an impetus for revitalization, perhaps more so than official status.

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION

It is essential to realize that Amoc's impetus to record rap in Inari Sami did not appear out of nowhere. Several decades of language revitalization work had already happened, including the language nest and resulting education in Inari Sami, much of it spurred on by Amoc's father. This clearly shows the importance of education, a topic that has come up repeatedly in these case studies. No area discussed in this research provides a complete secondary education in the minority or low-status languages, let alone tertiary education. While it is possible to study the Sami language and Sami cultural practices in Sami at some universities in the Nordic countries, it is not possible to obtain a degree solely using Sami. In South Africa, the language of universities is mainly English, which restricts access to higher learning since most citizens are not fluent in English. While there is one university in Nunavut, it appears that English is its dominant language.

Even if it were possible to graduate high school having been educated solely in a minority or low-status language, the educational systems themselves are completely rooted in the dominant culture. Therefore, only providing an education in the minority language would not be enough. Education itself needs to be redesigned to reflect the culture of the people who speak that language. For example, the Nunavut Tourism website proclaims that "in traditional Inuit culture, the ethic of sharing is of foremost importance...this sense of collectivity, respect and mutual reliance is what often distinguishes the friendly residents of Nunavut communities from people in many other corners of the dog-eat-dog world" (Welcome to Nunavut, True North

section, para. 2). Therefore, schools in Nunavut should reflect this important cultural value, but instead are based on the individualistic, competitive model, which requires "Inuit parents…to act white for their children to succeed in school" (Berger, 2009, p. 82). Curriculum needs to support the minority culture, and materials need to as well, instead of merely replicating long-held negative beliefs. An educational system that uses the minority language and reflects and respects the cultural beliefs of the people is vital in preserving these languages.

It could be argued that a start has been made in immersion classes for younger students that then switch over to the dominant language around grade 3. As Cooper (2007) showed, these children did use Inuktitut productively. However, research has shown that this model of education is not effective and instead perpetuates the societal conditions that keep these groups marginalized. Alexander (2001) states quite emphatically that "the African languages are, in this paradigm, seen as impediments that have to be 'overcome' on the way to mastery of the English language...This subtractive bilingualism approach was (and continues to be) an unmitigated disaster" (p. 362-363).

At least two studies conducted in Africa show that children perform better when taught in a language that they know well. "The experimental group [taught in Yoruba] performed significantly better than the other groups in Yoruba (naturally), in the subjects science, social and cultural studies and mathematics, and, also, in English" (Webb, 1999, p. 356). The other study found that "students who received instruction only in isiXhosa and the [reading comprehension] task in isiXhosa performed far better than those who received the same task in English only [and] outperformed the group...where instruction was given in both English and isiXhosa" (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004, p. 78).

In addition, the Ramirez report on bilingual education in the United States had the same findings (Cummins, 1992). That report showed that "Latino students who received sustained L1 instruction throughout elementary school have better academic prospects than those who received most or all of their instruction through

English" (p. 91). Webb (1999) sums it up by saying, "there is ample proof that the cognitive, psychological and social development of an individual can only occur fully in a language that the individual **knows well**" (p. 357, emphasis in original). Alexander (2001) terms the result of such instruction de facto illiteracy (p. 363).

Considering that this research is not new, why does this model of education persist? Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) speculate that it is a political choice, in that "choosing as the language of instruction an indigenous language…would redistribute power from the privileged few to the masses" (p. 68). Cummins (1992) goes farther than this, claiming that the Ramirez report research shows that "structures…within which schooling for language-minority students is currently organized are specifically designed to prevent the creation of conditions for the development of student voice. The curriculum has been sanitized and student expression of identity stifled in order to deflect attention from the massive social injustices that have historically characterized, and still do characterize, the interactions between dominant and subordinated groups" (p. 101). Whether or not one believes that it has been done intentionally, it is hard to argue that early grades immersion in the minority language with an abrupt switch to the dominant language after that is an effective approach.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER DIRECTIONS

There are several limitations to this project. Of course, it would be better to increase the number of case studies examined. Geographic diversity is lacking, since two case studies are Arctic, and none are in tropical regions where many endangered languages exist. I would also like to examine more case studies that were impacted by imperialism, colonialism, or nationalism, to see if there are differences with each historical background. Perhaps OS is more meaningful in one or another.

The biggest limitation, however, is that I am unable to determine if the situations would be worse if these languages did not have OS. It might be possible to compare them to similar language situations where the language does not have OS.

However, there is no evidence that things are better after gaining OS, even if we do not know if they would be worse without it.

Further directions include identifying and conducting more case studies to fill in the gaps just mentioned. In addition, one fascinating part of this study was observing how national constitutions and governmental acts talk about language, and that could be expanded into its own study, which may help deal with the consequences of nationalism on linguistic diversity.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this investigation has shown that achieving official status, in and of itself, is certainly not enough to secure a minority language's position in society. When official status is combined with top-down approaches seeking to keep old domains or establish new ones for use, this approach can be helpful, but as the case of the Sami in Finland shows, it also is not enough to counteract global pressures. In the long run, counteracting these forces will require a commitment to authentic, culturally sensitive education in the minority language(s), and an innovative approach to integrating the minority languages into the modern world, as in the case of Amoc's rap in Inari Sami. In addition, measures should be taken to promote the language-as-resource orientation in the dominant cultures. Whether or not this actually can be done in terms of resources and political willpower remains to be seen.

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