Sami Heritage Language Models
The Sami people live in current day Norway, Sweden and Finland;
All three countries have “developed state-financed systems of promoting instruction through the medium of Sami (Huss 1999)
This paper focuses on Sami education in Norway
Goals

- This article compares the program models that are in place in Norway to heritage Language learner and language revitilizaiton efforts around the world
Most research on heritage language education is geared towards Hispanic learners in the US.
Not all findings of such research can be applied to indigenous HL learners and programs.
There is an increasing amount of research now intended for indigenous learners and language revitalization.
Language Revitalization

• “In the 1970s and earlier, the prognosis for many indigenous languages, such as ... the Sami..., was that they were bound to disappear in the course of a couple decades.” due to to the economic and political power these languages lacked

• These languages had no “market value”, thus there were seen as not worth learning
Need for Language Revitalization

- Cultures feel a need to pass on traditions and beliefs
- Much of cultures is inherent in knowing a language
- Indigenous groups hope that heritage language program will be the bridge that connects youth to ancestry, so that the youth will carry on the traditions of their ancestors
Linguist revitalization movements are crucially important for many minorities because they can mark the end of a long history of discrimination and stigmatization and the beginning of a new positive minority identity;

There are many cultures in this predicament.
Reverse Language Shift

1. Acquisition of the language by adults, who in effect act as language apprentices (recommended where most of the remaining speakers of the language are elderly and socially isolated from other speakers of the language).

2. Create a socially integrated population of active speakers (or users) of the language (at this stage it is usually best to concentrate mainly on the spoken language rather than the written language).

3. In localities where there are a reasonable number of people habitually using the language, encourage the informal use of the language among people of all age groups and within families and bolster its daily use through the establishment of local neighbourhood institutions in which the language is encouraged, protected and (in certain contexts at least) used exclusively.

4. In areas where oral competence in the language has been achieved in all age groups encourage literacy in the language but in a way that does not depend upon assistance from (or goodwill of) the state education system.

5. Where the state permits it, and where numbers warrant, encourage the use of the language in compulsory state education.

6. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in the workplace (lower worksphere).

7. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated encourage the use of the language in local government services and mass media.

8. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated encourage use of the language in higher education, government etc.
Program Variation

- Skutnabb-Kangas outlines 6 aspects of language programs
  1. Medium of Instruction
  2. Whether the child comes from the majority of the minority
  3. Type of class
  4. Societal Goals
  5. Program Type
  6. Linguistic aims
Effective heritage language programs come from community based institutions or the formal education system;
Often this takes form of weekend or evening classes, with volunteers and untrained teachers;
This affects the language competence that can be achieved
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Program</th>
<th>Typical home language of child</th>
<th>Language of the Classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submersion (structured immersion)</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submersion (with withdrawal classes)</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Majority with pull-out</td>
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<tr>
<td>Segregationalist</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Movies from Minority to Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream (with L2 or FL instruction)</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Majority Language with L2/FL instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separatist</td>
<td>Minority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Bilingualism with initial emphasis on L2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance/Heritage language</td>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Bilingual with initial emphasis on L2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way (Dual) Immersion</td>
<td>Minority &amp; Majority</td>
<td>Minority &amp; Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream Bilingual</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Two Majority Languages</td>
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</table>
Immersion Education

1. The L2 is a medium of instruction
2. The immersion curriculum parallels the local L1 curriculum
3. Overt support exists for the L1
4. The program aims for additive bilingualism
5. Exposure to the L2 is largely confined to the classroom
6. Students enter with similar (and limited) levels of L2 proficiency
7. The teachers are bilinguals
8. The classroom culture is that of the local L1 community
First formal education of the Sami in Norway involved a selected number of Sami who were sent to missionary schools during the 17th and 18th century to “spread the Christian knowledge amongst relatives and neighbors.”

During the 18th and 19th century, Sami children were taken out of their homes and forced into boarding schools for Norwegianization.

One of the regulations:

“Even if the majority of the children in a school district do not understand Norwegian, the teacher must always... do everything in his power to ensure that Lapp and Kven languages are not used more than is absolutely necessary in the given circumstance.”
Sami Education Today

• In 1959 the “Norwegianization” regulations were abolished; however this continued to have effect until the 1970s;
• In 1966, Sami language education began on a trial basis in grunskole (primary to lower secondary education);
• Sami instruction as a subject was given a formal place in the curriculum as a school subject;
The establishment of the Sami Educational Council paved the way for the Sami to start discussing how the Sami language could have a place in the school system;

The council wanted to promote Sami as a first language of instruction

The foci were creating a national agenda, establishing curricula and developing teaching materials.
In 1977, the Norwegian educational system underwent a reform that created two separate agendas. The Sami receive the right to create their own separate but equal curricular frameworks. Although Sami schools may teach Sami language and culture they are still restricted by following the design of the Norwegian School system. Although the language of instruction is Sami, some argue that these are still not Sami schools, but rather partially translated Norwegian Schools.

Sami Education Today
Sami Bilingual Program Model

- Although Sami have some authority over educating their youth, the organization of the Sami school is still within the Norwegian School system;
- Sami have some authority over the curriculum, but not the organization and the layout of the school system;
Medium of Instruction

- An estimated 50% of ethnic Sami speak the Sami language.
- The programs can be separated as ones that have Sami as the first language (language of instruction) and those that have Norwegian instruction and Sami as a second language.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sami Immersion</th>
<th>Bilingual Two Track</th>
<th>Submersion/Mainstream Norwegian</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sami Track</strong></td>
<td>Functional Bilingualism</td>
<td><strong>Norwegian Track</strong></td>
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**Stated Program Goal:** Functional Bilingualism

**Language Medium:** Sami  
**Norwegian**

**Number of Students:**
- Sami Track: 971 or 41%
- Norwegian Track: 1375 or 59%

**Gov. Regulations:**
- Within Sami com.  
- No / Outside - minimum of 10 students  
- No minimum number of students
Conclusion

- The Sami have initiated language programs that are a sub-set of those in the Norwegian school system.
- Since the Sami have no control over the organization of the school system, the programs that have been developed are unlike bilingual education models used elsewhere.
- Due to the uniqueness of the model, many questions arise about the effectiveness and realistic learning expectations.
Further Research

- These models are difficult to research, because they allow for so much variability from school to school.
- Further research is needed taking into consideration the students home language, the school make up and the variations from location to location.