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EXPERIENCES AND ISSUES WITH TEACHING KARELIAN TO CHILDREN IN KARELIAN FAMILIES IN FINLAND

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1. INTRODUCTION

Families have an important place in language revitalization, since in order for a language to be vital, it has to be transmitted to next generations, and this process naturally occurs at home (UNESCO 2003; Hale and Hinton 2001). When this chain of natural transmission is broken, it is a sign that the language is in danger, and revitalization measures should be taken if it is to be saved.

Karelian is a heavily endangered, autochthonous minority language in Finland, that has been the subject of both wide-ranging research and revitalization efforts by the Karelian community. Karelian-speaking families, however, have not been studied in this context. There has been sociolinguistic research done on Karelians in general, the community's language fluency and patterns of usage, as well as needs in general, but this is the first study done specifically on how all of those things manifest themselves in Karelian families who wish to teach the language to their children.

The scope of this study is to research how teaching Karelian to children at home in Finland works in practice, and what kind of issues are related to that process. This thesis aims to provide a good overview of the families' everyday multilingualism, and specifically of the different forces that affect that process, on one hand within the families themselves, and on the other hand on communal and societal levels.

The study is done on the basis of eight interviews that were conducted in early 2019, between February 23rd and the 1st of March. The transcriptions of those interviews are the main data for this thesis, and the inductive analysis of that data is also supported by reviewing the results of previous research on similar issues, as well as other written documents related to the topic.

This thesis is divided into five sections. First, in order to provide context for the thesis, I will start with a brief overview of Karelian language and the history of Karelians in Finland. In Literature Review I look at previous research done in the area and establish the position of this thesis as part of two larger research traditions: language revitalization and the study of the Karelian language. In Methodology I

explain how the data was collected, provide basic information about the participants, explain my method of data analysis and clarify my position as a research regarding this topic. Analysis and Discussion, which forms the main part of this thesis, has a detailed step-to-step description of the analytic process, as well as the data analysis itself, and the presentation of the results including discussion on their implications for the revitalization of Karelian. Finally, in the Conclusions I provide a summary of the results and discuss potential future research directions.

2. KARELIAN LANGUAGE AND KARELIANS IN FINLAND

Unless otherwise stated, all the information in this section is based on the book *Vaietut ja vaiennetut – Karjalankieliset karjalaiset Suomessa* (2017) by Anneli Sarhimaa. The book is a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the history of Karelians in Finland.

The terms "Karelia" and "Karelians" refer to different things, and Marja Torikka (2004) provides a good overview of the different meanings. The geographical area called Karelia is divided between two states: Finland and Russia. The term "Karelians" typically refers to two distinct groups of either current or former residents of this area, as well as their descendants: speakers of a Finnic language called Karelian, who have traditionally been Orthodox Christians, and speakers of eastern Savonian and South-eastern dialects of Finnish, who have traditionally been Lutheran. Ethnically Russian inhabitants of the Republic of Karelia are not normally referred to as Karelians in this context.

This study focuses solely on the Karelian-speaking Karelians, and therefore whenever I speak about Karelians in this paper, I refer to this group. Besides the geographically region of Karelia, there is a significant Karelian population in Tver Oblast in the Russian Federation, and this diaspora is commonly referred to as Tver Karelia. Smaller diaspora populations have also existed around the cities of Tikhvin and Valday.

2.1 Karelian language and Karelians in Finland

Karelian is a belongs to the eastern subgroup of Finnic languages, which in turn belong to the Uralic language family. Karelian has two main dialects: Karelian Proper and

Olonets Karelian, the former of which is further divided into two subgroups: Northern Karelian and Southern Karelian. Northern Karelian, Southern Karelian and Olonets Karelian are commonly referred to as the three main dialects of Karelian.

Karelians are an autochthonous group in Finland and have lived in the area of modern Finland for as long as Finnish people. For centuries Karelia acted as a battleground for the many wars fought between Sweden and Russia, and these wars affected the demographic composition of the area, as the local population was subjected to different kind of atrocities by both sides. One of the most drastic shifts in the demographics happened after the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617, when the region of Kexholm was transferred from Russia to Sweden as a result of the Ingrian War. Up until then the area was predominantly Karelian-speaking and Orthodox, but Sweden imposed heavy religious oppression on the Orthodox Christians, which caused the vast majority of the population to emigrate to Russia over the next century. This in turn led to the creation of diaspora populations in Tver, Tikhvin and Valday.

In 1809 all of Finland was annexed by Russia after the Finnish War, and the Grand Duchy of Finland was created as an autonomous part of the Russian Empire. At this time Karelians were living in the easternmost parts of Finnish Karelia, called Border Karelia, as well as in the northern region of Petsamo and the easternmost villages of Kainuu. The border between Finland and Russia was largely non-existent, and Karelians had a lot of contact with each other across the border, in the form of trade and marriages, for example.

The 19th century saw the rise of Finnish nationalism, which lead to rising tensions between the Finnish and Karelian populations. An important part of Finnish nationalism was a movement called Karelianism. Karelianists saw Karelia as a part of ancient Greater Finland and thought that many "true" aspects of ancient and pure Finnish culture were retained in Karelia. At the same time, they considered Karelians to be Finns that were merely corrupted by Russian influence, and who could and also should be re-educated into proper Finns. This laid the groundwork for assimilationist policies that aimed to convert Karelians into the Lutheran faith and to have them speak Finnish instead of Karelian.

These assimilationist policies began during the autonomy and continued after the Finnish independence, which was declared in 1917. Finnish was the medium of

instruction in schools in Karelian-speaking areas, and Karelians were pressured to change their "Russian" names to Finnish ones. At the same time the development of industry and economy brought more Finnish speakers to Border Karelia, and some 30 000 refugees from White Karelia fled the Russian Civil War to Finland, about 20 000 of whom also stayed there.

After the Second World War, Border Karelia and Petsamo were annexed by the Soviet Union, and the entire population of those areas, including Karelians, were evacuated and relocated to different parts of Finland. This meant that Karelians were spread over a large geographical area and surrounded by Finnish people, who were very often openly hostile and blatantly discriminatory against Karelians. Karelians were ridiculed for their names, religion, customs and language, and in school children were bullied by their peers and forbidden to speak Karelian by teachers. Mixed marriages between Karelians and Finns were common, and in most cases children of such marriages were raised Lutheran and speaking Finnish.

At the same time Finnish nationalism was still very prominent in politics, and this manifested in the academic world as well. For example, linguist E. V. Ahtia was an ardent supporter of preserving Karelian, but he was left alone with his linguistically valid views as the leading linguist of the time, such as E. N. Setälä, Artturi Kannisto and Lauri Kettunen, had adopted the purely political view that Karelian is but a dialect of Finnish.

All these factors lead to the situation where Karelians were forced to hide every part of their Karelian identity that differentiated them from Finnish people, and at the same time Karelians were erased from science, education and public discourse. This tradition of silencing has led to the situation where even today, when Karelians are not as blatantly discriminated against as before, many Finnish people still know very little or nothing about Karelians, and the misconception that Karelian is a dialect of Finnish, is still commonplace.

In 1990s Karelians started to organise themselves more in order to promote their language and culture. Karelian Language Society (Karjalan Kielen Seura) was founded in 1995, and for a long time it acted as a central organisation for Karelians in Finland. Since then Karelian activism has taken many forms, and in 2009 a professorship of Karelian language and culture was founded in the University of

Joensuu, which in 2010 merged together with the universities of Kuopio and Savonlinna to form the current University of Eastern Finland. The latest estimate is that approximately 5 000 people in Finland use Karelian daily, 11 000 know the language well and the total size of the community is around 30 000. There are no statistics on the matter, so the numbers are estimates made by Anneli Sarhimaa, based on research by ELDIA (Sarhimaa 2016) and Tapio Hämynen (2010)

Whereas the legal status of indigenous and other autochthonous populations in Finland is defined in the Finnish constitution and defined further in other legislation, Karelians have no such status. The only way in which the state has ever acknowledged the existence of Karelians is that in 2009 Karelian was included as one of the languages that Finland reports on under The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, but so far this has not been very effective in improving the situation for Karelian in practice.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review I will provide an overview of the previous research done in the field and explain how my study is positioned regarding existing research traditions. This study mainly fits into two research traditions: language revitalization and the study of the Karelian language.

3.1 Language revitalization

Joshua Fishman is considered to be the father or language revitalization as a field of study. Although preserving endangered languages was something that minority communities themselves had been doing for a very long time, in 1991 when Fishman's book *Reversing language shift: theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages* was published, the idea of saving languages was new to the field of linguistics. One reviewer even laughed at the very idea that threatened languages could be saved (Fishman 2001). After that the study of language revitalization has grown and developed into a well-established and refined field, and the idea that saving

languages is not only possible but also important and valuable, has become more mainstream in the field of linguistics.

3.1.1 Reasons for saving languages

Many reasons for preserving the linguistic diversity of the world have been provided. For example, David Crystal (2000) argues that maintaining linguistic diversity is important because language is at the heart of what it means to be a human, and diversity is necessary for successful humanity. He also points out that since language contains a lot of information about history through words and idioms, preserving languages therefore means preserving our history. He also argues that languages are interesting in themselves, and that they also contribute to the sum of human knowledge. Besides these practical aspects of preserving linguistic diversity, Crystal also points out that language is important for identity, and everybody values their own identity. Therefore, Crystal's argument for saving languages is threefold: it is valuable for research, it is valuable for humanity, and it is valuable to those individuals whose language, and with it a part of their identity, would otherwise be lost.

Besides practical justifications for saving languages, an important concept in the field is "linguistic human rights". In *Linguistic Human Rights: Overcoming Linguistic Discrimination* (Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 1995), a lengthy volume by many different contributors, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, Robert Phillipson and Mark Rannut argue that linguistic rights are basic human right and this right is constantly violated when it comes to speakers of most of the world's 6000-7000 languages. To put it very shortly, linguistic human rights are defined as having the right to learn one's mother tongue, this including at least basic education through the medium of that language, as well as having the right to use the language in many official contexts.

Linguistic human rights are often examined in the context of education, since nation states very seldomly provide education in languages other than the official majority language or languages, thus furthering the death of minority languages. For this process Tove Skutnabb-Kangas has used the term "linguistic genocide". She argues that terms like "language death" do not fully represent the seriousness of the process, and hide the agency of it, portraying it as a natural process (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

She argues that a linguistic genocide is a far more accurate term, since in this kind of circumstances the state is actively seeking to turn members of the minority group into members of the majority group, a process which will eventually lead to the eradication of the minority group. These kind of assimilationist policies also cause distress and mental and emotional harm in the people subjected to them, even if physical violence is not involved.

3.1.2 Saving languages in practice

Besides just providing arguments for saving and revitalizing languages, there has also been work on developing models on how this can be achieved in practice, as well as methods to assess linguistic vitality. One such method of assessment was created by UNESCO (2003), and it assesses linguistic vitality based on nine factors:

- Intergenerational Language Transmission
- Absolute Number of Speakers
- Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population
- Trends in Existing Language Domains
- Response to New Domains and Media
- Materials for Language Education and Literacy
- Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies Including Official Status and Use
- Community Members' Attitudes towards their Own Language
- Amount and Quality of Documentation

The aim of UNESCO's model is to help assess vitality of different languages, so that this information in turn can be used to guide policy in order to safeguard these languages. It also provides some ideas about how this can be achieved in practice. While UNESCO's model has been influential, the issue with it is that it aims to be universally applicable, which means that it is rather vague and must be adapted for more local use, as endangered languages are very different from one another, just like the societies in which their speech communities live.

Nevertheless, the UNESCO model for assessing language vitality has proved to be functional, and has influenced later work, such as Lenore A. Grenoble and Lindsay J. Whaley's *Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization* (2006). This book draws on UNESCO's model but is much larger and more refined. When defining issues with language revitalization it differentiates between Macro- and Micro-variables. Macro-variables are further divided into extra-national, national and regional levels, and includes issues such as language policy, language attitudes, education policies, regional autonomy, federal support, regional languages and language density. Micro-variables focus on the local level, and include topics like language attitudes, human resources, religion, literacy and financial resources. Various models of how language revitalization can be organised in practice are also presented. This book also seeks to function as some kind of a universal frame of reference, but Grenoble and Whaley very explicitly acknowledge the fact that no universal model of revitalization that would apply to every single language can ever exist, and stress that all cases have to be evaluated individually.

Other important books in the field are *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* (Hale and Hinton 2001) and *The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization* (Hinton et al. 2018). *The Green Book* also offers a practical model to revitalize languages in practice, but its focus is solely on indigenous languages in North American context, providing only a few articles on some of the most famous examples of revitalization programs internationally. It has articles from various contributors and offers a lot of real-life examples of revitalization work. Besides introduction it consists of 8 sections, each focused on a specific topic concerning language revitalization:

- Language Policy
- Language Planning
- Maintenance and Revitalization of National Indigenous Languages
- Immersion
- Literacy
- Media and Technology
- Training

- Sleeping Languages

The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization can be seen as a continuation of *The Green Book.* It is also edited by Leanne Hinton, and like its predecessor, it covers different issues related to language revitalization through articles by various authors, often illustrating concepts through real-life examples. The issues are divided into seven sections:

- Language Revitalization in Context
- The Role of Institutions
- Revitalization Through Education
- Language Revitalization in the Household
- New Methodologies for Language Learning
- Literacy, Language Documentation, and the Internet
- Special Representations of Language

The book also aims to be more universal than *The Green Book*, and the second part is devoted to regional perspectives on language revitalization from different parts of the world.

3.2 Study of Karelian language

Karelian has been studied a lot, but most of the research done has been about the language itself. Sociolinguistic research about the Karelian community in Finland is much more uncommon. The most important work of research in this regard was conducted as part of the larger ELDIA (European Language Diversity for All) Project (Sarhimaa 2016), that studied Finno-Ugric minority communities in different European countries. Sarhimaa's research report is about the Karelian community in Finland, and a similar report was published regarding the Karelian community in Russia as well (Karjalainen et al. 2016)

An important part of the ELDIA Project was the development of the European Language Vitality Barometer (EuLaViBar), which is a tool for measuring the

vitality of a language on the basis of systematically gathered quantitative data, which was gathered via a survey. The vitality is determined by measuring four focus areas representing basic requirements for maintaining a language: the language community's members' capacity, opportunity and desire to use the language, as well as the availability of language products. These areas are further divided into three or four sections representing different dimensions on which the fulfilment of the requirements of language management are assessed. Each focus area was then assigned a value on a scale from 0 to 4, with different levels having the following meaning:

0. Language maintenance is severely and critically endangered.
1. Language maintenance is acutely endangered.
2. Language maintenance is threatened.
3. Language maintenance is achieved to some extent.
4. The language is maintained at the moment.

The scores for Karelian in Finland were 0,93 for capacity, 1,21 for opportunity, 1,29 for desire and 0,52 for language products. The results clearly show that Karelian in Finland is alarmingly endangered, and drastic actions to ensure the survival of the language are necessary.

Besides the survey, ELDIA also included interviews with certain target groups relevant to the topic. The topic was also researched through media analysis and studying the legislation. This data was also taken into account when determining the vitality level for different focus areas.

The main findings of ELDIA include that for the vast majority of Finnish Karelians it is considerably easier to use Finnish than Karelian, and that there are very few domains where the language can be used. Especially the use with family and at homes has diminished considerably from the past. The main domains where Karelians would like to see their language used more are television, internet and the educational system.

Finnish legislation offers virtually no support for Karelian, and although minority-related issues are regularly discussed in Finnish media, Karelians are mentioned extremely rarely and even in those seldom cases it is typically about

Karelians in Russia, and not in Finland. The education system offers very little support for Karelian as well. The research report states that the Finno-Russian school of Eastern Finland (Itä-Suomen suomalais-venäläinen koulu) has offered Karelian as an optional school subject in Joensuu since 2012. However, there were not enough students that had chosen this subject and the classes were never formed (Sarhimaa 2017) and by 2017 at the latest the school had dropped Karelian from their curriculum. (Itä-Suomen suomalais-venäläinen koulu 2017).

There are also very few services and materials available in Karelian. The most positive results of ELDIA were that there are still many Karelians who would like to use the language more, and one third of Karelians believe that the situation for Karelian will improve in the next ten years.

Based on the results, ELDIA also offers suggestions on concrete actions in order to revitalize Karelian in Finland. The report calls for better visibility for Karelian and Karelians, especially in mass media. Another important step would be a revitalization program for Karelian, as well as stable funding for these efforts from the state. For the Karelian community itself the report suggests that Karelian language and identity should be modernised, meaning that there should be more communal possibilities for networking and improving one's Karelian proficiency, as well as more language materials, such as literature, music, videos, films learning materials and online content.

4. METHODOLOGY

In this section I will explain the methodology I used to conduct this study. I will start by explaining how the data was collected, after which I will provide basic information on the participants. I will then provide an explanation of the theoretical framework I used for my data analysis and conclude the section by explaining my position as a researcher, and how that affect the study.

4.1 Data collection

I started to think about the design of my interviews in the spring of 2018. I read articles about the home use of heavily endangered minority languages, such as Maori (O'regan 2018), Tolowa Dee-ni' (Bommelyn and Tuttle 2018) and Lushootseed (Zahir 2018) and started to think about how to use the insights from those examples in order to develop my interview template. I opted for semi-structured interviews, allowing the interviewees talk as freely as possible whereas I would interrupt as little as possible, while still making sure that certain key topics were discussed. The reason for this was, that since the topic was not researched before, I had no information on teaching a minority language at home specifically in the context of Karelian in Finland. This meant that I had only information about such situations in the context of other minorities, and general information about the Karelian community in Finland. Had I adopted a stricter interview template, there would have been a risk of missing something important. This way I could take a more exploratory approach to the research and let the data speak for itself.

At first I also entertained the thought of doing some research on the actual language use of the families, since what people tell about the language use does not necessarily reflect the reality of it, as people's responses may be affected by their values and attitudes, and a person is often not able to analyse their own behaviour objectively. I decided against doing this for three reasons. First, it would have taken a lot of time to establish such a relationship of trust not only with the parents but also with the children, and I did not have such time at my disposal since for the time of the study I was not living in Finland, and only visited the country occasionally. Second, gathering such data in practice would also have taken much more resources and time and as said, I did not have such resources to spare. Third and the most important reason is that such data was not actually needed. The purpose of my study was not to find out the details of the actual use of Karelian at home, but rather to explore and explain the reasons why so few Karelians decide to teach the language to their children, and why those who do so have made this decision. Since parents are the ones making such decisions and managing how that is realised in practice, their subjective opinions and experiences regarding the matter are of key importance.

As Karelian is critically endangered and most speaker are elderly, I expected to find very few families to interview. Therefore, my plan was to interview all the families I could possibly find. I expected to find around ten families, which was a very optimistic estimation as most experts and activists that I talked to expected the number to be closer to five families. In the end my estimate turned out to be accurate, as I found nine families where Karelian is used at home. Out of those nine families, two did not respond to my email, one declined because of busy schedule, and with one I was not able to find an interview time because of busy schedule and illnesses on both sides. The remaining five families agreed, and the interviews were conducted successfully. Since the overall target group of my study is so small, it was not possible for me to conduct a pilot study, as it was important to get all the available information for the study itself.

As I said, the purpose of the interviews was to allow the participants to speak as freely as possible. Still, it was important to have a certain topical consistency with different interviews, so I made sure to ask each participant about the following topics:

- What languages were spoken at their childhood home?
- When and how did they learn Karelian?
- What other languages have they learned?
- What languages are spoken in their family now, how are they used and how much is each language used?
- How much planning has using Karelian at home involved?
- Who else do the parents or the children speak Karelian with?
- Have they used Karelian supporting materials (books, music etc.)?
- Have they experienced difficulties or particular feelings of success regarding using Karelian at home?
- Have they received support (either from the Karelian community or society at large) regarding using Karelian at home?
- What kind of reactions have they encountered regarding using Karelian at home?

- Is there something that they would hope for that would make using Karelian at home easier?

Finally, I asked them to shortly describe in their own words what using Karelian at home has been like. Because certain interesting topics came up during the first family's interview that I had not thought about beforehand, I added three more topics of discussion for the remaining interviews:

- What is marked as the parents' and the children's first language in the Local Register Offices?
- Have they informed the school/day-care that the child speaks Karelian and what has been the reaction to that?
- What kind of attitudes have the children shown towards Karelian?

I explained the basic information about my thesis to each of the participants and asked them to sign a consent form (appendix 1). I also informed them that since the interview is conducted entirely based on their voluntary participation and they are talking about matters concerning their personal life, they naturally have the right to refuse to answer any of the questions, or to stop the interview at any point without having to provide any explanations.

I interviewed three of the families at their homes, and two at their workplaces. In three families both parents lived together, in one family the other parent had deceased, and in the last one they had separated, and I only interviewed the parent who speaks Karelian to the children. In the families were the parents lived together, I interviewed both parents separately, in order to account for the possibility that they might have different views on things or give conflicting accounts. The interviews were recorded with the recorder application of a Huawei P smart 2019 smartphone. Two families provided me with additional information on the topic after I had stopped recording, and they confirmed that I may use that information in the study as well. They provided the information verbally which I then noted down, and one participant also messaged me later via Facebook Messenger. In total I had 5 hours and 56 minutes of recorded interviews.

After I had conducted all the interviews, I transferred the sound files to a computer for transcription. I have been working as a research assistant since September 2018 and my main task is to transcribe interviews for an archive. This means that I have a great deal of transcribing experience, which turned out to have both positive and negative effects. the positive is that I am very used to transcribing and can do it rather quickly, but the negative was that I was used to doing much more detailed transcription than was necessary for this study and used that method of doing transcription at first. With the first interview I used ELAN and marked down pauses, breaks and all utterances, including my own short utterances of acknowledgement while the participant was speaking.

After the first recording I realised that this method was slow and unnecessarily detailed, and I switched to Express Scribe for the rest of the recordings. The transcriptions also became increasingly less detailed, as they were still taking a long time to do, and they were still unnecessarily detailed. After all, it was only the content of the participants' speech that mattered. By the end of the transcription process, I had stopped marking pauses, breaks, laughter and my own utterances of acknowledgement, shortened my own questions as they were typically long and full of repetition, and stopped correcting small typos as they did not make reading difficult, and that allowed me to finish the transcriptions faster.

4.2 Participants

In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, I have taken certain measures in this study to protect their identities. Their names or places of residence will not be disclosed. The exact age of the children will not be revealed, although it is important in terms of the study to know whether they are attending day-care or primary school. I will also not reveal the gender of any of the participants of their children, as gender-related issues are out of the scope of this study. All these steps are necessary, because the study deals with family matters that many would consider intimate, and because the Karelian community in Finland is small, so all information not directly relevant to the study would make it easier to identify the participants.

At the time of interviews, the families lived in three different Finnish cities, with three of them living in the same city. All the families are also familiar with each other. The participants include speakers of all three main dialects of Karelian.

I will treat families as single units, rather than looking at all the parents individually. This is because in all families one of the parents is clearly more fluent in Karelian and has taken the main responsibility of managing their use of Karelian, whereas the other parent in the families where parents live together provides considerable support in different ways. When talking about the individual parents, I will refer to the one with stronger Karelian proficiency as the "first parent", and to the other as the "second parent". Furthermore, although the children were not interviewed or otherwise directly studied, it is clear that they too influence the families' language dynamics considerably, which also justifies using family as the unit of reference. I will now give short descriptions of each of the families, and from now on they will be referred to by the number provided here.

4.2.1 Family 1.

The family has two children, the eldest attends primary school and the youngest day-care. The first parent is of Karelian heritage and heard Karelian occasionally as a child when visiting grandparents and great grandparents, so they developed a certain passive knowledge of Karelian. The first parent started to improve their Karelian shortly before the eldest child was born and has always tried to speak as much Karelian to the children as possible, improving the parent's own proficiency at the same time. The second parent is Finnish and speaks no Karelian but has a strong passive knowledge and understands virtually everything that is being said. The family lives in a different city than the other participants.

4.2.2 Family 2.

The family consists of one child who attends primary school and the first parent is widowed. Both parents were Karelians from the Republic of Karelia. The first parent grew up bilingually speaking both Karelian and Russian, whereas the second grew up speaking only Russian. The first parent also learned Finnish starting from primary

school and studied Karelian at university. The family first spoke only Russian amongst themselves, but after moving to Finland the parents decided to introduce Finnish into the household in order to facilitate their child's adapting to the new environment. It was only recently after being widowed that the first parent started to use Karelian at home and to think more about the importance of revitalizing the language. The first parent works as a researcher of languages. The family lives in the same city as two other participant families.

4.2.3 Family 3.

The parents in this family are separated and live in different cities. They have two children, the eldest attends primary school and the youngest day-care. The first parent lives in the same city with two other participant families. The first parent is of Karelian heritage and started to learn Karelian around the time when the first child was born and has always tried to speak as much Karelian with the children as possible. The parent currently studies languages at university

4.2.4 Family 4.

The family has one child who attends day-care, and they live in a different city than the other participants. The first parent is of Karelian heritage and the second is Russian. As a child the first parent heard some Karelian at home and while visiting relatives but did not learn to speak the language. However, their passive knowledge was strong enough that later it was very easy and quick to learn the language. The second parent has no Karelian heritage and grew up in the Republic of Karelia where they studied Finnish at university.

4.2.5 Family 5.

This family lives in the same city as two other participant families, and they have a child who attends day-care. The first parent is from a Karelian family from the Republic of Karelia and grew up bilingually speaking both Russian and Karelian. The second is

from Finland and has Karelian heritage, but grew up speaking only Finnish, and started to learn Karelian at university. Both parents work as researchers.

4.3 Grounded theory

Since the topic of Karelian as a home language in Finland has not been studied before, I opted for an inductive, data-driven approach to the topic, and for my analysis I am using an adapted version of the grounded theory. Grounded theory is a systematic method for analysing qualitative data, and it was first developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the 1960s as an inductive alternative for the deductive methodologies that were dominant in social sciences at the time. Since grounded theory was first introduced (Glaser and Strauss 1967), it has become a popular and influential methodology for qualitative analysis, and many different versions of it have been developed. My method is based on the description of grounded theory provided by Jari Luomanen (2010), which in turn is based on the depictions of Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (particularly Strauss 1987; Strauss and Corbin 1990). I have adapted this model of Grounded theory to better suit my needs, as I will explain below.

Grounded theory is based on different forms of coding, or phases of inductive interpretation. The researcher compares data-based observations and tries to form links between them. This means going back and forth between inductive and deductive thinking, in order to construct a theory explaining the studied phenomenon. Hence the name grounded theory: the created theory is grounded on the data itself.

Another key concept in Grounded theory is Theoretical saturation. This means that the created hypothesis is tested by including more data, and this is continued until the added data provides no more insights and does not change the hypothesis. In the case of this thesis I was not able add more data, as I had already interviewed all the members of the studied group that I could find and arrange an interview with. Therefore, after the data was coded, I kept going through it repeatedly and adjusting my hypothesis, until this process did not change the formed theory any longer.

There are three different stages of coding in Grounded theory: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. These refer to analysing the data at different

levels, although in practice these different stages of work typically overlap and are done somewhat simultaneously.

Open coding means analysing and dissecting the data in order to conceptualise and categorise them. A category is a classification for instances, such as words, sentences or other parts of speech, that are referring to the same concept or theme.

After the categories are established, it is time for axial coding. This is where my version differs from the methodology provided by Luomanen. In the model described by him, this phase means establishing connections between a more abstract parent category and its subcategories, which would be the categories established during the open coding. The point of axial coding would therefore be not to establish relationships between the categories themselves, but rather to create categorical hierarchies. In this thesis I have taken a different approach. I establish parent categories, but in my data the categories were so deeply interconnected and these connections crucially significant for the topic, that in this phase I concentrated mainly on establishing these relationships.

The final phase is the selective coding, which means systematically connecting the made inductive observations to create a theory. This means selecting a core category that all the other categories are connected to, in a similar vein as is done with axial coding. At this point the final decisions are made to determine which parts of the data to keep, so that everything that is left is relevant for the final category, and a theory can be formulated on based on it.

A large part of my analysis section is devoted to explaining and analysing the categories (of open coding) themselves, as they form the bulk of the model and the relationships between them are the most important part of the model. The entire model and the theory based on that will be explained after that.

4.4 Researcher's position

It is a well-established tradition in qualitative research to reflect on one's own position as a research, and how that affects the study (for example Blaxter et al. 2010 and Berger

2013) Therefore, before going into the analysis I will first clarify my position as a researcher regarding this thesis and explain how it affected the process.

This thesis is about the Karelian community in Finland, and I am Karelian from Finland myself. I am also actively involved in the Karelian revitalization as a language activist and I have also work experience from the field. Revitalization of Karelian is an issue I care about deeply, and it affects me personally. However, I do not see this as an issue regarding my work as a researcher. As explained in the literature review, it is a well-established tradition in linguistics to promote revitalization of endangered languages, and it is also not uncommon for researchers to be passionate about the topic of their research. It is also common for researchers to study communities that they are themselves part of, as well as their languages. This is normal in the Karelian community as well, just as in other language minorities in Finland and the surrounding areas too. For example, Pirita Näkkäläjärvi, Sámi herself, has researched threats to the freedom of speech of the Sámi people in Finland (2017), and the Karelian linguist Lea Siilin has been involved in different research projects about Karelian and Karelians, such as the ELDIA project (Sarhimaa 2016).

My insider status as a member of the Karelian community did, however, have certain effects on my research. As I was transcribing the interviews, I noticed that I had been inadvertently giving the participants positive feedback when they were expressing opinions that I, as a Karelian activist, agreed with. Throughout the interviews I was reacting to the participants' speech with normal verbal acknowledging, but this acknowledging became more emphasised when they said something that I agreed with. Another thing that I realised only after the interviews was, that because of my insider status the participants might have assumed that certain things are obvious to me and thus did not say them during the interview. Such information would of course have been valuable even if it was indeed nothing new to me personally, and I could have countered this issue by emphasising that they should tell me even things that seem obvious and not worth mentioning.

There were also certain advantages resulting from my insider status. Because I knew all the participants and had met most of them beforehand, establishing connection was easy and the interview situations were relaxed and natural. The participants also talked about many experiences that were familiar to me as a Karelian,

and as an insider I have a good understanding of different issues that Karelians face and of what life as a Karelian is like in general. This insider perspective gave me a deeper understanding of the data.

Overall, I do not think that my position as a member of the Karelian community is an issue for the validity and credibility of this study. As I have established, this position came with both advantages and disadvantages, but such would have been the case as an outsider researcher too. The effects would have simply been different.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

For this analysis I will treat all the data from the interviews as a single entity, instead of analysing each family's interview data regarding each category separately. There are several reasons for this. First of all, the amount of data I got varies greatly from family to family. Since in Families 3 and 4 I only interviewed one parent instead of two, that naturally means that I have less data from them than from the other families. The families also have different backgrounds, so there were differences between the data received from them. For example, in Family 2 the parent did not speak Karelian to the child until the child was already somewhat grown up, whereas in all the other families, language was spoken to the children from the moment they were born. This meant that in Family 2 the situation regarding the language at home was different.

However, these differences did not pose an issue for the validity of the data, because they were not contradictory in nature, but rather complimentary. In none of the categories described below did the families provide information that would contradict that of the other families. Since the participants have different backgrounds and are overall different human beings, and since they could talk about their experiences freely, they also focused on different things. For example, Family 3 talked a lot about community behaviour (category 6), Family 4 described in great detail the mental effects of perceived negative attitudes toward Karelian (category 11), and Family 5 had many ideas about possible ways to tighten the Karelian community (category 8). If I would have wanted to be able to analyse all the families separately, I would have had to either

discard the data where all the families did not provide similar information or adopt a more rigorous interview template, which would have prevented the participants from talking freely about their own primary areas of interest. In both cases the resulting data would have been considerably poorer, and it would not have benefited the analysis in any way, which in turn would have meant that the results would have reflected the complex reality of these families much less accurately.

5.1 Categories

I started to form the basic ideas for the categories already during the interviews. I started to notice that different families were talking about very similar things and even using similar words to describe them. After the interviews I made notes about ideas I thought could be meaningful for the analysis, and in the following interviews I paid more attention to these topics.

The categories started to get a more concrete form during the transcription. As I had the information from all the interviews and had notes on them, this time I could listen to them more thoroughly and take a more analytic approach to what was being said. During the transcriptions I took more notes and started to shape the categories based on recurring themes and topics that kept coming up in the interviews.

These categories where centred around different aspects about the families' language use at home, the Karelian community and the society at large. Based on those categories I started to form a model explaining the powers affecting the language use of the families, that would take into account the different dynamics not only within the families', but also regarding their interactions with the Karelian community, and the Karelian community's interactions with the society at large. I had to modify and rework the categories many times over, but by the time I had transcribed all the interviews, I had settled on 14 different categories that I was satisfied with.

I then started to code the transcriptions. I assigned a colour for each category and went through each of the transcriptions colouring the text according to which category each word, sentence or topic belonged to. At the same time, I was still fine-tuning the categories. For the vast majority of the data it was very easy to assign it to the corresponding category, but in some cases I had to think about how to categorise

them, and this also made me to readjust the categories. Still, the 14 I had settled on remained largely unaltered, and this readjustment merely made them more solid.

Besides the colouring fourteen categories, I highlighted the parts of the text that were irrelevant to the analysis of. This included, for example, most of my own speech, the participants' descriptions of their proficiency in languages other than those spoken at home, and various anecdotes about things that were not directly connected to the topic. From one interview I also deleted certain parts entirely, because the participant specifically stated during the interview that they do not want those things to be included anywhere.

When the transcriptions were coded, I copied all the data I had to a single word file, arranging it first by category, and then by participants so that parents of the same family were after one another. This way all the data was in the same place in a systematic, easily analysable form. This allowed me to look at all the information I had on each category at once. At this point I still changed categories of a few snippets of data.

Of course, these categories are in many cases close to each other and interact with one another, and in some cases, it was not always clear in which category an instance in the data should belong to. For example, if the participant is talking about the attitudes of school staff members, that could very well belong under either education (Category 9) or Language ideology (Category 11). This, however, did not pose an issue of any kind for the analysis. After all, this study deals with actual human beings expressing their opinions in a real conversational setting, and it is only normal that every single thing they say cannot be neatly separated into categories. Also, as the categories are deeply interconnected, it is only normal that information can be relevant for two categories at the same time.

I formed the categories purely inductively in the manner described above, and when they were ready, I went through them again and included some addition information from various sources to provide context and additional information regarding the categories. This information includes both academic publications and other written sources on topics where academic sources were not available. These other sources include for example newspaper articles, pieces of legislation and official documents regarding education.

The categories are divided into three domains: family, Karelian community and the society. Categories under family belong to the private sphere of the home. Although the scope of this thesis is specifically Karelian families living in Finland, Karelian community cannot be confined to mean only the community in Finland. The community and all the families interviewed have so many connections to Karelians living in Russia that drawing a distinction at the border would be forced and unnatural. Finally, society refers to the entire Finnish society outside of the Karelian community, therefore including the state of Finland with all its structures, the private sector and individual citizens. The categories are as follows:

FAMILY
1. Language Proficiency
2. Managing Skills
3. Motivation and Ideology

KARELIAN COMMUNITY
4. Connections and Environment
5. Community's Language Proficiency
6. Behaviour
7. Community's Ideology
8. Resources

COMMUNITY
9. Education
10. Knowledge and Awareness
11. Language Ideology
12. Media
13. State Recognition
14. State Support

Of course, the distinction between categories and domains are not sharp or absolute. The families naturally also belong to the Karelian community, which in turn is a part of the society. The point that these domains demonstrate is rather that the family

functions within parameters set by the Karelian community, and the Karelian community functions within parameters set by the society.

5.1.1 Category 1: Language Proficiency

Naturally, it is impossible to speak Karelian at home if nobody in the family knows how to speak it. Out of these five families the first parents in two families had learned to speak Karelian at home when they were children. For all the others they had learned it, in Family 4 before they had children and in Families 1 and 3 the first parent had started to learn it around the time when their first child was born. Coincidentally, these two are also the families that have two children, and they both said that their eldest child speaks less Karelian than the youngest, because the parents had been improving their own language proficiency while speaking to the children, so by the time the second child was born, their Karelian was much stronger and richer than it was when the eldest was born.

This category includes the proficiency of all members of the family who live together, since it is naturally easier to maintain the language at home the more people speak it, and the better they speak it. Proficiency alone, however, does not mean that the language is being actively spoken at home, as is evident from the next two categories.

5.1.2 Category 2: Managing Skills

If Language Proficiency includes the knowledge of the language itself, for example of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, Managing Skills looks at how those skills are applied in practice. This category includes managing the use of the different languages spoken at home, strategies to deal with lacking language proficiency and strategies to manage with the lack of available language resources.

In terms of managing the different languages, the families have somewhat different strategies, but there are many similarities between them. For example, all except for Family 2 have spoken Karelian to their children since they were born, with the intention of speaking as much Karelian as possible. The differing approach Family 2 is explained in Category 3. The families report some issues regarding this. In Family 3, although the first parent is very fluent in Karelian, they often still speak Finnish to the

eldest child, since the parent only started to learn Karelian around the time the child was born and is thus more accustomed to speaking Finnish with that child. With the younger child the parent always speaks only Karelian. Like the parent says, "with [the younger child] it comes completely automatically, immediately when I speak with them, the language." In other families too they express their concerns that they are not always speaking as much Karelian as they think they should, or that it can be difficult to break patterns in situations where they are used to speaking another language, when they could use Karelian instead.

All the families except for Family 2 where the first parent grew up bilingually, also tell of very conscious strategies to deal with lacking Karelian proficiency. The first parents in Families 1, 3 and 4 and the second parent in Family 5 report that when they do not know a certain word in Karelian, they either just use the Finnish word or "karelianise" it, meaning that they take the Finnish word but apply the typical Karelian phonological features that differentiate the two languages to it. Other strategies include explaining around a missing word and thinking ahead what the family is going to do in the near future, and studying vocabulary related to that. One participant even says that if they cannot remember how to say something in Karelian, they will simply remain silent if it is nothing too important.

Since materials like children's literature or music in Karelian are lacking (I will return to this in Category 8), the families have also devised certain strategies to work around this issue. In Family 5 the first parent has translated Finnish children's book into Karelian by writing the translation by pencil next to the Finnish text in the book, whereas in Family 4 the first parent has memorised Karelian translations of the child's favourite books so that they may tell the stories in Karelian, even if the book is in Finnish or Russian. The parent in Family 3 tries to work their schedule so that the younger child would not have to spend too much time at day-care, because as a fully Finnish-language environment it has started to affect the child's Karelian.

All families also express tiredness of managing the use of Karelian. They say that they should learn more, but they do not have the energy, or that they would like to do more but simply do not have the time. All families are also very careful not to put too much burden on their children with Karelian, or multilingualism in general. The eldest child in Family 3 has had private Karelian lessons before, and the first parent

would like to continue them. However, the parent is not currently pursuing this because the child has expressed happiness that the lessons have stopped, since they were an extra burden on top of normal schoolwork. The eldest child in Family 1 was also receiving such lessons at the time of the interview and was much happier about them. Still, the parents in Family 1 also said that they do not want to push the children, and that the children are allowed to make their own choices regarding the language.

5.1.3 Category 3: Motivation and Ideology

This category includes not only the parents' motivation for teaching Karelian to their children, but also their attitudes and ideology regarding Karelian, and languages and multilingualism in general. It also includes the children's attitudes towards Karelian and its usage at home. This category is important since, even if the parents would be very skilful in the previous two categories, they will not teach Karelian to their children if they lack the motivation for it. This could mean that they do not think that it is important to transmit the language to new generations, that they have internalised the ideology that Karelian is inferior to majority languages, or that they had just simply not thought about doing so. Not teaching Karelian to children despite sufficient proficiency due to this category does not require a negative incentive to do so, it merely requires the lack of a positive incentive.

Family 2 is a perfect example of this. The first parent grew up bilingually and has studied Karelian and worked with the language, so they are exceptionally proficient in the language. They worked as a Karelian teacher at university when the child was born, but the only home language of the family was Russian. The thought of speaking Karelian at home did not even occur to the first parent. The parent describes this way of thinking:

> And I say again, I was not such a language activist. I knew my work well, the work of a teacher. Just like anybody here, an English or Swedish teacher knows it and teaches, but it does not mean that you should always speak Swedish at home.

The thought of speaking Karelian at home only came up when the family had already moved to Finland and the first parent was working closely with revitalization efforts and people started calling them an activist. The parent had personally never thought of it that way before.

There seems to be three main reasons for families to teach their children Karelian. First of all, they do so because it is the traditional language of the family and they say that the child has the right to learn it. In other words, they teach it because it is a part of their heritage. Secondly they do so because these people are deeply attached to Karelian and since it is a severely endangered language, they think it is important to save it, and this can only happen if it is being taught to new generations. Thirdly, there are practical benefits in teaching children more than one language. Parents say that they have read studies or otherwise acquired information, and that they are aware that multilingualism is beneficial to children. It will also make it easier for them to learn other languages later, which is seen as a valuable asset in life.

The third reason is connected to the overall language ideology and attitudes of the parents. All of them have a very positive attitude towards multilingualism in general, not just in terms of Karelian. None of them express any negative sentiments about any language, whereas many express their support to other language groups in Finland as well, such as Sámi, Russian or Arabic speakers, and wish that more families in general would teach their children their traditional languages, or any languages in general. Multilingualism is viewed in an extremely positive light, and as an asset to society.

Besides the parents' attitudes towards Karelian, also the children's attitudes affect the way languages are being used in the family. In Families 1, 4 and 5 the children have not had any negative attitudes towards Karelian, although in Families 4 and 5 the children are still very young, and the first parent in Family 4 expresses fears that the child is going to reject Karelian at some point. In Family 1 the eldest child had some reservations about Karelian before, but that was only for a short while and now the child is very proud of it and speaks openly about it both in school as well as with friends.

In Family 3 the younger child is still young and has not expressed any particular attitudes towards Karelian, but with that child the parent also spoke much

better Karelian from the beginning, than they did with the eldest. The eldest child has expressed some aversion towards the language, questioning why they have to learn it since it "has no use". The child in Family 2 has also expressed similar ideas and is very enthusiastic about English, because "everybody knows English" and "Karelian isn't even taught in schools". Recently, however, the child has started show a little more interest in Karelian.

This category also includes the parents' thoughts about what the experience of teaching Karelian to their children has been like. Although they have all had difficulties during the process, they all also see it as something rewarding. As good experiences they mentioned moments like when they first realised that the child understands Karelian, or when the child learns their first Karelian words or switches between Karelian and other languages when talking to different people. These kind of feelings of success also motivate the parents to continue with the process that can otherwise be taxing sometimes. Like one parent puts it:

> And I think this doesn't really bring any issues, speaking the language. On the contrary for me it's more like a source of strength. And like a positive thing because otherwise I just wouldn't have the energy. If it was like, it wouldn't make any sense so of course it has to be a good thing.

5.1.4 Category 4: Connections and Environment

One of the main issues that the families talk about is finding people for them and their children to speak Karelian with. As the language community is small and widespread, it is often difficult to find other people who speak it, and especially people that could speak Karelian with the children.

In all the families except for Family 3 there are at least some people in their family who speak Karelian, but with all except for Family 4 they live far away, and the families see them seldomly. They all have connections within the Karelian community and many people to use Karelian with, but a lot of this communication is confined to online spaces, like social media or e-mail, and a lot of the face-to-face

contacts they have are between adults outside the home and thus not very beneficial for developing the children's Karelian proficiency.

Indeed, the main issue in this category that the families talk about is the lack of other Karelian speaking families. These five families are well interconnected, and Families 2, 3 and 5 do have contact and visit each other, as they all live in the same city. Families 3,4 and 5 tried to arrange a meeting once with a fourth family not included in this study so that their children could play together, but in the end were unable to do so because they live in different cities and they could not get their schedules to match.

Families 3 and 4 also mention that they have visited Karjalan Kielen Kodi (Home of the Karelian Language), which is the headquarters on an eponymous organisation in the Karelian village of Vieljärvi (Vedlozero) in the Republic of Karelia. The organisation is devoted to Karelian revitalization and they offer different courses and host a language nest, which is why some participants would like to bring their children there more often. As there are so few Karelian-speaking families and no language nests in Finland, that families are willing to travel to another country just to give their children to speak the language with children of their own age.

5.1.5 Category 5: Community's Language Proficiency

This category refers the overall language proficiency of the Karelian community. The families mainly talked about how many people in the Karelian community struggle with the language and how most people in their own families have lost the language as well. This of course makes it more difficult to find people to maintain and improve the families' Karelian proficiency, since even if they would have a lot of contact with other Karelians, many of them are likely to not be able to speak Karelian very well.

ELDIA (Sarhimaa 2016) has provided an extensive study on the language proficiency of Finnish Karelians, based on a questionnaire where respondents self-evaluated their Karelian proficiency. The results are shown in table 1. As can be seen, the community's Karelian proficiency is indeed limited in many ways. 51.39% report being able to speak Karelian only poorly or not at all, whereas for writing Karelian the

same number is 74.12%. Only 8.26% report being able to speak the language fluently, and merely 4.47% claim fluency in writing.

PROFICIENCY	UNDERSTAND	SPEAK	READ	WRITE
FLUENTLY	12.69%	8.26%	10.46%	4.47%
WELL	21.75%	11.62%	22.15%	5.75%
FAIRLY	33.53%	20.80%	33.85%	15.65%
POORLY	27.19%	30.59%	25.85%	24.92%
NOT AT ALL	4.84%	28.75%	7.69%	49.20%

Table 1

5.1.6 Category 6: Behaviour

If the Category 5 is the Karelian community's counterpart for Category 1, this is its counterpart for Category 2. Just like in the families, so too on the community level Karelian proficiency does not always mean that they would actually use the language in situations where it is possible. All the families have had a many experience with Karelians who are able to speak the language, but in certain situations do not actually do so. This has happened both in their extended families and with Karelian friends and acquaintances.

Families 2 and 5 mainly describe the experiences with their own families, which makes sense since the first parents in these families are the ones that have the most Karelian speakers in their families. Both of them tell that when they were children, their parents, although fluent, did not speak Karelian to them, and same was true for most of their generations. They learned Karelian either from grandparents or by hearing their parents speak Karelian to each other.

Families 1, 3 and 4 talk more about contemporary Karelians, and they all have strong views on the matter. They think that it would not only be important and valuable that Karelians use the language more actively, but that it is also something that Karelians should do. For example, the first parent in Family 3 has had experiences where Karelians meet for some formal event such as a lecture, where speeches are given

in Karelian but when the same people talk to each other afterwards informally, they switch to Russian or Finnish, and the parent thinks that in such situations people should speak Karelian. They argue that although it might feel difficult at first, the only way it will get easier through talking and practicing more.

Family 4 in turn has had experiences where other Karelian speakers speak the language to the first parent, but not to the child. For example, the family is friends with a Karelian activist who is very vocal about promoting revitalization and is fluent in both Karelian and Russian. When they meet, he speaks Karelian with the first parent, but Russian to the child, since the family's other home language is Russian.

5.1.7 Category 7: Community's Ideology

Just as with the families themselves, the ideology and attitudes of the community at large affect the way the language is used. In the interviews a large part of this category manifested in the responses that the families have gotten from other Karelians regarding their choice to teach Karelian to their children. Besides that, this category also includes the community's general views about the language and other Karelians.

All the families have gotten positive feedback from other Karelians regarding their decision to teach Karelian to their children. All of the families are well connected to people involved in the revitalization process, and these people have naturally been very encouraging about the matter. Many have also gotten very positive reactions from their own parents and other family members who are Karelians, but did not transmit the language themselves, either because they did not have the proficiency, or because of other reasons related to this category. This kind of positive feedback, just as experiences of success in Category 3, is of course important because it encourages the families to continue with the process.

Not all feedback from Karelians have been positive, however. many have heard also negative feedback, even from within their own families. Many Karelians still see the language still as somehow inferior to well-established majority languages like Finnish and Russian. One participant reports that their old schoolmates from the Republic of Karelia, fluent in Karelian themselves, have asked if they "still speak that shit language". Another reports that their father, also a Karelian speaker, was against

teaching Karelian to children because it would "mess up their head". The father has since accepted the fact that the child speaks Karelian, but the participant thinks that if something negative would ever happen in the child's development, the father would blame that on the fact that the child was brought up with too many languages.

Besides this kind of direct feedback, the participants also talk about Karelians' attitudes towards their language in general. In many families the language was a source of shame and especially in Finland people feared that speaking Karelian would bring negative repercussions upon them from the rest of the society. This topic I have explained in the literature review. Also, many Karelians associate the language with elderly people, and have been surprised to hear small children speak fluent Karelian, as that is very rare nowadays. One participant tells that there was a respected Karelian cultural person visiting the family, and when he heard the family's child speak Karelian, he was surprised and exclaimed: "but they speak just like an old person!"

Finally, participants express wishes that the Karelian community would strive for more unity, and that the organisations would better reach out to families and other Karelians at the grassroot level, and that there would be less hostility towards amongst Karelians, because that will only turn people away from using the language as it creates negative connotations with it. This last remark can be interpreted as a reference to an ongoing feud about the classification of different varieties of Karelian and allocation of revitalization funds, that has been a very prominent issue within the community for the past couple of years. The feud has been described by the journalist Tuukka Tuomasjukka (2018) and Karelians Laura Arantola and Katerina Paalamo (2019).

5.1.8 Category 8: Resources

In this case resources are interpreted in a broad sense and the category includes many different kinds of materials and services provided by the Karelian community that are meant for the benefit of the entire community, especially in order to support revitalization efforts. Mostly these resources are produced by different organisations, but they could potentially be provided by individual activists or smaller, looser activist

networks as well. These are resources like Karelian literature and music, learning materials, language courses, private lessons and different kinds of events.

In this study language nests are included in this category if they are in Russia, but not if they are in Finland. This is because the scope of this study is the Karelian community in Finland with its cross-border connections, but in regard to state functions, only Finland specifically. Thus, attending a language nest in Finland is seen as a replacement of the normal day-care that children would attend in any in a different language, and it thus falls under Category 9. However, if families living in Finland occasionally have the chance to bring their children to a language nest in Russia, this is not part of the larger framework of the Finnish education system, but rather a service provided by the Karelian community through cross-border networks.

The main resources that the families have access to currently are books, language courses and private classes, but even regarding these resources the demand is much greater than supply. There is some children's literature translated to Karelian, but a lot of these are Moomin books, which is a series of children's books written by Finnish author Tove Jansson. Participants saw these as being too advanced for very small children and would wish for more books better suitable for this age. The books are also translated to Olonets Karelian and a family speaking the Northern Karelian variety reported that this variety can be somewhat difficult to the child and the second parent, as these two varieties are the ones that are the furthest apart from each other.

In terms of other material resources, the families would also wish for children's music, but more importantly, video games, digital media and virtual applications. As many of the participants said, the children can spend as much time with electronic devices as you allow them, and if that kind of resources would be available in Karelian, that would be a very easy and natural way to get them involved with the language. The participants emphasised that these resources would have to match the quality of those that the children use nevertheless. The children will not choose different resources than what they already like just because of the language, the content itself has to be compelling enough for that.

When it comes to services, the participants wished for more communal activities where Karelians would get together to do things using their language. In terms of smaller children there were mentions of after-school clubs or musical school where

children could play together and do things in Karelian after school or day-care. Such activities have been organised in different parts of Finland, but not in a very large scale (Sarhimaa 2017). One participant wished that when their child gets into their teenage years, it would be nice if there was a musical camp where they could use their creativity in Karelian and somebody would help them realise those ideas into music. This participant also hoped for music festivals or other similar things. As they put it:

> "…that there would be, kind of ways attach oneself to the language through positive, communal experiences, so that it would become personal. And when it is personal then one would dare to start to use it."

There was also need for more support regarding the language itself. The eldest children in Families 1 and 3 have received private language lessons via Skype that have been paid by the Karelian Language Society. Parents in both families have found this to be a positive thing, and Family 4 would like a similar arrangement for their child as well in the future, if the child would be motivated for it. Family 1 also wished for language support for the parents themselves since, as established in categories 1 and 2, managing the parents' own language proficiency can be difficult and taxing. After all, it is the parents that the children learn the language from.

The families also wished that the organisations that are currently in charge of organising the revitalization work, would reach out more to the families and that there would be some kind of a centralised program for providing help for all the different Karelian-speaking families in Finland. The organisations could take the initiative and reach out to the families so that they could think of ways to support them.

To summarise, Resources is the most important of the categories that are under the domain of the Karelian community, because it has the widest-reaching effect on other categories. Language courses, private lessons and learning materials affect the Community's Language Proficiency (Category 1), events and communal activities strengthen the networks and provide more domains of use (Category 4) and different kinds of events, services and materials can also be designed to educate people about revitalization and to encourage families to teach Karelian to their children (Category 7).

5.1.9 Category 9: Education

Education covers the entire Finnish educational system, which includes early childhood education and care, pre-primary education, basic education, upper secondary education and higher education (Hanhijoki et al. 2012). This category is not only about whether or not Karelian is taught in various parts of the system or used as the medium of instruction, but also whether or not Karelians and the Karelian language are talked about in general education as part of other subjects, such as Finnish, history or social studies.

Currently the only part of the education where Karelian is taught is the higher education, as since 2009 Karelian language and culture can be studied in the University of Eastern Finland (previously the university of Joensuu) as a minor subject (Sarhimaa 2017). A Karelian language nest worked in the city of Nurmes from 2009 until 2013, and Karelian has been offered as an optional subject in the Finno-Russian school of Eastern Finland and the school of Tohmajärvi, but these classes were never formed because there were not enough children interested in it, and both schools have since dropped Karelian from their curriculum (Sarhimaa 2017 and Itä-Suomen suomalais-venäläinen koulu 2017).

All the families would wish for Karelian-medium day-care or language nest, and for some Karelian language classes in school. This is in line with the ELDIA findings (Sarhimaa 2016). Participants mention the minimum group size requirements as an obstacle to this. According to Finnish laws, any language can be taught in Finnish schools if there are enough students for it. There is no state-mandated minimum group size for this, and in practice it depends on the will of local politicians in the city councils (Kangasvieri et al. 2011).

Minimum group sizes have been an issue with other minority languages as well. In 2019 the city of Oulu, which has a considerable Sámi community, decided to start a bilingual Northern Sami-Finnish class for first and second grades, and the minimum group size for this was set at 12 students (City of Oulu, 2019). This decision was heavily criticised by the Sámi community, since for a small language community with an endangered language 12 students, which for Finnish speakers would not necessarily pose an issue, is extremely high, since these students would all have to be the same age and live in the same city.

Families 1 and 3 had tried to arrange Karelian classes for their eldest children but were unsuccessful. In Family 1 the school had sent out a form where one question was if they would like the child to receive classes in their first language (the child's official first language is Karelian). The family answered yes, after which they never heard back from the school again. The family had not really expected them to be able to arrange such classes, but they felt disappointed that the school did not even bother to tell them that this was not possible. They thought that the school had most likely just dismissed the request without even looking into the matter. Family 3 had a similar experience, where the parent had taken the initiative and approached the school to see if it was possible to arrange something and was met with immediate rejection.

Participants felt that having Karelian in schools would be important since although it is possible to arrange private lessons for the children, like Families 1 and 3 had done, this was seen as extra work for the children outside their normal schoolwork. Family 1 also said that it would be good to have these classes in school, since now they conducted via Skype at the family's home, and they thought that this is rather something that would fall under school's responsibilities and should be official instead of voluntary. Participants felt that the issue with group sizes could easily be fixed with technology. The classes could be conducted virtually and children living in different parts of the country could attend the same class. Participants felt that it would be important that this would happen at school, as part of the official curriculum and that the expenses would be paid by the state instead of the Karelian community. This kind of an arrangement is not unheard of in Finland, and similar classes have been arranged for children speaking Skolt and Inari Sámi in the city of Oulu (City of Oulu, 2019).

Day-care was also a topic that had a prominent role in all the interviews. As Karelian-language day-care does not currently exist in Finland, the families felt that day-care was a strong Finnish influence on their children and Families 3, 4 and 5 had noticed that it had started to affect their children's Karelian. Every family reported language nests as important and good ways to support families using Karelian at home.

Another important aspect about Education that the families did not directly talk about is the inclusion of Karelians into the National Curriculum not only as receivers of education, but also as a topic that is talked about in different subjects. The Finnish National Curriculum (Opetushallitus 2014) is a detailed document that sets the

educational goals regarding what students are supposed to learn in the different subjects as they go through the educational system. The document is 473 pages long and it does talk about different minorities in Finland. The word "minority" appears 23 times, the word "Sámi" 426 times and the word "Roma" 215 times. The word "Karelian" does not appear in the document at all.

In summary, Education influences three different categories directly: Category 5 through Karelian classes and Karelian-medium education or currently, rather the lack of them, and Categories 7 and 10 by educating the general public about Karelians and multilingualism in general.

5.1.10 Category 10: Visibility and Awareness

This category includes the society's general knowledge and awareness regarding Karelians, Karelian language and multilingualism in general. As ELDIA (Sarhimaa 2016) found out, Karelians are almost never talked about in Finnish media. As explained earlier, in Finland there is also a long tradition of silencing when it comes to Karelian and Karelians.

Participants report that one major issue is that many Finnish people do not know that Karelian as a separate language exists, and when the participants talk about speaking Karelian, people often think that they are talking about the eastern Savonian and North-eastern dialects of Finnish. Participants say that they are often irritated and tired by this, as it gets tiresome to explain the same basic information over and over again to different people. One participant has even printed out small information leaflets about Karelian that they carry in their wallet all the time, so that they can hand them out when such situations arise. Thus, spreading awareness about Karelian is something the families would find important and useful.

Besides the language, there is also general confusion about different kind of Karelians. Family 1 reports that in their child's day-care they have a day once a year when they showcase the cultural backgrounds of all the children by making posters that show pictures and symbols related to that background. The teachers help make them, and with the family's child the poster had included pictures of people in traditional Karelian Isthmus dresses, which is culturally very different from the family's heritage,

as well as the flag of the Republic of Karelia, which the family felt as an administrative region of the Federation of Russia is not representative of them.

Another thing that came up during the interviews is people's general lack of knowledge about multilingualism. For many people it is still a distant concept that they have no personal experiences of, and there is a lot of misinformation about it, for example with people thinking that it would be harmful for children to learn more than one language.

Besides causing Karelians concrete issues in their daily life since they have to repeatedly explain basic information about themselves to people, Knowledge and Awareness also affect Category 11. The more informed people about Karelians and about multilingualism in general, the better and more based in reality their attitudes and ideologies regarding these topics can be.

5.1.11 Category 11: Language Ideology

This category includes the general language ideology of the society, as well as attitudes towards Karelian, different languages and multilingualism in general. It is different from Category 10. in that whereas that category is about actual knowledge and information based on research, this category concentrates on people's attitudes and conceptions, that have often no basis in such reality. For example, a recent study (Alisaari et al.) shows that many teachers in Finland still actively promote monolingualism, and children are still often not allowed to speak their own language at school. This kind of attitudes can be dangerous and harmful, as studies show that ignoring the student's home language in education can have a negative impact on their academic performance (Menken and Kleyn 2009). This kind of attitudes naturally also lead to the deterioration of the vitality of minority languages.

As the families speak Karelian in public setting, they report that they have gotten positive feedback from non-Karelian people, but they have also encountered attitudes they have perceived as negative. The first parent in one family has had encounters when people have been hostile towards them because they thought that the parent was Russian. One family has had some issues at day-care, where a teacher has told their child to speak Finnish while they are at day-care when the child has said

something in Karelian, although this has not caused issues for communication. These comments have not been made in a chastising or otherwise negative tone, but the parents find this to be a problem and even insulting, as they think that their child's ability to speak Karelian should be encouraged, since it is fairly unique and not an obstacle for communication

Even when the families have not faced direct hostility, many still feel a fear of such attitudes, and expect to still face them in future. One parent says that they have not been called "ryssä" (a slur for Russian people that has also been used against Karelians) yet but expects it to happen before they turn 60. Another parent has felt anxious speaking Karelian with their child in public, because he fears that people might think or say something negative. Part of the reason why Family 5 thinks their child should be encouraged at day-care now, is that they are sure the child will yet face negative attitudes from their peers when they enter basic education. Participants also report that people turn to look at them when they speak Karelian in public, but this has not been perceived as negative, but rather more as just curious.

From the way that the participants talk, it is clear that there is a feeling that the general attitude towards Karelians is at least somewhat negative, if not really openly hostile. Many also say this aloud and give examples of this. Family 3 feels that schools do not think as Karelian as something important enough for schools, but rather as something that the families can speak at home if they wish. Family 1 thinks the media considers Karelians to be an unimportant and uninteresting topic, and Family 5 says that the state and the general population do not think that preserving Karelian is something that should be preserved or that it would be the state's responsibility to aid in revitalization efforts. Family 4 talks about the general language ideology being negligent towards Karelians.

Besides negative attitudes towards Karelian itself, families say that the language ideology in general has a wrong view towards languages and multilingualism. They say that many people find it difficult to understand why they are teaching Karelian to their children. Some have said that it is harmful to the children and will only mess with their heads, and others do not understand why one would teach such small language that, from their perspective, has no practical uses in life. People tend to value languages according to how much they can benefit one economically, and from this

perspective Karelian is not seen as something useful. Families 2 and 3 also say that this ideology has affected their children as well, who have expressed similar views.

Another aspect about Language Ideology that did not come up in the interviews, is that Finnish people have a very strong sense of ownership when it comes to Karelia as a geographical location, and Karelian culture and identity. This applies to Finnish people who are descendants of the other, non-Karelian-speaking group that is called Karelians (as explained in section 2 of this thesis), and this group of descendants constitutes a major part of the Finnish population. The topic has recently been studied by Antti Makkonen (2018), and his findings show that this strong sense of ownership is combined with aversion towards the current inhabitants (namely Russians) of the part of Karelia under Russian control, and although many had positive views about Orthodox church, which has traditionally been a vital part of Karelian identity (Sarhimaa 2017), there were also attitudes of dismissal towards it. Combined with the sense of ownership was also a strong feeling that true Karelian culture is Finnish, and that Finnish people have the moral ownership of Karelia. These attitudes can be seen as a direct continuum of the Karelianist movement, since the sentiments are basically identical. The fact that Finnish people still know very little about Karelians and that there is still such a strong sense of moral ownership over Karelia, show that the same traditions of Karelianism and silencing that led to strong discrimination of Karelians in Finland, have continued until modern times.

Besides influencing the general atmosphere of the society, Language Ideology also affects the Community's Ideology. Karelians do not live separately from the rest of the society, and many of the phenomena described in Category 7 are clearly manifestations of larger societal trends. Currently this effect is largely negative, but it could very well be positive instead, if general attitudes were different.

5.1.12 Category 12: Media

This category contains the kinds of media that the Karelian community cannot directly control themselves, like non-Karelian newspapers, magazines, television and radio. Currently the Finnish national broadcasting company (Yleisradio) provides a weekly radio news broadcast in Karelian and has some online news articles translated to

Karelian. There is only one person who works with these Karelian news, researcher Natalia Giloeva, and her salary is not paid by the state but rather by the Karelian Language Society (Tuomasjukka 2019).

One topic that comes up prominently in the interviews and that the families have strong opinions about, is children's television series. Here the same principles apply as with the electronic services in Category 8. As television series are something that children spend a lot of time with in any case, this would be an effective and natural way to get the children involved with the language. Again, the parents stress the that they would have to be modern, high-quality series, something that the children want to watch for the content, not for the language. Two participants suggest that you could try to get the rights to translate and dub some of the current popular series, such as PAW Patrol. These results are in line with those of ELDIA (Sarhimaa 2016), as one of the main domains were people wanted to see more Karelian was television.

Two participants also say that they would wish for a talk show in Karelian, that would be hosted by Yleisradio. Besides providing a service for the Karelian community, this would also raise awareness about Karelians in the general population. Overall the participants would like to have more entertainment in Karelian. As one participant puts it:

> Well of course there's all kinds of things you could develop on that basis. On television, radio and all all all platforms, as there is very little entertainment available in Karelian.

Besides providing Karelians with language resources (Category 8), media also has the potential of raising general awareness of Karelians (Category 10) and shaping the attitudes and language ideology of people (Category 11). One of the issues currently, as stated earlier on the basis of ELDIA results, is that media treats Karelians differently than other minorities in Finland. Correcting this would already make the situation considerably better.

5.1.13 Category 13: State Recognition

Besides concrete services and better visibility, the participants would like to have some form of official recognition by the Finnish state. Participants feel that this would raise Karelian visibility and prestige, but they also express the sentiment that official recognition is also something that rightfully belongs to Karelians, as they have been living in Finland for as long as Finnish people.

Many of the participants simply say that Karelian should have a stronger status in Finland, without specifying further. Two mention a proper legal status and one specifically a constitutional status, as currently the constitution states that besides Finnish and Swedish speakers, Sámi and Roma people have the right to maintain their language and culture. One also says that the Karelians' relationship with the state should be more like that of Sámi people, as currently it is nothing like that. The same participant also says that Karelians should be mentioned more often in speeches and the like, or in other words, that Karelians should be a subject of higher prestige on the state level. When talking about the general attitudes towards Karelians (Category 12) this participant states:

> That kind of negativity definitely exists, but it is, well, more hidden. So now the problem really, like, is the state and us.

Families 2 and 5 have also had practical issues stemming from the fact that the state does not really recognise Karelians and does not thus know how to handle them. The first parent in Family 2 has reported Finnish as their first language to the Local Register Offices, because without a legal status Karelian is treated as a foreign language, and the parent fears that they would receive all official materials in English if they would set Karelian as their first language. It is actually possible to choose ones first language and language of interaction with the state separately, but the parent was not aware of this.

In the case of Family 5, the first parent has not acquired a permanent residence permit yet and has to keep applying for a new residence permit. In the form for that it is not possible to choose Karelian as the first language, so the parent keeps choosing Russian and writing a separate explanation stating that "I have put Russian here, but I have another first language too, Karelian."

Besides raising awareness (Category 10) and Karelian prestige (Category 11), Official Recognition would also have practical effects. Finnish legislation concerning Sámi and Roma people includes defining their rights when it comes to education. This is regulated in the laws about upper secondary education (Lukiolaki and Laki ammatillisesta koulutuksesta), and there is also a specific Sámi language act (Saamen kielilaki) The use of Sámi and Roma languages in media is also included in the law about the national broadcasting company (Laki Yleisradio Oy:stä). Karelians could easily be included in this kind of legislation as well, which would then have concrete effects on Media (Category 12) and Education (Category 9).

5.1.14 Category 14: State Support

This is a very broad category that includes all forms of state support that does not fall under any of the previous categories, although this concern mainly funding for various other categories. For example, the state could provide the Karelian community with monetary support that would then allow the community to produce better and more services and resources (Category 8.). Also, services like news and language nests fall under the societal Categories 12 and 9, but they might still be produced or even funded by the Karelian community. This would be an example of the lack of state support. One participant said that they were involved in trying to start a language nest in the city of Nurmes, and that they had even found a suitable teacher for the position, but in the end the city did not put in much effort to realise those plans, and the project fell apart.

The state of Finland has not supported the Karelian community much. In 2012 the state granted Karelian Language Society 100 000€ for revitalization efforts. This amount was allocated for a period of four years, 2013-2016, and channelled to the University of Eastern Finland for research, information and education purposes (Sarhimaa 2017). In 2017 the state granted Karelian Language Society 200 000€ for the year 2018 for revitalization efforts (Eduskunta 2017).

One of the questions that I asked from all the participants was if they felt that they had received any support from state to help with teaching Karelian to their children. To this all the families answered no. One participant even said that they felt that they have received more support from Russia than Finland, since the state of Russia

funds the Karelian Periodika publishing house that has published many useful materials in Karelian. Family 1 also said that theoretically one could say that they had received indirect support from the state since the Karelian Language Society pays for their child's private Karelian lessons and the society in turn has received some revitalization funds in the last two years, but that really they did not feel that the state had supported them with teaching the language.

Currently the state does not provide much support for Karelians, but the participants think that it should do so. Participants speak specifically of the state taking an active and conscious role in supporting the revitalization efforts and providing funding to realise different projects like language nests. Like one participant says:

> And then they think that, with Karelian they say: "speak it at home, the child will learn it there too". But why do they have to teach so much Finnish at school then? The children will learn Finnish anyway as they live in Finland. And then, you could think that for such a minority language there should be even more of that because the environment is anyway in the majority language. So, I think that there should be even more support of any kind for that.

State Support does not influence the society or the Karelian community as directly as the other categories, but it has a vital role as it enables a wide range of actions in different categories. State Support is vital for the functioning of Media (Category 12), Education (Category 9) and also plays an important role in the effectiveness of Resources (Category 8).

5.2 The Model for Successful Karelian Transmission at Home

As can be seen from the descriptions above, many of the categories are rather broad and have a variety of different things and topics under them. As I was formulating them, one of the main ways of distincting them from one another was their relationships and how they influence each other. Thus, while I was forming the categories I was simultaneously forming a model to explain the dynamics between them, and how all the

categories and their relations factor into whether or not families decide to teach Karelian to their children, and how into how successful they are in this endeavour. These relationships and how the categories influence each other are already explained above. The entire model is demonstrated in figure 1.
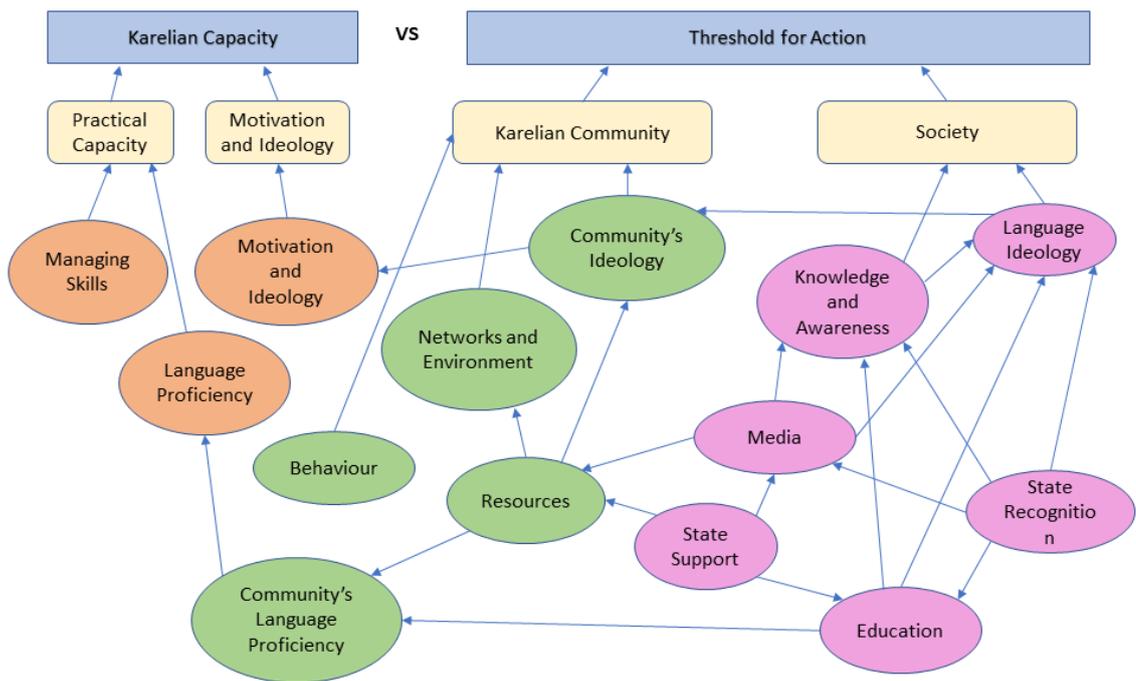

Figure 1

The orange categories relate to the families themselves, the green bubbles to the Karelian community, and the pink bubbles to the society. The relations may seem somewhat complicated to read, but the direction of the effect is clearly from right to left, from the society towards the individual, from top to bottom.

Following grounded theory, if the categories are the result of open coding, the parent categories formed through axial coding would be Practical Capacity, Motivation and Ideology, Karelian Community and Society. The parent category Motivation and Ideology is not actually necessary for the functionality of the model as there is only one category under it, but I added it for clarity so that the relationships between different tiers are all the same. These parent categories then fall under two

titles at the top tier, which would correspondence with selective coding of grounded theory.

The two items at the top level are Family's Karelian Capacity and Threshold for Action. Family's Karelian capacity means the ability and will to use Karelian effectively at home so that the language is successfully transmitted to the next generation. As described in the analysis of the categories, this process is neither straightforward nor easy. Threshold for action, on the other hand, means how easy or difficult circumstances outside the family make this process, and these circumstances are determined by the Society and the Karelian Community. In other words, in order for Karelian to be taught to children at home, the Karelian Capacity in that family has to be higher than Threshold for Action determined by the Karelian Community and the Society.

Currently the Threshold for Action in Finland is extremely high, and only a few families with an exceptionally high Karelian Capacity are able to cross this threshold. These families must have not only high Karelian Proficiency, but also an extremely strong motivation and outstanding Managing Skills to overcome all the different obstacles they must face in the process.

There is a lot that can be done to make this process easier, as I already explained. As can be seen from the model, the most effective categories in the process are State Support, State Recognition and Education. They are at the very top of the effect chain, meaning that whatever happens in them changes the entire dynamic. As there is very little in any of them that would facilitate the use of Karelian, the effect currently is strongly negative, meaning that these categories rise the Threshold for Action and lower the Karelian Capacity.

Although these three categories are the most effective regarding the process, they are not the only categories where work could or should be done to improve the situation. All 14 categories are important for the transmission of Karelian at home, and work can be done in all of them to support the process.

5.3 Results in relation to previous research

The model was constructed purely inductively based on the data, and I only included the additional supporting information from different sources to the analysis of the categories later on. When I had finished the model, the first thing that I thought was that it reminded me a lot of the models typically used in literature about language revitalization. I did the analysis section of this thesis before the literature review, and when I took a closer look at those books my first impressions were confirmed. On top of that, I also realised that the results of this study were very similar to those of the ELDIA Project. The fact that the results fit so well in line with previous research on the field, are strong indications that the analysis of this thesis was conducted successfully, and that the model works.

The similarity of the results to those of ELDIA's do not, however, mean that their value would somehow be diminished. The results are similar but not identical, and the scope of this study is entirely different than that of ELDIA's. ELDIA researched the Karelian community in Finland in general and provided insight into the situation of the community as a whole but did not research the transmission of Karelian in families in particular. This study has a much smaller and concentrated scope, provides detailed information about how those same dynamics affect families specifically and offers information on how to develop support tools and mechanism tailored specifically to help the transmission of Karelian at home.

6. CONCLUSIONS

As is evident from the results, teaching Karelian to children at home in Finland is not an easy process, and takes tremendous amounts of linguistic and mental resources as well as conscious work from the families. The ways in which the surrounding society and the Karelian community affect the transmission of Karelian at home are dynamic and heavily interconnected, and currently these structures work against Karelian being a home language. On the societal level the main factors that work against the preservation of Karelians are the lack of legal status, minimal monetary support for revitalization work, ideology of monolingualism, disparaging attitudes towards Karelians and the

exclusion of Karelians from the education system, both in the form of not providing Karelian classes or Karelian-medium teaching as well as not including information about Karelians in the general curriculum. Although the strongest negative effect on the transmission of Karelian is on the societal level, the Karelian community too can strive to do more to promote teaching the language at home, particularly by creating more opportunities to use Karelian in real life, by speaking Karelian more actively when meeting other Karelians, and by actively reaching out to families who want to teach Karelian to their children, and by looking for individual and targeted ways of supporting them together with the families themselves.

As this study was conducted solely based on interviews and relied entirely on the parents' descriptions of the families' everyday use of Karelian, an interesting prospect for future research would be to study the actual use of the language at home, for example through ethnographic methods. Another interesting direction would be to do comparative research between Karelian families and either monolingual Finnish families, or other multilingual families where a language or languages other than Karelian are spoken.

Another thing to take into consideration is that this study included only 5 of the 9 families that I found out about, where Karelian is being spoken at home. The remaining families could have provided new insights, and it is very well possible that there are yet other families in Finland where Karelian is spoken, that I did not find out about. After all, as stated earlier, already this number exceeded the expectations of experts in the field. Furthermore, since in all of the families interviewed for this study one or both parents were language activists, language experts or both, it would have been interesting to also hear from families where this is not the case. I cannot be sure if this is the case, since I did not get a chance to interview them, but judging from what I heard, at least one of the 9 families could fit this category.

One thing that is missing from this thesis and the Model for Successful Karelian Transmission at Home is digital vitality. There has actually been research done on digital vitality of Karelian (Salonen 2017), and there are even recommendations on how to improve tailored specifically for Karelian (Salonen et al. 2018). This is an important topic but since it did not come up in the data, it could not be included in this thesis. It would, however, be an interesting topic for future research.

My aim with this thesis was not only to describe the current situation with families teaching Karelian to their children in Finland, but to also provide insight to how the situation could be increased. I feel like this aim was reached, and I hope that this thesis and the Model for Successful Karelian Transmission at Home can act as a guide on how to improve the vitality of Karelian in Finland by supporting Karelian families. Hopefully, this research will prove valuable to both the Karelian community, and for those who are capable of affecting the societal categories, and also have the desire to do so.

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Appendix 1: The consent form

SUOSTUMUSLOMAKE

Täten annan suostumukseni siihen, että ääntäni nauhoitetaan, ja että antamiani tietoja käytetään tieteellisessä, sosiolingvistisessä tutkimuksessa, jonka pohjalta tehdään pro gradu -tutkielma kahdessa yliopistossa (**Vytautas Didžiojo universitetas** ja **Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz**), ja jonka tulokset mahdollisesti julkaistaan.

Kaikki aineisto käsitellään siten, että tutkimukseen osallistujien anonymiteetti taataan. Aineistoa tai mitään osallistujien henkilötietoja ei luovuteta eteenpäin kolmansille osapuolille, eikä niitä arkistoida mihinkään. Kaikki aineisto hävitetään viimeistään vuoden kuluessa sen keräämisestä.

_____   _____

Aika ja paikka   Allekirjoitus ja nimenselvennys

Appendix 2: The translation of the consent form

CONSENT FORM

I hereby give my consent that my voice may be recorded, and the information given by me is used in scientific, sociolinguistic research, that will be the basis of a master's thesis for two universities (**Vytautas Didžiojo universitetas** and **Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)**, and that the results of these research may potentially be published.

All collected data will be treated so that the anonymity of participants is guaranteed. The data or any personal information of the participants will not be given to third parties or archived anywhere. All collected data will be destroyed within one year of its collection

_____   _____

Time and place   Name and signature

Appendix 3: The transcriptions of the interviews

Due to the large size the transcriptions are attached on a separate flash drive.

Appendix 4: The student's statement on plagiarism

The student's statement on plagiarism
I, Tuomo Feodor Kondie have read the requirements for research papers in the MA programme Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism. I understand that plagiarism is wrong and that it can take different forms, some direct and some indirect. I also understand that plagiarism in an essay, project or thesis submitted to this programme will result in a greatly reduced mark or rejection of the paper entirely.