



HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

Title	Current Situation of the Sami in Finland (Abstract)
Author(s)	小内, 透
Citation	『調査と社会理論』・研究報告書, 34, 157-166
Issue Date	2016-03-31
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/61382
Type	other
File Information	700_abst.pdf



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Edited by Toru ONAI

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Current Situation of the Sami in Finland (Abstract)

Introduction

Sami people have been discriminated against and have deprecated their rights as indigenous peoples. However, their rights have been restored to some degree and the situation can be a model for other indigenous peoples like the Ainu peoples. Therefore, we have researched the current situation and problems of the Sami as indigenous peoples in Northern Europe sociologically for the past four years since 2012.

This is the fourth report to focus on a research on the Sami people. The first Sami research report was published in Japanese in 2013, following a research trip to Norway and Sweden in 2012 and the second and third reports, which were published in Japanese in 2015, were the results of the following two surveys that were conducted: (1) some interviews with Sami peoples in the county of Finnmark, Norway and (2) an international mail survey of the Sami people in Sweden in 2013. This fourth report focuses on the Sami people in Finland.

The homeland of the Sami in Finland is located in the northern part of the Lappi prefecture including Inari, Utsjoki, Enontekiö and the northern part of Sodankylä. However, many Sami people live outside the Sami homeland. There are about 9,000 Sami people in Finland; however, 60% of them live in Helsinki, the capital of Finland.

The Sami in Finland are sub-divided into four groups, i.e. the Inari Sami around the lake of Inari, the Skolt Sami in the northeast area of Inari, the River Sami in the Tana Valley and the Sami responsible for reindeer husbandry. The Skolt Sami and the Inari Sami each have their own language— the Skolt Sami language and the Inari Sami language— while the rest of the Sami use the north Sami language. There are more north Sami language speakers than Skolt and Inari Sami language speakers.

We visited Finland in 2014 and 2015 to research the Sami people. In fact, we researched on the City Sami in Helsinki, Inari Sami in Inari and Skolt Sami in northeast Inari. This is the report on the current situation of the Sami in Finland.

In Part 1 of this report, the results of the interview with two vice-chairpersons of the Sami Parliament are summarised. In Part 2, the elaborated characteristics of the City Sami Association and other organizations regarding the Sami people are the result of interviews with the persons concerned and in Part 3, the current situation and problems of the Language Nest in Finland based on interviews with the administrators are summarised. In Part 4, the results of the questionnaire survey with students, parents and teachers at the basic school (i.e. primary and lower secondary schools) in Inari are summarised, while Part 5 gives the results of those involved in the Sami Education Institute (i.e. upper secondary vocational school) in Inari. In Part 6, the results of interviews with the Sami TV and radio are analysed and people's use of Sami media is examined.

Part1: Current Situation and Problems of the Sami Parliament in Finland

As per history, the Sami Parliament in Finland started in 1973. In this year, the Sami Committee proposed the establishment of the Sami Parliament. To that end, the Sami Parliament (the Sami Delegation) was

established by a presidential decree in 1974. There were 20 parliamentary members. The term of office of the members was 4 years.

In 1996, the Sami Act was executed. The Sami Act provided legal basis for the Sami Parliament. Therefore, the position of the Sami parliament changed from that of being a government panel to being the core organization of the Sami.

The main purpose is to plan and implement the cultural self-government guaranteed to the Sami as an indigenous people. This purpose is related to the Constitution of Finland. The Constitution gives the Sami 'the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture' (Section 17) and 'linguistic and cultural self-government' (Section 121). However, self-government of the Sami is restricted to 'language and culture' because the Finnish Government did not ratify the ILO Convention No.169.

The current Sami Parliament consists of 21 members and four deputies. They are elected from among the Sami every four years. The deputies are elected one by one from four electoral districts (Inari, Utsjoki, Enontekiö and Sodankylä). When a member is absent from parliament, the deputy of the same electoral district alternatively attends the parliament.

One chair and two vice-chairs are elected from the members. Only the chair is employed full-time. Other members receive salary according to the affairs in the parliament. The term of office of the chair is four years and the term of the vice-chair is two years.

The executive board of the Sami Parliament consists of a chair, two vice-chairs and four executive board members elected from members of the parliament. The term of an executive member is two years.

The Sami Parliament has seven expert committees. These committees are the following: Cultural Committee, Social Affairs and Health Committee, Educational Committee, Sami Language Council, Livelihood and Legal Committee, Youth Committee, and Electoral Committee. These committees consist of five members. The chair is elected from members of the parliament but other members are elected from members and non-members of the parliament. The plenary session of the parliament deliberates on agendas after the committee deliberates on agendas.

The secretariat of the Sami Parliament consists of the General Office, the Sami Language Office and the Educational Office. There are about 30 secretaries in these offices.

The parliament chamber is located in SAJOS in Inari. Because Inari is the centre of the Sami district, it has the best access in terms of transportation and it has a large Sami population. The branch offices are located in Utsjoki, Enontekiö and Sodankylä.

The finances of the Sami Parliament consist of a subvention from the Finnish Government. The Sami Parliament receives about €1,500,000 every year. The main uses of the subvention are employment costs of the members and the secretaries and official travel expenses.

The candidate running for election in the Sami Parliament is required three qualifications. First, the person must be 18 years of age or above. Second, the person has a Sami identity. Third, the person learned Sami as the first language or his/her parent or grandparent learned Sami as the first language.

The Sami Parliament has a subsidiary organization called the Young Sami Association which Sami consists of 13 to 30 year old Sami. The association gets subvention from the youth committee of the Ministry

of Education and Culture and the Lapland Regional Council. The association meets every second month. The members deliberate on the plan of activities for young Sami and the agendas about young Sami are deliberated on in the Sami Parliament.

There are three problems relevant to the Sami Parliament in Finland. The first is a legal problem in national politics, specifically from the ILO Convention No.169, i.e. the legal revision of the definition of a Sami and so on. The second problem is the fact that non-Sami people are authorized to engage in reindeer husbandry in Finland. The parliament hears from the Sami people about the problem. The third problem is the outflow of the young Sami population from the Sami district. The Sami Parliament plays a major role in the community planning to promote the return of young Sami to the Sami district.

Part2: Characteristics of the City Sami Association and Organizations regarding the Sami people

Section 1: The City Sami Association

The City Sami Association was founded in 1988. Its objectives are to unite the Sami people who live in urban areas and maintain a Sami identity. The number of regular members is about 300 and the support members are about 50 at present. About 25% of the members can speak the Sami language.

In the City Sami Association, connection to the Northern Sami and other Sami people to practice their own culture and language has provided the opportunity to be able to strengthen the personal and social identity of the Sami. The detailed activities are as follows: operating the Language Nest, undertaking Sami music sessions, making the Sami national costume and traditional accessories, experiencing traditional life style and so on. For the operating costs of the City Sami Association, it receives funding from the European Union, the Finnish government, the Sami parliament, the Finnish Culture Foundation and the Department of Education.

Section 2: The Inari Sami Language Association

The Inari Sami Language Association was formed in 1987. Its objective is to promote the Inari Sami language. The Language Nest run by the association began its operations in 1997 and has led to an increase in the number of Inari Sami speakers. The number of regular members is about 400 and all of the members can speak the Inari Sami language.

Currently, the Inari Sami Language Association operates three Language Nests, the main activity of which is on the Inari Sami language. Other activities are publishing the newspaper written in the Inari Sami language, teaching on making modules and other materials on the Inari Sami language, film-making about Sami and making a Sami calendar. The operating costs of the Inari Sami Language Association come from funds received from the Sami Parliament, membership fees, donations from companies, subsidies from private foundations, the Department of Education and local funding. Around €20 million out of a total budget of €30 million is allocated for labour costs.

Section 3: The Skolt Sami Cultural Foundation

The Skolt Sami Cultural Foundation was founded in 2008. Its objectives are to support and revive the Skolt Sami language and culture and to guarantee their preservation for future generations. With all of its

operations, the foundation aims at maintaining the vitality of the Skolt Sami communities in Sevettijarvi and nearby regions. The organization is composed of nine directors and two secretariat staff.

To support its functions, the Skolt Sami Cultural Foundation has received discretionary operational subsidy from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland since 2011. Additionally, the foundation has received project funding from various sources to realize its objectives. The operations and events of the Skolt Sami Cultural Foundation have also been organised with donations from private persons, organisations, as well as enterprises. The Skolt Sami Cultural Foundation aims at building a Skolt Sami Cultural Centre in Sevettijarvi.

Part 3: The Current Situation and Problems of the Language Nest in Finland

This chapter attempts to explore the current condition of the Language Nest and its problems in Finland by conducting surveys with preschool teachers and parents. The surveys have taken place at the Language Nest, which aims to protect indigenous languages that are in danger of extinction.

It is believed that the Language Nest started in New Zealand in the 1980s. In order to protect the mother tongue of the Maoris, the indigenous people in New Zealand, only the Maori language was spoken in all childcare arrangements for preschool children. By doing so, it attempted to make the children naturally acquire Maori. This idea was soon disseminated to the world and the Sami in Finland was not an exception. The first Language Nest in Finland was founded in 1993, but it was closed shortly after six months. The Language Nest was actually stabilized in Finland when it was launched in Inari in 1997. Although there were difficulties, the Sami Language Nests gradually spread and at present (2015) there are 10 Nests in Finland. While the Language Nest in Inari is famous worldwide as a successful case, problems were also identified: for example, unstable annual budget which should be renewed every year, along with the primary problems of poor working conditions of preschool teachers and the lack of certified preschool teachers who can speak Sami.

The surveys for preschool teachers and parents took place at five preschools in total, including two in Inari and one in Ivalo, Sevettijärvi and Helsinki. Participants were five preschool teachers and nine parents. Both preschool teachers and parents were highly conscious of the significance of teaching Sami language and culture. They also highly evaluated the Language Nest as a means to pass Sami to the next generation. They never hesitated to learn dying languages although this tends to be discussed with scepticism in Japan. They considered learning Inari Sami and Skolt Sami as rather advantageous. This idea is probably derived from the practical benefit of getting better jobs for people who can speak Sami and not merely for everyone with the ethnic identity. Furthermore, preschool teachers think that parents must use Sami more at home as they try their best to teach Sami language and culture to their children in their own way. In fact, most of the parents belong to the 'Lost Generation' of Inari Sami. The Language Nest, thus, is useful not only for the legacy and acquisition of the Sami language for children but also for instilling awareness in the parents' generation.

Part 4: Current Situation and Issues of Sami Education in Basic School

Sami Education in Finland started in the 1970s. The advisory committees which deal with Sami Education were established. These committees, in turn, submitted many reports. Trial efforts such as the prototype of a

textbook and instruction in Sami were undertaken.

In the 1980s, Sami Education in Finland has made significant progress. In basic school, the teacher could teach pupils in Sami and Sami language became a part of the mother tongue subjects. In postsecondary education, the teacher could teach pupils in Sami. In 1991, the Sami language became a mother tongue subject in postsecondary education. Then, in 1995, basic schools could teach Sami as Mother tongue. Consequently, the rate of pupils which learned Sami as mother tongue or as an elective subject has increased since the 2000s.

We conducted a web-based questionnaire survey to understand the current situation and the issues of Sami Education in Finnish basic schools.

This study aims to identify the current condition of Sami Education in Finland by conducting surveys with teachers, parents, and students at the Inari Basic School. The participants included five teachers, eleven parents, and four students. The Inari Basic School is the only school in Finland where students can choose Finnish, Northern Sami, Inari Sami, or Skolt Sami as their mother tongue. At the time of the surveys, 30 students spoke Northern Sami and 25 chose Inari Sami out of 138 children in total.

In such a scenario, teachers, parents and students highly evaluate the significance of learning Sami language and culture. Almost nobody believes in the idea that they are distracted from acquiring the Finnish language and culture by learning Sami and its culture. No one was also of the opinion that they should learn English rather than Sami. In contrast, there is a tendency in Japan to think that ethnic education is disadvantageous to children who want to pursue higher studies and secure good jobs. This idea of the Japanese people is considered to be nonsensical in Inari. Rather, competence in Sami is considered as a weapon to secure better educational degrees and jobs. Although there are several opinions on whether the Inari Basic School should become a Sami School, non-Sami teachers tend to agree with the positive opinion on Sami education. According to the survey results of teachers and parents, they strongly believe that children should have more time for learning Sami language and culture. As for the students, however, most of them are satisfied with the current condition. Of course, they do understand the significance of Sami education. Furthermore, although parents have a negative opinion towards the idea that scientific subjects should be taught in Finnish, students tend to take it positively. This means that students think that the current situation of Sami education is sufficient whereas teachers and parents are eager to develop it more along with the active restoration of the Sami language.

Part 5: Current Situation and the Role of the Sami Education Institute

The Sami Education Institute is maintained by the government. The purposes of this institute are to provide education which fits the needs of the Sami area, and maintain and develop Sami culture and livelihood. This institute provides vocational education and training on courses such as Sami handcraft and reindeer husbandry in both Finnish and Sami, for young and adults. Also, this institute provides a study program on Sami language and culture. In addition, the institute runs a virtual school which provides long distance learning on Sami language and culture.

We conducted a web-based questionnaire for teachers and students in the Sami Education Institute to consider the current situation and the institute's role. We received answers from 14 teachers and 42 students.

The findings mainly are as follows :

1. The teachers in charge of the study programs which are closely related to Sami culture and livelihood are mainly Sami or do reindeer breeding as their other job.
2. The teachers in charge of the study programs which are not closely related to Sami culture and livelihood are mainly 'Non-Sami.' However, some of them became teachers in order to be involved in Sami culture. Many of them can use and want to learn Sami language.

These findings suggest that one of the roles of this institute is to encourage both the 'Sami elite' and the 'Non-Sami', who are interested in Sami culture and livelihood, to work as teachers.

3. There is no difference between the study programs selected by Sami students and those by 'Non-Sami'. This is due to the Non-Sami students who are interested in Sami culture and livelihood.
4. More Sami students learned Sami language in basic school than the 'Non-Sami'.

These findings suggest that one of the roles that this institute plays is to provide further opportunity to learn Sami for many Sami students and an initial opportunity to learn Sami for many 'Non-Sami' students.

5. Many students hope to live in Sami area in the future. Many of student which are from outside Sami area hope so.

These findings suggest that this institute contributes in the reproduction of the community and has a role in attracting people from outside the Sami area towards the Sami area.

6. 'Non-Sami' students tend to think that the institute should increase learning about Sami culture than Sami students do. However, the former are satisfied about understanding Sami culture in this institute.

This finding suggests that 'Non-Sami' students evaluate this institute highly and request enriched education.

Part 6: The Sami Media and its Use in Finland

This part of the paper examines the current role of the Sami media in Finland. Today, Finland does not have its own Sami newspapers and periodicals. It only has the Journal of the Sami Association. Hence, print media is less in Finland compared to Norway and Sweden. Generally speaking, to publish a newspaper or a periodical magazine, national governmental subsidy is needed. The Finnish Government does not seem to be cooperative in a publication by the Sami.

With regard to the broadcasting media available for the Sami people, Sami Radio, Sami TV and Sami DAB (digital audio broadcasting) were incorporated into YLE Sápmi. YLE Sápmi is a section of the larger YLE public broadcasting network. The finance of YLE Sápmi is stable since it is dependent on public broadcasting tax. In Finland, funds of public broadcasting changed from subscription fees to public broadcasting tax in

2013.

Goals of those Sami media are to share information with the Sami society and to transmit relevant information to those outside the Sami society. The former aim helps to foster an indigenous identity and the latter aim has importance in terms of introducing the opinions of the Sami people to the rest of the nation.

In addition, it is also important that 'freedom of the press' is guaranteed rigidly in the domain of the media. It is written in Finnish law that the national government, stockholders and managers must not violate the editor's right of 'freedom of press', a law which has been adhered to. Even if an agent or an agency gives funds, editors can assert their opinions without reservation. This situation guarantees that relevant information is transmitted to the Sami people through the media.

In this study, people's use of Sami media was examined. The subjects were four lower secondary school students, five lower secondary school teachers, 11 parents of lower secondary school children, 42 Sami Education Institute students and 14 Sami Education Institute teachers. The total number of participants was 76. They use Sami media frequently, most often listening to programs on YLE radio. They also watch programs on YLE TV. Most of them do not read newspapers and magazines published in Norway or Sweden. Parents and teachers use these media much more frequently than students. Sami Education Institute students were categorized into two groups for this study, one using the media well and the other not. We could not see the difference between men and women. It is important that young Sami people enjoy Sami media more now, considering issues related to successive generations and the upholding of Sami culture.

Of the respondents, 49.2% felt that transmission of information to non-Sami people was insufficient. The sharing of information via Sami media within Sami society has been successful to some extent, but more work needs to be done on communicating with those beyond the Sami region. However, in Finland, we did not observe any correlation between the frequency of use of Sami media and negative evaluation on the current situation in terms of information transmission to those outside the community. This tendency was checked in Norway and Sweden. We see that this tendency is related to a few print media in Finland. We think that this is a remarkable finding.