"It is a huge wealth with languages and cultures"

Administrative Municipalities and Minority Languages in Sweden

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Abstract
This thesis will focus on the seven Swedish administrative municipalities that administer at least two of the three official minority languages in Sweden. Those languages are Finnish Meänkieli (Torne Valley Finnish) and Saami languages and all of these languages are territorially bound to the northernmost area in Sweden. The thesis depart from a new law (SFS 2009:724) that went into practice in 2010. The new law is based on new directives from the European Council to promote and protect regional- and minority languages which is part of a change of paradigm where the value of minority languages has been emerging. This will be investigated by using the ecology of languages-theory which is both described in a global setting and in the Swedish context as well. Language planning is also included to illustrate what is needed to increase status for minority languages. The data collection method for this thesis has been interviews where minority language officials from all seven municipalities included in this thesis are represented.

From this thesis it become evident that the language planning theory is important when studying this subject. To some extent also the ecology of language theory can be applied regarding these issues on minority languages in the Swedish setting. The respondents in this thesis only had positive opinions on the new legislation even though there are some things which could develop. For instance the respondents said that they could see minorities that have become more proud and willing to show their minority language and culture. Some of the most important conclusions from this thesis are that an overall perspective is important for the minority languages. Also, the majority population should get the opportunity to understand the minority situation and learn about their language and culture.
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1. Introduction

The subject of this thesis will be to investigate the situation for three official minority languages in Sweden from the administrative municipalities’ point of view. The reason for this is because there have been a change of perspective in relation to minority languages in general (Mühlhäusler 1992). Traditionally the value of minority languages have not been appreciated but more recently that has changed and policies have been implemented to promote and protect minority languages. One example of such a policy is the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages was passed by the European Council and it is possible to say that the administrative municipalities in Sweden stems from this charter. The reason for this was to promote and protect these small languages and also to encourage the cultural heritage and traditions that can be found in Europe. In Sweden this is of interest since a new law (SFS 2009:724), ratified in 2010, replaced two laws (SFS 1999:1175) and (SFS 1999:1176). These two laws went into practice in the year 2000 and had regarded people who spoke either Saami or Finnish and Meänkieli respectively. To be fair Saami is more than one language (Axelsson and Sköld 2007, 120) but neither of the laws differentiates between the different Saami languages. These minority groups were allowed to speak their native language when they were in contact with administrative authorities. What the new law did however, was to give these minorities more rights to use their own languages than the previous laws and a larger geographical spread.

Today there are 59 administrative municipalities for Finnish from Kiruna in the north to Trelleborg in the south. Saami languages is administrated in 19 municipalities mostly in the Swedish mountain regions and 6 municipalities administrates Meänkieli and they are located in the northernmost municipalities close to Finland. From 2010 minority language groups shall consult with the administrative authorities to make these administrative units aware of their situation and the needs that the groups have. Administrative units might be municipalities, county councils and regions. The minority language groups will also be provided with preschool, elderly care and efforts to promote and protect their culture. Another addition regarded where the regions which were administrative units are located. In the previous laws the legislation were restricted to Norrbotten but in the new law administrative authorities for Finnish and Saami could be found in other parts of Sweden than just in Norrbotten. Administrative authorities for Meänkieli on the other hand is still only found in Norrbotten (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2013).

In light of all this, the main focus for this comparative thesis is to investigate how Swedish municipalities which administrates at least two official minority languages are
handling minority language issues. This, especially in regard to the new paradigm where more importance is put to promote and protect these minority languages. By doing so this thesis will present and problematize how the respective municipalities currently manage the minority languages and their views on this rather interesting topic.

To manage to do this all municipalities that are administrative municipalities for more than one of the possible three official minority languages: Finnish, Meänkieli (Torne Valley Finnish) and Saami have been included. The municipalities are presented in alphabetical order: Gällivare, Haparanda, Kalix, Kiruna, Pajala, Umeå and Övertorneå. Among these municipalities Gällivare and Kiruna are administrative municipalities for all three official minority languages and the rest are for both Finnish and Meänkieli or Finnish and Saami languages. The difference between administrative municipalities and other municipalities is that the administrative municipalities are obliged to provide preschool and elderly care in the minority languages if this is needed. They shall also promote and protect the minority cultures in their respective municipalities. Other municipalities are not excluded from the law but they are not obliged to provide these things, they only have to do as much as they can. Furthermore the administrative municipalities receive governmental grants to cover extra costs for the services demanded in the law (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2013). In this thesis Meänkieli and Torne Valley Finnish are both used but they consider the same language and it is spoken by Torne Valley Finns (Tornedalingar).

1.1 Aim and research questions
The aim of this study is to investigate how municipalities which administrates at least two of the following official minority languages; Finnish, Meänkieli and Saami languages, are working with and promoting these languages. Of special interest is the conflicts and vulnerability between the minority languages within the same administrative municipalities but also possibilities and development of these languages. Of geographical interest is that these administrative municipalities are all located in the northern parts of Sweden because they are historically tied to these regions. To achieve this aim there are some special objectives to be answered:

- In what ways have the implementation of administrative municipalities contributed to the view on minority languages as something to appreciate?
- How can the theory of language planning explain the different facets of minority language survival and popularity?
• How are issues regarding language diversity treated in municipalities which administrates minority languages?
• What does the minority language officials identify as important to develop for further facilitation of the minority languages?

1.2 Contributions of the thesis
It is important to contain a linguistic diversity and therefore this thesis contributes with an examination of the practices, threats and possibilities for further development for these languages (Finnish, Meänkieli and Saami languages) in administrative municipalities which administrate at least two of these official minority languages. To analyze this the theory of the language planning theory has been combined with the findings. In so doing this thesis apply this theory to the Swedish context.

2. Theoretical framework
In this part of the thesis the theoretical framework for the thesis is described. The primary theory used is language planning and the more descriptive theory of ecology of languages. Because the ecology of languages is explanatory and captures historical views on minority languages it is natural to begin with that theory in this section. Following that descriptive part the language planning theory will be presented which take a more dynamic grip on the existence of minority languages.

2.1 Ecology of languages
Throughout history and in a great variety of societies the world have seen languages become extinct and lost forever (Mühlhäusler 1992, 168). The linguistic diversity has globally developed to a more uniform state. Small ethnic groups and their languages have been lost because the natural environment has been destroyed or due to assimilation of these people (Romaine 2013, 217, 220). According to Nettle and Romaine (2000, ix) we face a risk that by 2100 about half of the currently existing languages will have been extinct. This has been going on simultaneously as the decline in biodiversity and these two can be seen as a joint problem. If we are to save the local ecosystems then languages are also something that need to be accounted for (Romaine 2013, 217).

A very important question to ask is how we could have put ourselves in this situation? Language ecologists seem to have the answer. According to Romaine (2013, 218), languages need, as well as the speakers, a home. To find a proper home there are ten things (Haugen 1974) that need to be thought of, and those things regard many different point of views. In this
study especially the three following views are of importance: linguistic demographers who look at class, in what setting the users live or other ways to group the users. Next dialinguistics that care for how bilingual the users are and how much overlap there are between the languages. Last, ethnolinguistics who investigate the attitudes from the users to the language when it comes to status and identification. The example of these three point of views can each be connected to a question and those questions are respectively: Who uses the language, what other languages are the users of this language speaking and what attitudes the users have towards their language? This is important for any given language that are to be studied (Haugen, 1974, 336). Nevertheless, the home for a language is not as concrete as the home of its users. To be able to tell why a certain language is being extinct we need to look at the entire life of the people using the language and not just at the language in itself (Romaine 2013, 218).

To illustrate the skewed distribution of speakers of different languages it can be said that if all languages were the same size in terms of speakers each language would be spoken by roughly 917 000 persons. The actual case, however, is that the median speaker quantity of all languages is about 5-6 000 persons (Romaine 2013, 218). As illustrated in table 4 it is possible to see that 5.6 % of all languages are each spoken by at least 1 million people and that is just over 94 % of the total world population. 81.4 % of all languages are spoken by less than 100 000 and that amounts to 0.1384 % of all speakers in the world (Lewis 2009, 20). Then one should bear in mind that according to Kloss (1977, 57) it is inevitable that most languages spoken by 50 to 50 000 people are destined to disappear. Mühlhäusler (1992, 168) on the other hand argues against the inevitable destiny that these languages are said to have by two reasons. First, because to predict this over a long period of time is very complicated, especially since it regards demography and social development which is not done that easily. Second, the author struggle with the idea that Kloss seem to have accepted nation states as the foundation of human development as the dominant paradigm.
Table 1 Distribution of languages by number of first-languages speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population range</th>
<th>Living languages</th>
<th>Number of speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000,000 to 999,999,999</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000,000 to 999,999,999</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,000 to 9,999,999</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 to 999,999</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 to 99,999</td>
<td>1,824</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 to 9,999</td>
<td>2,014</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 to 999</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 99</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 9</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lewis (2009, 20)

2.2 Language ecology in Sweden

If this is transferred to the Swedish context Elenius and Ekenberg (2002, 15) have written about governmental treatment toward the minorities. Due to nationalistic policies in use from about the late 19th century to approximately the mid-20th century the minorities could not live as they had been used to and their cultural expressions were limited. Another consequence, especially for the Saami people were also the forced relocation policies that the Swedish government used to move these people from their traditional areas. These forced relocations took place during the same period of time as the limitation of the minority cultures and were among other reasons due to the fact that natural resources were found in the traditional Saami area and they started to be exploited. These relocation did lead to upraised tensions and conflicts among the involved parties (Lantto, 2014; Wråkberg and Granqvist 2014). It is also of importance to know that all minorities included in this thesis have been subjects for racial studies (Pikkarainen and Brodin 2008, 20)

Adding to this it is possible to observe the condition for North-, Lule-, Pite-, and Ume Saami at a UNESCO-homepage where they provide information on vulnerable languages in all countries. The languages can be categorized as: ”vulnerable”, ”definitely endangered”, ”severely endangered”, ”critically endangered” or ”extinct”. North Saami is placed at the lowest end of the scale in the ”definitely endangered” category with 30 000 speakers, including Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Lule- and South Saami are both in the
"severely endangered" group with 2 000 and 500 speakers respectively in both Norway and Sweden. The Saami languages that are placed in the "critically endangered" category are Pite- and Ume Saami. Pite Saami is said to be spoken by approximately 20 persons of which the majority is older than 50 years. The Ume Saami is also said to be spoken by 20 but it is added that this number might be as low as 10 persons. These numbers are based on native speakers and are only estimations but it is still a pretty good guideline to the actual situation (Moseley, 2010).

2.3 Language planning
The concept of language planning is important, this include organized actions from institutions to try to change the status of languages and also develop them. To do this institutional action in the form of language policies are one factor (Jasso-Aguilar 1999, 9-10) On the other hand, as Bamgbose (1989) stresses in his article, this is an issue not only for the institutions but also the users must join in the efforts to strengthen status for minority languages. Winsa (1999, 376) argues that language planning regards both socio-political issues and the importance of having a linguistic diversity. Nettle and Romaine (2000, 186-187) found that from studies being conducted in Europe the minority languages which were declining had one thing in common, namely that the languages were not taught in school. It has also been shown that minorities that do get language education have a better language maintenance than other minority languages in the US. However, all responsibility cannot be put on the state and school as Bamgbose (1989) also states, especially since many minority languages have speakers that have graduated school many years ago. People must also speak their languages in their homes and in the community for a minority language to change status and gain speakers.

Traditionally when languages and their condition have been studied it has been done in the point of view of one single language. First, the origin of the language in focus has been given and after this the appearance of this very language in neighboring regions and countries followed by more distant regions where this language could have been established (Voegelin and Voegelin 1964, 2). According to these authors a new way of looking at, and study, languages is presented in the mid-20th century by Haugen (1953; 1956) who looks at languages ability to adapt to other languages in its surroundings. In so doing the emphasis has changed from one isolated language to a more holistic view on several languages that exist in symbiosis. Linguistic ecologists rather departing from a specific area, possibly a country or
smaller units, instead of a specific language and from there look at all the languages in that location (Voegelin and Voegelin 1964, 2-3).

Romaine (2013, 217) points at a similar development for languages as that of plants and animals where a growing monoculture is replacing the previous diversity. When it comes to preserving languages continuous care is essential (Mühlhäusler 1992, 166). Despite this the author, after studying small languages in Australia and in the Pacific, states that the most common view on language maintenance is by far the laissez faire-point of view i.e. simply what happen, happens. This has been the attitude from both politicians as well as the general public, if the general public notices it at all. Nettle and Romaine (2000, x) together with Mühlhäusler (1992, 166) argue that people care more about the loss of biological species than the diversity of languages as well do politicians and policy makers. Neither, adds Mühlhäusler (1992, 166) does it exist any paragraphs in the human rights that argues for the obligation to maintain small languages. Language maintenance in point of view of the ecological approach has, in the 21st century, started to stress the importance of a holistic view in the field. An ecosystem consists of interrelations and interdependencies and therefore it is not enough to just focus on one thing in the system. Because of this interrelation everything evolves together interdependently (Romaine 2013, 218).

Before, it was very popular to spread one owns’ language at the cost of other small languages. It was not desirable to have people talking other languages and this resulted in many missions in the Pacific that for example included teaching the indigenous people metropolitan languages. Such missions contributed to the fact that some traditional languages would disappear. This could be done because languages and cultures were not seen as being linked together (Mühlhäusler 1992, 167). This view has been very well captured by Benton (1981, 100) that writes about the Cook Islands where a superintendent of education shall have said that it was important to save the traditional institutions but not the language. Instead Nettle and Romaine (2000, 19, 21-23) argues that languages are an important identification marker for the speakers. According to the authors a now late Maori leader has stressed the importance of language in a culture by arguing that the viability of their culture is the language. If the language would disappear so would the culture. This view of the connection between language and culture is shared with Roma people for example who have a saying that without your own language the people is only half. By prohibiting languages the political and social fundaments of a country will be weakened. Such treatment of languages could lead to conflicts between the minority and majority. This has not been the only reason for conflicts, because languages and dialects have been a marker of class etc. Despite this, conflicts are
seldom due to what languages that are spoken but rather fundamental inequalities between
groups who may speak different languages by coincidence. However, languages have always
been in constant battle because they compete about a limited resource, namely the speakers.

To understand why some languages prosper on the expense of others, it is important to look at the history. By then it is possible to see patterns in number of speakers and the economic power that some groups possess. If we want to do something about the loss of linguistic diversity today the forces of history must be understood. It is not possible to know how many languages and cultures that have existed in history, let alone in the present time. Some say that up to 50 % of the approximately 12-14 000 of the cultural groups that existed 500 years ago may have been lost (Romaine 2013, 218). Some might say that this has to do with survival of the fittest but actually much of which languages that are important today were decided by deeper and more complex structures that occurred in a specific time at a specific place (Nettle and Romaine 2000, 18, 57).

For the future, increased understanding of languages is needed and it could partly be achieved through a cooperation between linguists, geographers and ecologists. Then it could be easier to understand the evolution of language diversity as well as competition between languages (Binder and Smith 2013, 240).

According to Nettle and Romaine (2000, 189-190) some language planning projects have not been as appreciated as they probably should be. As an example they mentioned Irish and the critique the users had toward the intervention program. This program had been carried out to support the language but the result was not as positive as people would have hoped for. However, the authors reflect that without revitalization for Irish, the language could have been worse off if nothing had been done. For example education at all levels have given a varied cultural life, it has also become easier to access ancient traditions and last but not least the efforts have made the Irish a continuously vivid language. Romaine (2013, 230) also show with an example from Canada that the French in Quebec was affected positively by intergenerational transmission interventions in the 1970s even though this had been seen as unnecessary before the intervention was made. Even though a language is only kept as a second language, this is actually an important victory because in the globalized world of today it is impossible to just speak one language. Previously bilingualism was seen as abnormal and not needed, but today that has changed and the number of bilingual people is increasing. Language planning efforts, such as the one in focus in this study from the European Council can do much for minority languages (Nettle and Romaine 2000, 191, 201).
2.4 Language planning in Sweden
According to Hult (2004, 181-183) Sweden is seen as a bilingual, or even a multilingual nation with many languages being spoken within the country. The most important “other” language is perhaps English and Sweden give education in English at an early age (Winsa 1999, 400). Development regarding minority language policies began in the late 20th century. The importance of language planning and cultural development can be seen in the number of committees and academies that have been created lately in support for national minority languages (Hult 2004, 189-191).

Prior to these more positive views on people affiliated to the Swedish minority groups Elenius and Ekenberg (2002, 15) state that the Swedish view have been problematic. These groups became assimilated into the Swedish society and those who did not want to be assimilated were seen as a problem. Not only those who did not want to change, but all minorities were in the nationalistic view problematic and needed to adjust themselves into the Swedish norm. The lack of knowledge about minorities did not only result in misconceptions but also violations of these groups. Adding to this many of the minorities came to see themselves as something bad and that made them for example stop using their minority languages. As a consequence of this not everyone affiliated to the minorities can speak their own language and in the cases where they do know their language it might not be a written one.

Salminen (2010, 35) informs the reader that there are in total eleven different Saami languages in the entire Sápmi area, that includes areas from Norway to Russia. Of these, the most spoken language is the North Saami. Even though this language is small, the condition is better than for Lule-, Pite- and Ume Saami. Despite efforts to save all these languages there are few speakers and for the latter two the native speakers are elderly people. As late as in 2002 the last native speaker of one Saami language died.

Axelsson and Sköld (2007, 120-122) however, argue that there are at least three languages with clear differences and adding to this all of them contain a minimum of nine separate dialects. The authors continue to argue that the languages, as for a majority of the minorities in the world, is fundamental for the Saami culture. When the areas in the north were colonized, Swedish became the language to speak in schools, public workplaces etc. This is slowly changing but it has taken a lot of effort, especially since the colonization affected the Saami population severely. Since the 1970s the number of Saami people has been estimated to be about 20 000 people or less. This is partly due to how the Saami people were to be categorized in official statistics. As Rogers and Nelson (2003, 64-67) states in their
article, the Saami people could not decide this themselves but others were to say who belonged to the Saami group and who did not. Axelsson and Sköld (2007, 120) also adds that this was the job for priests, which also meant that many Saami people lost their identity as Saami people and their contacts with relatives or when they moved away from the traditional Saami area, known as Sápmi.

In the case of Torne Valley Finnish, Salminen (2007, 220) explains that this language is spoken in the border region between Sweden and Finland. This region is called the Torne Valley and the language is similar to Finnish, this mean that mutual understanding between a Torne Valley Finnish-speaker and a Finnish-speaker is quite easily achieved. In Sweden the Torne Valley Finnish is nurtured in the local form which is not the case in Finland. As for the Saami people the Torne Valley Finns became a victim of the nationalistic language policies that Sweden had during the late 19th and 20th century. The Finns in Sweden have been subject for similar treatment as the Torne Valley Finns (Elenius and Ekenberg 2002, 15, 19-20). During the assimilation process, especially Torne Valley Finns argue that Finnish, Finns and a Finnish identity had low status (Winsa 1999, 382)

Since the 1970s Sweden has actively promoted bilingualism through a new language policy which was intended both for immigrants as well as minorities within the country. Such promoting measures were for example education in the native language. Education in their own languages did have important positive results, for example the youths got a strengthened identity and it opened up doors for integration into the society as well as better results in other subjects. The new language policies also included media broadcasting in the minority languages and some subsidiaries for minority cultures, books and newspapers (Winsa 1999, 409, 413).

Hult (2010) argues in an article that the Swedish Television actually has been one important player in language planning and policies. Television broadcasting shows what is happening in the society. The national television promotes and informs the minorities as well as the general public about languages which might have low statuses. The Swedish Television has promoted multilingualism by broadcasts in several languages. In their mission as national television they shall have linguistic and ethnic minorities in mind when they are producing programs. In doing so, the Swedish Television is a great help for minorities in status planning since the status is growing when the language is heard and used in different settings such as media.
3. Method
This section of the thesis introduces the method used for the data collection, namely interviews and how these were performed. From these interviews coding segments were extracted and ultimately categorized and thereby the result part. There is also a short part on literature review since that method has been used.

3.1 Qualitative method
To begin with, Blaikie (2012, 162) states that data in the form of words have been criticized because they are not as precise and reliable as numbers, but that has been changing lately. For this thesis qualitative methods are used to spot differences and similarities between the chosen municipalities and to understand the reality of the respondents (Miller and Glassner 2011, 132-133). This to be able to understand as much as possible of the experience and knowledge that the municipalities possessed, represented by Minority language officials. For this thesis it has been important to be flexible, not only by letting others, in this case the respondents, choosing when the interviews were to be held. However, not only this but along with the interviews it has become evident that it is not possible to just focus on one particular element of the work that the municipalities have faced for a few years. It has been important to capture what the respondents have said during the interviews. Sometimes new insights and questions have developed from what have been brought up at the interviews and have in some ways changed the direction of the study. This is, as Blaikie (2012, 215) argue a part of the qualitative study. This has made some parts of the interview guide less important and others more. In some cases these changes of direction have just lasted for the specific interview but in other cases the parts that have gained importance have affected the other interviews as well. However, this has not been at the expense of other parts in the interview guide.

In qualitative studies there are problems with how to use definitions since many of them have come from quantitative research and that have made them difficult, not to say impossible, to apply on qualitative research (Lundman and Hälgren Graneheim 2008, 161). For one, generalizability has been a problem since the outcomes are subjective and hard to measure (Blaikie 2012, 216-217). According to Schofield (1993, 202) the qualitative research has instead aimed to provide a picture of a situation with details which is coherent and descriptive. This has also been the goal for this thesis, to give a description of how the situation has been so far for the administrative municipalities that administer at least two official minority languages.
3.1 Data collection
Interviews have been a common source for data collection, Holstein and Gubrium (2011, 150) argue that it is possible to estimate that in the social science field 90% uses interviews. The aim for this thesis made it natural to take the same path. Even though the choice to use interviews was quite clear from the beginning there were some things that needed to be thought of which could cause problems in the end. As Miller and Glassner (2011, 136) argue, it is important to understand that interviews do not give the whole picture despite the themes in the interview being diverse. However, the material was ”colored” by the study since there were many questions regarding conflicts and funds.

An advantage with this thesis and the interviews have been that the data is primary. No one else has been gathering the material. This mean that the data has always been collected with this thesis in mind (Blaikie, 2012, 160-161). However, the setting for interviews can be felt as unnatural and therefore the data that is produced between the interviewer and the interviewee have biases (Miller and Glassner 2011, 132). The respondents have been sitting either at the phone or in an office responding to questions regarding their job and the experience in the municipality. The latter is probably more natural but still it is an outsider that wants to get a view on how the work has been done in the municipality. On the other hand as Holstein and Gubrium (2011, 161-162) declare, even normal conversations have biases and the only real difference is that no interviewer has arranged the dialogue. It is inevitable to not, in any way ”contaminate” the material in an interview but since the ambition in this thesis has been to make the interviews remind as much as possible to a spontaneous conversation as much as possible has been done to avoid any inconvenience for the participants.

3.2 Material and methods
The material for this thesis has been collected by using semi-structured interviews. The interview guide is presented in Appendix I in the end of this thesis, however in Swedish. All respondents were selected first and foremost on merits of the administrative municipalities, which means that all the respondents had to represent municipalities that administrated at least two minority languages. In the case where there are two minority language officials the selection became a selection of convenience. This type of selection is, according to Dahlgren, Emmelin and Winkvist (2007, 34) probably the method where it is easiest to find respondents to participate but also the one with lowest credibility. Despite this the method was used due to the need for respondents to participate and the selection was not very large to begin with. In one municipality an e-mail about the study and a question were sent to one of the officials.
who forwarded it to the other and then when dates were being set the second official had time
to answer the questions. In the second municipality the person who had the highest position in
the municipality regarding these questions asked if one other person could join in the
interview session. In the third municipality contact was made with one of the two officials and
it was possible for that person to participate in an interview. The same e-mail was sent to all
respondents about the thesis and subject etc. with a question regarding if they could
participate. In the cases where the respondents did not answer or in the case where the e-mail
address were not found the respondents were contacted via telephone and received the same
information as was given in the e-mails. From this selection five females and three males
were selected to participate in the study.

Due to the available resources all interviews but one were made via telephone and the
time for the telephone interviews ranged from about 45 to 90 minutes. One of the interviews
could be performed in person and the time for that interview was about 90 minutes. Preferably
all the interviews would have been made in person but in the end it seemed to have worked
out quite well. In the beginning of all the interviews the respondents once again received
information about the thesis. They were also asked to give their informed consent to
participate and also if the interviews could be recorded to facilitate the transcriptional work.
Informed consent is seen as more or less mandatory for a majority of the qualitative research
methods according to Mack et. al. (2005, 7). This because the interviews were to regard the
work of the respondents, it was found necessary to have their consent. All respondents
accepted to participate and they also accepted the interviews to be recorded. Because it was
semi-structured interviews it was possible to ask follow up questions if the respondents’
answers raised other questions that were not thought of in beforehand and could be seen as
relevant for the thesis. This also made it possible to adapt somewhat to the different
municipalities and the different interviews since the situation is not the same in all
administrative municipalities in this thesis. When the first interview had been done the time
consuming (Blaikie 2010, 25) process of transcription began and it was performed
simultaneously as the rest of the interviews. In the beginning of all interviews the respondents
were asked if they wanted to read through the transcription before the material was
categorized and the analysis began. All but two respondents took the opportunity to read it but
no one had any comments.

For this thesis the method of qualitative thematic content analysis was used to analyze
the gathered material. To facilitate the categorization of the interviews the sorting program
OpenCode 4.02 was used. The program was easy to use and it helped to make the transcribed
material easy to overlook when it was time to create codes for categorization. These codes made the material more abstract and gave another perspective to the gathered data (Lundman and Hällgren Graneheim 2008, 163). In the same process as the codes were created the material was translated into English. This means that the interviews and transcriptions were in Swedish, but all codes have been translated into English. When using OpenCode it is possible to summarize the material into coding segments which will be saved by the program and all these segments will be saved once no matter how many times they have been used. Since one coding segment cannot be put in two different categories and they should be internally homogenous and externally heterogeneous (Lundman and Hällgren Graneheim 2008, 163), Excel was of good help. There, it was easy to mark what codes have been used and by using different sheets the organization of codes were fairly simple. Hence, all the coding segments were put in respective categories relating to the content of each segment. Not all segments were used in the end, 272 coding segments were dropped because they were not relevant for this thesis. The categories were, mentioned in order of appearance in the thesis: “Law”, ”Grants”, ”Minority languages”, ”Practical implementation in the municipalities”, ”Cooperation”, ”Conflicts”, ”Threats”, ”Possibilities” and ”Future development”. Since weight was put on conflicts, threats, possibilities and possible future development in the beginning it is fair to say that the categories regarding this are more deductive. On the other hand, the other categories were found to be important during and after the interviews and these are more inductive in their nature. When the data was sorted in these categories the result part started to take form. Since anonymousness were important the interviews have been given numbers from one to seven (i.e. Minority language official 1, Minority language official 2 etc.) to guarantee the anonymity of the respondents that participated as far as possible.

3.3 Literature review
This part will present the situation for minority languages in neighboring states to Sweden. In Finland for example there are many studies on bilingualism since the country is officially bilingual in Finnish and Swedish (6.6.2003/423). For more information about the Finnish and Swedish language use in Finland see for example Engman (1995), Østern (2001) and Latomaa and Nuolijärvi (2002). These contributions all together give an informative picture of the language situation in Finland with special focus on the relation between Finnish and Swedish. However, the Swedish language position in Finland is stronger than the position of other minority languages such as those included in this thesis. For a description of minority languages in an equivalent position in Finland as the Swedish minority languages it could be
recommended to see Pietikäinen, (2008), Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes (2011) which handle the media broadcastings in relation to Saami languages. Also Hellesten (2010) has written about the Saami minority in Finland and investigate in what state the Saami identity is.

In Norway attention is also given to issues in regard to minority languages and it could be recommended to read the following texts Bull (1995) which investigating a loss of multilingualism in North Norway and Todal (1998) where school for Saami people in Norway is discussed. Some texts that could be recommended to read regard Saami languages in the North Calotte are Salo (2012) and also Aikio (1986) where both Saami as well as Finnish are treated as minority languages, that article does also consider Meänkieli. As do the following article by Pietikäinen et. al. (2010) and it also regard the Norwegian minority of Kvens.

4. Results
In the following section the results from the thematic content analysis will be presented in nine different categories. The categories are: "Law", "Grants", "Minority languages", "Practical implementation in the municipalities", "Cooperation", "Conflicts", "Threats", "Possibilities" and "Future development". These categories have furthermore been grouped together to more easily connect this section with the theoretical framework. Consequently the former five will be addressed under "Implementation of legal and municipal responses on language planning”. The latter four are dealt with in the "Managing language diversity”. The creation of the aforementioned categories came from the compilation of codes that have been made from the interviews. A majority of them were thought to be of great importance even before the interviews were conducted but from the answers given during the interviews some other classes developed to become of more importance than initially had been considered. These nine categories will help to structure this section. First, however a short background to the subject and setting of the municipalities included in the thesis are given.

4.1 Background
This introduction to the result section will provide a summary of the European Carter from 1992 concerning minority and regional languages to the legislation and implementation in Sweden. In this part all administrative municipalities in Sweden will be provided. Ultimately a map that show the geographic location of the included municipalities will be presented which also offer the reader information about what languages the respective municipalities administrates.
4.1.1 The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages and administrative authorities

In 1992 the Council of Europe presented the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. This charter was presented to protect small languages within the borders of Europe. It was argued that to even further promote the unity between the different member states and the charter was seen as important to protect the minority languages. By protecting languages from eventual extinction this would also protect our heritage since the languages are an important part of our cultural wealth and traditions that includes ideals and principles etc. The right to speak one owns’ language both in private as well as in public is also stated in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, presented by the United Nations (UN) and it is a fundamental right. When regional or minority languages are promoted this will also contribute to the building of Europe on democratic principles and the cultural diversity in the region (Council of Europe, 1992).

To protect and also support regional or minority languages within Europe the charter has taken several measures. These measures focuses at different parts of society, the educational sector should, if the number of students are considered to be sufficient, allow education from pre-school to university in the minority or regional language of interest. People from groups affiliated to minority languages can also expect to have support in their mother tongue when they are in a judicial process and also when in contact with administrative authorities and public services. That includes availability of documents in the minority languages as well as the possibility to get spoken information in their preferred language whether it is a majority language or a minority language. Aside from this, media together with cultural activities and facilities should be available in minority languages. Last, economic and social life are also considered in the charter and that includes for example to eradicate prohibitions and/or limitations to use regional or minority languages in documents related to economic or social life if there are no justifiable reasons. Such documents may include contracts of employment and various types of instructions among others. The public sector should also organize activities to promote minority or regional languages and in hospitals and elderly care the care shall be given in the preferred language (Council of Europe, 1992).

This charter has been ratified by 25 European states (Council of Europe, 2015), among them are the four Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden of which the last will be in focus for this thesis (Council of Europe, 2014). Other states can also be invited by the Committee of Ministers in the council to accede to this charter. To be able to control for the work with the minority languages the parties will have to write reports to the Council
of Europe and these should also be made public. The first report should be presented to the council the first year after ratification and after that reports should be drafted with a three year interval following the first report (Council of Europe, 1992).

What this Charter states is that in countries with minority or regional languages these will not be regarded as something of more or less importance than the official language. By that it is argued that development in one language must not mean obstruction of the other regardless if it concerns the official language or the minority language and this approach also respects both national sovereignty and territorial integrity. The definition in this charter of a minority language is a language historically tied to a geographical area. Non-territorial languages are also mentioned in the charter and they are spoken within a country but they are not bound to a specific place in that country (Council of Europe, 2014).

4.1.2 Minority language administration in Sweden
Sweden did ratify the Charter January 13th 2000 and it entered into force of law June 1st the same year. The minority languages that Sweden did designate were; Saami, Meänkieli, Finnish, Romani and Yiddish. The former three languages are geographically tied to one or more areas in Sweden whilst the latter are languages not territorially bound to any specific areas in Sweden (SÖ 2000:3). This law was preceded by two other laws, one which allowed people to speak Saami in their contacts with administrative authorities and courts (SFS 1999:1175) and the other which gave people the same right regarding Finnish and Meänkieli (SFS 1999:1176). Though, the law considering the use of Saami did only include areas where the North Saami was spoken and this only applied for four municipalities in the northernmost of Sweden (SFS 1999:1175; Kuoljok).

Later on, in a law that entered into force January 1st 2010, the two aforementioned laws were replaced by a law that included what SFS 1999:1175 and SFS 1999:1176 had done and also stated once again that the minority languages beside the three also included Romani and Yiddish. In this new law the South Saami had been included so by then 17 municipalities where administrative authorities for the Saami, 23 for Finnish and 5 municipalities were responsible administrative authorities for Meänkieli. The law also stated that other municipalities could apply to become administrative authorities for the three languages and that these applications were to be accepted by the Swedish government (SFS 2009:724; Kuoljok).

It is worth mentioning why Romani and Yiddish are not included in any administrative authorities. That relates to what was described earlier in this part, namely that they are non-territorial languages. In the case for these languages they are present in Sweden as minority
languages which they have been for a long time. Nevertheless, they do not have any historical connections to any specific place in Sweden and because of that there are no municipalities that are administrative authorities for the two minority languages (Arjeplogs kommun, 2013).

4.1.3 Geographical distribution of the minority languages in Sweden
As of today there are a total of 89 units that are administrative authorities. The majority of these are municipalities, 75. The rest, 14 units, are county councils, for example Norrbotten and Västerbotten where the municipalities of interest for this thesis are situated, and regions. The majority of the municipalities are administrative authorities for only one minority language. These can be found in table 1 and 2 regarding administrative authorities for Finnish

Table 2 Municipalities that are administrative authorities for Finnish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finnish</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borlänge</td>
<td>Haninge*</td>
<td>Mariestad</td>
<td>Solna*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borås</td>
<td>Hofors</td>
<td>Motala</td>
<td>Stockholm*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botkyrka*</td>
<td>Huddinge*</td>
<td>Norrköping</td>
<td>Sundbyberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degerfors</td>
<td>Häbo*</td>
<td>Norrtälje</td>
<td>Sundsvall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enköping</td>
<td>Hällefors</td>
<td>Nykvarn</td>
<td>Surahammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eskilstuna*</td>
<td>Karlskoga</td>
<td>Oxelösund</td>
<td>Södertälje*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fagersta</td>
<td>Köping*</td>
<td>Sandviken</td>
<td>Tierp*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finspång</td>
<td>Lindesberg</td>
<td>Sigtuna*</td>
<td>Trelleborg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gävle</td>
<td>Ludvika</td>
<td>Skinnskatteberg</td>
<td>Trollhättan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>Luleå</td>
<td>Skövde</td>
<td>Trosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallstahammar*</td>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>Smedjebacken</td>
<td>Uddevalla</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


and Saami languages respectively. In these tables, primarily the first regarding Finnish, it is possible to see a spread from Luleå in the north to the most southern municipality in Sweden, Trelleborg. However, most municipalities are situated in and around the proximity of Stockholm and a few in the proximity of Gothenburg. Municipalities that are administrative authorities for Saami are situated in the northern parts of Sweden from Jokkmokk to Älvdalen in the mountain region. The municipalities with (*) after their names were included in the SFS 2009:724 law, the others have been added on later (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2015).
Table 3 Municipalities that are administrative authorities for Saami languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saami languages</th>
<th>Arjeplog*</th>
<th>Krokomm</th>
<th>Vilhelmina*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arvidsjaur*</td>
<td>Lycksele*</td>
<td>Are*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berg*</td>
<td>Malå*</td>
<td>Alvdalen*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorotea</td>
<td>Sorsele*</td>
<td>Östersund*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Härjedalen*</td>
<td>Storuman*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokkmokk</td>
<td>Strömsund*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3 show the municipalities that are administrative authorities for more than two official minority languages. The table is divided by which languages the municipalities are administrative authorities for. This table give us two interesting facts, first a majority of these municipalities were included in the law (SFS 2009:724). Only Kalix has been added to regard both Finnish and Meänkieli, Umeå has also added one language since the law, Finnish. The second fact provided by this table is that Umeå is the southernmost municipality that is administrative authority for more than one official minority language. The bottom row show the total number of municipalities that are administrative authorities for the official minority languages (Länssyrelsen Stockholm, 2015).

Table 4 Municipalities that are administrative authorities for more than one official minority language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finnish &amp; Meänkieli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haparanda*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finnish &amp; Saami languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Umeå**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Umeå was in the original law only administrative authority for Saami languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finnish, Meänkieli &amp; Saami languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gällivare*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiruna*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (2*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finnish</th>
<th>Meänkieli</th>
<th>Saami languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59 (23*)</td>
<td>6 (5*)</td>
<td>19 (17*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Länsstyrelsen Stockholm (2015); SFS 2009:724

4.1.4 The administrative authorities included in the thesis

The location of the administrative authorities in this thesis are illustrated in figure 1. The minority languages are displayed by the flag of each minority group in Sweden. The Swedish Finns that speaks Finnish have been illustrated with their flag, a white bottom with a yellow and blue cross. The Torne Valley Finns who speak Meänkieli (Torne Valley Finnish) have
their yellow, white and blue flag and the Saami flag represent the municipalities that are administrative authorities for Saami languages. With this map it is possible to see that the majority of the municipalities included in this thesis are located in the northernmost parts of Sweden. It is only Umeå that not has a neighboring municipality that administers more than one official minority language. It is also only Umeå and Kalix which do not have borders to either Norway or Finland.

![Map of administrative municipalities included in thesis](image)

Figure 1 Location of the administrative municipalities included in thesis

### 4.2 Implementation of legal and municipal responses on language planning

In this part of the result section, the opinions from the respondents in the included municipalities regarding the new legislation and grants as well as how they view their language planning measures will be presented. It also provides a description of how the municipalities perceive how the minorities have responded to this legislation and also different levels of cooperation according to these important issues.
4.2.1 Law
This category contains responses about what the law regarding administrative municipalities have contributed to and also how the minority language officials that participated in the interviews think about the legislation. First of all, according to the law the municipalities have to be able to offer and promote preschool, elderly care and culture for the national minorities. This is not optional, all municipalities must do this, not only the administrative municipalities. The difference between administrative municipalities and other municipalities is that the former shall offer these things while other municipalities shall do as much as they can. For other municipalities the law regulate them to do as much as possible for the minorities. The law also constitutes that the administrative municipalities will be compensated for extra costs that are added to the municipality when they offer preschool, elderly care and culture as well as extra costs due to consultation meetings. Consultation meetings where representatives for the minorities meet with the municipality should be held at least four times per year and this is an opportunity for the minorities to, among other things, express needs, discuss where grants should go and work together with the municipality to develop their work with these questions, this according to the respondents.

The respondents witness that in many municipalities the legal framework has enabled the minority languages to gain status and go from being forbidden to instead be appreciated and receive more attention, both by authorities and in the municipalities in general.

I can only see the emergence of this law as something positive. It has, in a way, pointed out that it is allowed to speak Finnish and Meänkieli [...] well, not only allowed but they should also get service from the municipality. Minority language official 1

This citation is from a respondent which is working in a municipality administrating Finnish and Meänkieli. According to the answers from those administrating Saami languages, the respondents did show similar positive attitudes.

No one criticized the legal framework per se but some of the respondents thought that it was not perfect. Much of the critique did relate to financial issues, for example some thought that it would be good if the municipality could get more funding because it was a lot that they could do but not with the amount of funds they received now. Also a few of the respondents thought that it was odd that the municipalities with three minority languages to administrate received the same amount of money as the municipalities that administered two minority languages.
This is quite impractical which I can think is a bit unfair and we have told the county council (in Stockholm) and the Saami Parliament before that we actually have three languages to translate to and to provide preschool and elderly care in all three minority languages. [...] Today it is only two municipalities that are affected by this and there are joint plans to write to the government to call attention to this.

Minority language official 3

The respondent was not alone to think that this. A few respondents said that Finnish and Meänkieli are quite similar but they are still two different languages. Since the municipalities have to provide services to all minority languages that means more effort and eventually more costs for the municipalities that administrate both of these languages. Also, the law was a bit criticized by a few of the respondents for being a bit hard to interpret because the law is quite general. Sometimes it could be hard to identify how the grants could and could not be used. However, a general law gives more freedom to the municipalities and this was argued by some respondents as well.

The law also appointed the Saami Parliament and the county council in Stockholm to be supervisory authorities who are to control how the municipalities work with minority languages. To manage this, these two authorities send reports to the municipality to fill in. These reports are divided in one economic report where the municipalities’ report how the grants have been used and then one survey where the municipality answer and comment on their work. These reports are given to the municipalities to fill in every six months and the answers are compiled by these two agencies and then sent back to the municipalities as well as to the government in order to evaluate how the work proceeds in the administrative municipalities. If the supervisory authorities found out that the municipalities for example did not spend all the grants without a good reason the grants would be reduced to the following year. Not only the municipalities report to the Saami Parliament and the Stockholm county council but also representatives for the minority languages answer a survey to give their perspective on how the work proceeds in the municipalities.

4.2.2 Grants
This category could has been included in the law category above but the government grants were much discussed by the respondents. The grants are, as mentioned before, given to municipalities that had been appointed to be administrative municipalities for one to three minority languages. The idea with the grants is that these should cover the extra costs that the administrative municipalities would have. All municipalities included in this study received
either 1 160 000 SEK or 2 480 000 SEK each to cover the extra costs. These government grants should only be used to cover costs for work with enhanced protection for the minorities and was set by a pre-made tariff, based on people in the municipality and number of minority language that the municipality administered. The basic protection that all municipalities, whether administrative or not, should consider shall be included in the regular budget. The amount of the grants had been reduced for all municipalities once and that was due to an increase in the number of administrative municipalities.

Quite a few of the respondents said that in the beginning it felt like the sum of the grants was too large and that it would be hard to spend everything during one year. However, since the municipalities got used to their new task everyone had changed their opinion. Only a few of the respondents in the interviews said that the sum of the grants was enough while the rest said that it would be good if the grants were somewhat higher.

500 000 more would be good. I mean, we have projects that we could carry out. There would not be any problems... [...] There are things that are very expensive for example putting up signs and translation are very expensive. [...] It would be possible to do a lot more. Minority language official 5

This was quite evident from more than this municipality. Others did not mention the same things as costs but that they could quite easily spend more money to promote and protect the minority languages. Some said that in the current situation they could not provide money to all requests. One municipality had a policy that they spilt the money in half so neither of the minorities would be able to get all what they requested and they saw this as the fairest distribution. This opinion was shared with the supervisory authorities. Another respondent said during the interview that in the current situation the municipality could not fulfill all the applications to a 100 % but maybe up to two thirds of the asked sum in some cases. According to the respondents this was a bit of a pity, because if all requests could get all the money they asked for it would be possible to carry out the project or event as it was thought in the beginning. If the party/association asking for money could not get all they asked for the project would have to be changed to be completed. The respondent saw that this was of course better than not at all but preferably the municipality would want to be able to give all of what had been asked for.

Regarding the view on the sum of grants one respondent said that the municipality could fulfill the intention of the law with the resources that they were provided with. Nevertheless, they would still like to do more than this to further promote and strengthen the languages and
the peoples affiliated to them. However, this was not possible but an increase in funding would be appreciated. Another Minority language official said that it is always good to get more and it seemed like this view on the grants was shared with most of the colleagues.

About the divide of grants that has been mentioned earlier in this category one respondent said that the division was made by the politicians and that this did receive positive responses. In one municipality the minority language official could give money to projects for a sum up to 44 000 SEK which this respondent found to be positive. If a project asked for more money, then they had to ask at a higher instance. Another respondent said that the municipality had split the grants in three roughly equal parts. About one third was to cover consultation costs, compensate participants at consultation meetings and 70% of the salary for the minority language official. Another third of the grants were budgeted for municipality activities and if they had to buy material to any of the languages or for translation etc. The last third of the grant were in turn divided into three parts and one of these parts, or roughly one ninth of the grants were for each of the minority languages. If the municipality wanted to do a project for all minority languages money were taken from all of them to pay for this project. It was possible to diverge from this scheme but the municipality derived from this when planning the budget. All in all the municipalities worked a bit differently with the grants but everyone were positive about their respective municipality.

4.2.3 Minority languages
This category contains responses regarding what the Minority language officials said quite generally about the minority languages in their respective municipalities. It regarded what the minorities found important in the municipalities and also somewhat how they worked together with each other. Much of what was said about this regarded relations in one way or another. Some respondents also emphasized the unequal division of people belonging to the minority groups. However, this was not the easiest thing to do since there are no statistics on native language only on place of birth. Though, as one respondent commented on this, you cannot be sure that for example a person from Finland speak Finnish so that statistic was not very helpful. All the respondents mentioned, that they did not know the exact number of people speaking a minority language but they did not see a problem with the lack of statistics because this is not available.

When the minority language law went into practice some municipalities were assigned to become administrative municipalities for the minority languages of Finnish, Meänkieli and Saami. This was nothing optional but the law just gave some municipalities more responsibility for the promotion of these minority languages. Even though it is hard to know
how many are speaking these languages in the municipalities, the municipalities were chosen on geographical grounds.

*That is impossible to know (number of speakers), but I could imagine that geographically Finnish, Meänkieli and Saami have traditionally been strong here where we live.* Minority language official 3

According to this respondent the background to which municipalities that were initially chosen came to be dependent on where the languages had been historically tied to for quite some time.

When the respondents talked about the needs that the minority languages in their municipalities had it became clear that the needs differed somewhat between municipalities. In some municipalities the need for elderly care was the most important function for one language but in another municipality the need for preschool for the same minority language could be more important. To gather this information one respondent said that in their municipality they had sent out surveys to all households and these surveys had included one part regarding minority languages and if the respondent affiliated to any of the three groups. After that it was possible to answer what needs they found important for the municipality to put more efforts in. This worked as some sort of mapping of needs among the minority groups and the respondent found this to work well.

As mentioned above relations were also a part within this category, in some of the municipalities Finnish was the largest language. However, how common it was for the languages to be spoken was dependent on the age groups of the population. One respondent said the Saami youths spoke their language more frequently compared to how common it was that youths in the other minority groups spoke their respective language.

Similarities and differences between the minority groups were also brought up during the interviews. For example someone said that the Finnish-speaking group did probably have a better relation to immigrants from other countries that had settled down in the specific municipality. This, according to the respondent, Finns had also like the immigrants migrated to the municipality and could in a way better relate to them than other groups that had been living in the municipality much longer. Not all respondents shared this view, a few said that they found the minorities to be very considerate about each other. They possibly had disagreements at the consultation meetings, because they guarded their interests, but as the following citation states the underlying relation between them was based on understanding:
I do think that the minorities are quite good at protecting each other, sharing many experiences about having a language and culture with low status and that they have had to learn Swedish and what it means to not have been able to keep one’s language, identity and so on. So I think they have a pretty good mutual understanding. Minority language official 7

As this respondent said, the minorities do care about the interest of the other minorities in a municipality in general. Of course they want their own language to prosper but in most cases they have been facing similar treatment from the majority. One respondent said that it is more like a ”we”, the minorities, against the municipality and/or state. A few of the respondents said that they saw healthier minorities now after the law even if some municipalities had had a focus on the minorities also before the legislation.

4.2.4 Practical implementation in the municipalities
In this category are the respondent’s answers and reflections on how their municipalities’ works with minority languages since the legislation went into force. For example the municipalities shall consider the minorities and work to promote and protect them. Much was said about how big part of the job the respondents worked with minority languages. Also, in a few of the municipalities the respondents said that they had been mapping the people working in the respective municipalities. This was to investigate to what extent the minority languages were spoken to see if they could improve their services.

When appointing the administrative municipalities in the original law, this decision was nothing the municipalities had a say in, but it had worked out well. Nevertheless, many of the respondents felt that it was much to do for a person working part-time. Some said that it was a fun job but that it should be a full time employment. Not everyone said how much of their time they worked with minority language questions but of those who did, no one had a full time employment. One only had a 15 % employment regarding minority languages while another shared 20 % with a colleague which meant that they had 10 % each. A third respondent said 70 % and two others said that they had 75 %.

It should be a full time employment, I have 75 % but I have so much to do so sometimes I do not know how to manage it all. Up to now it has worked out quite well actually. However, I am not able to do everything that I want to. [...] They have spoken about increasing it to a full time employment. Minority language official 6
This was something which many of the respondents shared, that it was hard to be able to do everything that they wanted to do in the time they had. Also, one respondent who worked in one of the municipalities which was an administrative municipality for all three languages felt that it was hard to do everything in a part time job while municipalities with only one minority language could give one minority language official a full time employment. Also something that came up during the interviews was that only three out of the seven municipalities had more than one person employed as a minority language official.

Most of the work did, in one way or another, relate to administration and consultation meetings which was the most important formal contact with the minorities according to the respondents. Issues brought up during these meetings were then forwarded to the politicians in each municipality to incorporate the minority groups’ views and needs in the municipality. In one municipality the respondent stated that they had two different forms of consultation meetings which worked well. They had reference groups and budget meetings. The reference groups were divided into different focus groups, for example school, culture and leisure and information. In these group meetings the only subject discussed was the particular responsibility of that group, for example school. At the budget meetings the delegates from the different minority languages, together with the municipality representatives discussed how the government grants were to be divided. They also had something that they called open consultations. To these meetings everyone that belonged to any of the five official national minorities i.e. Finns, Torne Valley Finns, Saami, Roma people and Jews were welcome to participate. No decisions were made during these meetings but it could well be so that issues or views shared at these open consultations could be forwarded to the other meetings. At these meetings the municipality always gave examples of what could be discussed and also gave other useful information because it could be people that were there for the first time. This was also shared from another respondent, giving information at the meetings took quite some time. However, the respondents were positive about how the municipality worked and that they looked forward to see how it would develop in the years to come.

4.2.5 Cooperation
In the beginning of this process this category was first and foremost thought of as cooperation between the administrative municipalities both in their common context (i.e. north of Sweden) but also with other municipalities in the southern parts of Sweden. In addition to this type of cooperation international collaboration was conducted with countries were these minorities also live. Such countries are Finland and Norway and in some way Russia, but one respondent said that Russia was a bit far from our context when considering these types of issues.
Nevertheless, during the interviews cooperation between the minorities were also highlighted a few times as in contrast to eventual conflicts between the groups.

When considering cooperation with other municipalities, especially those in the same region, all respondents mentioned the networks between minority language officials. In these networks all administrative municipalities were represented both at national and regional level (Norrbotten and Västerbotten).

*It is like this, we have a well-established network in Norrbotten. It is fourteen municipalities in Norrbotten […] and ten of them are administrative municipalities. We meet one to two times every year and network between the municipalities. Also the county council in Norrbotten participates. At these meetings we discuss and reason about issues concerning minority languages and how we should handle and deal with these things in a good and efficient way.* Minority language official 2

This citation pretty well summarizes what all the minority officials said. Almost everyone experienced a well-functioning collaboration in the network where the municipalities could exchange experiences and help each other with mutual issues especially at county level. Even though this is said by a person that worked in Norrbotten the positive experience from working together with others were sheared with the respondent in Västerbotten. Almost every respondent also said that they, beside these regional meetings and cooperation’s, had closer cooperation with a smaller number of municipalities in the same region.

The national meetings were most often planned to regard some special area of the municipal work regarding minority languages and administration of these languages. This made the national meetings perhaps more structured since one topic was in focus. The help they received from the regional meetings were in general positive and appreciated. The local meetings were perceived to be better because there, all the present municipalities could relate to one another easier than at the national meetings and cooperation’s.

*They (southern administrative authorities) have quite a lot of joint arrangements and it is closer between them so they can for example maybe split the costs for lecturers or a theatre. For us in the north, we are somewhat shielded from the rest.* Minority language official 3

This shows that although administrative municipalities are spread from north to south, east to west there are differences in how the municipalities can cooperate with each other. In the north there are large areas both within the municipalities and between the municipalities this
means that the collaboration in the north does not look the same as in the south. However, the respondents were pleased with how their collaborations functioned.

From the interviews it also became evident that beside the positive experience they had within the county and nation many of the respondents said that their municipalities had cooperation in one way or another with either Finland and/or Norway. The international cooperation could regard joint projects not only locally and on EU-level but also to educate municipal staff and to get material for native language education in schools. One of the respondents highlighted Norway as a good model because there they have a more developed approach in relation to national minority languages.

Cooperation between the minority languages in the municipalities also became evident in some of the interviews. One of the respondents talked about how grants primarily intended for one minority language, in the end of the year could be given to another group. This could happen if the group with money left did not have something planned and someone else did, but had no money to go through with it. Instead of repaying the grants they could be given to projects that would promote another minority language. It also happened that the minorities could cooperate to, for example, have events that promoted more than one language. The respondents made it clear that the cooperation between the minorities was quite good. This collaboration could be seen regardless if the municipality administrated two or three minority languages. Of course the municipalities also cooperated with the minorities to get their views on how the situation was in the municipalities for these groups.

4.3 Managing language diversity
In this last part of the result section more focus is put on important views on how to manage a diversity of languages that these minority languages contribute to. First there are some conflicts and also possible conflicts that may occur in the future in relation to these issues. Adding to this the respondents shared their view on threats and possibilities which they have seen during their involvement in minority language management and furthermore a part regarding possible future development is included.

4.3.1 Conflicts
Of obvious reasons the category regarding conflicts between different languages, primarily the minority languages in the administrative municipalities in focus here has, even from the initial stage, been seen as important for this thesis. However, as a matter of fact the conflicts were not as evident as one might could have thought in the beginning. Despite this, a number of the respondents testified that conflicts have existed both in the past and in present time
between different language groups. Yet others said that they could see a potential risk for conflicts if the current situation would change in some way.

One of the respondents witnessed about quite a harsh relation between groups of Finnish- and Meänkieli-speakers in the Municipality where the group of people speaking Finnish was said to feel discriminated in the society. These feelings grew because of how the Meänkieli-speakers spoke about the Finnish-speakers a group.

*Yes, there is a type of conflict between them. [...] Well, as I said earlier, the Meänkieli-speakers are afraid that the Finnish language will take over (in the municipality). They don’t treat Finnish people well. [...] I’ve heard many people say that those that have moved from Finland are not as good people (as others).*

Minority language official 6

According to this respondent the conflict had been ongoing for quite some time in the municipality. A probable cause of this discrimination towards Finns and Finnish-speakers, which is also apparent in the citation, reflected a general fear from within the Torne Valley Finnish-society. This fear was that the use of Finnish would increase in the municipality at the cost of Meänkieli. Since the respondent had started as minority language official the conflict was not as apparent in consultation meetings anymore due to a new instituted prohibition about bringing up personal matters at these discussions. Nevertheless, the respondent thought that all in all the situation in the municipality was probably the same as before. This is not the situation in all municipalities, one of the respondents said that there have been a kind of competition between different language associations in consultation meetings. The respondent said that this competition was not destructive to any of the language groups in the municipality but it was instead done to guard one owns’ interests.

There was also a conflict between different local Torne Valley Finnish associations as well in the same municipality. This conflict regarded what Meänkieli-dialect was the ”right one”, because the Meänkieli language does not have an identified orthography. Because of this situation there were some conflicts within the group of Meänkieli-speakers. This disagreement was, according to the respondent not unique for the municipality but all municipalities where Meänkieli is spoken have had this issue. Possibly the situation in the municipality where this respondent lives was more visible than in others also for outsiders because these local associations would write about each other in the local newspaper.

Another Minority language official in the same region claimed that there have been a conflict between the minority language, Finnish, and the majority language, Swedish. That
conflict arose because the Finnish language was seen as very strong in the municipality and even now the respondent answered that Finnish is almost the most spoken in the municipality. From the answers it became clear that this conflict was not present anymore, at least not in the public forum. The respondent from this municipality said that Finnish was still almost a majority language in the region. Conflicts between the Finnish- and Swedish-speakers could eventually develop, even though the respondent did not see a direct threat of that happening in the near future.

The last form of conflicts that was brought up during the interviews regarded eventual changes of the conditions that would affect the municipal work in these issues. The respondent that spoke about this mentioned that the work within the municipality functioned well now with routines, meetings and what the municipality offered to the minority language groups. However, the respondent said that if the municipality would be administrative municipality for a third minority language there was a risk that a conflict would emerge. The respondent explained that a municipality get government grants according to a scheme explained in the grants category above. However, a municipality receive the same grants if it administrates two or three minority languages. The possible conflict would then be that the minorities would have less money when the grant would be split between three than today’s two minority languages.

4.3.2 Threats
The respondents explained that there were challenges in all of the municipalities included in this thesis. It could be anything from things that made it hard for one single individual to matters that regarded entire minority languages in the municipalities as well as at the national level. It could also be situations that indirectly had an effect on the minority groups, for example lack of job and out-migration due to that. In some municipalities lack of funds was a problem. They were able to fulfill the law but they felt that they wanted to do more. Also some of the respondents complained about them only having part-time employments, not being able to manage everything they had to do.

In many of the municipalities the common nominator were youths. One reason could be that it was hard to motivate them to study minority languages. Another reason was that it was hard to involve young people in the minority language associations, this to be able to put focus on things that youths are interested in since they are important when revitalizing a language.
In my investigation it became clear that English is the biggest and then other languages as well that youth’s thinks are cooler than Finnish or Meänkieli. Minority language official 6

This respondent had investigated language use in the municipality a few years ago and found that minority languages were surpassed in popularity by English among youths. Although this was some years ago, the same tendencies could still be seen in the municipality. Another official said that there were some problems with theme days in school because the success of these minority events were dependent on the teachers’ enthusiasm.

Maybe one of the most severe threat was brought up by a few of the respondents, they feared that especially Meänkieli faced a risk of being extinct in some municipalities. The respondents did not know how this could be prevented. One respondent stated, quite accurately that it is little that a municipality can do on its own. The government need to put in extra measures to prevent this and someone else stated that everyone, from the minorities to the municipalities and government, need to cooperate to prevent this from happening. According to the respondents they could not really do much more than what they already are doing, which is highlighting minority cultures and languages as well as promoting native language education in school. Yet again they pointed at the importance of the new generation to pick up the languages from their homes and start to use those more both at home and together in their social lives. Related to this threat is, what a few of the respondents brought up, the general out-migration from some of the municipalities. When people move it might be to a region where the minority languages do not exist or at least not in the same extent as in the municipality where they move from. This lead to a situation where the language is used less or not at all.

According to one of the respondents the reason to why youths did not demand more was due to the colonization of minority cultures that this respondent argued, still was present in the Swedish society despite the gains from the new law.

I think you could say that one threat is that they have been colonized both in terms of land and culture. The ‘Swedish’ has claimed the right to the land and the right to language and identity. So I think that we should focus a bit more on decolonization. This is important to understand the value of one owns’ culture, language and identity. Minority language official 7
This response witness that although there are now legislation that will promote minority languages the work is not finished yet. Just because Sweden has done something for the minorities the society still have to do more to make minorities equal to the majority. The respondent also said that due to this, there is still an ongoing colonization of minorities, primarily youths do not question why they have not got the chance to learn their own language. They have been made Swedish and because of this they do not reflect about their minority rights and this is in the end a threat to the minority cultures. This view that the Swedes started to dominate languages and cultures is shared by some of the other respondents as well.

Regarding the funds, a few of the respondents argued them not being enough for what they wanted to do. One respondent said that they had quite a large Finnish-speaking population and the municipality did want to translate homepages to Finnish, so that everyone could understand what was going on locally, but they could not afford this. Furthermore, the respondent added that these web pages which were translated quickly became outdated. The homepages being outdated is not good because the respondent felt it would be more welcoming to everyone living in the municipality if they could access information provided by the municipality. Another official added that if the inhabitants did not speak Swedish it made it harder for them to reach those people with written information, for example through local Swedish newspapers.

4.3.3 Possibilities
This category is a rather wide one, since it contains possibilities and positive aspects on a wide variety of what the minority language officials can see in their job with these questions. Much of it regards projects and their positive outcomes as well as the positive view on their job with minority languages. In general the respondents seemed to be pleased with the implementation of the law because they have experienced that the minorities are more proud about their language and that it has meant that these groups now have received a higher status in the Swedish society. One of the respondents said:

*To continue to develop [...] you can see a rising interest and you see that youths and kids think that Finnish and Meänkieli are fun and that they maybe want to continue to work with the language in school.* Minority language official 4

This was a frequent answer in almost all the interviews, that the respondents experienced a big interest from youths and kids to learn "their” languages. They had become proud of what they are and they are becoming more interested in taking back their languages. Especially the
respondents were positive that these feelings of being proud and interested in the minority languages could be seen in youths. Of course these feelings could be found among elderly but as all of them stressed, to revitalize a language you need young people and as it seems when talking to the respondents there is a will in this age group.

In relation to this, much of the positive views on possibilities for the minority languages regarded what had been done in preschool and school in their respective municipalities. There were theatres both in preschool and for older youths that were popular. In many municipalities they could also see that parents wanted to have their children in a preschool where at least some of the education was held in any or all of the minority languages. Some municipalities were looking to expand their preschool for minorities. Other municipalities said that it was positive that they, after becoming an administrative municipality, did not have to change too much in what they offered, for example in preschool. The municipality, even before the legislation, had offered this service in the minority language which were spoken in the municipality. The respondents all had positive examples to give from their own municipalities and also about other matters not only concerning that. It could be that the network in their county functioned well and that it was easy to ask other Minority language officials for help if they had any questions or problems.

In one municipality the Minority language official could see that this work with national minority languages in schools were not only positive for them but for others as well. The legislation was found to have positive effects, not only for speakers of Finnish, Meänkieli, Saami, Romaine or Yiddish but also for other minorities living in Sweden.

*You can strengthen them (the Saami people)! But you can also strengthen everyone that have another (identity) than the Swedish identity!* Minority language official 7

When talking about Saami culture in schools this respondent found it to be very positive that there was a possibility to, not only strengthen a national minority but also others. The respondent said that usually there were many youths in every class that study another language in native language education. By supporting those included in the law it is also possible to strengthen other minorities when talking about decolonization despite that the focus is on decolonization for a national minority.

A subject that was much spoken of during the interviews and got much positive critique was the good cooperation between administrative municipalities. Meetings in the network group had become more effective and in general they have gained more experience when learning more about handling these issues. One respondent also mentioned that the regional
meetings in Norrbotten could be visited by the county council in Stockholm which, together with the Saami Parliament, are supervisory authorities. The respondent said that this was much appreciated from both sides. The municipalities felt noticed and that their work mattered and the Stockholm county council was pleased to see how the legislation was executed in "reality" to experience how the municipalities practically worked with the law.

A majority of the respondents said that they could see a positive future for the minority languages in their municipalities and that the law had made the rest of the society more positive towards these groups too. According to one respondent the work has had many positive outcomes and most of all it had given hope to the minorities. It is now possible to use this strengthened interest when working for further recognition of these minority languages.

*There is a will amongst the people to take back and strengthen their language [...] but I think that this must be made possible by the municipalities and authorities [...] and not dismiss it by saying 'but it is like this [...] we cannot do anything about it'.*

*Yes, you can do something!* Minority language official 7

In other words, the respondent meant that just because it has been in a certain way for a long time, it is no excuse for not trying to improve the situation. It is achievable to change the possibilities for minorities, especially when the minorities want to change their own situation. The Minority language official said that these minorities had also become better to demand services from the municipalities. This was positive because then the respondent said that minorities started to understand that they were appreciated and had the courage to speak up for themselves.

The minority languages officials that participated were all positive about the minorities’ languages in their municipalities. One respondent even said this about the minority languages and cultures in the municipality:

*It is a huge wealth with languages and cultures! A huge wealth for us! We would not be what we are if we did not have the Torne Valley Finnish culture, the Swedish culture and the Finnish culture. So three cultures, one border and one river as well as a linguistic history and a narrative tradition and those things. Basically that is our opportunity and specific character. We are multi-cultural, multi-lingual and that is a huge opportunity for the municipality which we of course take advantage of.*

Minority language official 1
By this, one can understand that the respondent is very positive to what the minorities can give to a society. However, it was not only this municipality where positive opinions were expressed but all respondents had positive views on having minority groups living in their respective municipality.

4.3.4 Future development
This is a category that contains a wide variety of different subjects that were brought up during the interviews. Some of the respondents talked about development in regard to the consultation meetings where the municipalities have the most formal contacts with the minority language associations. In addition quite a lot of the respondents also mentioned how the municipalities’ work with the minorities had developed since the law went into force. When the respondents talked about what needed to be developed a few of them mentioned information and someone mentioned developed cooperation. One respondent pushed for a need to continue to develop interest among children about the minority languages. Last but not least some of the respondents highlighted what projects where developing right now. One respondent talked about a possible project that would be interesting to see.

A few of the respondents said that they had, since their municipalities started to administrate minority languages, continuously developed their consultation meetings and that it overall functioned quite well after just a short period of time. Nevertheless, they highlighted the importance of not just settling but to continue to see how their work and their contacts with minority language associations could further develop. In one of the interviews the respondent said that the consultation meetings now had developed to focus more on long term issues and how to deal with them, which this respondent found to be very positive. However, this has not been the situation for all administrative municipalities.

*We are fully aware that we have worked with this for a long time [...] but these questions have not been prioritized and it has been some kind of civil official decisions. It has not been so much dialogue with the minority groups in the society. [...] By the time I started to work with this I demanded to have politicians [...] represented at our consultation meetings. [...] I think that it feels better now.*

Minority language official 3

Even though it felt better with formalized meetings it was still much to do, this because the trust from the minority groups were damaged from the period when these questions were not prioritized. The meetings now had a chairman that worked at the municipality management
and the meetings felt more serious. This respondent said that there were still much to do but they had been developing and was on the right track.

According to one respondent the awareness of the minority languages had developed and grown in the municipality and these questions had been more in focus in the municipality. This had been positive both for associations which lately had started to request money for events and projects, but also for the general public who now started to realize their rights. Another official stated that when the law had been implemented, the minority languages had been highlighted both in positive and negative terms. The respondent meant that the languages were more visible in the municipality and that this made people want to continue the job to make them even more visible. Also a few of the respondents mentioned how the municipality had developed their work with these issues. In some of the municipalities the languages had been included since before the law in the municipal work, but others said that they now had developed to focus more of the municipal activities to promote minority languages.

Up to now the focus has been on how and what has been developed, but if the focus is shifted to what the respondents brought up regarding what had potential to develop, not only focusing on their municipalities but also at a national level, many mentioned information. If starting at the local municipal level many said, as mentioned before, that it was important to continue with the development work.

*It feels like we just want to continue to develop the interest for the languages and [...] to increase the status for Finnish and Meänkieli, which is the goal with our work. So we want to continue to develop that.* Minority language official 4

Although this response came from a respondent who worked in a municipality which administrated Finnish and Meänkieli it sums up, in a good way, what many of the other respondents also brought up. They mentioned that the most important thing with this issue is to make it more visible and thereby develop the interest for these languages. Someone added that to develop this visibility and the general interest it was important to continue to develop the cooperation between the municipality and the minorities, both at meetings but also with the general public that are not present at consultations.

One of the respondents highlighted the need to develop written information in the minority languages for everyone to be aware of what happened in the municipality, not only regarding these questions but also about the municipal work in general. The respondent said that if they could translate more information that would benefit the whole society because
then more people would be able to get involved in the municipal commitments because this could be improved. According to this official the inhabitants should not be blamed for not involving themselves in the municipal activities, because there is a lack of information in their native language. Another respondent shifted focus to the issue of developing information from the local level to the national one. It would be good to have a magazine with one issue per year that was distributed to all minority language officials. In this magazine all municipalities could add what they had been doing the past year and share important information. This would, according to the respondent, make it easier to find common problems and possibilities and maybe open up for more cooperation not only with the neighboring municipalities but also with others.

The respondents highlighted that projects were being developed in the municipalities. One of the officials said that they had started to develop an elderly care project where volunteers were to talk to the elderly in their native languages. The idea was that the elderly would be able to talk about anything and everything in their own mother tongue which would stimulate them. The project had been tested for a few weeks and the respondent said that the result was positive, but because the budget was already set for this year it would not be possible to carry this out before next year. In one of the interviews a respondent said that the municipalities in Norrbotten wanted to develop "language packages" that would contain information about minority languages and the importance of transmitting the languages to the next generations. These packages would in that case be given to all Finnish-, Meänkieli- and Saami-speaking couples that had children. Another respondent said that they were discussing an EU-project with Norway to strengthen Saami languages by developing new methods. The project would also work with changing attitudes among the majority population within the countries. Last one of the municipalities bordering to Finland said that it would be interesting to develop a Meänkieli-project with all the municipalities along the Torne river valley both on the Swedish and Finnish side of the border would be very interesting to develop.

5. Discussion
In the theoretical framework it was argued by Mühlhäusler (1992), Romaine (2013) and Nettle and Romaine (2000) that the linguistic diversity has been declining for an extended period of time. However, lately the discourse has changed from uniformity to diversity and the value of bilingualism or even multilingualism has been appreciated in the global world where we live. Since the implementation of the administrative municipalities, they have contributed in many ways to give a more positive view on the minority languages. To protect
small languages it is shown that measures needs to be taken from the highest level in society but this is not enough, the minorities themselves need to take action in revitalizing languages in the society, this is supported by Bamgbose (1989). From the interviews and the answers the respondents gave it is possible to see that this is the case not only in theory but also in practice at national as well as at the local level. Because these administrative authorities (municipalities and regions for example) are spread all over Sweden this also opens up for cooperation between the administrative bodies that probably would not occur otherwise. Despite the fact that the respondents found the local or regional collaboration as the most important, they also found the national meetings for minority language officials as an opportunity to develop and learn how others handled the matters. This thesis has been focusing on the view from some of these administrative authorities, namely all seven administrative municipalities that administrate at least two of the official minority languages. Despite the focus of the municipal work all respondents argue that they, in one way or another, can see a will from the users of these languages to revitalize and that they are more proud of their own languages as well as their cultures. By the implementation of the legislation this also give at hand that minority languages are important to the minority cultures as Nettle and Romaine (2000) argue.

Despite the positive result from the new policies one must not forget that the policies are new and there are still challenges to be dealt with. As one of the respondents declared, the minority groups had low confidence in the municipality. Despite this is changing for the better it is still a long way to go. Here language planning theory help to explain how a higher status can be given to minority languages. The minority groups included in this thesis have faced forced relocation, xenophobia and racism as Lantto (2014) and Elenius and Ekenberg (2002) discussed. To some extent they still do as one respondent brought up and mentioned the continued colonization of minorities by the Swedish society. However, since there are now active measures to strengthen the status and popularity as well as to keep these languages alive and spoken. The language planning theory show that with action and collaboration from both the state and the minority language users, as Bamgbose (1989) stresses, change can be achieved. To further develop this work and gain trust from the minority groups it is important to look at the questions raised by Haugen (1974). This regarding whom the users of a language are, what other languages these people speak and also what attitudes people speaking minority languages have towards their language. It is also important to look at attitudes towards minorities. Haugen had ten questions which he said were important to understand when studying languages and the people speaking the languages. In the context of
this thesis the three questions already mentioned were of most importance and thereby they are included and not the others. According to this it is important to focus on the relation between many different things and not just the language in itself.

In relation to this, as Romaine (2000) argues, there are more things that must be done than just focusing at the school and what the school can do for the minority language speakers. There are many older people speaking small languages, which have not been passed on to the younger generations. With this said, the minority groups in the different municipalities included in this thesis did not wish for the same support in all municipalities. The municipalities would rather, together with the minority groups, map the needs in their specific context to be able to support the minority language speakers and their languages. However, culture is something that regards everything and this is not tied to special age groups such as preschool or elderly care. Culture can contain many things, if taking culture into consideration this is a possible way to be able to see the full picture and the context for the minority languages. Collaboration is yet another possibility for seeing the full picture of these issues and also to learn how other municipalities try to capture the overall image of the situation.

About the new policies in Europe as well as in other regions of the world it is possible to say that the focus has shifted from a more laissez faire-point of view to a mutual understanding that diversity matters and that languages and cultures are connected to each other. The implementation of these laws in Sweden also illustrate this and the attempt to revitalize small languages from both the municipal side as well as from the minorities themselves. Hult argues in two articles, (2004) and (2010), that the new focus on language planning by making the minority languages more visible in television broadcasts as well as new academies in support for the minorities. This possibly show that Kloss (1977) was wrong when stating that the majority of languages, used by no more than 50 000 people were to disappear. Since the languages have now been subject to more attention and are more visible in the society and the work with small languages must continue according to Mühlhäusler (1992). Because this is not a single effort but rather something that must go on for a long time since there are things that can be a challenge but also things that might facilitate the situation for these language groups. Quite a few of the respondents mentioned during the interviews that the languages have become more visible and more people came into contact with the municipalities. The message has been spread in the society and the popularity has been increasing for the minority languages. On the other hand, something that a majority of the respondents brought up was the size of the grants, if the grants were larger they could do
As well as the situation with the part time employment and the amount of time the minority language officials can put on the minority languages.

Regarding language diversity and how that is treated within the included municipalities there are some existing and potential conflicts in this field. The respondents argued that all of these conflicts, in the past, present or potentially in the future, had something to do with relations to others and how the minorities had been treated previously in history as supported in theory by Lantto (2014). The conflicts could for example occur because one minority language group was afraid that another was too strong and would have too much influence in the municipality. This could be seen in what Nettle and Romaine (2000) have been writing about regarding conflicts in relation to languages. From the respondents there were three different types of conflicts, first of all the conflict between minority and majority stemming from how the minorities and minority languages were treated during the 19th and 20th century with oppression, prohibition and racial experiments, see for example Pikkarainen and Brodin (2008). Due to this the trust for the majority has been low but together with these new policies the relations are becoming better. However, there are also conflicts between the different minorities, the Finnish-speakers felt discriminated because of attitudes that the Meänkieli-speakers had towards them. This conflict could probably be explained by the fact that the two languages want to be stronger but the Meänkieli-speakers feel that their group have been decreasing for quite some time at the expense of a stronger Finnish-speaking group in that municipality. These Meänkieli-speakers in the same municipality also have a dispute between each other as well because of the lack of a standardized orthography. This had even caused a conflict between the Torne Valley Finnish-groups, to settle which one that speak the "right" Meänkieli which should be the basis for the orthography.

Collaboration between the minority language groups was probably more visible when considering the relations between the different minorities. As some of the respondents said as well as Elenius and Ekenberg (2002) and Pikkarainen and Brodin (2008) state in the theoretical section of this thesis. The minorities share many experiences from nationalistic policies and colonization of the areas where these groups live. Because of this the minorities have in general a good understanding between each other and care for the other groups as well as for their own. The groups also cooperate with the municipalities to develop and becoming more effective and productive. Of course the relations between the municipalities and the minority groups do not look the same but all respondents said that it was either good at the moment or that it constantly became better.
There are quite a few threats that the respondents have stressed during the interviews and the most important is that the languages may not be revitalized among youths which, according to Romaine (2000) is important even though one should not forget other parts of the society. Yet another threat which Axelsson and Sköld (2007) and Rogers and Nelson (2003) brought up is the general out-migration as some of the minority language officials spoke about during the interviews. Due to the lack of jobs in some municipalities families move to other areas and where they settle there might not be any use of the minority language which might be forgotten for the generations to come. This points at another threat that is visible in the table provided by Lewis (2009). There are quite a lot of languages that are spoken by less than 100 000 people. When putting this in relation to what Kloss (1977) argues and look at the situation for the Saami languages (Moseley 2010) the seriousness of the situation is apparent. One cannot forget the threat about the reality that youths, belonging to minority language groups, in some cases have been brought up without getting a chance to learn their own language. This witness of the laissez-faire view on minority languages of which Mühlhäusler (1992) mentions where the majority do not change the situation but in a rather deterministic way have let the minority language speakers decrease without doing anything.

That seems to be the old method to deal with minority languages and it seems like we are in the beginning of a paradigm shift where we now have started to see the value in keeping small cultures and languages and their homes as Romaine (2000) and Mühlhäusler (1992) put it. As mentioned earlier and supported in theory by Bamgbose (1989) it is both the state as well as the minorities that want to have the development which we see today. This will and pride that the minorities are said to show today are perhaps the most important positive outcome and possibility that this work has led to. As a result of this the languages are more visible and this is positive for the language planning as Hult (2010) argues. This visibility is something that is favoring both the languages as well as the municipalities as one respondent expressed it.

The most important part is however maybe what has developed and even more so what the respondents said needed to be developed in the future work with minority languages. Cooperation was one of those things that was mentioned as where progress can be seen and this can still be developed which is supported in theory. However, this was a bit ambiguous since some thought that it was better now than before at the regional meetings, while another respondent wanted the regional minority language official meetings to contain more of what they had done previously to learn more about what others do. One important thing that needs to continue to be developed is the spread of information to make languages more visible both
locally and nationally. Once again Hult (2010) argues for this and the important role of the Swedish Television to spread the minority languages and make them more visible. Another important thing to work with is the majority and majority view on minority language groups and the minorities views on each other in some cases. According to some of the respondents this was extra important and also to further work with issues regarding equal rights and possibilities.

6. Conclusions
In later years a paradigm shift has occurred which has showed a new positive attitude toward minority language speakers. This has been evident from many different places in the world and this thesis also show that Sweden has started to take a responsibility for its official minority languages. There is still a lot to do, as many of the respondents in this thesis have mentioned but it is on the right way. In this thesis the focus has been departing from the view of how the municipalities that administrates at least two languages (Finnish, Meänkieli and Saami languages) see their work and thoughts that they have. What could be concluded from this is that all respondents said that they could see positive effects from the new policies. Especially the attitudes from the minorities themselves which they felt to be more proud and truly pleased about the current development regarding these issues. However, for some languages it might be too late, particularly for some of the Saami languages where the speakers are few and old. This new policy promoting minority languages could save them as second languages. This could be something to develop, like the view of the survival of languages as not one separated part of the ecology but as part of everything else. What is needed is probably a collaboration between many different fields to further help minority languages to survive and grow in popularity.

From the respondents in this thesis it has become more apparent that situation-specific strategies are important to support minority languages at a local level, which the municipalities in this study seem to have. Nevertheless, while local strategies are important it is also of much importance to have national strategies as well. This, not only for the minorities but also for the majority population which must get a chance to get knowledge about the national minorities in Sweden. This should probably be a focus in schools and that is also a part of the issue to see the whole scenario and not just stating the fact that the number of speakers of some of the minority languages are decreasing. It is of greatest importance to know why the situation is like this and not just accepting it. Maybe it would help if the municipalities could offer more written information in the minority languages for example.
Regarding the municipalities, they are doing a good job and they have been appreciated for it as the interest is growing for these questions. The legislation is quite new and some municipalities have come further in their work than others but all of them seem to be moving in the right direction. Some parts of the work seem to function well and others can be developed. A few of the respondents also stated that information can always be developed and maybe it would be good if all municipalities could get reports on ongoing projects from all administrative municipalities in Sweden. Some of the respondents also mentioned that there was not so much specific feedback on the work which the individual municipalities made but rather more overall information. Today it is 75 municipalities and 14 county councils and regions which means that a total of 89 subjects are currently regarded in the legislation. It would probably not be possible to give specific feedback to everyone each year but maybe it would be possible for every subject to get it at least once every fifth or sixth year to show that it is important and that the work is appreciated.

After all this thesis has shown that the development is moving in the right direction and that this matter is taken very seriously in the studied municipalities which is due to the focus on language planning. They are both promoting and protecting as well as keeping a dialogue with the minorities to avoid conflicts so that the minority languages can live together with other minority languages and with the majority because many languages and cultures are a wealth.
7. References


8. Appendix

8.1 Interview guide

Hej, jag heter Hampus Forsman och jag läser det internationella masterprogrammet i Samhällsplanering och utveckling vid Umeå universitet och jag skriver just nu min masteruppsats som handlar om kommuner som är förvaltningsområden för minst två minoritetsspråk. Fokus ligger på konflikter mellan minoritetsgrupperna, särskilt vad gäller fördelning av medel och sårbarhet. För att få reda på detta har jag beslutat att bland annat använda mig av intervjuer och därför jag vill ha en intervju med dig.

De uppgifter du lämnar kommer att kunna finnas med i min uppsats men de kommer att vara anonyma. Du har också rätt att välja att avstå eller avbryta intervjun om du av någon anledning känner för detta, även om jag hoppas att du vill svara på mina frågor. Jag kommer också att spela in intervjun och sedan transkribera (skriva ut) denna. Är det okej för dig? Vill du läsa igenom intervjun innan jag fortsätter med min analys så kan jag skicka över denna när den är färdigtranskriberad.

Är det här okej och vill du genomföra denna intervju?

Informed consent

Till att börja med, kan du kort beskriva ditt arbete och dina arbetsuppgifter?

Hur länge har du jobbat med minoritetsspråk?

Vilka minoritetsspråk är kommunen förvaltningsområde för?
Vet du, på ett ungefär, hur många som talar finska i er kommun?
Vet du, på ett ungefär, hur många som talar meänkieli i er kommun?
Vet du, på ett ungefär, hur många som talar samiska i er kommun?

Varför önskade kommunen bli förvaltningsområde för finska?
Varför önskade kommunen bli förvaltningsområde för meänkieli?
Varför önskade kommunen bli förvaltningsområde för samiska?

Hur är minoritetsspråkens ställning i förhållande till de stora invandrarspråk som finns representerade i kommunen i övrigt (Farsi, arabiska, somali, tigrini, kurdiska etc)?

Hur stort statsbidrag får ni för att vara förvaltningsområde för dessa minoritetsspråk?
Har statsbidragets storlek förändrats över tid?

Hur ser kommunens relation till staten ut i minoritetsspråksfrågan (pengar och krav)?
På vilket sätt hanteras ärenden om fördelningen av pengarna mellan språken?
Finns det några riktlinjer för hur denna fördelning ska göras?

Om inte, tittar ni på hur andra kommuner som är förvaltningsområden för flera minoritetsspråk fördelar pengarna eller använder ni någon annan typ av fördelningsnyckel?
Tas det någon hänsyn till antalet talare av minoritetsspråken?
På vilket sätt?

Hur har antalet personer som talar något av de erkända minoritetsspråken utvecklats sedan ni blev förvaltningsområde?
Hur hanteras väldigt små och sårbara språköar såsom sydsamiska?
Finns det konflikter mellan minoritetsspråken rörande resurser och tjänster etc.? (i de fall kommunen har att hantera minst två minoritetsspråk)
Vilka är det i sådana fall?

Hur får ni reda på de behov de olika minoritetsspråken har?

Vad är det de finsktalande vill ha/får tillgång till?
Vad är det de som talar meänkieli vill ha/får tillgång till?
Vad är det de som talar samiska vill ha/får tillgång till?

Kan du beskriva vad kommunen gör för att underlätta för minoritetsspråken? Ex. förskola, ålderdomshem, fritiden/föreningslivet övrigt?
Hur har detta utvecklats sedan ni blev förvaltningsområde för minoritetsspråken?
Finns det någon konkurrens mellan minoritetsspråken när det kommer till detta?

Samverkar ni över kommungränser/länsgränser eller nationsgränser för att utveckla och vidmakthålla minoritetsspråken?
Bör det utvecklas/underlätta?

Sker det något samarbete med andra kommuner som har samma ansvar som er vad gäller minoritetsspråk?
På vilket sätt samarbetar ni och hur ser ni på samarbetet, bör det utvecklas/underlätta?

I och med att ni blev förvaltningsområde för dessa språk, på vilket sätt upplever ni att ni fått möjlighet att utveckla ert arbete med minoritetsspråk?

Finns det funderingar på att bli förvaltningsområde även för meänkieli/samiska?
Hur skulle det påverka kommunen när det kommer till fördelning av medel till minoritetsspråken?
Ser ni att sårbarheten för något av språken skulle öka?
På vilket sätt skulle kommunen förebygga och förhindra detta?

Har det uppkommit några problem i och med att ni blivit förvaltningsområde? Ex. byråkratiska, juridiska mm?
Finns det något som ni med er erfarenhet skulle vilja utveckla och i så fall vad?
Hur skulle ni då önska att gå tillväga för att utveckla detta?

Hur får ni återkoppling för ert arbete från staten?
Hur får ni återkoppling för ert arbete från minoritetsgrupperna?

Finns några föreningar i kommunen som representerar minoritetsspråket/språken?
Hur arbetar kommunen med dem?

På vilket sätt finns minoritetsspråken företrädda i den kommunala administrationen?

Hur hanteras minoritetsspråken i skolan?
Konflikter i detta?

50
Generationsproblem d v s en äldre generation som är tvåspråkig och en yngre som bara pratar svenska?

Hur bedömer ni hot mot minoritetsspråken?
Hur bedömer ni möjligheter för minoritetsspråken?

Tack för att du har ställt upp på den här intervjun, har du några frågor kan du nå mig på mejl hampus.forsman1990@gmail.com eller telefon 070-5733992.