

## **Inbetweeners?: minority language learners in the primary-lower secondary school transition in Norway**

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In this poster presentation, I will introduce my PhD project in which I aim to shed light on the language choices of individuals having the subjects of Sámi, Kven or Finnish as a second language (SKF) in their transition from primary to lower secondary education. This project is also part of a larger interdisciplinary research project on *Multilingualism in Transitions (MultiTrans)*.

The SKF subjects are educational offerings intended for historical minorities in Norway and are chosen in addition to all the mandatory subjects. Therefore, having an SKF subject at school is a marked choice (Sollid, 2024). However, statistics show student loss in the SKF subjects throughout the educational system. In my study, I use a qualitative approach to examine how the SKF pupils experience and navigate the language choices related to the SKF subjects in the primary-lower secondary school transition. At this stage of the educational system, pupils can for the first time decide for themselves if they want to choose or opt out of these subjects.

I employ nexus analysis (Scollon & Scollon, 2004) as a theoretical-methodological framework to explore the making of choices related to the SKF subjects as a *nexus of practice*, a junction of multiple social practices and contexts. The study draws on ethnographic data (classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and various biographical methods) collected over one year in an urban space in Northern Norway. In this process, I followed the educational transition of six SKF pupils in real-time as they went from one educational level to another. My preliminary findings suggest that the choices related to the SKF subjects at this educational stage involve multiple in-between spaces on different timescales. Among these are: weekly transitions between mainstream classrooms and SKF classes; “one-time” choices in the vertical transitions between educational levels; or choices connecting to the discourses of language shift and language reclamation.

### **References:**

- Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. W. (2004). *Nexus analysis: Discourse and the emerging internet*. Routledge.
- Sollid, H. (2024). Det er kult å lære samisk: Om investering og affekt i samisk språkutdanningspolitikk. *Målbryting*(14). <https://doi.org/10.7557/17.7239>