

Language policies in Saami archaeological research
Perspectives on research published in Finland
Minerva Piha, Nord universitet

I will examine how the Saami languages are used in Saami archaeological research. I will concentrate particularly in Saami terms. These terms are words in Saami languages that refer to Saami archaeological cultural heritage, e.g. types of burials, dwelling sites, sacred sites, artefacts, landscapes etc.

The research questions are: Which Saami terms have been used in research published in Finland? How is the use or non-use of Saami terms motivated? How has the term-use changed from 1970 to 2019? And, ultimately, what does the use and non-use tell about language policies in Saami archaeological research?

The data is collected from archaeological research publications published in Finland. The data includes all the publications that concern Saami archaeology, and I have collected Saami terms from the publications and analyzed them by using content analysis.

In the data, there are 133 Saami archaeological research publications, and in 63 of them there are Saami terms. Altogether 65 Saami terms have been used. The 15 most used terms include North Saami terms such as *sieidi* ‘sacred stone, rock, tree etc.’, *siida* ‘Saami village’ and *goahti* ‘hut’.

Many of the terms have been written in an unspecified Saami language; only a handful of all the research mentions which Saami language has been used. None of the publications include notes on why that particular Saami language has been used. Comments on motivation of use or non-use of Saami terms are not found. In the last 20 decades the use of Saami terms have been more frequent than before the 2000s. However, no clear and systematic language policies on how to use a Saami language cannot be found in Saami archaeological research.