



## Creative Methods and Learning with Justice-Centered Mixed Methods Research: Decolonizing Systemic Inequities with Land Acknowledgments

Anna S. CohenMiller 

Charlotta Maria Langejan 

Nayr Correia Ibrahim 

### To cite this article:

CohenMiller, A. S., Langejan, C., & Ibrahim, N. (2026). Creative methods and learning with justice-centered mixed methods research: Decolonizing systemic inequities with land acknowledgments. *Journal of Mixed Methods Studies*. Vol(13), 49-68. <https://doi.org/10.59455/jomes.83>

**Article Info:** Received: 23 February 2026 Revised: 19 March 2026 Accepted: 29 March 2026

### Abstract

The purpose of this article is two-fold, offering both a methodological and socially meaningful direction in justice-centered research integrating the arts and texting. First, we invite readers into a narrative, creative approach centering social justice, environmental justice, and economic justice as justice-centered mixed methods in an effort towards decolonizing systemic inequities and issues of power. We highlight an arts-based response integrating poetry, photos, and texting as a response to the call to action from Onwuegbuzie and Abrams (2024) for “integrative, transformative approaches to research” that are “socially meaningful and transformative” (p. 218). Second, in this article, we guide readers through the methodological and practical process of developing, expanding, and adapting a land acknowledgment for the Sámi - Indigenous people with territory spanning Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia. Our methods weave together feminist collaborative processes with collaborative autoethnography in data generation, bringing together visual arts through asynchronous research processes, quantizing narrative, Wordcloud, and identification of learning contexts. Findings highlight the relevance of the arts and informal learning within justice-centered mixed methods (including an Appendix with toolkit), noting the need for further research continuing decolonial processes furthering social, environmental, and economic justice and research praxis for Indigenous peoples of the Sámi territory of Sápmi.

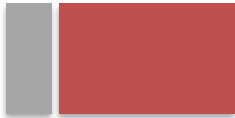
**Keywords:** *Justice-centered mixed methods research, SIDES, arts-based research, informal learning, Saami/Sámi/Sápmi land acknowledgment*

## Creative Methods and Learning with Justice-Centered Mixed Methods Research: Decolonizing Systemic Inequities with Land Acknowledgments

### Introduction

In this article, we bring together justice mixed methods research with arts-based methods to address a topic of systemic inequities and consider practical steps to move forward through the purposeful use of a Sámi land acknowledgment. We incorporate justice-centered mixed methods research (CohenMiller & Grace, 2026) with the SIDES of CDP 2.0 - social justice, inclusion, diversity, equity, and social responsibility (Onwuegbuzie & Abrams, 2024). Through these lenses, we journey into the topic of land acknowledgements, and how people and organizations (e.g., universities, large-scale events) can incorporate them in teaching (and offering informal learning) to acknowledge systems of power and privilege, racism, and colonialization, and take one small step towards positive change through spreading awareness. A goal in this work is to answer Onwuegbuzie and Abrams’s (2024) call to action to push mixed methods forward for justice-centered aims, in particular as relating to systemic inequities and power imbalances. We do this through the weaving together of methodology and practical application.

We expand upon autoethnography and poetry with mixed methods research (Onwuegbuzie, Abrams, S., Abrams, M., CohenMiller, & Bambrola, 2024), weaving visual arts together with informal learning,

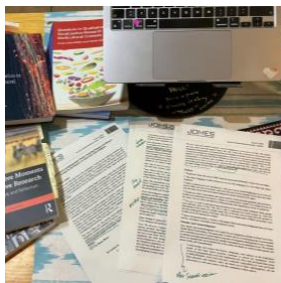


ending with a toolkit for practical use. In the following poem, we introduce the idea of a land acknowledgement for the Sámi people, in a poetic collage developed through found poetry, cultivating words from an article I (Anna) co-wrote for this same journal about the development of a land acknowledgement for the Sámi people at our university (CohenMiller, Ness, & Martin, 2024).

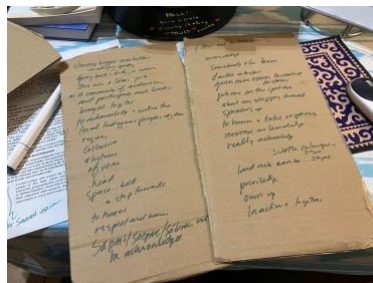
Land acknowledgements are not common practice in Sápmi, although the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (n.d.), which is funded by the country, offers a recognition<sup>1</sup>. Within Sápmi, there are differences, with variances in the breadth and depth of acceptance of ownership and historical presence across Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia. Sápmi, the name for the Sámi People’s traditional territory, also describes as a transnational Indigenous homeland that crosses the Arctic Circle, including substantial areas of the Kola Peninsula in Russia and the northern parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland (Koivurova, 2015). Despite the formal recognition as an Indigenous People, there are still voids between the formal recognition and the realization of rights (The Saami Council, 2025).

As Lynn Butler-Kisber (2019) explains, found poetry is a type of poetic inequity in which the words of participants are drawn out of the transcript into poetic form. I used the words of the article as the participant “voice,” drawing forth words and phrases, adding in my own connecting words and interpretations in parentheses. The process started identifying words and phrasing from the article (CohenMiller, Ness, & Martin, 2024), rewriting, and then rereading and further reducing (Figure 1).

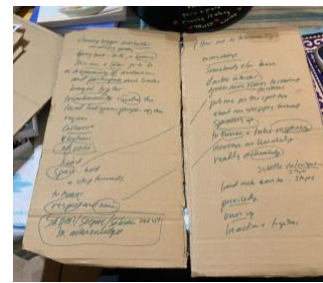
**Figure 1**  
*Found Poetry Step-By-Step*



Article notes



Reducing ideas and writing down key words and phrases

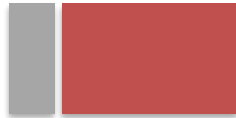


Further reducing the ideas and connecting concepts

*(I hear the) cadence (in) the Sámi yoik.  
Community participants; acknowledge and value  
(Are the Sámi acknowledged and valued?)  
a collective voice, (trying to give) space  
respect(ing) and honor(ing) – Sápmi/Saepme/Sabme  
(Yet, and, also, we’re) double outsider(s)...  
Speaking up (for others). (A chance to take) responsibility  
acknowledge (our) privilege  
own up, (stand up)  
Together (with and for one another)*

In that article, we (Anna, Tove, and Rose from the 2024 article) used mixed methods autoethnographic

<sup>1</sup> “OCA acknowledges the Sámi as one people, and as the Indigenous people of the Fennoscandian region. On the land of this region, Sápmi, the Sámi people have lived since time immemorial, respectfully harvesting from nature by fishing, farming, hunting and following reindeer, amongst other activities. We pay respect to the deep knowledge of land and water, as well as to the spiritual principles and world perspectives that have and continue to inspire Sápmi across all of its communities.” (Office for Contemporary Art Norway, n.d.)



theater. We integrated critical self-reflection to address social justice issues (CohenMiller & Boivin, 2021) along with evocative autoethnography (Bochner & Ellis, 2016). We note that while we aren't Indigenous, we felt (and feel) a responsibility and need to take responsibility, acknowledge our privilege, and offer some type of awareness to colonialization (with which racism and discrimination come hand-in-hand). Sápmi (the land where Sámi have lived for centuries) includes land where our university resides in Bodø, Norway, and spreads across northern Scandinavia and into the Kola Peninsula in Russia. We ended our article with a practical direction, a sample land acknowledgement developed by a Sámi scholar and PhD student at our university, Sandra Rahka. The idea was to offer a tool that others could use and implement as fitting for their contexts. And in this article, we (Anna, Charlotta, and Nayr, of this article) - continue this work, spurred on from the use of the land acknowledgment at TEDxBodø.

### Research Questions

The following three questions guided our overall study:

1. Why do we care about land acknowledgments?
2. Who needs to learn about them and why?
3. What feelings / images come up when thinking about land acknowledgments?

How these questions developed in a collaborative process and how it led to determining our data collection methods is discussed later in the article.

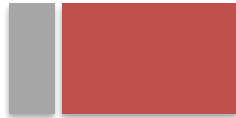
### Method

As part of our process we base our work upon a decolonial lens drawing from CohenMiller and Grace's (2026) justice-centered mixed methods research, to purposefully center and actively advocate for social, environmental, and economic justice. We aim to integrate mixed methods autoethnography to offer greater nuance and understanding, whereby "The goal of integrated mixed methods autoethnography is to integrate the elements in such a way that they complement and enrich each other, leading to a deeper understanding of the research topic" (Onwuegbuzie Abrams, S., Abrams, M., CohenMiller, & Bambrola, 2024, p. 169).

We embed critical self-reflection throughout our processes, asking reflexive questions as a form of the 3As of research (Author, 2024c) to better understand ourselves through awareness, acceptance of one another, with an ultimate goal to affect positive action. Such an approach considers our critical reflection as a form of contemplative inquiry which can enhance our research and ourselves (Janesick, 2016). Critical self-reflection can be seen as echoing the work of emancipatory pedagogue, Paolo Freire who notes that "Critical reflection is also action" (p. 128).

Emphasizing CDP 2.0 and the four SIDES of social justice, inclusion, diversity, equity, and social responsibility (Onwuegbuzie & Abrams, 2024), we aim here to answer the call to action. As set forth by Onwuegbuzie and Abrams (2024), they call for transformative mixed methods research that seeks to "push the boundaries of what mixed methods research can achieve, particularly in terms of addressing issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion" (p. 218).

Moreover, we recognize the importance of vulnerability in our process, such as "sharing about one's limitations in research and/or practice for the purposes of growth and learning for the individual or greater good" (CohenMiller, 2024, p. 5). Therefore, we work to include the "messiness" of research, seeing how "doubting" comes into critical thinking (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1973) as we consider the ways we navigated through our processes of learning individually and together. These steps of embedding vulnerability can also be seen as drawing from evocative autoethnography (Bochner & Ellis, 2016), where we seek to engage with specific details along with feelings and emotions.



## Development of Research Questions and Feminist Collaborative Practices

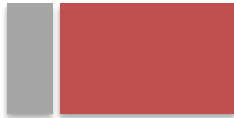
The three of us came together and were each profoundly impacted by the development and use of a land acknowledgment at our university. But why? What was it about the land acknowledgement that touched us? Thus, we found ourselves with ideas to explore that led to specific guiding questions for each of us. Using a text message group, Anna shared a few suggested research questions and ideas. As guided by participatory methods, the aim was to work collectively and cooperatively with one another to determine our questions and processes. I (Anna) started a WhatsApp group with the three of us, after first checking in with Charlotta and Nayr individually so as not to assume they wanted to take part and not to pressure them into joining. These ideas are grounded in justice-centered research practices, such as those seen in the feminist research collaborations I've been a part of and led (e.g., CohenMiller, Dresscher-Lambertus, & Samuels, 2026; Hinton-Smith, 2022).

## Uncovering our Positionality: Our Roles and How We've Used a Land Acknowledgment

We are three transnational women in higher education who have become friends and critical colleagues over the last three years while working at the same university in northern Norway. We are all double outsiders, neither Indigenous nor from Norway. And yet the insider-outsider concept is not as clear-cut as a black and white dichotomy, but instead can incorporate an in-between "space between" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) and also a movement between status roles, shifting along a "spectrum of insider-outsiderness" (CohenMiller & Boivin, 2021). For example, Charlotta and Nayr are in the process of creating a children's trilingual book where a Sámi language, a Maōri language, and Norwegian are side by side. Nayr includes multilingual, decolonial and Indigenous perspectives in her teaching and research of children's literature for Grades 1-7 (Ibrahim, 2020, 2022, 2025, *forthcoming*; Lau, Ibrahim & Destroismaisons, 2025). As such, she has used a multilingual/translanguaging approach to integrating or fusing dual language picture books, where one language is an Indigenous, in this case, northern Sámi, thus meeting the curriculum requirements for addressing Indigenous perspectives and the university's role in supporting the teaching and learning of two Sámi languages. Anna integrates Indigenous and decolonial paradigms and research into her research and writing (e.g., CohenMiller, 2023a, b; 2024a, b; CohenMiller & Boivin, 2021; CohenMiller & Dikanchieva, 2024; CohenMiller & Grace, 2026). We agree with Sonya Corbin Dwyer and Jennifer Buckle (2009) when stated, "I do not think being an insider makes me a better or worse researcher; it just makes me a different type of researcher" (p. 56).

While in different roles (a professor in a center for teaching and learning, an associate professor in the department of education, and a lead administrator in the department of education), we found a connection through our deep commitment to working with students, faculty and communities to address systemic inequities at a local and global level. For Anna, she added the Sámi land acknowledgment to her signature after writing the previous article (CohenMiller, Menten-Ness, & Martin, 2024) and she began incorporating into the programs she leads, talks and workshops. For example, at the kick-off for an inclusive master's program for top students to learn more about research and become a part of the academic community, she incorporates the land acknowledgment as part of the welcome (Aaaneland, 2025; CohenMiller, 2025). As a part of that work, both Charlotta and Nayr have become integral partners in presenting and leading workshops, joining in with the land acknowledgement. Inspired by Anna's sharing of the land acknowledgement, Nayr added the land acknowledgement to her signature, shared it with her networks, for example, in the Association for Researchers on Children's Literature in English in Norway (ARCLLEN), and will introduce it to her classes as a lead-in to the literature courses.

The land acknowledgment became a part of all our work. For example, in Charlotta's role, she both added the land acknowledgement to her email signature and likewise integrated it into events she led. For example, in opening the Summer School (Nord University, 2025), she began with the Sámi land acknowledgement.



## Uncovering a Process: The Sámi Land Acknowledgement at TEDxBodø

After a year of working together to develop TEDxBodø, on October 24, 2025, we (Anna and Charlotta) led the welcome to the event at the public library in Bodø, Norway (Figure 2, 3). We had developed a PowerPoint to guide us through the event, collaborating, acting as master of ceremonies, literally and figuratively sharing the stage with one another and others. As part of that process, we made decisions about the layout of the PowerPoint slides, how we were going to introduce each speaker, and how to thank our sponsors, partners and audience. One decision we made was automatic; we included the Sámi land acknowledgment. It was actually one of the first slides we created, as we considered its inclusion as a central aspect to working in the area and showing respect for the Indigenous peoples. Moreover, when we had first chosen the date for the TEDx event, we purposefully chose Sámi Language Week Giellavahkku – Giellavahkko (The Sámi Parliament, n.d.), to help draw attention to the important social, environmental and economic justice issues.

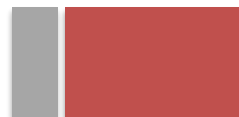
### Figure 2

*Anna and Charlotta Introducing the Sámi Land Acknowledgment at TEDxBodø (Fagerbakk, 2025)*



As we began our introduction, we could look out and see Nayr in the audience, poised to offer her TEDx talk. Within the first minute of walking onstage, we invited the audience as participants to join, together, to read the Sámi land acknowledgment (Figure 3):

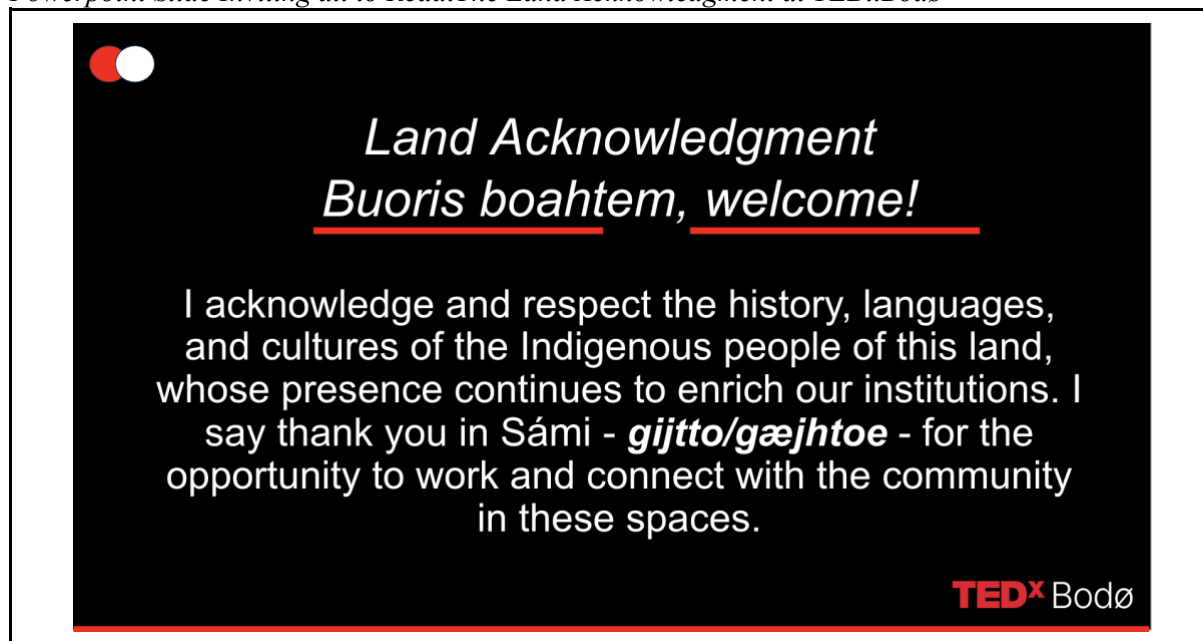
...today we will start us off with a land acknowledgment, and this is an opportunity and respect where we are in our space and places and recognize our privilege to be here together today to learn with one another. Please follow along with the words on the screen that Charlotta will



lead us in

**Figure 3**

*Powerpoint Slide Inviting all to Read The Land Acknowledgment at TEDxBodø*



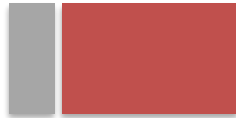
### Seeing a Praxis: Informal Learning and the Land Acknowledgment at TEDxBodø

Although we (Anna and Charlotta) had been using the land acknowledgment since 2024. At this point, it was unique to invite an entire audience to read with us. Likewise, bringing it to a context outside of the university extended the visibility of the attention to Sámi peoples, and an extension of informal learning in another context. We hadn't initially planned to have the audience read along with us, instead we had many conversations around who was the "right" person to read it. What would be signalling to others by our choice? If we had someone identifying as a white Norwegian man read it, what would that say about colonialization? If we had a Sámi student read it, would that signal that only someone who is of an Indigenous background could read the land acknowledgment? In the end, it turned out that all our choices of people weren't available. Thus, the result was audience participation, which appeared to offer a chance to move away from what Goffman (1959) refers to as "audience segregation". Reflecting back, we now consider this approach to be the ideal symbolic statement to make with others, to draw in awareness and show how we are all affected and part of the space we are embodying.

These types of questions of who is involved in the reading of the land acknowledgment relate to the field of adult education and nonformal and informal learning. Sharan Merriam and Lisa Baumgardner (2020) explain of the three types of learning traditionally classified in adult education, that while formal education takes place typically in higher education for credit, nonformal and informal learning occur in other spaces:

Nonformal learning refers to organized activities outside educational institutions, such as those found in community organizations, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, and voluntary associations. Informal learning refers to the experiences of everyday living from which we learn something. (p. 24)

Thus, the use of the Sámi land acknowledgement as part of an event taking place at a university institution, lies at the intersection of formal, nonformal and informal learning. The intent of the inclusion of the land acknowledgement is not the specific learning that is being taught, however as it is within a learning context, its inclusion can be seen as formal learning. Whereas when the land acknowledgement



is used within a learning environment outside of higher education, such as at the TEDx event, where the purpose is to convey “ideas worth sharing” (TED.com, n.d.), its inclusion could be seen as nonformal or informal learning for audiences. When an event or organization has as specific purpose to share information with the intent for audiences to learn, we can see the space as a site of informal learning, one that effects our sense of gendered identities (CohenMiller, Koo, Collins, & Lewis, 2020) as well as racialized positioning. And as a purpose of a TED event is to share information and learning, we can look at a site of informal learning. Thus, what audiences and participants saw (a PowerPoint slide with the land acknowledgment written on it), what we hear (the acknowledgment read aloud), and exposed to (participating in read it), influence our understanding of the world around us and our own belonging.

### Unpacking Reactions

**Responses to the land acknowledgment from the organizing team.** When we had developed the PowerPoint draft, we shared it with our full organizing team. However, with everyone’s busy schedule, many hadn’t noticed the land acknowledgment until we invited the audience to read it with us. This point was jokingly noted in a debriefing meeting we had with our full team of six. Someone in the group noted how I (Anna) managed to lead the team in a “flat” manner - where everyone was brought in to make decisions together. This person laughed and said that sometimes on the team texting thread, I would write and say, “what do you all think?” And he would get worried thinking, “oh no, this will never be resolved!” but then it would be sorted out. Yet, there was one point he noted that was different. And it was the inclusion of the land acknowledgment; he said I hadn’t asked others about it being added.

*So, why didn’t I ask others about that?* If I critically self-reflect on it, I was advocating for its use, standing up for its inclusion, and unintentionally finding a back door to embed it within the event.

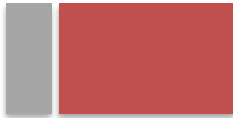
I find myself wondering about this comment now. In the team of six of us, two of us identify as women. Considering how social inequalities including gendered inequities exist in all societies would the inclusion of the land acknowledgment have felt differently or have been received differently if we (Anna and Charlotta) identified as men? The inclusion of the land acknowledgement was a purposeful step towards justice-centered practice, what Onwuegbuzie and Abrams would explain of critical dialectical pluralism, which “addresses local practical needs, particularly in culturally progressive ways that engage with and support marginalized, oppressed, underserved, and/or silenced communities to bring about social change and to foster social justice” (p. 208).

**Reactions from the audience.** Multiple audience members came up to us (Anna and Charlotta) after the event to thank us, and many emphasized how interesting it was that we had included the land acknowledgment. They suggested they appreciated it, noting that it was new for them. Later that day, our organizing team was directed to a Facebook post from a local celebrity, Rick Kirkman. He included a couple photos of the event, a video from his own TEDx talk a few years before, and one other video - of our welcome and land acknowledgement. The attention to posting the communally spoken land acknowledgement suggested its impact, and potential value to the community.

The combination of these reactions from our team members and audience is what led to the idea for this article. I (Anna) contacted editor in chief of JOMES to see of their interest for a potential follow-up to the original article about the development of the Sámi land acknowledgment, and we were given an encouraging response.

### Texting as Research Practice

Our team primarily collaborated with one another via text message, forming a WhatsApp group to share our thoughts, feelings, and images. Texting for researchers and participants is a direction to work with limited time and access to other ways to engage. Text messages as part of research are a growing area,



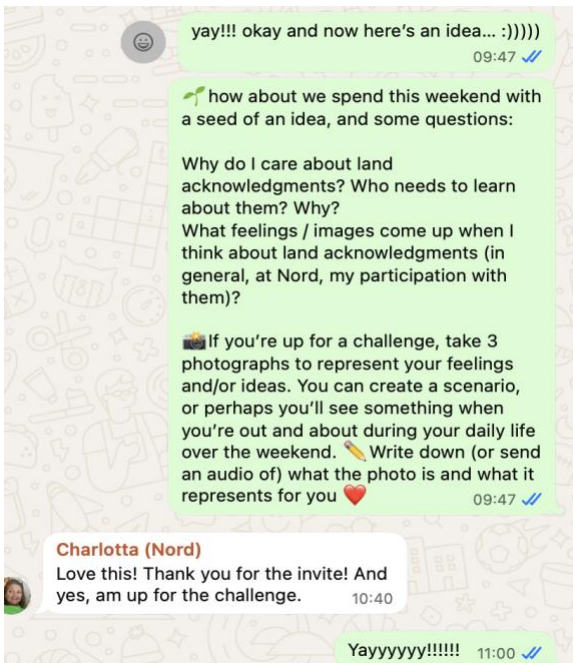
such as a means to facilitate voice and access for participants to communicate with researchers (CohenMiller, Schnackenberg, & Demers, 2020) or as a means for data mining (Nordstrom, Maheshwari, Quenneville, & Shen-Tu, 2025). For us, choosing to use a texting group meant that we weren't tied to the timeframe that emailing typically takes place, and could use an asynchronous flexible process – a “rigid flexibility” (CohenMiller, Schnackenberg, & Demers, 2020). Not being bound to office hours meant we could explore these ideas and feelings when we were out walking, when we were with our family, and in town. Working beyond office hours can conflict with typical Norwegian separation of work and personal spheres, however as each of us are *from* different cultural contexts and have lived across regions spanning Europe, USA, Africa, South America, and Central Asia, the idea of working from our phone even on a weekend was agreed upon for all.

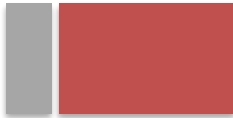
Starting off the first text message to the group was an invitation about how we might proceed:

Hi lovelies! Here's our new group for working on the land acknowledgment article with a culmination at TEDxBodø. the idea here is not to add \*more (stress/deadlines), but instead to go with the flow of the feelings and explore our thoughts throughout the last year or so hearing, being a part of, and implementing the use of a land acknowledgement at Nord/Bodø. To open a space in our minds and hearts individually and together.

Considering my background in the arts-based research (CohenMiller, 2018, 2022, 2025), I immediately thought about ways we could incorporate visual arts to help us better understand our own experiences, thoughts and ideas, as well as help one another connect in understanding each other's ideas. Thus, I proposed the following questions (Table 1). The questions along with photographs were a means for us to start thinking and feeling and seeing through a lens of embodied learning (Tobin & Tisdell, 2015) and embodied inquiry (CohenMiller, 2025; Leigh & Brown, 2021).

**Table 1**  
*Research Invitation to Participate in Collaborative Research*

Questions	Text Message Screenshot
Why do I care about land acknowledgments? Who needs to learn about them? Why?	
What feelings / images come up when I think about land acknowledgments (in general, at the university, my participation with them)?	
<p>📷 If you're up for a challenge, take 3 photographs to represent your feelings and/or ideas. You can create a scenario, or perhaps you'll see something when you're out and about during your daily life over the weekend. ✍️ Write down (or send an audio of) what the photo is and what it represents for you ❤️</p>	



**Data Generation as Collaborative Process**

Part of our process of collaboration can be seen in how the data was generated. Here we purposefully use the term “data generation” instead of data collection. In data collection, there can be a misconception that data exists “out there,” to be collected by the researcher. Yet all data is “generated” or “created” by the researchers, by participants, and in this case, by us as participant-researchers. This shift to the use of the term data generation aligns with justice-centered mixed methods practices, pointing to “the relational aspect of working with data” (CohenMiller & Grace, 2026), echoing the emphasis in CDP mixed methods research (Onwuegbuzie & Abrams, 2024). The first set of data generation came from Charlotta. She shared the following responses via our texting group followed by a photo of her family from that day on November 10th, 2025, (Figure 4):

**Figure 4**  
*Charlotta Offers Her Thoughts*

On Saturday, I walked from Bodøsjøen to City Nord. As always, I paused at a certain point on the road to take in the soil, the sun, the mountains, and the sea—except when the darkness feels too heavy. “What do they mean to me?” I asked myself. An inner voice answered: belonging and roots.

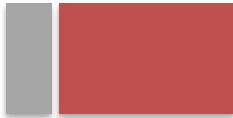
A few minutes later, I felt a hand on my shoulder. One of my sons had quietly cycled after me. Soon, another joined us. In that moment, I thought: they are my belonging and roots in human connection. I took a photo—two of my three sons, and the place where I feel I belong. Of course, I’m a guest here. It’s not my land. But I’m allowed and welcome to be part of it.

During the first break at TEDxBodø someone asked: “Charlotta, that land text—what was that about?” I tried to give a short answer but struggled to capture its depth. I gave (some kind of) answer - and the person said: “So it’s a sign of respect?”. “Yes,” I replied. “It’s a sign of respect.”

Why do I care about land acknowledgements? Because they are part of a healing process. Indigenous people here have faced discrimination and persecution. It’s everyone’s responsibility to help heal. A few weeks ago, we held a thematic day for our MAGLU students. One speaker—a mother of a boy with severe autism—shared how much her son loved soccer and had volunteered at Aspmyra, FK Bodø/Glimt’s home field. He welcomed people, even though speaking was hard for him. On of these occasions, a grown man looked at him and asked: “Are you Saami or what?” Imagine that—from an adult, in Bodø, in Sápmi.



We know how attitudes form early, often passed down like social genes. If we really care about justice, we must give it a voice—even through something as “simple” as a land acknowledgement (which isn’t simple, it’s profound). I would love to see Nord University lead this process in Bodø and



Nordland. Could we get a reporter to write about it? If not, maybe we write the piece ourselves. Who needs to learn about land acknowledgements?

Just free-wheeling here... 😊 These are just spontaneous thoughts. Here are the photos from Bodøsjøen with my sons.

As part of a collaborative and cooperative collective online space, we engaged in some conversation and reaction to one another's texts. For example, a response to Charlotta's photo with a response by Anna (Figure 5):

**Figure 5**  
*Cooperative Space through Text Response*



Anna was the next to share about her data generation related to the prompts. While Charlotta punctuated her words with a photo at the end, Anna began with photos, expanding upon the initially suggested three photos. She included a short explanation to a few days after on Tuesday, November 11th, 2025, followed by further explanation and narrative the following day (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**  
*Anna Offers Her Thoughts*

Here are my photos, from today as over the weekend I couldn't get myself settled into the questions \*enough. The words will come later but for now when I thought of a land acknowledgment and what it meant to me, I saw patterns and shapes and colors and contrast





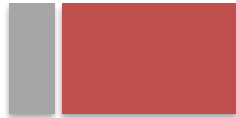
Okay, here are some thoughts that are coming to mind this morning.

I don't yet feel comfortable in saying and using the land acknowledgment even though I've been using now for almost two years at events and presentations. But something was different at TEDxBodø and I think it was because I was doing it with you, @Charlotta Knowing that I wasn't alone in trying to show an important direction to be inclusive, and like you said @Nayr, to be respectful.

It reminds me a bit of taking a pause, in general. A secular prayer of sorts of recognition and thanks. I remember going to a conference once led at a religious institution. When we went to eat, everyone paused, lowered their heads and...paused. Nothing said outloud, likely to not separate any of us from one another. And that pause felt so profound, so different too.

As I think more about the land acknowledgements in Canada and New Zealand that I know of, they are deeply meaningful as well to note the privilege and move towards action to doing something to make up for being on others' lands/ spaces, colonizing with language and bodies.

So I wonder, is the land acknowledgement \*enough?



No. But it is something and starting somewhere is important.

Which then makes me think about the power of showing a presence, like the linguistic landscape @Nayr. For more than a couple decades I've been interested in how popular culture influences us...and language is a part of our popular life, in signs, in signatures, in meetings. So, maybe it is \*enough for now.

After Anna texted the set of photos, Nayr shared that same day focusing on just words. She linked many ideas from her time at the university and in the city, as well as related to her earlier experiences traveling:

Hei... no photos from this weekend but I was asked to write about the linguistic landscape of Bodø early on when I arrived (2019) and I was surprised how little Saami I saw in the landscape... I suddenly realized that it's still rather hidden to the naked eye - you need to make an effort to find it - of course there's the university and I have added Saami to my email signature (thanks to you Anna)!

I first experienced the land acknowledgment in Canada at Queens university on the project Canope - it was an interesting experience and I wondered why we didn't have one in Norway - now we do! But I always feel rather uncomfortable - imposter syndrome, I guess! I'm not Sámi or indigenous - I don't have that experience or background or pain. In actually a descendant of a colonizing country - so how legitimate am I? Double non-belonging - I'm not Norwegian either - but recognition, respect is key!<sup>2</sup>

## Results

### **Unfolding: How the Land Acknowledgement Has Been Used**

When we first started thinking of the next steps for the Sámi land acknowledgment and our research, the first step was to identify how it has been used. Through a reflective process, we sat down to try identifying details of how we have used the land acknowledgment, such as the type of event, the date, who read it each time, and the other people involved. Although we aren't able to articulate most of the details from the events we were involved in, there is one case where we don't have all the information about the people involved. Likewise, it's possible that the land acknowledgement has been used in another instance that we're not aware of. Part of the purpose of itemizing these details is to consider the influence of audience members and/or participants in the space being exposed to the practice of reading and/or seeing/listening to it (Table 2).

In June 2024, the land acknowledgement was published as a sample use (CohenMiller Ness, & Martin, 2024). During that year, it was used four times and read by different people each time. I (Anna) invited various people to read it, starting with the coordinator of a Sámi research center, followed by other coordinators of the program I was leading. Once I read it at the beginning of a talk I gave at an online event. In 2025, the Sámi land acknowledgement was read seven times, including expanding its use beyond events I led, into the welcoming for another university event (which included international students as well), by another faculty members, and for the first time at a public community event. We can estimate that approximately 340 people, including students from our university and others, faculty members, staff members and community members locally have heard the Saami land acknowledgement. One particularly salient feature was a faculty member (from a Canadian context who is used to land acknowledgments) who heard it at a teaching event and thanked us for developing it and asked to use it in her lecture about Saami health.

**Table 2**  
*Sámi Land Acknowledgement Learning Contexts*

Date (reverse chronological order)	Event	In person	Online	Who read the land acknowledgment	People in the audience/ participants (approx. no.)	Student	Faculty members	Staff members	Community members
Oct 2025	TEDxBodø	x		Charlotta, invitation to full audience to read along	100	x	x	x	x
June 2025	Summer School opening	x		Charlotta (asked Anna to use it after seeing her use it elsewhere)	50	x	x	x	
May 2025	Lecture for nursing students		x	Faculty member lead.	20	x			
May 2025	Ed. Prof. development		x	Anna	40		x	x	
April 2025	Master's Program Research Seminar III	x		Nayr	10	x	x	x	
Feb 2025	Master's Program Welcome	x		Coordinator	15	x	x	x	
Oct 2024	Master's Program graduation	x		Coordinator	15	x	x	x	
Aug 2024	Master's Program Research Seminar III	x		Coordinator	15	x	x	x	
April 2024	Teaching conference workshop		x	Anna	50	x	x		
Jan 2024	Master's Program welcome	x		Lead for the university Sámi research center	25	x	x	x	
<b>Learning: 340 people</b>									



**Figure 7**

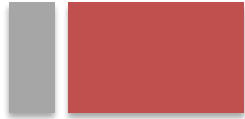
*Wordcloud And Table Of The 30 Most Frequently Used Words In Our Texting Narratives*

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage	Similar Words
land	4	15	2,98%	land, lands
acknowledgment	14	11	2,19%	acknowledgement, acknowledgements, ackn...
feel	4	7	1,39%	feel, feelings, feels
nord	4	7	1,39%	nord
bodø	4	5	0,99%	bodø
part	4	5	0,99%	part
paused	6	5	0,99%	pause, paused
photos	6	5	0,99%	photo, photos
something	9	5	0,99%	something
belonging	9	4	0,80%	belong, belonging
like	4	4	0,80%	like, likely
respect	7	4	0,80%	respect, respectful
sons	4	4	0,80%	son, sons
thoughts	8	4	0,80%	thought, thoughts
write	5	4	0,80%	write, write
asked	5	4	0,80%	asked
love	4	4	0,80%	love, loved, lovelies
now	3	4	0,80%	now
one	3	4	0,80%	one
think	5	4	0,80%	think
weekend	7	4	0,80%	weekend
care	4	3	0,60%	care
enough	6	3	0,60%	enough
even	4	3	0,60%	even
landscape	9	3	0,60%	landscape
landscape	9	3	0,60%	landscape
saami	5	3	0,60%	saami
tedxbodø	8	3	0,60%	tedxbodø
university	10	3	0,60%	university
answer	6	3	0,60%	answer, answered
come	4	3	0,60%	come, coming

As part of any data interpretation are decisions. This is particularly important when we think about the ways we can embed justice-centered decision making into mixed methods research (CohenMiller & Grace, 2026). One such decision was in our transcription of the text in the WhatsApp group. While retaining the exact words spoken or written can be a means to allow voice of participant-researchers to come through, it can also diminish the voice through distracting and removing power from the content. The decisions in translation in research practices emphasize how to embed and consider such justice-centered decisions (see Eng’s Insight from Practice, in CohenMiller & Grace, 2026). As such, in the text messages, we made minor edits for clarity, including removing emoji’s that did not transfer to the Word document and a correction of spelling.

What notes are emphasized? Which ideas? *Paused. Belonging. Respect.* Those words jump out. Almost as if they are speaking to us, *what is important about a land acknowledgement?* A chance to pause. A coming together of belonging. An opportunity to show respect. So, what can that mean in looking through, reading, taking in our narratives, the set of dates and people included in reading with and for the land acknowledgment? It means a consideration of what is said, and what is included, and what is not there.

And lastly, but perhaps most importantly, we are left with questions that need to remain open. *Whose voices are missing? What perspectives are still needed? What are the next steps for moving forward to decolonize spaces and places and how, if any, can a land acknowledgment take a role to affect this change?* It’s not a “neat” ending, it’s messy, as people are, and research. And it’s a continuing unfolding process of justice-centered praxis – of research and informal learning.



### **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation**

*...how can we become more critically self-reflective  
to support these practices and ultimately empower others  
and ourselves to do the important work needed to  
make our societies and world more just?*

- emphasis in original, CohenMiller, 2023, p. 46

In conclusion, the integration of justice-centered mixed methods research with the weaving together of texting and arts-based methods with particular attention to CDP offers a powerful direction for unpacking systemic inequities through informal learning practices. Through our autoethnographic narratives and photos, we have seen ways to continue the SIDES of CDP to embed social justice, inclusion, diversity, equity, and social responsibility into the topic of Indigenous land acknowledgments.

The implications of this study provide significant potential for justice-centered mixed methods research and the arts to better understand societal injustices and determine potential steps to influence positive change. Such research practice brings together theoretical frameworks with real-world applications that can guide work with communities.

At the heart of our work in this article is twofold, a texting, arts-based response to the call to action from Onwuegbuzie and Abrams (2024) for “integrative, transformative approaches to research” that are “socially meaningful and transformative” (p. 218). And with this response, further research is needed to further understand questions around how best to honor and respect the Indigenous peoples and lands as individuals, as higher education institutions, and as society, while recognizing such differences as generational, geographic, and linguistic practices. And secondly, this article offers a practical set of tools (and toolkit in the Appendix) for all committed to re-envisioning spaces and seeking to decolonize higher education and beyond to offer awareness, respect, and honor in a land acknowledgment as the first step towards meaningful change.

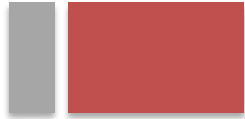
### **Appendix**

#### **Toolkit for Using a Land Acknowledgment**

We have developed this short toolkit for others interested in developing a land acknowledgment for themselves and/or their related institutions.

1. Put together a team of interested individuals.
2. Research the topic locally to confirm that a land acknowledgment hasn't already been created for the area.
3. Reach out to the local Indigenous communities to assess their interest to connect and collaborate and join the team.
4. Draft a land acknowledgement and share with team members and others who would have diverse perspectives and insight into the cultural contexts. (See below for a sample land acknowledgement.)
5. Determine which languages the land acknowledgement should be translated into, and which to use in which contexts.
6. Include the land acknowledgement in written spaces (e.g., email signatures, websites).
7. Determine who will speak the land acknowledgement (e.g., events, workshops) recognizing that each choice of person highlights a particular perspective and can appear to devalue others. Consider having everyone read aloud together.

#### *Sample Land Acknowledgement*



*I acknowledge and respect the history, languages, and cultures of the Indigenous people of this land, whose presence continues to enrich our institutions. I say thank you in [the local language - \_\_\_\_\_ - ] for the opportunity to work and connect with the community in these spaces.*

**Funding:** No external funding was received.

**Informed Consent Statement:** The content of this article is co-written by the three authors without any additional “human subjects.”

**Data Availability Statement:** For supporting data regarding the findings, please email the first author.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

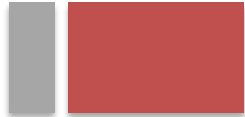
**AI Support:** No AI tools were used.

#### **Short Bios:**

**Anna CohenMiller**, PhD, works as a Full Professor at Nord University (Norway) and is a TEDx speaker, multi-award-winning arts-based researcher, and transformative educational leader who focuses on addressing issues of equity and inclusion in higher education internationally. CohenMiller specializes in demystifying research, such as in texts to empower communities in creating meaningful, sustainable positive change. Select recent books include: *Justice-Centered Mixed Methods Research* (The Guildford Press), *Questions in Qualitative Social Justice Research in Multicultural Contexts* (Routledge), and *Transformative Moments in Qualitative Research: Method, Theory, and Reflection* (Routledge).

**Charlotta Maria Langejan** is a Senior Advisor at Nord University in Norway and a trained teacher from Finland. Her work focuses on teacher education recruitment, diversity and retention, and the development of collaborative initiatives between universities, municipalities, and external partners. Her interests include educational policy, multilingual education, and strengthening pathways into the teaching profession.

**Nayr Correia Ibrahim** is Associate Professor of English Subject Pedagogy at Nord University in Norway. Her research interests include early language learning, learning to learn, bi/multilingualism, language and identity, children’s literature, children’s language rights.



## References

- Aaneland, T. E. (2025, December 19). *Nord Master Plus*. <https://www.nord.no/en/study-programmes/ta-en-master-ved-nord-universitet/nord-master-plus>
- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind*. Basic Books.
- Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (2016). *Evocative autoethnography: Writing lives and telling stories*. Routledge.
- Butler-Kisber, L. (2019). Poetic Inquiry. In *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-Based Perspectives* (2nd ed., pp. 95–113). SAGE.
- CohenMiller, A. S. (2018). Visual arts as a tool for phenomenology. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-19.1.2912>
- CohenMiller, A. (2022). Asynchronous online photovoice: Practical steps and challenges to amplify voice for equity, inclusion, and social justice. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 23(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-22.2.3860>
- CohenMiller, A. S. (2023a). Empowering qualitative social justice researchers and communities in multicultural contexts. In D. Court, R. K. Abbas, Z. Kamal, & R. Abu Much (Eds.), *Social Justice in Multicultural Contexts* (pp. 30–44). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- CohenMiller, A. S. (2023b, October 18). Arts-based decolonial research to meaningfully connect with lived experience. *Northern Conference for Saami and Indigenous Peoples*. Bodø, Norway.
- CohenMiller, A. (2024a). *Transformative moments in qualitative research: Method, theory, and reflection*. Routledge.
- CohenMiller, A. S. (2024b, April 3). Empowering researchers through stories: indigenous inquiry, decolonial research, emancipatory learning and the arts. *Adventus International Conference: Education, Bible, and Society: Contemporary Innovations, Challenges, and Opportunities*. Cernica, Romania.
- CohenMiller, A. S. (2025, October 14). *Building Research Futures: Celebrating Achievement and Looking Ahead – PLUS*. <https://site.nord.no/plus/building-research-futures-celebrating-achievement-and-looking-ahead/>
- CohenMiller, A. S., & Boivin, N. (2021). Uncovering the spectrum of insider-outsiderhood. In *Questions in qualitative social justice research in multicultural contexts* (pp. 73–95). Routledge.
- CohenMiller, A. S., Koo, S., Collins, N., & Lewis, J. L. (2020). EXPOsing gender in science: A visual analysis with lessons for gender awareness and science diplomacy. *Gender, Technology and Development*, 24(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718524.2019.1695519>
- CohenMiller, A. S., Schnackenberg, H., & Demers, D. (2020). Rigid flexibility: Seeing the opportunities in “failed” qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920963782>
- CohenMiller, A., & Dikanchiyeva, L. (2024). Healing inquiry: Collaborative practice, artistic interpretation, and a decolonial response to living in and through war. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical*

*Methodologies.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/15327086241250075>

- CohenMiller, A., Ness, T. M., & Martin, R. (2024). A mixed methods autoethnographic theater: Extending pedagogy and research through the development of a Sámi land acknowledgment. *Journal of Mixed Methods Studies*, 2024(9), 253–262. <https://doi.org/10.59455/JOMES.2024.9.7>
- CohenMiller, A., Dresscher-Lambertus, N., & Samuel, N. (2026). Creativity as wayfinding: Towards a transformative artful leadership praxis. In K. , Pithouse-Morgan, D. Pillay, C. Mitchell, R. Berkey, & A. Hart (Eds.), *Handbook of Arts-Based Educational Research*. Bloomsbury Publishers.
- CohenMiller, A. S., & Grace, K. (2026). *Justice-centered mixed methods research*. The Guilford Press.
- Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 54–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105>
- Fagerbakk, L. (2025, October 31). *TEDX er en fantastisk arena [TEDx is a fantastic arena]*. Nord University. [https://www.nord.no/aktuelt/tedx-er-en-fantastisk-arena?fbclid=IwY2xjawR5BBRleHRuA2FlbQlXMAbZcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzIxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeYPNA50xW0jMg7jbogQES5wZbQHMcW6vZPISlWsak3KrkCJbA3GOkzTE4ahA\\_aem\\_NiwosbP557mHiV64BTgn5Q](https://www.nord.no/aktuelt/tedx-er-en-fantastisk-arena?fbclid=IwY2xjawR5BBRleHRuA2FlbQlXMAbZcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzIxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeYPNA50xW0jMg7jbogQES5wZbQHMcW6vZPISlWsak3KrkCJbA3GOkzTE4ahA_aem_NiwosbP557mHiV64BTgn5Q)
- Goffman, E. (1959). *Presentation of self in everyday life*. Doubleday.
- Hinton-Smith, T., Mazanderani, F., Samuel, N., & CohenMiller, A. (2022). Co-creating cross-cultural approaches to gender mainstreaming: Experiences and challenges in developing an interdisciplinary, international feminist knowledge-exchange research approach. In A. S. CohenMiller, T. Hinton-Smith, F. Mazanderani, & N. Samuel (Eds.), *Leading change in gender and diversity in higher education from margins to mainstream* (pp. 259–279). Routledge.
- Ibrahim, N. (2020). The Multilingual Picturebook in English Language Teaching: Linguistic and Cultural Identity. *Children's Literature in English Language Education*, 8(2), pp. 12-38. <https://clejournal.org/article-1-nayr-ibrahim/>
- Ibrahim, N. C. (2022). Examining a Northern Sámi-Norwegian Dual Language Picturebook in English Language Education Through a Critical Translingual-Transcultural Lens. *Intercultural Communication Education*, 5(3), 105–124. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ice.v5n3.847>
- Ibrahim, N. C. (2025). Pedagogical Mediations of a Dual Language Northern Sámi-Norwegian Picturebook in English Language Education: An Indigenous, Environmental, and Translingual Perspective. In Hartmann, E. C. *Creative Readings of Multilingual Picturebooks: International and Transdisciplinary Perspectives* (137-154). Routledge.
- Janesick, V. J. (2016). “Stretching” exercises for qualitative researchers. In “*Stretching*” *Exercises for Qualitative Researchers* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Koivurova, T., Masloboev, V., Hossain, K., Nygaard, V., Petrétei, A., & Vinogradova, S. (2015). Legal Protection of Sami Traditional Livelihoods from the Adverse Impacts of Mining: A Comparison of the Level of Protection Enjoyed by Sami in Their Four Home States. *Arctic Review on Law and Politics*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.17585/arctic.v6.76>
- Lau, S. M. C., Ibrahim, N. C., & Destroismaisons, F. (2025). Promoting Reading for In-Depth Learning for Critical Literacy and Interculturality. *Children's Literature in English Language Education*. 13(1), 1-29.



- Nordstrom, A., Maheshwari, A., Quenneville, R., & Shen-Tu, G. (2025). Combining text mining and manual thematic analysis to understand participant experiences with surveys. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069251378860>
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2024). On quantitizing revisited. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1421525. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1421525>
- The Saami Council. (2025). *The state of the Sápmi*. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dfb35a66f00d54ab0729b75/t/68b60ae4f71fb454d6e764ce/1756760804737/The+State+Of+Sa%CC%81pmi+01:2025.pdf>
- The Sámi Parliament. (n.d.). *Giellavahkku - Samisk språkuke*. Retrieved February 22, 2026, from <https://giellavahkku.org/>
- TED.com. (n.d.). *TED: ideas change everything*. Retrieved January 6, 2026, from [www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)
- TEDxBodø (2025). [www.tedxbodo.com](http://www.tedxbodo.com)
- Tobin, J. A., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). “I Know Down to My Ribs”: A Narrative Research Study on the Embodied Adult Learning of Creative Writers. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 65(3), 215–231. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07417136155749>
- UN Regional Information Centre for Western Europe. (2021, March 21). *Sámi: We are the natives of this country*. United Nations. <https://unric.org/en/sami-we-are-the-natives-of-this-country/>