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Šárka Svobodná

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**Russian Identity: Minority Schools in
Contemporary Estonia**

Diplomová práce

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Abstrakt

Práce *Ruská identita: Menšinové školství v současném Estonsku* pojednává o ruském středním školství v Estonsku v období od rozpadu Sovětského svazu do roku 2012. Zaměřuje se na dvě oblasti, které významně ovlivňují formování národní identity ruských studentů žijících v Estonsku: na vyučovací jazyk a výuku dějepisu. Co se týče první oblasti, cílem práce je ukázat, jak estonská vláda implementuje reformu požadující 60 % výuky v estonštině a jak je tato reforma přijímána ruskými studenty a jejich učiteli. Co se týče druhé oblasti, práce zkoumá vnímání sovětského období ruskými studenty v kontrastu s „oficiální“ interpretací tohoto období, kterou zastává Ministerstvo školství. První část práce se zaměřuje na integrační proces Rusů do estonské společnosti, zdůrazňujíc jeho úskalí a implikace týkající se národní identity Rusů žijících v Estonsku. Druhá část práce už se věnuje konkrétním problémům (vyučovacímu jazyku a výuce dějepisu) na základě dostupných psaných materiálů, zatímco závěrečná a zároveň klíčová část práce analyzuje tyto problémy na základě terénního výzkumu na ruských školách v Estonsku.

Abstract

The thesis, entitled *Russian Identity: Minority Schools in Contemporary Estonia*, analyses Russian upper-secondary schooling in Estonia from the dissolution of the Soviet Union until 2012. It focuses on two issues, which are considered to be important for national-identity building of Russian students living in Estonia: language of instruction and history teaching. In terms of the first issue, the thesis aims to show how

is the Estonian government implementing the reform introducing mandatory 60% of curricula in Estonian and how is it perceived by Russian students and their teachers. In terms of the second issue, the thesis examines perception of the Soviet period by the Russian students comparing to the “official” Estonian interpretation advocated by the Ministry of Education. First part of the work focuses on the integration process of Russians into Estonian society stressing its difficulties and implications concerning the national identity of Russians living in Estonia. Second part finally examines the two particular issues (language-of-instruction reform and history teaching) from the point of view of the available written sources, while the final and the key part of the thesis analyses the same issues based on a field research at Russian schools in Estonia.

Klíčová slova

Estonsko, ruská menšina, národní identita, menšinové školství, interpretace historie,

Keywords

Estonia, Russian minority, national identity, minority schooling, interpretation of history,

Rozsah práce: 114 166 znaků

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V Praze dne 16. 5. 2014

Šárka Svobodná

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1. Introduction

1.1 Topic, methodology

This work analyses Russian upper-secondary schooling in Estonia from the dissolution of the Soviet Union until 2012. It is a case study which describes how the Estonian schools with Russian as the primary language of instruction work under national legislation. The study targets two issues. The first of them is a compulsory partial implementation of Estonian language into Russian schools (perceived by Estonians as a fundamental precondition to integrate Russian speaking inhabitants into Estonian society, but by many Russians as an attempt to eliminate the Russian minority). The second issue is the way of teaching history with the focus on the interpretation clashes concerning the Soviet era. These topics are very delicate for both sides, because education in national language and possibility to publicly interpret history without any negative implication are in general considered to be the attributes of the national emancipation, while their inhibition reflects national oppression.¹

The main sources of this case study consist of interviews and questionnaires led by the author among students, teachers and officials of the Russian schools in Estonian cities of Tartu, Narva and Tallinn. The examined period, starting with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and ending in 2012 (the year of the field research), includes a short excursion to the Soviet times for better understanding of the historical background and mainly focuses on the time of preparation and adoption (2007–2011) of the high-school reform concerning the implementation of Estonian as the language of instruction.

The term “Russian schools” (“Russian students etc.”) is being used to refer to those schools that use Russian as the official language of instruction, which does not have to correspond to the language used in most of the classes (because certain amount of Estonian-language classes is mandatory at the higher secondary level, which will be explained further in the text), but it is usually the mother tongue of absolute majority of students and teachers.

¹ During the Soviet times, the oppressed side were Estonians – they could not freely interpret the integration of Estonia into the Soviet Union as a violent annexation. Russians are currently criticized by Estonians for glorifying the Soviet victory in the Second World War but at the same time they feel to be oppressed by the schooling reform requiring compulsory Estonian language classes.

The transliteration system of The Library of Congress is used² for the transliteration of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet while originally Estonian names are kept in their original Estonian form.

1.2 Research questions, hypotheses

The research questions of the case study are stated as follows:

- 1. How is the Estonian government implementing Estonian as a language of instruction at Russian schools and how is it perceived by Russian students and teachers – are the effects integrative, or rather assimilative?
- 2. How is the Soviet time period perceived by Russian students compared to the “official Estonian” interpretations?
- 3. Are Estonians using the regulations of Russian schools in Estonia imposed by the authorities endangering preservation of the identity of the Russian minority in Estonia, or on the contrary, are the graduates of Russian schools in Estonia potentially dangerous for the Estonian society?

It is easy to make a preliminary hypothesis concerning the first two questions: Against any change, which is introduced as compulsory reform, opposition is expected. Therefore, in the case of a compulsory introduction of the Estonian language a negative reaction is expected as well. The antagonistic interpretations of the Soviet history of Estonia in general are considered as a fact,³ so the swing towards the “Russian” interpretation among the Russian students and teachers is expected. Answering the third question will probably be more difficult: The possible dangers on both sides will be detectable easily (lowering Russian language knowledge and therefore losing connections to Russian culture vs. disability to integrate into the Estonian society because of insufficient proficiency in Estonian and different perception of history). Listing and description of the possible dangers will be the more probable result than the statement which of them are more pending.

² “Transliteration of Russian Cyrillic alphabet,” Home page of the Library of the Czech Academy of Sciences, <http://www.lib.cas.cz/space.40/CYRILLIC/RU-EN-T3.HTM> (accessed April 16, 2014).

³ Proved by the author already in her bachelor thesis (Šárka Svobodná, *Sovětská anexe a okupace Estonska* (bakalářská práce) (Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, 2011): the Estonian interpretation stressing the illegitimacy of the occupation, which lead to the hated part of Estonian history vs. the Russian interpretation stressing the economic importance of the membership in the USSR.

1.3 Thesis organization

After the Introduction (chapter 1) follow two chapters including historical and theoretical framework of the topic. The historical-framework chapter (ch. 2) explains how the leading majority formed by 90% of pure Estonians shrank by the increase of Russian speakers during the Soviet times to only 60% on the eve of 1980s, but still the Estonians became the driving force in politics of newly re-established Estonian Republic (leaving members of Russian minority strongly underrepresented in governing and legislative bodies). Endeavours of the Estonian institutions to integrate members of the Russian minority by forcing them to learn Estonian (by laws limiting only-Russian speakers) are described as well.

The theoretical framework (ch. 3) comes after the historical framework chapter, because a certain basic knowledge of the topic is already needed to understand the theory. The chapter introduces basic concepts of ethnic identity (the NOT ONLY – BUT ALSO and EITHER–OR concepts) and introduces possible scenarios of the Russian-minority future in Estonia (segregation, assimilation, integration). In the last part of this chapter, two factors influencing the national identity, which are later examined in detail, are identified – more specifically the language and the interpretation of history.

The following two chapters tackle on the main topic itself: the language and the history teaching. The fourth chapter (titled Reform of upper secondary schools with Russian as a language of instruction) brings together facts about the upper secondary schooling reform in Estonia introducing compulsory 60% rate of classes taught in Estonian. It also shows reactions of the students, teachers and school officials and pinpoints what they are worried about concerning the reform. Opinions of both, proponents and opponents of the reform, are presented. The fifth chapter (Teaching of Estonian history – clashes of narratives) explains why the language integration is not the single precondition for successful integration of Russian minority to the Estonian society and presents attempts of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research to present the “correct” interpretations of history.

The final chapter presents what is comprised in the title: Results of the field research at schools in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva.

1.4 Literature analysis

The main sources for the historical part of the thesis include a composite book *Russkie v Estonii na poroge XXI veka: Proshloe, nastojashchee, budushchee*,⁴ which was published as an offspring of the eponymous Tallinn conference in Tallinn in 2000 organised by the Russian research centre in Estonia, and the report entitled *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On* published by AS Eesti Ajalehed.⁵ Majority of contributors to the first work were Russian authors; unlike with the second one written by Estonians. This chapter is by no means controversial; it rather provides a mere summary of the facts based on the statistic research and no contradictions were observed, therefore more detailed comment on the literature is not needed.

Basis for the theoretical framework was laid by Leoš Šatava, a Czech ethnologist (who summed up the “NOT ONLY – BUT ALSO” and “EITHER–OR” concepts of ethnic identities in his publication entitled *Jazyk a identita etnických menšin: Možnosti zachování a revitalizace*, which treats the topics of language and identity of ethnic minorities),⁶ and by an Estonian scholar Ekaterina Fishkina, who forecasted possible scenarios concerning integration/assimilation/segregation of Russians in Estonia. While Šatava’s work is generally theoretical in nature and presents particular examples only for illustration, Fishkina focuses specifically on the Estonian case. Despite her ethnic background, she tends to be very objective. Her opinion on the best solution,⁷ with putting stress on keeping Russian culture does not seem to be a hint for the hidden sentiment, but rather an objective estimation of the situation and liberal attitude.

In case of the fourth chapter – Reform of upper secondary schools with Russian as a language of instruction – a special caution was needed regarding the objectiveness of the sources, because the evaluation of the reform is expressed in the used sources. Basic sources for this part of the work come from two institutions that have both made their researches about attitudes of students/parents/teachers towards the reform, but have absolutely different goals. First of them is the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, the author of the reform, which regularly commissions surveys examining the

⁴ Viktor Bojkov and Naftolii Bassel’, eds., *Russkie v Estonii na poroge XXI veka: Proshloe, nastojashchee, budushchee* (Tallinn: Russkij issledovatel’skij centr v Estonii, 2000).

⁵ Peeter Vihalemm et al., eds., *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011).

⁶ Leoš Šatava, *Jazyk a identita etnických menšin: Možnosti zachování a revitalizace* (Praha: Cargo, 2001).

⁷ Integration/assimilation/segregation of Russians in Estonia.

attitudes of teachers, students and their parents towards the reform.⁸ It tends to be very idealistic while interpreting the results of the surveys; for example any step towards more positive attitudes is interpreted positively, irrespective of the rate of opponents – in other words, while rate of opponents is constantly dropping, it is not important how high it is. On the other hand, the representative of the opponents to the reform, Legal Information Centre for Human Rights⁹ with its declared goal to advocate interests of the Russian minority in Estonia, is much more sensitive about possible negative effects of the reform. Furthermore, its publication *Russian Schools of Estonia: Compendium of Materials*¹⁰ was financially supported by Russkiy Mir Foundation,¹¹ which declares its goal as promoting the Russian language abroad. Hence, from their point of view, any restrictions on the teaching of Russian, irrespective of any possible effects on knowledge of Estonian language, are considered to negative.

The most interesting source used for this work are Additional materials for teachers issued by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research,¹² which were published together with the compendium of materials for high-school history classes. They are intended mainly for history teachers with Russian origin, who are by the Ministry expected to tend to glorify the victory of the Soviet Union in the World War II, which is at the same time understood by many Estonians as a beginning of the unwanted Soviet occupation of Estonia. These materials comprise of comments on the teaching of history in general as well as on the problem of interpretation of Estonian modern history. Despite the fact that the Russian/Soviet point of view is also presented in the compendium, the endeavour of authors to explain what ought to be the “correct”

⁸ “Brief summary: Non-Estonians’ awareness of and attitude towards the transition of Russian-medium schools to teaching subjects in Estonian at the upper secondary school level, January 2008”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7223> (accessed April 16, 2014); “Subject teaching in Estonian at Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2006”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=6844> (accessed April 16, 2014); “Teaching Subjects in Estonian in Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2004”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7239> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁹ Official site of Legal Information Centre for Human Rights, <http://www.lichr.ee> (accessed April 16, 2014).

¹⁰ *Russian Schools of Estonia: Compendium of Materials* (Tallinn: Legal Information Centre for Human Rights, 2010), www.lichr.ee/main/assets/School-Eng.pdf, (accessed April 16, 2014).

¹¹ Official site of Russkiy Mir Foundation, <http://www.russkiymir.ru/> (accessed April 16, 2014).

¹² Toomas Karjahärm and Andres Adamson, eds., *Povorotnye momenty istorii Estonii: Dopolnitel'nye materialy dlia uchitel'ia* (Tallinn: Celovoe uchrezhdenii integracii, 2008), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?249885> (accessed April 16, 2014).

interpretation of Estonian Soviet history is clear. This material will be analysed later in the text in more detail.

The sixth and the most important chapter of this work Results of field research in schools in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva is based solely on primary sources collected during the author's research stay in Estonia in November 2012, specifically the transcripts of interviews with teachers and officials of Russian high-schools in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva and questionnaires answered by 12th grade students. Those are the most up-to-date sources on Russian minority schooling in Estonia and also the most objective ones – since the author of the research is neither Estonian, nor Russian, and is by no means involved in the issue. One slight disadvantage of these sources is definitely their extent (119 questionnaires, 8 recorded interviews, and some informal interviews off-record), which is the maximum number possible to collect during the research journey due to time limitations. The thorough description of the methodology of the field research is in the subchapter Introduction to the field research.

2. Historical framework

2.1 Estonian bi-ethnic society

Estonians are a small one million nation inhabiting the northernmost of the three Baltic republics. They managed to keep their language and culture over the centuries of dominance of their Swedish and Russian neighbours. The first period of their national sovereignty in the interwar period was aborted by the Soviet annexation, which lasted until the second Estonian independence achieved in 1991. During this period, many socio-economic features of Estonia changed, among them also the ethnic composition of the population.

While before the Soviet period Russians living in Estonia did not compose more than 8% of Estonian population, on the eve of dissolution of the Soviet Union their number increased to over 30% and the rate of Estonians fell to nearly 60%.¹³ Only a very small minority of them were descendants of people, who had been living there for at least several generations. Others were immigrants who had been coming to Estonia from the

¹³ (According to the census in 1989.) The “missing” 10% were mainly people from other Soviet republics, often Russian speaking. Due to the fact that in 1990s many Russians left Estonia while others gained Estonian citizenship, today's rate of Estonians among Estonian population is about 68%. “Population by Nationality,” Official gateway to Estonia, <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/country/population-by-nationality.html> (accessed April 16, 2014).

rest of the Soviet Union to take the workplaces emerging in the developing Estonian industry. Because of the widespread knowledge of Russian (which was virtually a condition for a successful life in the Soviet Union) the immigrants used to have very low incentives to study Estonian. But in newly re-established Estonian Republic, knowledge of Estonian became required in all public services, and later in private services as well. The change was quite striking for Russian speakers: Coming as inner work migrants and also members of Russian speaking majority among the Soviet citizens, they have suddenly become aliens in re-established Estonian Republic (in 1991) and non-citizens without suffrage, because the Estonian citizenship (and therefore suffrage) was automatically granted only to inhabitants of the interwar Estonia. Others could have gained citizenship only after naturalisation, which included testing of the knowledge of Estonian. At once, the state emerged where about one third¹⁴ of population have undetermined citizenship (which effectively prevents them from participating in political life and could deepen their isolation). Some of them were not even able to attain citizenship without help. Russian language also underwent shift from the position of the privileged one to a language without official status. This shift made many Russians leave Estonia;¹⁵ others had to accept new arrangements, which were set almost solely by Estonians, because the Russian element is (even until now) quite underrepresented in the Estonian Parliament, as well as in the Government.¹⁶ The underrepresentation could be partly explained by the low rate of elites among the Russian speakers: The old, pre-war Russian intelligentsia (which used to be traditionally numerous in Estonia) perished in Stalin camps and the one coming to the Soviet Estonia was mainly technically educated, executing lead positions in industrial enterprises. Elongating of this state is caused by the fact that in early 1990s the young Russians

¹⁴ As was immediately after the dissolution of the USSR. "Integration to Estonian Society," 20 March 2014, Official gateway to Estonia, <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/society/integration-in-estonian-society.html> (accessed April 16, 2014).

¹⁵ In 2000: 300 000 of Russian speakers, 1991 400–450 000. Oleg Sidel'nikov, "Russkaja obshchina v Estonii na rubezhe XX i XXI vekov", in *Russkie v Estonii na poroge XXI veka: Proshloe, nastojashchee, budushchee*, eds. Viktor Bojkov, Naftolii Bassel', (Tallinn: Russkij issledovatel'skij centr v Estonii, 2000), 162.

¹⁶ The only member of Estonian government with non-Estonian roots have been so far Eldar Efendiev from the Central Party (Keskerakond), who was a minister in 2002. (Vello Pettai and Klara Hallik, "Understanding processes of ethnic control: segmentation, dependency and co-optation in post-communist Estonia," *Nations and Nationalism* 8 No. 4 (2002), 517). The advocate of interests of the Russian-speaking minority in the Estonian parliament is the oppositional leftist Central Party (Keskerakond) that has absorbed nearly all the former voters from the russophone political parties which emerged after 1991 and held 6 seats in the two following parliaments in 1990s. "Political data on Estonia," Parliament and government composition database, <http://www.parlgov.org/stable/data/est.html> (accessed April 16, 2014).

aspiring to the University education were leaving Estonia to study in Russia because of the lack of knowledge of Estonian language, and after graduating they almost never came back.¹⁷ In early 1990s also the factor that non-citizens could not have voted showed its effect.

Because the majority of Russian-speaking immigrants were factory workers during the Soviet times, they were strongly affected by the closing of non-profitable factories after the change of the regime, which has sharply increased unemployment of Russian-speakers compared to Estonians; an average salary of Russian-speakers is even now lower than a salary of an Estonian.¹⁸ Because of that, Russians living in Estonia are generally less happy about their life than the ethnic Estonians – the ethnic Estonians seem to appreciate the structural changes that have come after the dissolution of the Soviet Union; unlike Russians who have become rather uncertain about their future.¹⁹

In addition to the frustration from inability to influence the changes (due to the political underrepresentation) and the economic problems, worries of survival of the Russian culture emerged as well. While during the 19th century Russian culture on the territory of today's Estonia was evolving together with the Russian culture in Russia²⁰ and during the Soviet times Russian culture (deformed to the Soviet one) was dispersed to the whole Soviet bloc and promoted by the Communists; at that time the Estonian Russians became the only advocates of themselves and their isolation from the "Russian Russians" started. Consequently, since the beginning of the 1990s the Russian diaspora in Estonia has been fighting the problem of how to live successfully in Estonia and at the same time preserve their culture and language, which is not very popular among Estonians – due to the bad historical experience. Hence, the first steps of the national governments in 1990s Estonia were (quite understandably) full of endeavour to forget the Soviet past and therefore to prefer anything Estonian over anything Russian. Their

¹⁷ Sidel'nikov, "Russkaja obshchina v Estonii na rubezhe xx i xxi vekov," 163; Fishkina Ekaterina, "Est' li budushee u russkoi kul'tury v Estonii?" in *Russkie v Estonii na poroge XXI veka: Proshloe, nastojashchee, budushchee*, eds. Viktor Bojkov, Naftolii Bassel', (Tallinn: Russkij issledovatel'skij centr v Estonii, 2000), 183.

¹⁸ Sidel'nikov, "Russkaja obshchina v Estonii na rubezhe xx i xxi vekov," 163.

¹⁹ As Agarin stated, "individual's opinion of his or her economic situation influences their perceptions of the outcomes of transition [of Estonia]". Timofei Agarin, "Divided Societies? Public Opinion on State and Economic Change in Estonia and Latvia," in *Ethnic Images and Stereotypes – Where is the Border Line? (Russian-Baltic Cross-Cultural Relations)*, ed. Jelena Nõmm (Narva: Narva College of the University of Tartu, 2007), 298. Agarin's statement about "the doubts about their future in Estonia" was proofed also in our research among Russian high-school students in Estonia.

²⁰ Natal'ia Lesnaia, "O sokhraneni preemstvennosti v razvitii russkoi kul'tury v Estonii v XX veke," in *Russkie v Estonii na poroge XXI veka: Proshloe, nastojashchee, budushchee*, eds. Viktor Bojkov, Naftolii Bassel', (Tallinn: Russkij issledovatel'skij centr v Estonii, 2000), 91–94.

practices were often criticised by Russia, as well as by several transnational entities, such as the EU.

2.2 Integration and keeping the culture

Meanwhile, the Estonian political elites understood well that there is a need to find a solution for the people, who were not able to integrate themselves into Estonian society. They declared the goal of “integration” of Russian speakers, which will help them live on a higher level in Estonia. The problem was that Russians considered the main instrument of integration – endeavour to teach all the Russians the Estonian language – to be assimilative, and therefore a threat to Russian language and culture.

In 1997, the Government formed a 17-member expert committee, which was supposed to develop foundations of the state integration policy.²¹ Consequently, the Government presented draft documents in which Estonian-language education, as well as the preservation of the non-Estonian ethnic identity, were set as the main tasks. In 2000, the Government approved a state programme titled *Integration in Estonian society 2000–2007*,²² which provided a framework and a guide for governmental agencies and other institutions to implement the integration policy. The main goals of this strategy should have solved the two problems of Russian minority mentioned above: to allow Russians to retain their distinct identity and at the same time to increase their participation in and loyalty to the Estonian state. Estonian language education was mentioned as the main medium for the enhanced integration.²³ The strategy was replaced in 2008 by its new version, *Integration in Estonian society 2007–2013*.²⁴ This blueprint stressed again preserving and developing one’s culture and language, irrespective to his ethnic origin, while at the same time putting stress on a competence in the national language and a friendly and safe coexistence of all the inhabitants in Estonia. The results of the study *Integration Monitoring 2011* has shown that 61% of non-ethnic Estonians consider

²¹ Kristina Lindemann, “Education”, in *Integration of Second Generation Russians in Estonia: Country report on TIES survey in Estonia* (Tallinn: Institute of International and Social Studies of Tallinn University, 2008), 23, http://www.tiesproject.eu/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_download/gid,351/Itemid,142/ (accessed April 16, 2014).

²² “State Programme Integration in Estonian Society 2000–2007,” Approved by the Government of Estonia on March 14, 2000, Estonian Ministry of Culture, http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/state_programme111.pdf (accessed April 16, 2014).

²³ Lindemann, “Education,” 2008, 23.

²⁴ “Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013,” Estonian Ministry of Culture, http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/Loimumiskava_2008_2013_ENG.pdf (accessed April 16, 2014).

themselves to be moderately, strongly or fully integrated.²⁵ This seems to be a good result, but there is still the other part of the non-ethnic Estonians, who do not feel integrated. Among them are mainly older people, but also youngsters, mainly those who attend the schools with Russian as the language of instruction. Another indicator showing the level of integration of minorities in Estonia (apart from the self-assessment of the respondents) could be the lower rate of persons with undefined citizenship, which was reported to be 7% in 2012, compared to 32% in 1991.²⁶

Even though some scholars at the beginning of the 1990s had predicted conflicts ensuing from implementation of the integration policy, at least until the Bronze Night of 2007²⁷ everything went rather smoothly²⁸ – according to some because of relative mild measures,²⁹ which have complicated lives of the for non-Estonian speakers, but have not caused stronger clashes. The Bronze-Soldier affair is known as a turning point after which some delay in the integration process was detected. Even though the political elites seem to believe that linguistic policy should be the core of the integration strategy,³⁰ especially after the Bronze Night events there are more and more authors who are sceptical about possible effects of propaganda of national language on the integration of minorities.³¹ According to the sceptical side, the power of collective memory of the society must not be underestimated – in other words, a peaceful integration of the Russian minority is becoming more difficult because of conflicting interpretations of history; the best example is the previously mentioned Bronze Soldier Affair.

²⁵ “Monitoring of Integration in the Estonian Society in 2011,” Estonian Ministry of Culture, http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/Monitoring_2011_EN.pdf (accessed April 16, 2014).

²⁶ There is 84% of people with Estonian citizenship, 7% with Russian citizenship and 2% citizens of other countries. “Integration to Estonian Society,” Official gateway to Estonia, <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/society/integration-in-estonian-society.html> (accessed April 16, 2014).

²⁷ The term Bronze Night describes unrest in streets of Tallinn in April 2007 which arose after the government’s decision to move the Bronze Soldier monument. The monument commemorates Russians of their fallen relatives in the Second World War, but at the same time for Estonians it is a symbol of the Soviet occupation.

²⁸ Lindemann, “Education,” 2008, 84.

²⁹ Ilmar Tomusk, *Language Policy and Legislation in Estonia* (Estonian Language Inspectorate, 2000), <http://www.keeleinsp.ee/index.php3?lng=1&s=menu&ss=content&news=178&id=82> (accessed April 23, 2014).

³⁰ Maarja Siiner, Triin Vihalemm, Svetlana Djackova, Meilute Ramoniene, “The implementation of language policy in the context of the integration of the Russian-speaking population,” in *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*, ed. Peeter Vihalemm et al. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011), 122–128.

³¹ Anu Toots and Tõnu Idnurm, “Does the Context Matter? Attitudes Towards Cosmopolitanism Among Russian-Speaking Students in Estonia, Latvia and the Russian Federation,” *Journal of Baltic studies* 43, No. 1 (March 2012), 120..

2.3 Introduction to Estonian language policy

During the Soviet times, Russian became a common language for all the different ethnicities who came to work to Estonia, as well as for the communist elites in the entire Soviet bloc, which made it used in many areas of public life, at the expense of Estonian. Estonian was replaced by Russian in several functional domains, for example in banking, statistics, the militia (Soviet police), railway, naval and air transport, mining, energy production, etc.³² The newcomers had no need and therefore no motivation to learn Estonian language, which was for Soviets a welcomed help with a russification of Estonia. At the end of 1980 Russian was already “forcefully encroaching on the Estonian language”³³.

Re-estonisation started as early as it was possible, due to the perestroika and therefore a fading influence of Moscow. Some sources describe the process of re-estonisation as a “normalisation”,³⁴ trying to evoke that it is just a return to the original state of affairs. The shift towards re-estonisation occurred hand in hand with a strive for national sovereignty. Estonian became the republic’s official language at the eve of dissolution of the Soviet Union, and in the 1990s the exclusive use of Russian was delegalized as an official means of communication; Estonian language requirements were introduced to many areas, as in the job market as well as for acquiring Estonian citizenship.³⁵ The first years of independence were rather about setting rules: the dealing with the issue itself was delegated to individuals, the necessity to learn Estonian arose mainly because of problems on labour market. The formative power had not only the rules that required Estonian-language proficiency, but also the fact that the lack of national-language proficiency could be considered by the potential employer to be an attribute of laziness or lack of will, and therefore conveying message about speaker’s personal qualities.³⁶ The systematic integration strategy and the language policy, which would help people overcome problems with Estonian language and also some liberalisation of language

³² Mart Rannut, *Language Policy in Estonia* (Revista de Sociolinguistica, spring/summer 2014), <http://www6.gencat.net/llengcat/noves/hm04primavera-estiu/docs/rannut.pdf> (accessed April 16, 2014), 3.

³³ Tomusk, *Language Policy and Legislation in Estonia*, 2004.

³⁴ Delaney Michael Skerrett, “How Normal is Normalisation? The Discourses Shaping Finnish and Russian Speakers’ Attitudes Toward Estonian Language Policy,” *Journal of Baltic studies* 43, No. 3 (September 2012); Rannut, *Language Policy...*, 2014, 4.

³⁵ Triin Vihalemm and Maarja Siiner, “Language and integration policies of the Baltic states in the EU context,” in *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*, ed. Peeter Vihalemm et al. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011), 119.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

requirements came on the agenda not before the second half of 1990s,³⁷ definitely partially because of necessity to make citizenship and language laws compatible with international standards, due to future membership in NATO and the EU. The Estonian state introduced an extensive language training system, such as state-paid Estonian language classes,³⁸ because it is illusory to believe that the official status will ensure the revival of the national language.³⁹

While some people do understand well that career opportunities, for example, are much more promising for Estonian speakers, there are also some reasons supporting the feeling that Estonian is not needed – one of them is the existence of Russian-speaking media in Estonia. Russians living in Estonia are not deprived of information in mother tongue, because they can easily follow television and radio broadcasts from Russia and read Russian-language newspaper published in Estonia.⁴⁰ Another obstacle for a successful re-estonisation of Estonia is the territorial isolation of the Russian speakers in the north east of Estonia. In other parts of Estonia such as Tallinn or Tartu, the barriers between Estonian majority and Russian-speaking minority are not quite specific, but in cities Narva or Sillamäe, where the rate of non-Estonians is nearly 90%, there are very few practical possibilities to practise Estonian even for those, who would be interested. In this context was also mentioned the positive effect of the liberalization of linguistic requirements, which was adopted after some international bodies criticised Estonia for discrimination against minorities – some observers mentioned that this liberalisation could have provided opportunities to practice (and therefore to enhance the command of) the language for a certain group of people.⁴¹

³⁷ Ibid., 119n.

³⁸ Vihalemm and Siiner, “Language and integration...,” 2011, 121n.

³⁹ As an example of an official language with a weak position could be mentioned Maori on the New Zealand and Belarusian in Belarus. Skerrett, “How Normal is Normalisation?...,” 2012, 381.

⁴⁰ Aurike Meimre, *Post-Soviet Russian Language Media in Estonia* (Tallinn University, 2006), http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/llc/files/russian-media-conf/Meimre_Aurika.doc (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁴¹ Siiner et al. “The implementation of language policy...,” 2011, 128.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Possible scenarios of the clash of identities

While the term “identity” could be defined as a feeling of belonging to a certain group, with which the subject shares values, norms and other features,⁴² the “national identity” limits this to the case of national or ethnic groups.⁴³ The corner stones of a national identity are the same as those of the nation itself – will and common culture. Will comprises voluntarily loyalty to the group and solidarity; a common culture includes a set of traditional customs kept across generations.⁴⁴ The “negative” definition of national identity is equally important, which describes it as „cultural practices and outlooks of a given community of people that set them apart from others“.⁴⁵

In countries where more than one ethnic group happen to live and interact, the identities are clashing and influencing each other. There is no need to adhere to any of the two concepts of ethnic identities – primordialism or instrumentalism – because both of them are based on interaction between them; the difference is only whether the change of identity could be deliberately induced by the person’s decision to join certain society (instrumentalism), or not (primordialism).⁴⁶ It is not important, whether the identity is changed consciously or not, the effect and the initiator are the same – in our case we assume, that the initiating factor influencing the change of identity is the educational system.

According to a Czech ethnologist Leoš Šatava there are two possible concepts concerning the case of the clash of ethnic identities (in our case newly demarcating relations between Estonian and Russian nations at the territory of independent Estonia after 1991): the concept EITHER–OR, which “allows man to be member of one ethnic community, or another one – with no possibility of a third way”, or the concept NOT

⁴² Jan Průcha, *Interkulturní psychologie – Sociopsychologické zkoumání kultur, etnik, ras a národů* (Praha: Portál, 2012), 120.

⁴³ In reference to the text of the antropologist Tomáš Hirt, the author uses words “ethnicity” and “nationality” (and therefore ethnic and national identity) as synonyms. Tomáš Hirt, “Přehled nejasností spjatých s konceptem etnicity v perspektivě post-barthovských přístupů,” *AntropoWEBZIN*, No. 2–3 (2007), <http://antropologie.zcu.cz/prehled-nejasnosti-spjatych-s-konceptem-etnicit> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁴⁴ Ernest Geller, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), 52n.

⁴⁵ Anthony Giddens, *Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), 487.

⁴⁶ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Antropologie multikulturních společností: Rozumět identitě* (Praha: Triton 2007), 101.

ONLY – BUT ALSO, which is connected to the multiculturalism.⁴⁷ According to Šatava, the delimitating of Baltic nations is considered to be an example of EITHER–OR concept,⁴⁸ even though lately many authors have during their research detected something as a new identity of young Estonian Russians emerging⁴⁹ (mainly among those attending schools with Estonian language of instruction), which corresponds rather to the NOT ONLY – BUT ALSO concept.⁵⁰

Which of these two concepts is more suitable for describing the current situation of students of Russian-language schools in Estonia should be included in the conclusions of this work, but the prevision of evolution for this case (or the case of members of Russian minority living in Estonia generally) was presented by a Russian-writing author, Ekaterina Fishkina, in her article from 2000. She described three possible scenarios, how the clash of Russian and Estonian identities in Estonia could evolve:⁵¹ 1. **Assimilation:** This scenario could come true if the majority of Russian inhabitants left Estonia and the rest would be “estonised”. Fishkina considers assimilation possible only at the local level, but impracticable in case of a half a million Russians from whom the majority does not plan to leave. She states in many cases the politicians talk about integration, which is in fact assimilation – as an example of this “silent assimilation” she considers “law about elimination of Russian high schools”.⁵² A voluntary version of assimilation is called “competitive assimilation” – “executors of this strategy are not politicians, but the members of the minority themselves: they voluntarily make decisions, which lead to assimilation (for example to decide for an education in titular nation’s language), because they believe that it will ensure to them better job opportunities. Because such individuals, who joined Estonian collective in lower grades,

⁴⁷ Šatava, *Jazyk a identita...*, 2001, 19–20.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁹ Elvira Küün, “The Ethnic and Linguistic Identity of Russian-Speaking Young People in Estonia,” *TRAMES* 62/57, No. 12 (2008), 183–203, http://www.kirj.ee/public/trames_pdf/2008/issue_2/Trames-2008-2-183-203.pdf (accessed April 16, 2014); Mare Leino et al., “New Identity of Russian Speaking Children in Estonian Society,” *Social Work and Society* 4, No. 1 (2006), <http://www.socwork.net/sws/article/view/184/572> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁵⁰ Identity of young non-Estonians / Estonian Russians with good Estonian language skills and higher acceptance of Estonian culture, who are already more loyal Estonian citizens. Elvira Küün, “The Ethnic and Linguistic Identity of Russian-Speaking Young People in Estonia,” *TRAMES* 62/57, No. 12 (2008), 201.

⁵¹ Fishkina, “Est’ li budushee u russkoi kul’tury v Estonii?” 2000, 178–182.

⁵² The reform will be discussed later in the text, the term „elimination“ is not exact, as will be explained later.

are usually absorbed well by the Estonian society, they are losing their ties with the Russian environment“.⁵³

2. **Segregation:** According to Fishkina, it is an autonomous and isolated evolution of Russian culture – orientation to Russia in all aspects of life. This possibility is according to Fishkina supported by those, who do not have Estonian citizenship and do not want to gain it. Fishkina does not mention viability of this scenario, but it seems quite plausible especially for the city of Narva and the region of Ida-Virumaa at the north east of Estonia, where the Russian speakers form a majority, but all of this only in case the central government would give up its influence there, which is not probable. (The first and the second scenarios could be included in the EITHER–OR concept, the following one in the NOT ONLY – BUT ALSO concept.)

3. **Integration**, which she understands as “integration of Russians to Estonian society, mastering of Estonian language, good knowledge of Estonian culture and Estonian mentality while at the same time keeping the mother tongue and affiliation to the Russian cultural world as dominant“.⁵⁴

According to Fishkina, the goal should be integration, which would help Russians to still be Russians but not to feel alien, “to remain Russian in language, in culture, in national identity, but at the same time to be loyal citizens of Estonian republic, (...) feeling here home and part of the society”.⁵⁵ The Estonian politicians are, at least theoretically, of the same opinion, as will be shown later – the practice is by critics considered to be rather assimilation or segregation (mainly in Narva region or in connection to the strict division of the Estonian society into two groups in early 1990s – citizens and non-citizens). It is important to distinguish between those concepts, because the terms “segregation” and “assimilation” have traditionally negative connotations.

3.2 Factors influencing national identity

According to a British sociologist Anthony Giddens, diverse characteristics may serve to distinguish different ethnic groups, the most common are language, history or ancestry, religion, and styles of dress or adornment.⁵⁶ While examining the national identity of students at Russian schools we will, for simplification, focus on those, which could be influenced by education – language and history, particularly perception of

⁵³ Toots and Idnurm, “Does the Context Matter?...”, 2012, 120.

⁵⁴ Fishkina, “Est’ li budushee u russkoi kul’туры v Estonii?” 2000, 178–182.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 179 and 181.

⁵⁶ Anthony Giddens, *Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), 487.

compulsory teaching of the second language (Estonian) and history (so not the real family history, but perception of the historical events).

At this point, the term “second language” and its difference from a “foreign language” should be explained: “While a foreign language is a means of exploring and getting to know the world outside, competence in a second language is an obligatory means of achieving a higher social status and gaining access to the labour market and education system inside the society of permanent residence”.⁵⁷ By other words the theory states that the knowledge of the second language should help the members of the national/language minority (Russian students – in our case) integrate themselves into the majority (Estonian) society. The problem is that the Russian students are worried that due to the majority usage of their second language (Estonian) at high school their first language (Russian) will be neglected. This would make it easier to integrate them into Estonian society, but their national identity will be affected as well.

The second element influencing national identity examined in this work will be the history teaching, because sharing the collective memory (externally expressed, for example, by classification, interpretation and celebration of certain historical events), as well as common language, are the factors, which hold the ethnic societies together and help to distinguish between different ethnic groups as well. The connection between history perception and a level of integration are shown in a work,⁵⁸ where the author shows that Russians, who are somehow separated from the Estonian society tend to believe more that Estonia joined the Soviet Union voluntarily.

Heiko Pääbo made an important research about this topic in his dissertation work proving that different national master narratives (based on the collective memory of certain societies) could lead to international identity conflicts.⁵⁹ He concludes that the Estonian history narrative (official Estonian interpretation) is opposing the Russian one, because in Estonian textbooks, Russians have usually threatening look and are usually considered rejected intruders.⁶⁰ The fact, that a “public opinion and individual’s

⁵⁷ Triin Vihalemm, Maarja Siiner and Anu Masso, “Introduction: language skills as a factor in human development,” in *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*, ed. Peeter Vihalemm et al. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011), 116.

⁵⁸ Jüri Kruusval, Raivo Vetik and John W. Berry, “The Strategies of Inter-Ethnic Adaptation of Estonian Russians,” *Studies of Transition States and Societies* 1, No. 1 (November 2009), http://www.tlu.ee/stss/?page_id=158 (accessed April 16, 2014), 9.

⁵⁹ Heiko Pääbo, “Potential of Collective Memory Based International Identity Conflicts in Post-Imperial Space: Comparison of Russian Master Narrative with Estonian, Ukrainian and Georgian Master Narratives” (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Tartu, 2011).

⁶⁰ Pääbo, H. “Potential of Collective Memory...,” 298.

consciousness” (and therefore national identity) are influenced by the historiography, is acknowledged also by other authors;⁶¹ Pääbo adds that “instruments for socialising the new generations” are history school books, which he also used as a main source for his research.⁶²

4. Reform of upper secondary schools with Russian as a language of instruction

During the Soviet rule in Estonia, ubiquitous russification has also hit the educational system: beginning in the first grade, courses of Russian language were compulsory for all the types of schools, more topics from Russian (and Soviet) history, literature and geography were introduced. Fortunately for Estonians, all the educational levels, from kindergarten to university, have kept Estonian as the language of instruction. Only majority of vocational schools, which were closely related to the Soviet industrialised economy, have adopted Russian language.⁶³ But aside from these Estonian educational institutions, Russian schools emerged to educate children of immigrants coming from all over the Soviet Union. Even though those newcomers were of many different nationalities, the language of instruction at those schools became to be Russian.⁶⁴ At those schools, Estonian was taught as a foreign language only,⁶⁵ sometimes just voluntarily and sometimes even not at all.⁶⁶ Learning Estonian language was not very popular among Russian students for a simple reason: their future (social position or job opportunities) was by no means dependent on their competence in Estonian.

This situation has changed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union when language laws, requiring knowledge of Estonian in many situations, were introduced. Some Russians have realised the advantages of knowing the official language of the country

⁶¹ Alexander Ivanov, “Historiography as Framing and Support Factor of Ethnic Identity: the Case of Historiography of Latgale”, in *Ethnicity. Towards the Politics of Recognition in Latvia: 1991–2012*, eds. Vladislav Volkovs, Deniss Hanovs and Inese Runce (Riga: “Zinatne” Publishers, 2013), 283.

⁶² Pääbo, “Potential of Collective Memory”, 2011, 296.

⁶³ Mati Heidemets et., “Education” in *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*, ed. Peeter Vihalemm et al. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011), 96.

⁶⁴ In 1983 those Russian schools in Estonia were attended by 38% of children studying in Estonia. Peter Hilkes, “Estonian and Soviet School Reform in the 1980s,” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 18, No. 4 (1984), 360.

⁶⁵ Not as a second language, as the Estonian is taught in Russian schools in Estonia nowadays.

⁶⁶ Hilkes, “Estonian and Soviet School Reform in the 1980s,” 1984, 359.

where they decided to live.⁶⁷ In order for their children to gain language proficiency naturally, they chose to send them to Estonian schools or kindergartens, instead of the Russian ones⁶⁸ (which did not ceased to exist until now – currently there are 45 Russian high schools currently operating in Estonia⁶⁹). But many other parents, for whom the good proficiency of their children in their mother tongue (Russian) was important, considered this option unacceptable, because of insufficient offer and quality of classes of Russian language at Estonian schools.⁷⁰ Dilemma for many parents arose: What is better for my children – to study in their mother tongue and have fewer opportunities to practice Estonian (the official language of the country where they live), or to master Estonian at the expense of detachment from the Russian language.

The Estonian government decided to help Russian parents to solve the dilemma by approving the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act in 1997, which had introduced the plan for a compulsory transition to a partial use of Estonian as a language of instruction at upper secondary schools with Russian language of instruction. The goal of this decision was to enable obtaining of a good command of Estonian. From the discussion about the exact form of the reform, during which the complete transition to the Estonian language, as well as a bilingual education were mentioned, it was decided

⁶⁷ According to a survey, in 2005 88% of Estonian Russians believed that both languages (Russian and Estonian are important) and only 5,5% of them believed that only Russian is important. RSE19/67. According to the same survey 66% of Russian respondents in 2005 disagreed with the statement that “learning Estonian makes one distant from Russian culture”. Jennie Schulze, “Cultural Integration and Adaptation,” in *Integration of Second Generation Russians in Estonia: Country report on TIES survey in Estonia* (Tallinn: Institute of International and Social Studies of Tallinn University, 2008), 67, http://www.tiesproject.eu/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_download/gid,351/Itemid,142/ (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁶⁸ At the very end of the 1990s only about 15% of school-age ethnic Russians studied at Estonian schools (Sidel’nikov, “Russkaja obshchina v Estonii na rubezhe XX i XXI vekov,” 164.), currently the predominant tendency of Russian parents is still to send their children to the Russian schools. (Maria Golubeva, “Different History, Different Citizenship? Competing Narratives and Diverging Civil Enculturation in Majority and Minority Schools in Estonia and Latvia,” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 41, No. 3 (September 2010), 317.)

⁶⁹ In Estonia, there is a total of 214 municipal, state and private upper secondary schools, in 45 from those is study organised in Russian or in immersion classes. Asso Ladva (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), e-mail message, October 9, 2012. The number is decreasing, in an academic year 2007/2008 it was possible to acquire a secondary education in Russian in 63 schools, of which 4 were private school to which the reform does not apply. “Amendment to Regulation no. 56 of the Government of the Republic entitled “National Curriculum for Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools” dated 25th of January 2002,” Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7236> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁷⁰ After the dissolution of the Soviet Union many Estonian schools take the Russian language out of the foreign-language offer in their curricula, because it became non-mandatory. Paradoxically, many young Estonian find out after graduating from the secondary school, that good command of Russian is still an advantage in the labour market . Triin Vihalemm et al. “The changing patterns of foreign language use and attitudes in the Baltic states,” in *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/2011: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*, ed. Peeter Vihalemm et al. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011), 135–138.

that in addition to already mandatory Estonian language courses (which are compulsory from the first grade since 1996),⁷¹ other subjects taught in Estonian will be introduced as well. The minimum rate of Estonian-language classes at the upper secondary level was set as 60% of minimal allowed educational content. The deadline for implementing this was finally set for the academic year of 2011/2012. To make the transition more smooth, first compulsory Estonian-language subject should have already been introduced in academic year 2007/2008, and another one each following year. Those compulsory Estonian-language subjects were Civic Education, Music, Estonian History and Geography. Bilingual concept was for those subjects forbidden – from 2011 during the 60% of lessons, Estonian should have been used as the only language by the teacher, as well as the students.⁷²

In the first reaction of the Russian school, we could have detected worries that they were not able to get prepared for the transition, mainly because of the lack of teachers with sufficient knowledge of the language. Schools were also worried about the time consumption of the language requirements, which will leave less time to the subject itself, so that the amount of knowledge gained during the lessons will be smaller, in other words, the growing level of Estonian-language proficiency will be followed by a decrease in other knowledge. Teachers themselves started to be afraid of their jobs. Especially for older teachers, mastering Estonian was not only a technical problem, but also a psychological one – for instance worries that some students could speak Estonian better than them was quite understandable.⁷³

Results of the surveys⁷⁴ ordered by the Ministry of Education and Research and conducted during the preparation period (1997–2007) have shown that negative attitudes were connected to the low experience with teaching in Estonian. All the above

⁷¹ Rannut, *Language Policy...*, 2014, 13.

⁷² “Amendment to Regulation no. 56 of the Government of the Republic entitled “National Curriculum for Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools” dated 25th of January 2002,” Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7236> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁷³ “Subject teaching in Estonian at Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2006”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=6844> (accessed April 16, 2014), 20.

⁷⁴ “Subject teaching in Estonian at Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2006”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=6844> (accessed April 16, 2014); “Teaching Subjects in Estonian in Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2004”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7239> (accessed April 16, 2014).

mentioned problems were detected, but the Ministry optimistically believed that the problems will be solved during the preparation period. The survey from 2006 has shown that, as the schools started to prepare themselves for the transition (mainly by introducing some subjects in Estonian already before the deadline), more positive attitudes emerged. Even though, the increasing workload for students was often mentioned (especially those whose parents did not speak Estonian and thus could not help them), the authors of the survey from 2004 concluded that the problem is “teachers; students will manage anyway”⁷⁵.

Ministry of Education promised to help the schools implement the reform by guaranteeing and funding the in-service training for teachers,⁷⁶ and preparing additional materials for students, as well as for teachers, and purchasing textbooks. The Ministry also promised financial support to those schools that were implementing Estonian language subjects at a faster pace than has been determined, which were quite numerous.⁷⁷ We should stress out that the reform did not apply to private schools (which are not financed by the state).

Even though the transition to partial Estonian instruction is mandatory only for the upper secondary level (ages 16–18, grades 10–12), it brings certain consequences also to the basic schooling, because this should provide their graduates with such a level of Estonian language that they would be able to continue their studies at the upper secondary schools in Estonian.⁷⁸ Strategies and levels of teaching Estonian at basic

⁷⁵ “Teaching Subjects in Estonian in Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2004”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7239> (accessed April 16, 2014), 11.

⁷⁶ “Training and re-training,” Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?148690> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁷⁷ “The plan of action for the transition to Estonian-language instruction in municipal and state schools with Russian-language instruction at the upper secondary school level for 2007–2012,” Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2007, <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7238> (accessed April 16, 2014), 4–5. The deadlines (academic year 2007/2008 for first subject under Estonian language instruction and 2011/2012 for 60%) are minimal requirements. At least some Estonian-language subjects were taught already in 2006 in 95% of Russian schools. For example in 2008 41 out of 63 contemporary Russian schools were planning to teach more than that time two compulsory subjects, which were Estonian Literature and Music. Already in 2006 at least some subjects were conducted in Estonian in 95% of schools. Those were mainly creative and applied subjects like crafts, art, music and PE and subjects corresponding to abilities of teachers, who could teach in Estonian. (“Subject teaching in Estonian at Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2006”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=6844> (accessed April 16, 2014), 12–13.

⁷⁸ To finish a basic school, all students must be able to speak Estonian at B1 level or higher. “Russian-language schools’ transition to partial Estonian-language instruction – What is happening and why?” 31

schools are various: introducing Estonian-language instruction only in such subjects as physical education or arts (in which understanding the language is not so important and improvement in language proficiency is not significant), Estonian-language electives or special language immersion program.⁷⁹

The reaction to the reform published in a research ordered by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research during the transition period (2007–2011) differed again concerning the progress of the reform in different schools (the more subjects introduced, the more positive experience and therefore also more positive attitude towards changes) but also concerning different subjects. Teachers of social sciences and history were the ones who complained the most (for example because of too high level of language in textbooks), who have in discussions replaced the teachers of sciences as math or chemistry, who were loud opponents of the reform before the preparation period even started (because of alleged difficulties of such subjects taught in non-mother tongue), before they realized, that transition for “their” subjects is not compulsory. Significant cleavage has been detected also between opinions of principals on the one side, and teachers and parents on the other: already in 2004, 84% of principals of Russian-speaking schools agreed that it was a good idea to introduce some Estonian-language subjects while majority of teachers and parents were then against the reform. The reasons for lower opposition to the reform among principals could be explained by the fact that the positions of principals are usually occupied by people who speak both languages perfectly and are aware of advantages about being bilingual, while teachers are mostly driven by their worries of insufficient knowledge of Estonian (and therefore unsure future of their job) and parents by worries that their children will not succeed. It should be also mentioned that different surveys stress different data. The best example

January 2013, Official gateway to Estonia, <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/society/russian-language-schools-transition-to-partial-estonian-language-instruction-what-is-happening-and-why.html> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁷⁹ Language immersion is a form of studies which is aimed against acquiring equally good skills in native language (Russian) and second language (Estonian). (“Language immersion,” Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?148693> (accessed April 16, 2014).) This goal should be achieved by pulling the children out by their home environment to teach them first the new language and later their mother tongue. So-called ‘sink-or-swim’ method is sometimes used – the teachers do not speak the mother tongue of the students. (“Immersion Programs in the United States,” University of Michigan, http://sitemaker.umich.edu/356.hess/immersion_programs (accessed April 16, 2014).) In Estonia this method is aimed primarily to the preschool level, but also 13,5% of all the Russian-speaking primary schools in Estonia voluntarily joined this program. (“Russian-language schools’ transition to partial Estonian-language instruction – What is happening and why?” 31 January 2013, Official gateway to Estonia, <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/society/russian-language-schools->

of this is the above mentioned sentence: 85% of “agreeing” principals come from the survey ordered by the Ministry of Education (2004)⁸⁰ while the majority of pessimistic teachers come from the survey supported by Russkiy Mir Foundation (2010).⁸¹ While the Ministry strives for defending its policy, Russkiy Mir Foundation tries to promote teaching of Russian language abroad,⁸² and therefore is not very happy about Estonianisation of Russian schools in Estonia. According to many surveys, opinion about the reform is also highly influenced by following media⁸³ – in Estonian-language newspaper, the reform is usually presented as successfully progressing while in Russian ones as harmful. This forms opinions especially of those, who have not personal experience with present schooling.

The Ministry is aware of the problems stemming from the reform but believes that they will be soon overcome as the Estonian-language courses will be implemented. We cannot find such optimism in the results of the survey financed by the Russkiy Mir Foundation. In their conclusions the worries and unpreparedness (still in 2010) of Russian students and teachers (who are under psychological pressure from Language Inspectorate, which controls their Estonian-language proficiency) are stressed, together with criticism towards absence of a broader discussion about the topic and methodological basis for the reform. Even though the majority of respondents of the survey agreed that the reform will enhance the knowledge of Estonian language (which is actually the main goal of the Ministry of Education), the conclusion of the survey is at the same time very negative about the reform. The survey considers harassment by the

transition-to-partial-estonian-language-instruction-what-is-happening-and-why.html (accessed April 16, 2014).)

⁸⁰ “Teaching Subjects in Estonian in Russian schools: current situation and needs, November–December 2004”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7239> (accessed April 16, 2014), 10.

⁸¹ *Russian Schools of Estonia...*, 2010, 31.

⁸² Official site of Russkiy Mir Foundation, http://www.ruskiymir.ru/ruskiymir/en/fund/about_ (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁸³ Annu Masso, Katrin Kello, Svetlana Djackova, “Minority education in the context of language and integration policy,” in *Estonian Human Development Report 2010/201: Baltic Way(s) of Human Development: Twenty Years On*, ed. Peeter Vihalemm et al. (Tallinn: AS Eesti Ajalehed, 2011), 132.

Language Inspectorate⁸⁴ and uncertainty about future of the Russian schools to be the two main problems.⁸⁵

The technical problems (such as a low language proficiency of teachers, which will inevitably solve itself over time thanks to the change of generations of teachers) are much easier to be solved (at least according to the opinion of the Ministry of Education) than the ideological ones – and uncertainty of the future of Russian schools is one of them. While Estonians themselves present their educational system, compared to other European countries, as a more than accommodating for members of the Russian-speaking minority (“publicly financed schools that provide an education in languages other than the official state language”⁸⁶), Russians as well as the EU-bodies share a different opinion.⁸⁷

Authors of the Compendium of Materials concerning the Russian Schools in Estonia⁸⁸ point out the right to education. According to the Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities from 1996 “education is extremely important for preservation and deepening of the identity of persons belonging to a national minority”⁸⁹. According to the authors, the reform considerably restrains opportunities for Russian-speakers in Estonia from gaining education in their mother tongue. They also consider it as discriminating irrespective of its positive influence to the Estonian-language proficiency of Russian youngsters. Some opponents of the restriction of sovereignty of the Russian schools stress the freedom of choice represented either by the conciliatory opinion “learning Estonian is advantageous but we should have right to choose whether we want to do it or not”, or by a factious “I do not need to know Estonian, let me study other, more useful languages”. The second argument is supported by the fact that among Russian speakers English, which is much

⁸⁴ The Language Inspectorate is a governmental body under the Ministry of Education and Research. Attestation of teachers is one of its tasks. (“The Brief History of the Language Inspectorate,” Language Inspectorate, <http://www.keeleinsp.ee/?lang=1> (accessed April 16, 2014).)

Teachers of Russian-schools are required to have obtain at least B2-level certificate of Estonian proficiency. The survey states that the majority of teachers complained about the harassment from the Language Inspectorate – frequent controls “in the all-pervasive atmosphere of nervousness” *Russian Schools of Estonia...*, 2010, 16.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁸⁶ “Russian-language schools’ transition to partial Estonian-language instruction – What is happening and why?” 31 January 2013, Official gateway to Estonia, <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/society/russian-language-schools-transition-to-partial-estonian-language-instruction-what-is-happening-and-why.html> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁸⁷ *Russian Schools of Estonia...*, 2010, 16.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

more useful, is spoken as often as Estonian,⁹⁰ and that many of Russian-speaking youngsters plan to leave the country to study or work and not to come back.⁹¹ From the territorial aspect, the most critical voices towards the reform are heard from the Eastern part of the country, where mother tongue of the majority of inhabitants is Russian. In those regions, the animosity towards the reform is supported by the fact that people there lack any communication experience with native speakers and literally have no vital need to use Estonian language.

But the problem does not comprise only the language, but also their role of preserving Russian culture in general. According to the results of the surveys, majority of the Russian-speaking respondents think that “the Russian culture and language are not valued in Estonia and teaching subjects in Estonian threatens the preservation of the Russian language and culture”,⁹² plus about one third of Russians agreed that “Russian youth will lose their cultural identity as a consequence of the educational reform”.⁹³ Therefore it is not surprising that the main goal of the Russian schools is, aside from keeping a good level of Russian proficiency among Russian youngsters, “to create a cultural person (...) of Russian culture”⁹⁴, simply to preserve the Russian identity of its students. The Ministry of Education tries to persuade Russians that the reform is by no means endangering Russian culture by the claim that it is “important to pay attention to studies of Russian language and literature”.⁹⁵ The Ministry does not plan to reduce the number of Russian language and literature classes, the schools are encouraged to bolster those studies by increasing the number of elective subjects they offer.

⁹⁰ Masso, Kello and Djackova, “Minority education...,” 2011, 131.

⁹¹ According to the Masso, Kello and Djackova, “Minority education...,” 2011, 132 it is about 40% of Russian-speaking young people, which is slightly higher rate than among the Estonian speakers.

⁹² “Brief summary: Non-Estonians’ awareness of and attitude towards the transition of Russian-medium schools to teaching subjects in Estonian at the upper secondary school level, January 2008”, Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7223> (accessed April 16, 2014), 14.

⁹³ Lindemann, “Education,” 2008, 42.

⁹⁴ Fishkina, “Est’ li budushee u russkoi kul’tury v Estonii?” 2000, 181.

⁹⁵ “Frequently Asked Questions,” Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?148684> (accessed April 16, 2014).

5. Teaching of Estonian history – clashes of narratives

5.1 “Language is not enough”

It must be mentioned that there are many voices that criticise the opinion that Estonian-language proficiency will solve the problem of coexistence of Estonians and non-Estonians in one state. Opinion that the real integration is hindered by historical-cultural and political-ideological reasons is stressed.⁹⁶ Simply said, it is not easy to make loyal and proud Estonians out of Russians, whose historical experience and understanding of events of the second half of the 20th century is absolutely different from the Estonian experience, while letting them adhere to their Russian culture. While interpretation of history is one of the attributes of national identity, change of attitudes towards historical events is problematic and in this case, understanding of the language is of no use.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russian schools in Estonia have come under the jurisdiction of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, therefore they are obliged to use textbooks authorised by the Ministry (the same as are used in Estonian schools, translation into Russian is allowed in the subject, which does not need to be taught in Estonian).⁹⁷ Even though Estonian high-school history textbooks are rather brief;⁹⁸ opponents of the unified curricula, even in such “nation-connected” subjects as history or civics, criticise it for its ethnocentricity,⁹⁹ which could be problematic from the perspective of Russian-speaking pupils.

The problems with underrepresentation of topics connected to history and culture of Russia could be easily solved by adding facultative courses, which is recommended by the Ministry of Education.¹⁰⁰ But the critics also detect a problem with a divergence between the official Estonian views on some historical events and those of Russian

⁹⁶ Siiner et al. “The implementation of language policy...,” 2011, 123.

⁹⁷ The only divergence is allowed in case of teaching of Estonian language. The schools can choose, whether they will follow the Estonian curriculum or the Estonian as a second language curriculum. “Studies in Estonian in Russian-medium Schools,” Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?1510031> (accessed April 16, 2014).

⁹⁸ This argument is supported by the author’s research on the topic Differences in Interpretations of Estonian Republic History in History Books Used in Estonian and Russian Schools in Estonia submitted as a final paper for course Contemporary Issues in the EU–Russian Relations (SORG.04.033) at Tartu University lead by prof. Viatcheslav Morozov in summer semester 2012.

⁹⁹ Only 12% of teachers from Russian schools (compared to 55% of teachers from Estonian schools) believe that the representation of minority and majority in history textbooks they use at school is balanced and fair. Golubeva, “Different History...” 2010, 322.

¹⁰⁰ “Frequently Asked Questions,” Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?148684> (accessed April 16, 2014).

teachers and pupils.¹⁰¹ As an example of such controversial issue could be presented the Soviet occupation of Estonia, which is a traditional point of clashes of opinions: only 28% of students at Russian schools agreed that Estonian was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 (among students at Estonian schools this number reached 59%).¹⁰² In spite of the fact that even among Estonian historians have already emerged authors who are against the traditional Estonian interpretations of the second half of the 20th century,¹⁰³ the “official interpretation”¹⁰⁴ considering the admission of Estonian to the Soviet Union involuntary is periodically reminded by the state officials in speeches who do not hesitate to indicate different interpretations as “wrong”, and even points at the people who stand behind those “wrong opinions” – members of the Russian-speaking minority.¹⁰⁵ The authors of those opinions are Estonian Russian speakers. But who are transmitters of those opinions to the younger generations, who did not lived during the Soviet times? For sure Russian media (broadly followed by Estonian Russians), but also their parents’ and teacher’s opinion, generally marked as a “hidden curriculum”.¹⁰⁶ However, according to the surveys Russian teachers are quite unwilling to admit that they present an alternative to the “official Estonian” interpretation of history to their students, but about 45% of Russian students admitted that their teachers are correcting statements in textbooks concerning the role of Russians in history.¹⁰⁷ Therefore it is not

¹⁰¹ Masso, Kello and Djackova, “Minority education...,” 2011, 132.

¹⁰² The objectively low percentage in both groups is due to the high percentage of students who do not know. Golubeva, “Different History...” 2010, 318.

¹⁰³ For example Estonian historian Magnus Ilmjärv in his book *Silent Submission*: does not consider the Soviet occupation of Estonia solely single-sided action of aggression and describes secret acts of controversial Estonian president Konstantin Päts which helped it. Magnus Ilmjärv, *Silent submission: formation of foreign policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania: period from mid-1920s to annexation in 1940* (Stockholm: Stockholm University Dept. of History, 2004).

¹⁰⁴ The “official interpretation” is an interpretation expressed by the state representatives. The official interpretation since the gain of independence in 1991 in Estonia correlates with the Estonian historical narrative, which was described in detail in Pääbo’s book as “strongly dissimilative towards Russia and Russians” and “Estonia as a part of the Russian state has been an historical anomaly that us fortunately eliminated” and therefore dissimilative towards Russian national narrative. Pääbo, “Potential of Collective Memory”, 2011, 23, 123 and 83–178.

¹⁰⁵ Speech of the president of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves on the anniversary of Tartu Peace on February 2nd 2007. “Rech Prezidenta Estonii Toomasa Khedrika II’vesa k godovshchine Tartuskogo mira 2 fevralia 2007 goda,” in *Povorotnye momenty istorii Estonii: Dopolnitel’nye materialy dlia uchitel’ia*, eds. Toomas Karjahärm and Andres Adamson (Tallinn: Celovoe uchrezhdenii integracii, 2008), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?249885> (accessed April 16, 2014), 46. Translation from Russian made by the author.

¹⁰⁶ Hidden curriculum are “factors that influence students’ perception of citizenship, history and the nation”. Golubeva, “Different History...” 2010, 319.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 322.

surprising that the Russian schools are by Estonians viewed as “locus of transmission of another country’s historical narratives”.¹⁰⁸

5.2 Approach to teaching history

The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research thinks that the key factor for conciliation of the Soviet times history interpretation is knowledge of the facts. Therefore it was decided to publish a composite book comprising documents and other materials about Estonian history, from the end of the prehistory until the year before the book was published (2008), entitled *Key moments in Estonian history*.¹⁰⁹ An entire one third of the book is dedicated to the period following the year 1939. Already in the additional title of the publication it was made clear to whom the book was intended: to high schools with Russian as a language of instruction. In this composite book primary sources as well as segments of works of Estonian but also Russian authors are shown, questions and tasks are suggested at the end of every topical chapter. It is up to teachers which segments out of the 360 pages they will use during the classes. The materials in the composite book are presented without any comments. Untrue or demagogical claims could be found, which should, according to the authors, stimulate interests of pupils to discuss the issues. Because of that the reading of materials by students should be always preceded by a lecture about the topic.¹¹⁰

On the other hand, according to the Ministry, the students are not the only ones, who need a lecture before they start reading the documents – also the teachers need some “preparation”. A publication named *Additional materials for teachers* (concerning the modern history part) was issued at the same time as the composite book of documents.¹¹¹ While the goal of the publication of documents is to show the young Estonian Russians all possible points of view, the Additional materials already express author’s prevailing interpretation, criticising the Russian one. The need to tolerate different interpretations is being strongly stressed,¹¹² but the unvoiced hope of the authors (that after the critical analyse of the sources it will be clear that the Estonian

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 316.

¹⁰⁹ Translation to English made by author. Karjahärm and Adamson, eds., *Povorotnye momenty istorii Estonii: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov dlia gimnazii...* 2008, 46.

¹¹¹ Both publications were recommended to be used by the Estonian state subject commission for history and distributed to the schools. Ibid., 2.

¹¹² Toomas Karjahärm, “Nekotorye promlemy prepodavaniia istorii Estonii v shkolakh s russkim iazykom obucheniia,” in *Povorotnye momenty istorii Estonii: Dopolnitel’nye materialy dlia uchitelia* (Tallinn:

interpretation is somehow “fairer”) is evident. The following paragraphs describe, what kind of texts the Additional materials comprise: mainly comments about history teaching, as well as a problem of interpretation of Estonian history.

An Estonian historian Toomas Karjahärm tries to identify problems of history teaching in Russian schools in Estonia.¹¹³ He is aware of segmentation of the Russian speaking community in Estonia (different levels of integration), out of which a considerable part is not willing to accept its position of minority. Karjahärm has realised, what was already stated, that acquiring Estonian citizenship or language proficiency is not a sufficient premise for feeling home in Estonia, since historical narratives of the two nationalities are so diverging. The stubbornness of both of the sides (pressure from the Estonian side on Russians to accept Estonian views, and a Russians’ kind of protest-self-consciousness as a reaction) is threatening mutual understanding.

In his first contribution to the publication Karjahärm tries to persuade opponents about his point of view to understand that Estonians do not want to disregard accomplishments of the Russian nation, but wants them to accept that many actions made by the Russian (or Soviet) representatives were very harmful to the Estonian nation. According to him, the way to mutual understanding is the knowledge of facts. Karjahärm criticises forgetting the terror caused by the huge Russian nation to the small Estonian one and presenting Stalin as a hero and dissolution of Soviet Union as a negative phenomenon. He also touches the delicate issue of Estonians fighting in German Nazi army, which is by some Russian historians interpreted as highly compromising. Karjahärm notes that in that case Estonians were not fighting against the Soviet Army for the victory of the Great Germania, but to evade return of Bolsheviks to Estonia. He hopes that a broader knowledge of the topic could overcome the cleavage. He also does not forget to remark that the everlasting Russian influence in Estonia was not always harmful (he mentions the number of Estonians who studied and became successful in Russia), that contemporary Russians are in no way responsible for the occupation and other grievances, and that the Soviet Union really gets the main credit for beating the Nazis. But at the same time, he considers appalling the absence of stressing out that Stalin was a negative historical figure.¹¹⁴

Celovoe uchrezhdenii integracii, 2008), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?249885> (accessed April 16, 2014), 7.

¹¹³ Ibid., 7–16.

Very interesting part of the publication is the already mentioned speech of the president of Estonia – Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who mentions the “wrong” interpretations.¹¹⁵ His message is again the same: everybody has the right to celebrate his victories, even though it is complicated due to the fact that historically Russian victories corresponded to Estonian losses, but praising the Soviet occupation, or considering the Soviet Russia to be Estonian liberator (instead of a violent occupant) is impertinent.

Not to concentrate only on the Estonian side, the publication also mentions the dark parts of Estonian history. For example, a very pertinent parallelism is shown between Estonian patriots (war veterans who brought flowers to the Lihula monument for the Estonian fighters for the freedom fighting in the units SS, which were also killing Jews in Sonderkommandos) and Russian patriots (who brought flowers to the Bronze Soldier – fighter against Nazis as well as an occupant).¹¹⁶

A Russian historian Elena Zubkova, who works mainly abroad and is known for her works criticising Stalinism, also tries to bring an insight to the minds of Russians. She adheres to the interpretation that according to the historical sources the occupation was illegitimate, but explains that it is not easy not to consider Stalin to be the most successful ruler in Russian history – from the point of view of the imperium, the annexation of the Baltics was beneficial.¹¹⁷

6. Results of the field research at schools in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva

6.1 Introduction to the field research

In the following chapter I will present the results of my field research, which consisted of visits of high schools in Estonia, whose students’ as well as teachers’ mother tongue is Russian. For purpose of the research, all the Russian schools in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva were contacted. Those cities have been chosen because of their model characters: Tallinn is the capital city of Estonia where about a half of the population has Russian as their mother tongue, so an independent existence of the functioning solely Russian

¹¹⁵ “Rech Prezidenta...”, 2008, 43–47.

¹¹⁶ Karjahärm and Adamson, eds., *Povorotnye momenty istorii Estonii: Dopolnitel’nye materialy dlia uchitelia...* 2008, 73 and 78.

¹¹⁷ Elena Zubkova, “Istoriik: u sovetskogo proekta v Pribaltike budushchego ne bylo,” in *Povorotnye momenty istorii Estonii: Dopolnitel’nye materialy dlia uchitelia*, eds. Toomas Karjahärm and Andres Adamson (Tallinn: Celovoe uchrezhdenii integracii, 2008), <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?249885> (accessed April 16, 2014), 92.

community is viable, there is a real possibility for the Russian speaking people to nearly avoid a close contact with Estonians – there is enough Russian schools, which are usually not attended by the students of Estonian origin, and also many Russian companies are operating in the city. On the other hand, Russians interested in contact with Estonians have lots of opportunities to meet with them. The two other cities are different. Tartu is the most important city in southern Estonia, where the rate of Russian speakers is traditionally lower (about 14%).¹¹⁸ Here the contact of Russians and Estonians is frequent, because the separated Russian community would not survive. Narva, located in the North Eastern part of Estonia near the Russian border, the territory traditionally inhabited by Russians, is the antipode of Tartu region. The absolute majority of inhabitants is Russian speaking, there are not many Estonians living there. Therefore, contact with Estonian language is more difficult there, even though Estonian is still the only official national language.

From the contacted schools only six have answered that the study visit is possible (three in Tallinn, two in Narva and one in Tartu). All of them were visited in November 2012 in purpose of the interviews with members of the management and teachers, visits of history classes concerning the modern history topics (12th grade) and Estonian language classes of different levels in order to gain general view of the educational process and to distribute the questionnaires among students.

The questionnaires were distributed among students of the 12th grades. The total number of 119 answered questionnaires were collected (70 Tallinn, 35 Narva and 14 Tartu). The number of gained questionnaires was limited by the number of students present at school at the moment of the visit. The printed questionnaires in Russian language were distributed during the lessons to have the highest possible rate of return. Open questions as well as multiple choice questions were presented.¹¹⁹ The questionnaires were on-line pre-tested on the testing sample consisting of six Russian high-school graduates.

The goal of the first part of the questionnaires was to get some basic information about the origins of the students, which could be later viewed in light of other answers. These questions investigated whether the students and their parents have Estonian nationality

¹¹⁸ "Population by sex, ethnic nationality and county," Estonian statistical database, http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=PO0222&path=../I_Databas/Population/01Population_indicators_and_composition/04Population_figure_and_composition/&lang=1 (accessed April 16, 2014).

(eventually why not) whether they feel Estonian, Russian or other and at which level do they speak Estonian and how often they use it. Second part of the questionnaires was about their studies at Russian schools in Estonia (why they have chosen it, what do they think about the reform) and about Estonian and Russian language in school and in public (how difficult are for them courses taught in Estonian, how should Estonian government tackle the Russian language). The third part of the questionnaires was dedicated to history. The questions investigated what the students know and think about the Soviet times and how much they discuss or commemorate this period at school and home.

The interviews with teachers and school officials were led mainly in Russian, some in English. They were semi-structured and the topics altered according to the position of the interviewed person. In total, eight recorded interviews in Russian language were analysed with the length of about 45 minutes.¹²⁰ The number of the interviewed persons was limited mainly by the willingness of the respondents. Generally the teachers of Estonian origins (who also teach at Russian schools), or those who admitted to have more contacts with Estonians in their professional or personal life were more communicative. Some off-record interviews also appeared that were used as the supportive sources for the investigations but could not be directly quoted. Main topics of the interviews were opinions of the respondents on the educational reform concerning the language of instruction at Russian schools, how important is the knowledge of Estonian and how their school helps the students to gain the knowledge. The historical topics concerning the Soviet times were also touched, especially during the interviews with history teachers.

Qualitative (interviews, open questions in questionnaires) and quantitative (questionnaires) results of the analysis will be presented on the following pages.

6.2 Questionnaires – Personal information part

From the analysed sample of 119 students an 86% majority has Estonian citizenship, mainly thanks to the “by-birth citizenship law”.¹²¹ The majority of the rest would like to

¹¹⁹ The full text of the questionnaire can be found in appendices at the end of this work.

¹²⁰ The list of the interviews with details is presented in the list of sources at the end of this work.

¹²¹ Among their parents 70% of mothers and only 50% of fathers have Estonian citizenship, while they mainly do not want to gain it in the future, fathers refusing it more than mothers. The reasons are mainly that it is not necessary or travelling to Russia to see relatives without visa or deep Russian roots. But also extreme answers as “my mother does not respect Estonia as a country” occurred. Only minimum of

have it; the reasons for this are usually a possibility of travelling/studying/working in the EU without visa. A reason mentioned by those, who are not interested in obtaining Estonian citizenship (and usually have the Russian one) is similar: just turned towards Russia – no need for Russian visa for travelling to Russia where they have families, or plan to leave Estonia soon anyway. The highest proportion of Estonian non-citizens among the students is in Narva (25% of Narva inhabiting students; the reason is usually their Russian place of birth), who generally would like to gain it because of the advantages mentioned above. An interesting advantage for having Estonian citizenship was mentioned by one respondent: “convenient for my sport challenges” – which pinpoints the fact that it is much easier to get into the Estonian national team than to the Russian one. The difference from countries such as Latvia and Lithuania involves the absence of motivation to gain Estonian citizenship in order to avoid Russian military service, because Estonia has compulsory military service as well.

The question about whether the students feel to be Estonians or Russians brought more interesting results. The 74% majority feels Russian; only 7% Estonian, mainly explaining this by a simple comment that they live in Estonia, one mentioning the daily use of Estonian language, another one even stresses that Estonia is his homeland. The group of 19% who answered “other” and commented on it has left the most original explanations. Traditional answers of the second generation Russians in Estonia, which were equally mentioned in some sources, emerged in our questionnaires: “not Estonian and at the same time not Russian”, “for Estonians Russian, for Russians Estonian”, “something in between”, “European” or “Cosmopolitan”. As the most concise explanation we can present “I live in Estonia, speak Russian, think European”. This is a considerable advancement from the attitudes of their parents, among whom felt Estonian (according to their children) less than 4%. Students see often the clear connection between the lower knowledge of Estonian language of their parents and their “feeling Russian”, which supports our primary assumption that language is (together with history) important creator of national identity. So there is no surprise that the older generation Russians do not feel Estonian when their offspring in our questionnaire answered that about 15% of mothers and 43% of fathers do not speak Estonian at all, and 51% and 32% (mothers and fathers respectively) “speak badly, but communicate if needed”. However, the 61% majority of younger generation has already moved to the

students is from mixed or Estonian marriages, from Estonian marriages usually at least one of parents has Russian as his or her mother tongue despite his Estonian ethnicity.

group “speak well with some errors” which has influenced their national attitudes – not yet towards the Estonian-ness, but already against the Russian-ness.

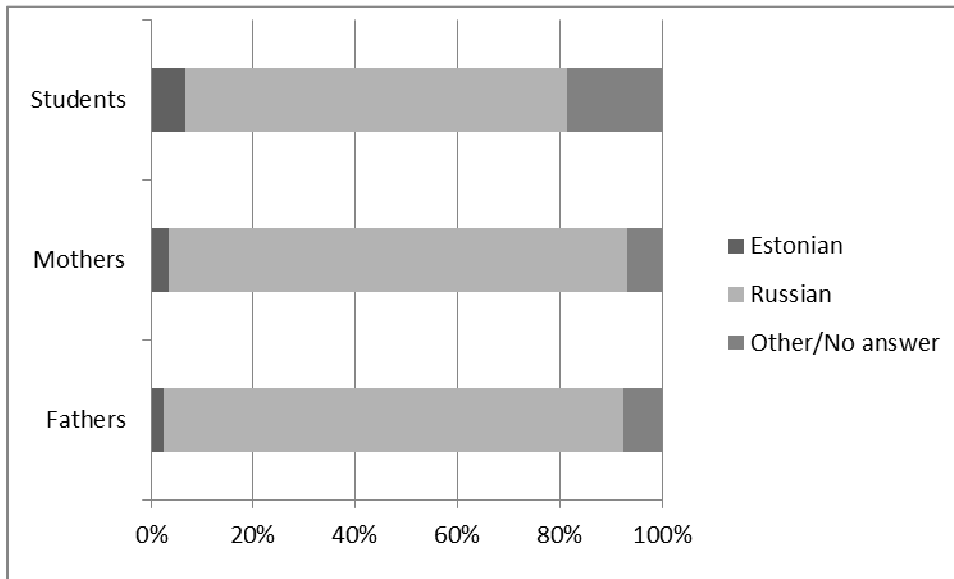


Figure 1: You/your mother/father feel/feels you/she/he are/is Estonian/Russian/other.

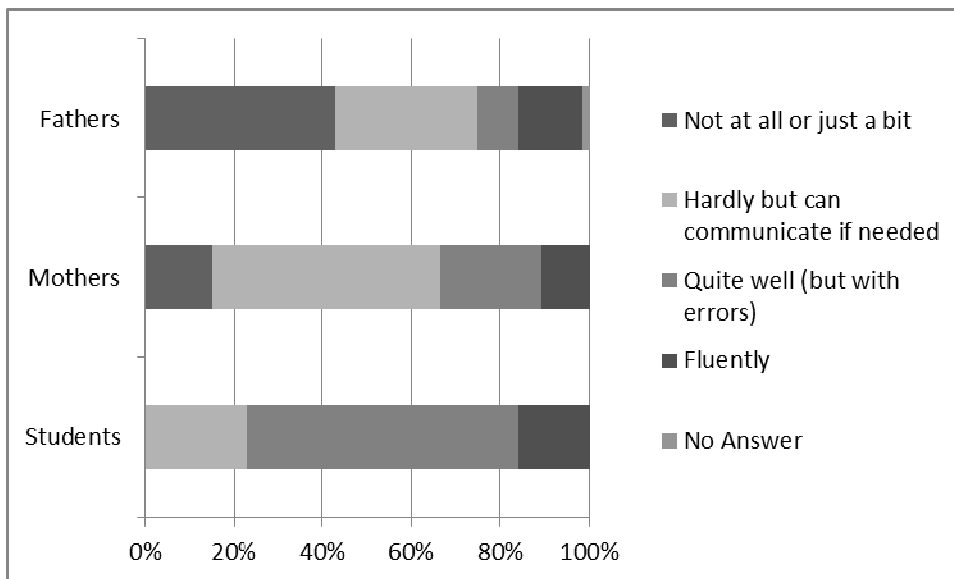


Figure 2: You/your mother/father speak/speaks Estonian.

The increasing level of Estonian language knowledge seems to be partially result of the educational reforms from after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, because 95% of respondents admit that they have learned Estonian at school. There were also other activities that helped to enhance Estonian language knowledge of 47% of respondents. Among those, let’s mention the private language courses (which were attended by a

quarter of respondents), or various free-time activities, mainly in sport clubs. One respondent mentioned the logical consequence of having enhanced his Estonian skills – he started to use Estonian even outside of school. The ministry of Education would probably consider this an example of positive effects of its reforms. Still, the vast majority (90%) of Russian students speaks mainly Russian with their friends, which indicates that young Russians attending Russian schools are to a certain degree isolated from their Estonian peers.

Speaking of the students' plans for the future, 49% of them plan to study at Estonian Universities (only two students from Narva), 10% in Russia and 45% elsewhere abroad.¹²² Only one of those, who would like to study in Russia, added a comment: “My mother tongue is spoken there.” Among those who have chosen “abroad”, the arguments, such as a better education or job opportunities, and higher wages resonate. This topic is important in connection with one of the possible arguments of the students who do not want to study Estonian, because it does not have a perspective, and they want to leave Estonia anyway (so that they want to spend the time rather studying some more useful language).¹²³ Comparing to other countries, the rate of those who want to leave is quite high,¹²⁴ but we must take into consideration that those numbers show only wishes of the students and do not show the real future of the students. We must also take into consideration that Estonia is a very small country with only 1,3 million inhabitants – so the fact that Estonian students want to study abroad is nearly comparable with the situation of students from the Czech city of Brno who want to study in Prague, and vice versa.

6.3 Questionnaires – Subjects taught in Estonian

According to the answers, students are generally divided into two groups of the same size: one of them admitted that studying in Estonian is difficult for them, the other one refused it. The first group quite often simply mentions that “it is not my mother tongue” or “it is a difficult language”; among the comments of the second group often occurs “I have learned already long”, or “I got used”. Comments like “I consider this language

¹²² Answers to the question “where they want to live after studies” the answers were: 34% – do not know yet, 41% – abroad (except for Russia), 23% – in Estonia, 6% – in Russia.

¹²³ Unfortunately this question was not a part of the questionnaire.

¹²⁴ According to Eurobarometer, Estonia's rate of people who find working abroad to be a positive phenomenon (38%) is after Denmark (51%) at the second place among the EU countries. For comparison, in the Czech Republic this rate is only 11%. “Geographical and labour market mobility,” Eurobarometer, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_337_en.pdf (accessed April 16, 2014), 10.

stupid and I will never need it”, and “I do not like this language” also occurred several times, accompanied by antipodes such as “I do not have problems, I like this language.” The answers foreshadow the level of language skills depending mainly on the time spent studying and using it (as well as students’ motivation and liking the language), so it is probably only a question of time when the Estonian Russians will learn the official language of the country they live in (the positive trend across the generations was described in the previous paragraph).¹²⁵ The Estonian Ministry of Education have introduced a reform about compulsory 60% of classes in Estonian language to speed up this process (details in previous chapters). The interviewed students are nearly equally divided according to their opinions on the reform (45% think that the reform is unnecessary, 42% think that the reform is not unnecessary), but at the same time only 34% of the students agree with the current form of the reform while 55% are against (it is too fast, not gradual enough...). 66% of students admitted that the reform will help Russian students to learn Estonian, study at Estonian universities and work in Estonia, at the same time 63% consider the reform to be discriminating against rights of minorities. The majority thinks that the reform will help but at the same time it is discriminating. The main arguments for this are that everybody should have a choice and that the idea is good but it should not be introduced compulsorily. Also the worry that the level of knowledge of Estonian will increase only at the expenses of the other subjects is expressed, because there will not be enough time for explaining due to translating. Quite a lot of answers use as a justification for Russian as a language of instruction simply the facts that there are so many Russians living in Estonia who should have right of choice. Some offensive comments against Estonians occurred as well: “It [Estonian] is a dead language. Estonians are on the verge of their era, they should bury their language.”¹²⁶

The 78% of students feel that Estonian government tries to reduce or eliminate the usage of Russian language on Estonian territory and only about 7% of respondents answered negatively to the question whether the Estonian government should support Russian language and culture on Estonian territory. According to their comments the

¹²⁵ Also the problem of teachers who are able and willing to teach in Estonian at Russian schools will gradually vanish as the new graduates of pedagogical faculties with better Estonian language skills will come to praxis.
According to 57% of students their teachers have problems with teaching in Estonian.

students think that Russians are considered by government to be some kind of second-rated citizens who should be assimilated, the critique of the motto “Estonia for Estonians” was repeated in the comments. Students expressed their frustration by offensive comments: “Stupid Estonians”, “[Estonians are trying to eliminate Russian language] very effectively, by slow but shameless steps and forcibly“, “it is a revenge”. The most offensive comment of the student, who thinks that Estonia is trying to eliminate Russian culture, even stated: “The strong Russian culture will pulverize the Estonian one.” Some of the students consider the reform only another of governmental nationalistic acts, they understand “they [Estonians] do not like Russians here”, “Estonians do not have any own culture”, and “majority of Russians here feels as aliens in Estonia”. The 15% of respondents who do not see any attempts of Estonian government to pulverize Russian language and culture usually have added some conciliatory comments like “[Estonian government does not want to eliminate Russian], (...) they just want to preserve their language and culture”, or “they are trying to protect their language and culture, but it is not necessary in my opinion”, “it is usual practice of small countries – trying to keep their culture”, “many people have relatives in Russia and they don’t want to lose them – knowing the culture can help in communication”. Two comments about Estonian tolerance also occurred (“[Estonia] supports Russian traditions“, and „all the people live in peace and love“), while the second one is probably not taken absolutely seriously.

According to answers of 70% of students, Russian should be the second national language in Estonia (70% yes, 24% no). As an explanation a high number of Russians living in Estonia was usually mentioned, with a bit of exaggeration (“The majority of inhabitants of Estonia are Russians”). Two students also mentioned “democracy”. Only one comment used a strange argumentation: “Because Estonia used to be a part of Russia.” The comments of those, who refused the improvement in status of Russian usually expressed empathy towards the small Estonian nation (“Estonian language would die”, “Estonia is not Russia”, “Every country has its own mother tongue so Estonians does not need to make it for Russians”, “This is Estonia”, “Because state language is Estonian and we live in Estonia. Nobody needs Russian here”.), and also the worries that in the case of Russian as a national language Russian speakers would not be

¹²⁶ This student’s comment is very similar to a popular Estonian joke that Estonians have no sex and no future – which is according to Estonians valid only for the Estonian grammar that really lacks distinction between genders and a distinct form for a future tense.

motivated to learn Estonian (two respondents). Two students made connection between language and culture by comments “Russian and Estonian are absolutely different, I think that Russian can destroy Estonian culture,” and “Estonia would lose its culture,” which is exactly the opposite point of view from the one of critics of the reform, who are afraid of annihilating of Russian language and culture.

6.4 Questionnaires – History part

Question about how students assess the Soviet Union lead to a quite high rate of people, who have not chosen any of the proposed answers (47%). The answers were predicative anyway: 46% of respondents agreed with the sentence “The Soviet Union was a winner of the Second World War and therefore should be celebrated” while 7% agreed with “The Soviet Union was an unwelcome occupant of Estonia and therefore should not be celebrated”. There was only one very frustrated comment among those who have chosen the “occupant” answer (“I hate the Soviet Union”).

The comments of some of those who have not chosen any of the two suggested answers were conciliatory: “I do not think that anyone should be celebrated – the most important thing is the respect for each other” or “the Soviet Union has won: it was victory of Russians as well as of Estonians”. Two of the undecided respondents mentioned voluntariness of the accession of Estonia to the Soviet Union. There were also some students who obviously understood the delicacy of the topic while commenting: “Difficult question, every nation has its own opinion.” “The Second World War and the occupation are too complicated topics to have one precise answer.” “The winner of the Second World War should be appreciated, but the occupant of Estonia should not be appreciated.” [underlined: Winner of the WW2, erased: should be appreciated.] “Soviet capturing/occupation policy was horrible, but thanks to it Estonia could reach high life standards.” “The Soviet Union won the war but not everybody has accepted this victory.” “(...) aggressive policy [of the Soviet Union, but that time it was] a fight mode (...). A World War II was not won solely by the Soviet Union.”

Even some of those choosing the option of celebrating the Soviet Union are aware of the delicateness (“Praise for the victory but not the socialistic system.” “For all its faults it has advanced Estonian economy and has helped to win the Second World War”), another respondent stresses out that during the Soviet times Estonia was developing well. For one respondent a sufficient reason for celebrating the USSR is the fact it “had the most victims and saved Europe from destruction by Nazis”. Another just notes that

“Estonian government tries to rewrite history”, or that “we [Russians] must remember our history”.

But even more explosive are answers to the four following questions about pros and cons of the Soviet Union: Since about a half of respondents¹²⁷ have not answered or have answered “I do not know” (or similar), we cannot consider any opinion to be the opinion of the majority. However, we can detect some types of answers that were put into the table (simple answers such as “everything” and “nothing” are not commented in the following text, but are shown in the chart as well):

	no answer / I do not know	economic aspects	democracy / HRs	everything	nothing
1. USSR +	48	24	7	4	6
2. today -	66	10	6	2	1
3. USSR -	57	5	26	3	3
4. today +	57	4	33	0	6

Chart 1: Opinions of students to positive and negative aspects of the Soviet Union compared to today (the figures represent number of students whose answers fit in the certain type of answer).

Comment on the chart: The questions were: 1. What was positive about the Soviet Union? 2. What is today worse than in the Soviet times? 3. What was negative about the Soviet times? 4. What is today better than during the Soviet times? Digits in the chart are percentage of respondents, whose answer fit in certain answer type. The questions were open (with no suggested answers), the types of questions were artificially created during the analysis of the answers. Quotations of particular answers are in the following text.

Economic “achievements” of the Soviet Union were mentioned quite often, such as zero unemployment, positive influence on Estonian economy (“Look around, how the

¹²⁷ No answer or “I do not know” answer. What was positive about the USSR? 48%; What was negative about the USSR? 57%; What is today better than during Soviet times? 57%; What is worse today than during Soviet times? 66%. The questions were in the questionnaire in this order. The rising rate of no or “I do not know” answer is probably caused by the order of the questions – the latter question, the more people are lazy to think about the answer.

Estonians could have managed to build skyscrapers, nine-floor buildings and factories (...); “Estonia was sponsored.”), social security and equality, lower prices, but also remarks about education and sports (in one case also “many flats”) for free. As negatives of nowadays high unemployment, high prices, and tuition fees were mentioned.¹²⁸ The economic aspects were declared also as negatives of the Soviet Union, only less often (see the Chart 1). Among those spare comments were single remarks about deficit of goods, absence of private business, lower living standards, command economy, queues and coupons.

The second type of answers concerned human rights and democracy (3rd column in the table). Comments of this type assessed the Soviet Union to be negative (26% of respondents). The comments include expressions such as: “repressions”, “violence”, “censorship”, “closed borders”, “no freedom and citizen rights”, “Stalin”, “transportations to Siberia”, “totalitarianism”, “dictatorship”, “absence of democracy”, “limited freedom” or “one-party system”. Those kinds of intense comments, only with the opposite meaning (“no totalitarianism”, “democracy” ...), were also in 33% of the answers to the question “What is today better than during the Soviet times?” Problems with democracy (corruption or discrimination) mentioned in connection with nowadays reach much lower rate (6%). On the other hand, the Soviet Union was appreciated for the equality of people or no corruption by 7 % of the students (this kind of statement will be discussed further in the text).

Russian language was mentioned as a positive feature of the Soviet era: once connected to education, once as “people spoke Russian without mistakes” and once just by itself. Worries about one’s future (compared to the past) were mentioned as a negative feature of nowadays, feeling of unity as a positive feature of the Soviet Union, and discipline in the USSR both as a negative and as a positive feature according to different respondents.

Let us mention also the comments, which were very rare, but outstanding by their absurdity or opposition to the opinions of the democratic Western World. Due to their scarcity there could be no conclusions made of them, they are just an interesting illustration to the topic. For example, though the claim that “[during the Soviet times] there were no borders with many countries“ is technically true and travelling between Estonia (or other EU countries) and other former Soviet republics is now under visa

¹²⁸ Tuition fees at Estonian universities are currently paid by those students, who do not get a financial aid, which is distributed according to results of the entrance exams.

regime, which is inconvenient especially for inhabitants of border areas of the EU (which Estonia is), possibility of travelling abroad is in fact relatively less complicated nowadays. Also two identical comments (the respondents could have possibly copying from each other) “All the countries were united” are highly misleading. Answer “Stalin”, written two times as the positive of the USSR is no surprise since more than a half of the Russian population, according to regular surveys of public opinion, still thinks about him positively. Furthermore, one of those respondents wrote “Stalin” as an answer for the negatives of the Soviet Union, which means that he understands delicacy of the issue. Due to the stated “positives” of the Soviet Union as “censorship”, “dictatorship” and “KGB” (and “no KGB” as today’s negative) we have to accept the possibility that the respondents could take it not seriously. However, even the fact that students dare to joke about such things tells us something about them.

From the Soviet Union positives we should mention “a rich and advanced culture of the USSR, many famous films and music compositions which importance today is underestimated”, and from negatives “a big influence of Western culture” and “a dissolution of the USSR”. Those answers are disputable about their positivity and negativity,¹²⁹ but no way offending. Some other answers bear evidence of respondent’s naivety or idealism about the Soviet Union (positives of the Soviet Union – “no corruption during the Soviet times” or negative of today – “youngsters drink alcohol”). Delicate answers describing positives of the Soviet times are also these: “people knew that (...) they will be accepted to the university”, “education was guaranteed for everyone” or “everybody was equal”. It seems that those respondents do not see the problem that during Soviet times this “equality” worked only for those who agreed with the Soviet regime. But at least one respondent has expressed a high level of understanding to this problem: “For different people there are different pluses and minuses and the opinions are different.”

Generally, the figures in the Chart 1 indicate that students consider today’s Estonia better than the Soviet Union in areas concerning democracy and human rights and worse concerning the economic aspects.

According to the other answers, students are confronted with the topic of the Soviet Union more at school (60%), less at home (36%), some of them (30%) stated that they do not talk about this part of history neither at school, nor at home. The question

¹²⁹ The remark about “the advanced culture of the USSR” is denied by another respondent by considering “propaganda of Russian culture” as one of the negatives of the USSR.

whether information about the Soviet Union learned at home and at school are different was answered only by 20% of respondents (8% – yes, it differs; 12% – no, it does not differ), unfortunately with very sparse comments, so we cannot conclude, in which way the students' interpretations differ. Some of the few notable comments of students to this question, concerning the differences, were: “Really depends on with whom I am talking.” “In school we speak more about occupation of Estonia.” (The latter was written by a student, whose history class is taught by an ethnic Estonian.) Some other students do not see any differences (“Pretty much we talk about same things – when it was, how it was.” “We just learn history. People say that life was safer but nothing else.”), some show what they have learned about the Soviet Union at school (“Negative and also positive moments, how the communists came gained power.” “The Soviet Union was well developed country.” “The Soviet Union used to be strong power.”), some express their lack of interest about the Soviet-Union topics (“I do not care about the Soviet Union.” “I do not like talking about the Soviet Union.”).

Since commemorating history is one of the most remarkable demonstrations of history interpretation, the last three questions of the questionnaire tackled the Victory Day of the May 9th. About 54% of respondents admitted celebrating the holiday at school. In the text of the question possible answers as drawing of topical pictures in lower grades and visiting historical monuments in higher grades were proposed, which were confirmed by the students (visiting monuments mostly by the students from Tallinn where the Bronze Soldier monument is situated). Among other mentioned activities connected to the holiday were concerts, singing/listening to military music, visiting war veterans, topics for essays, reading of poems, related classes, parades, plus an interesting signalisation of the beginning of class – military music played from loudspeakers.¹³⁰ It seems that answer to this question strongly depends on the school. In Narva, according to the questionnaires, both examined schools seem to be organising some kind of activities (concerts and visiting of veterans), in Tallinn it is some of them (visits of the Bronze Soldier monument), while in Tartu this is not the case; as one of the Tartu students mentioned: “It is only initiative of some students and some teachers.” One of the students from the school in Tallinn, which seems not to be organising any such activities, stated that “that part of history was horrible and we must forget it”, and

¹³⁰ Comparing to older times, when the beginning of a class used to be signalised by a mechanical bell, various melodies from the loudspeakers are common signalisation nowadays, at least at those schools the author visited .

one of his classmates answered that “on that day we celebrate the Day of Europe”, which indicates big differences in interpretation even among Russian schools.

Even more students (73%) agreed with the statement that “you (or your parents, grandparents or relatives...) celebrate the Victory Day”.¹³¹ Visiting monuments (the Bronze Soldier in Tallinn, the monument in the Raadi park in Tartu, Narva – not specified) and military cemeteries, bringing flowers, watching parades, visiting or congratulating to war veterans – those were the comments of 38% of respondents. For about 10% of respondents is the Victory day rather “family holiday like the New Year”, as one of them stated. Family gatherings, commemorating dead relatives, congratulating to those who have lived through the war, talking war stories or “picnics, going to the places of memory” and “wishing of peace” seems to represent the attributes of this family holiday.¹³² Among those who do not celebrate the Victory day one of them commented that “just because of tradition [he] simply go[es] to the monument – to watch other people” and another one said that he “do[es] not forget our heroes and respect them”.

The very last investigated question what the students thought about relocating the Tallinn Bronze Soldier statue. Disagreement about his new location was expressed by 58% of the students, 18% of them thought the military cemetery was a proper place for him (“Because he is not there near the street, but in silent woods.” “I really do not know why there was such a fuss about it.”) But even some of those, who consider the military cemetery to be a good place criticise the process of re-localisation (6% of all respondents), which seemed as „planned provocation before the festivities”. Comments on the relocating mention that “the way of action of the authorities was wrong”, and “it should have been done democratically”, “more carefully – without provocation”, “not all of a sudden”, “in more cultivated way”, “not in such an awful way – to change its place at night”, “not at that day and not so demonstratively”, “without such a scandal”, “not just before May 9th”, “not in such a crazy way and on that holiday”, “more calmly not to provoke disapproval of many people”, and others very similar. One of the opponents of the removal would have agreed with the scenario the monument would have “have been moved with celebrations”, another thought that “only war veterans should have decided about what to do with the Bronze Soldier”. Bitter and outraged

¹³¹ Only 3% of total expressed in comments that not them personally, but only their relatives (usually grandparents) celebrate it.

¹³² Also this group (“Victory day as a family holiday”) was created artificially while analysing questions.

comments also emerged, one of them mentioning an insult “not only [to] Russia but also the other countries“, other considering the removal very lousy [svinskoe] approach of Estonians”, another calling for “giving power to Putin”, because “[the PM] Ansip has not achieved anything by that, just focused hatred towards Russians”. Some of the students understand well, that “the problem is not in the location” and try to explain that “for many Russians in Estonia this is not a communist memorial, but it commemorates the Russians who died during the Second World War” – this idea is more plainly expressed by another comment devoted to the Bronze Soldier: “He is a hero!” According to comments of three different students, “Estonian state should care about the opinion of the minority” and not “limit Russia and the memory of war veterans” because “the role of Soviet soldiers in the history should not be minified”. Of course there are also students who do not care: “I am not interested in this topic. I think there is no need to emphasise past. It is needed to look forward to the future.”

6.5 Interviews – Language part

Reactions of the teachers and school-managers to the research rather varied, usually depending on the ethnicity and knowledge of Estonian language of the interviewed person: Estonians and bilinguals (to the group of bilinguals belonged the majority of the interviewed staff members) were in general more interested in the research and more open to the questions than those, who did not speak Estonian fluently. It is possible that the less welcoming approach had some connection with fears of controls from the Ministry of Education.

According to the interviewed staff, all the visited schools obey the law and therefore have successfully introduced at least 60% of Estonian-language classes for the upper secondary level at the latest in the academic year of 2011/2012. Some of them are trying to keep as much Russian-language classes as possible, and not to transfer to Estonian language prior 10th grade,¹³³ others try to prepare their students for Estonian already before reaching the upper secondary level.¹³⁴ Strategies for the lower levels differ as well: some schools have added just grammar and conversation classes of Estonian language (some of them quite radically, which was very good for advanced students but

¹³³ Interview no 4.

¹³⁴ Despite the on-going reform, which will eventually divide the primary and the secondary schooling systems it is still quite common in Estonia to have primary and secondary school in one building and under one leadership.

very stressing for the weaker ones¹³⁵), some offered facultative courses in Estonian,¹³⁶ some decided rather introducing Estonian in compulsory but simple subjects such as music or physical education,¹³⁷ the most advanced schools have worked out several different study programs (differing from the percentage of the Estonian classes¹³⁸). The degree and the pace of transformation (faster than the compulsory schedule) is usually consulted with the parents, who are generally divided into two groups. One of them supports the reform and is very happy about the possibility to put their children into a Russian school (because of the Russian environment) where the Estonian is taught starting from the first grade.¹³⁹ Parents (and school principals) of the second group are against the reform because they either they want to offer education in their mother tongue, or are simply worried that children will not keep with their studies in Estonian (especially the difficult subjects as maths, chemistry, biology, chemistry¹⁴⁰). One of the teachers believes that the problem is only in the parents' minds – they sometimes just look back at how the things used to be in the past and are not ready for the change, while their children do not care or simply get used to it.¹⁴¹ However, some schools point at the real unreadiness of the students: Even though the transition period should have been already over, and the 60% of subjects should be already taught solely in Estonian, some teachers admitted that they still sometimes need to use Russian while teaching.¹⁴² Some teachers are still complaining about the lack of special study materials for Russian students (which would help them understand the difficult language used in Estonian textbooks¹⁴³) and the lower quality of Estonian textbook – the Russian ones are, according to them, better because of a higher methodical quality.¹⁴⁴ Another aspect which complicates the successful implementation of the reform is the lack of Russian teachers speaking Estonian.¹⁴⁵ It is partially being solved by the arrival of the new generation, partially by accepting ethnic Estonians into

¹³⁵ Int. no 12.

¹³⁶ Int. no 12, Int. no 14.

¹³⁷ Int. no 12.

¹³⁸ Int. no 14, Int. no 6, Int. no 6.

¹³⁹ The demand for Estonian language classes is twice the actual capacity that the Russian schools in Tallinn can offer. Int. no 6.

¹⁴⁰ Int. no 1.

¹⁴¹ Int. no 4.

¹⁴² Int. no 14.

¹⁴³ Int. no 15.

¹⁴⁴ Int. no 1.

¹⁴⁵ All the schools in Narva are complaining about this (Int. no 18, Int. no 20, Int. no 14), in Tallinn it depends on a school (It is important to mention that it is not only problem of Estonian speaking teachers but of teachers in general), (Int. no 1, Int. no 6), in Tartu this problem was not detected (Int. no 12).

Russian schools. While the ethnic Estonians are usually welcome variegation which could help the Russian schools to become less insulated from the Estonian society, the partially “artificial” generation exchange is by the younger teachers viewed as problematic – with older teachers, who are the real teaching professionals, is leaving also their teaching expertise and methodology.¹⁴⁶

The interviews have detected a myth connected to the teaching in Estonian language: Parents, students, but also teachers or school staff who do not have any personal experience with teaching those subjects in Estonian, usually mention worries about how the students will manage to study in Estonian language the “difficult subjects” as math, physics or chemistry. But the real experience of teachers shows, that the social-studies subjects as history and civic education are much more problematic, and not only because of clash of interpretations, which will be discussed later. The simplicity of mathematics comparing to history was mentioned by multiple history teachers; one of them argued that “in math you just have to resolve different examples and tasks, [...] math is not speaking, math is just resolving the exercises, but history is speaking 45 minutes, [...] in history you have to analyse, discuss [...] which is not possible when students do not speak Estonian [on sufficient level]”.¹⁴⁷ The problem of a too high level of language in history textbooks was mentioned as well.¹⁴⁸ But the history teachers are not the only ones who do not consider teaching maths in Estonian language difficult; a good argument for this is a fact that Estonian terminology for maths is more understandable than the Russian one. The term perimeter could serve as a good example: Russian uses the word “perimetr” with the Greek origin, while Estonian uses “ümbermõõt”, which literally means “measure it around”, which is more understandable and easier to remember.¹⁴⁹ But what helps the math teachers the most is the fact that mathematics is not planned to be compulsory transformed into the Estonian language of instruction, so it is usually only a facultative subject attended by only those who have a high Estonian-language proficiency.

It is clear that the Estonian language proficiency of students attending the immersion programs is very high.¹⁵⁰ Those students have no problem at the upper secondary level and could easily continue at Estonian universities. The observations during classes of

¹⁴⁶ Int. no 6, Int. no 4.

¹⁴⁷ Int. no 6.

¹⁴⁸ Int. no 15.

¹⁴⁹ Int. no 14.

¹⁵⁰ For example Int. no 14, Int. no 19, Int. no 6.

Estonian language at primary-school level have shown that enthusiasm for Estonian language depends solely on the ability of the teacher to catch the pupils' attention – if the learning is hidden in a game, which the pupils enjoy, they are eager to learn. To catch the attention of the older students is more difficult. Those who are motivated seem to be able to learn Estonian even without the reform (as many of today's Russian teachers did¹⁵¹), the reform just help them how to learn Estonian more effectively. The unmotivated ones usually have problems, but not only in Estonian-languages classes, but in other subjects as well,¹⁵² which is already not a problem of the reform itself.

Those students, who do not want to learn Estonian, sometimes argue that they do not need to learn Estonian because they will move abroad as soon as possible, therefore they should not waste time learning Estonian but learn a more useful language. According to the teachers this argument is used by students, who are not interested in learning Estonian, very often, but the reality is sometimes different – the official statistics are not available, but for example from a high school in Narva (which ranks about 15th out of 230 Estonian upper secondary schools in final exams;¹⁵³ it means that its students should be good enough to study abroad) only about 2% of graduates of high school are really studying abroad.¹⁵⁴ The discrepancy between the numbers of students planning the study abroad and the number of those who really carried out the plan is probably caused by the already mentioned argument that those who do not want to study Estonian usually do not want to study any other language either, so their future plans are just wishes.¹⁵⁵ Many teachers also pinpointed examples of students who used to be deep-rooted opponents of Estonian-language classes hoping to leave Estonia as soon as possible, who are now still living in Estonia together with an Estonian spouse.

Among the teachers generally prevails the opinion that everybody should study the language of the country of residence,¹⁵⁶ at least at the level needed for his position until he finally leaves Estonia. But the opinion that the reform is unpopular, because it is forced and the possibility of choice is missing, is also quite common.¹⁵⁷ One teacher

¹⁵¹ Int. no 8, Int. no 6, Int. no 8, Int. no 6. One of them even expressed, how envious he was towards the Russian children who had possibility to learn Estonian already in kindergarten and therefore easily (Int. no 4).

¹⁵² Int. no 14, Int. no 6, Int. no 12.

¹⁵³ Ranking of Estonian secondary schools according to the results in final exams in 2012,

<http://www.postimees.ee/export/riigieksamid/2012/?aine=Kokku> (accessed April 16, 2014).

¹⁵⁴ During the study trip to Estonia the author got the possibility to look into internal school documents of one of the high schools in Narva.

¹⁵⁵ Int. no 13.

¹⁵⁶ Int. no 8, Int. no 12, Int. no 20, Int. no 14, Int. no 4, Int. no 11, Int. no 9, Int. no 18, Int. no 13.

¹⁵⁷ Int. no 8, Int. no 1, Int. no 13, Int. no 6, Int. no 18, Int. no 11, Int. no 1, Int. no 3.

mentioned that the methods are the same as during the russification during the 19th century, and therefore kind of discriminating.¹⁵⁸ Some others understand that the “right of education in mother tongue” is kept, because the reform does not apply to private schools¹⁵⁹ and formally also to the basic schools.¹⁶⁰ On the other hand, analogously to the students’ answers in questionnaires, the slight majority of them would support Russian as a second official language in Estonia, in case such a possibility would arise. But again analogously to the students’ answers, the more ruminative teachers see that it is not the interest of Estonian society.¹⁶¹ Of course the best solution would be a country, where everybody speaks both languages equally. This already works at a local level,¹⁶² but state-wide is utopic. The opinion that the official status of Russian would make Russians lazy to learn Estonian was expressed,¹⁶³ and supported by some other teachers. Aside from the Estonian immersion classes, the best way to teach children speak fluently Estonian without investing money in private lessons at language schools is to put them to the Estonian schools, but this possibility has according to the teachers several obstacles, especially in Narva region, where the quality of Estonian-language schools is lower than of those with Russian language of instruction, and also the percentage of Russian-speakers in those schools is higher, which makes it impossible to create the real Estonian environment.¹⁶⁴ Very important arguments against sending Russian children to Estonian schools are also well-founded worries that in Estonian school they will not learn so much Russian and therefore they will not master for example their writing skills in Russian so well. Aside from the problems with language, the different mentality of the parents could cause certain problems as well – some conservative Russian parents complain about difficulties with understanding their children who have attended Estonian schools, not in linguistic sense, but concerning the culture and common values.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁸ Int. no 11.

¹⁵⁹ Int. no 20.

¹⁶⁰ Only the “cunning” fact that the basic schools in fact must also teach in Estonian otherwise they will not manage to prepare their students for higher education is also mentioned together with the problematic situation of the students who did not manage to start studying Estonian earlier and now have problems. Int. no 6.

¹⁶¹ Int. no 6.

¹⁶² Int. no 4 mentions personal experience from Estonian companies, where at least a basic knowledge of the mother tongue of a colleague is strong friendship-making instrument.

¹⁶³ Int. no 4.

¹⁶⁴ Int. no 14.

¹⁶⁵ Int. no 6, Int. no 12.

The questionnaires distributed among students and also the interviews have shown an interesting detail that students of Russian schools, who have above-average contacts with Estonians (and therefore better command of Estonian), are often sportsmen attending trainings and competitions together with Estonians.¹⁶⁶ It means that hobbies, during which the Russian and Estonian children and youngsters meet each other, are very helpful for upgrading the level of knowledge of Estonian language among Russians. Those Russian schools that are aware of it try to support the contact between their and Estonian students by cultural events for children of both nationalities – exchange days or weeks, summer camps or student conferences. The perception of teachers whether the contact is intensive or not differs according to location: while Narva teachers are pessimistic about the possibility of intensive contacts, trying to explain the lack of interest for exchange programs from the Estonian side by the worries of mothers to send their children to the remote Narva region,¹⁶⁷ in Tartu and Tallinn the teachers think that possibilities how to spend time in Estonian-Russian environment are abundant – taking advantage of it depends only on interests of individuals.¹⁶⁸ The personal contacts among teachers in Estonian schools were appreciated concerning the communication with different schools about exchange programs etc.¹⁶⁹ Those contacts are indirectly supported by the reform, because of higher percentage of ethnic Estonians teaching at Russian schools.

6.6 Interviews – History part

Talking with teachers at Russian schools about teaching modern history was more complicated than discussions about the reform of the language of instruction. Uneasiness while talking about this topic by some teachers was evident: lower voice while talking about controversial topics, even requests to switch off the dictaphone by an ethnic-Estonian teacher employed at Russian school, discomfort of some Russian teachers talking about certain topics or decline of an already arranged interview. When asked directly about the way they interpret certain issues, the teachers usually stressed the need to show the students facts and let them think about interpretations themselves.¹⁷⁰ As one ethnic-Estonian teacher said, “history teachers know exactly how

¹⁶⁶ Int. no 4, Int. no 13.

¹⁶⁷ Estonians from other regions perceive Narva as a slightly dangerous place due to the bad economic situation, and therefore a higher criminality.

¹⁶⁸ Int. no 20, Int. no 14, Int. no 15, Int. no 13, Int. no 12, Int. no 7, Int. no 4.

¹⁶⁹ Int. no 14 a Int. no 7.

¹⁷⁰ Int. no 15, Int. no 7, Int. no 6.

controversial our history has been”,¹⁷¹ because of which teaching of Estonian history is complicated at Russian, as well as Estonian schools. But not all the teachers are so optimistic about the objectivity of their colleagues, the presumption that modern history of Estonia is taught differently at Russian and at Estonian schools was supported mainly by those with mixed Russian-Estonian origin and therefore natural insight into the both communities.¹⁷²

The interpretation of the Soviet occupation was used as a sample issue in the interviews – the teachers were asked about their personal opinions. The toleration to the Estonian interpretation was expressed among the answers, but some of the teachers mentioned their personal disagreement with it – according to them the occupation was not a violent act.¹⁷³ An ethnic Russian history teacher has made a broader view into the minds of Estonian Russians: while confronted with answer of one of his students in the questionnaires (What was positive about the Soviet Union? – “Stalin.”) in carefully elaborate answer he showed his discontent with the single-sided Estonian interpretation: he agrees with dispraising Stalin for the repressions and teaches his students that Stalin has „built his empire on bones“ and that Soviet times were by all means “sad time for Estonian national idea”, but at the same time he understands fascinations by Stalin – he was really the one who made Russia a Superpower. Therefore, during his classes he focuses also on the positive aspects of the Soviet rule as “a higher education for free, scholarships, free healthcare, sanatoriums, [...] invested money [...]”,¹⁷⁴ while explaining that not everything was negative about the USSR, which is the simplest summary of the Estonian interpretation. The need to mention also the positive aspects of the Soviet rule was stressed also by the teacher who considers the occupation itself “negative” and “painful” “for Estonian country”, irrespectively of how the people call the period (voluntary incorporating vs. involuntary occupation).¹⁷⁵

A political problem concerning the different interpretations of Estonian modern history was mentioned as well. The schools react defensively to the speeches and acts of Estonian politicians who are building the Estonian national identity on the opposition to

¹⁷¹ Int. no 7.

¹⁷² Int. no 14, Int. no 20.

¹⁷³ “As I have seen the documents and how it was, it was voluntary. For the rulers it was a solution. According to which I know, it was not violent occupation.” (Int. no 1) „I, personally, do not consider it [the Soviet times] to be violent occupation, for me it was just the [consequence of] the Second World War.“ Int. no 12: It should be stated that those two comments were said by the members of the school staff, not by the history teachers.

¹⁷⁴ Int. no 11.

¹⁷⁵ Int. no 6.

everything Soviet and therefore Russian. The nationalistic behaviour of the government is criticised by Russians, as well as Estonians, while different levels of worries about how much those tensions are in fact influencing the education were expressed.¹⁷⁶

6.7 Concluding remarks on the field research

While reading the arguments of teachers from Russian schools, we can detect two basic lines of thinking about the educational reform that are clashing at the point of value of personal decision: first line believes that everybody has the right to decide how and whether he will learn Estonian or not; the second line stresses that it is needed to persuade Russians to believe that a knowledge of Estonian is useful for them. The people who speak both languages fluently seem to be in the most advantageous positions – at least the interviewed ones: teachers who considered themselves to be bilingual, enjoyed their status and tried to persuade their students about the advantages stemming from bilingualism. Even though the implementation of the reform is not perfect, the Russian teachers seem to be accepting it and understanding the advantages of it. Some grievances are felt but the obvious benefits are known. By words of one teacher: “Nobody likes the reform. Nobody likes any kind of reform, never. Because reforms are every time connected with emotions and complications”.¹⁷⁷ But as another said: “Estonian is not a rocket science”¹⁷⁸ and therefore possible to learn.

Speaking of the history teaching, even though particular anti-Estonian messages are being detected among students of Russian schools¹⁷⁹ and many (not only Russian) teachers and students are not pleased by too patriotic Estonian official point of view, it seems that picture of Russian schools as nests of anti-Estonian propaganda is highly inexact. As one of the Russian teachers said: „Every nation has the right to explain to its children [its history] – every nation has the right to its nationhood“.¹⁸⁰ This quotation is expressing exactly, what is going on in Russian schools in Estonia – the Russians are explaining their history to their children. In their own way. Nothing more, nothing less.

¹⁷⁶ “History teaching is political thing anyway.” Int. no 15. The stupidest thing is to make the education become a political or media thing.” Int. no 4.

¹⁷⁷ Int. no 12.

¹⁷⁸ Int. no 4.

¹⁷⁹ Examples mentioned by some of the teachers: “All the Estonian politicians should learn how Putin works and do everything like Putin because he is the only good thing in the World” (from an essay, Int. no 13); “We hate Estonia,” could had been heard even from small children after the Bronze soldier night (Int. no 3).

¹⁸⁰ Int. no 11.

7. Conclusions

Despite their technical Estonian-ness represented by their Estonian citizenship (which they welcome as an instrument enabling them travel, study or work in the EU), students of high schools with Russian as a language of instruction still feel predominantly Russian, they speak predominantly Russian with their relatives and friends and in case anyone asks, they will support Russian as a second official language of Estonia. The assumption about the language they use being a big influence on the national identity was indirectly approved by many of them with simple responses explaining why they feel Russian: their mother tongue is Russian. On the other hand, all the students are already able to communicate in Estonian, at least on a certain level, which distinguishes them from the generation of their parents. The absolute majority of students admitted that they have mainly learned Estonian at school (with Russian as a primary language of instruction).

The high level of Estonian language proficiency of Russian students is a result of language policy of Estonian state, which marked it as its goal already in early 1990s – the 60%-Estonian-at-high-schools reform, which was implemented in full force in the academic year 2011/2012, is one of its instruments that were enforced despite the protest voices of the Russian minority pointing at the insufficient preparedness of students and teachers as well. During the years before the implementation of the reform, researches on progression of preparation were published by both proponents and opponents of the reform with results, which were not contradictory (opponents pointed at unpreparedness of teachers and students and proponents were emphasizing that the preparations are still in progress and that a successful implementation is only a question of time), just differently interpreted (badly prepared vs. successfully progressing reform).

Our research has found out that the students are nearly equally divided into two groups – one of them having no problem with the transition to the Estonian language of instruction, the second feeling insufficiently prepared. But even the prepared ones criticise the form of the reform, especially that it is mandatory – they consider the absence of possibility to choose discriminating. The same arguments are used also by some teachers. The school staff members (and usually the younger teachers) are somehow more optimistic, appreciating the possibility enabling the students became easily bilingual, which they (themselves often bilingual) consider to be a big advantage

on the job market, and in personal life as well. From our point of view the reform is integrative rather than assimilative, because certain amount of classes remains in Russian, as well as the communication outside of classes.

The easier access to acquiring Estonian language knowledge naturally, especially for the more motivated high-school students, is not the only result of the reform, because the reform indirectly influences also the lower schools, which are obliged to prepare their graduates to later study in Estonian. Another positive effect is a more tight cooperation between Russian and Estonian schools enabled by hiring ethnic Estonians as teachers to Russian schools – personal ties make it easier to organize student exchanges and other events, which helps to connect Russian and Estonian communities.

Concerning the history teaching, especially about the Soviet times, students and teachers are well aware of the delicacy of the issue. While talking about this topic, teachers and school staff are very cautious about expressing the need to present to students more than one point of view and to teach them to respect the different interpretations. Their personal opinion to this topic seemed to mirror the level of integration to Estonian society. Those with family ties with Estonians seemed to be more compassionate to the Estonian point of view. The endeavour of the teachers being objective seems to be working, since the students are well informed of the delicacy of the issue as well: they are aware of the democratic limits of the Soviet Union comparing to these days, and many of them understand that what is by Russians considered positive was very negative for the Estonian nation, which have interspersed our worries about objectiveness of history teaching at Russian schools; at present, fanatic advocacy of fight against Nazis was replaced by showing different points of views. But students' naivety about some topics must be mentioned as well – equality of all the people during the Soviet times (concerning for example admission to universities) seems to be a typical example of their idealism, rooted in their membership to the society, which used to be privileged during the Soviet times.

Despite students admitting talking about the Soviet period more at school than home, the Victory day of May 9th is celebrated more at homes than at schools. It means that this Russian cultural phenomenon is considered to be rather a family holiday commemorating the relatives fallen in war, than celebrating the victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War. This difference is hardly perceivable by Estonians, who are connecting the end of the Second World War with the Soviet occupation of Estonia.

The feeling of a gradual assimilation represented by the laws regulating Russian schools in Estonia among Russian students is evident. The most frustrated individuals seem to compensate worries from assimilation by disrespect to Estonian culture, but their hateful remarks addressed to Estonians and Estonian culture or language were emerging in questionnaires at about the same frequency as remarks of their more compassionate classmates understanding the disadvantageous position of the small Estonian nation and its language, which should be kept and protected at the expenses of Russian.

Even though Estonians express their discontent with Russian culture (especially concerning the propaganda of Russian language as an official language and celebrations of the Soviet victory in the Second World War), their endeavour to teach Russians living permanently in Estonia Estonian language and to try to explain them that Soviet victories were hurtful for Estonian nation, is not meant to ruin Russian culture in Estonia, but to only make Russian respect the Estonian one.

The bilingualism and insight to Estonian perception of history (which are goals of the 60%-Estonian reform and the publication of additional materials for history teachers) seems to be supported mainly by teachers, who are bilingual themselves. Those who we met and interviewed were proud citizens of Estonia and at the same time proud Russians by origin, who enjoyed their status in between the two societies understanding both sides (not only linguistically). They managed to become bilingual already before the reform was implemented but welcome it as an instrument making the process easier for the younger generation of students. Simply, the concept NOT ONLY Russian – BUT ALSO Estonian, with no stress on which identity should prevail, seems to be a good way to move forward. According to our opinion, this way is the one the Russian schooling in Estonia is moving.

8. Shrnutí

Tato diplomová práce se věnuje dvěma aspektům současného středního ruskojazyčného školství v Estonsku, které významně ovlivňují formování národní identity ruských studentů: vyučovacím jazyku a výuce dějepisu. Z výsledků výzkumu plyne, že současná generace středoškoláků ovládá estonštinu na mnohem větší úrovni než generace jejich rodičů a to zejména díky reformám, které nejprve zavedly do všech úrovní škol estonštinu jako „druhý jazyk“ a v roce 2011 do středních škol také jako vyučující jazyk minimálně v 60 % výuky. Tato reforma je mnohými Rusy považována

za diskriminační, asimilační a ohrožující ruskou národní identitu studentů, nicméně příklady škol, které tuto reformu implementují nejúspěšněji a již překonaly počáteční problémy, dokazují, že její důsledky jsou v souladu se záměry Ministerstva školství integrační a že úspěšní středoškolští absolventi těží ze svého bilingvismu a ohrožení své ruské národní identity necítí.

Co se týče výuky dějepisu, jak studenti, tak učitelé jsou si vědomi delikátnosti problému interpretace sovětské éry, studenti zejména zmiňují demokratické nedostatky SSSR. Rozhovory i dotazníky sice potvrdily předpokládané interpretační střety i idealizaci sovětských časů studenty (zejména co se týče ekonomických aspektů), neúcta k estonským hodnotám a kultuře je ovšem mezi ruskými studenty okrajovým jevem.

Obecně se dá říct, že reforma o 60 % výuky v estonštině i přes počáteční problémy skutečně podporuje bilingvismus ruských studentů a jejich vhlad do estonského chápání dějin se díky dostupnosti různých zdrojů zlepšuje. Bilingvní učitelé a studenti jsou obvykle hrdí na své estonské občanství a zároveň na svůj ruský původ, odpovídají tedy konceptu národní identity NOT ONLY – BUT ALSO. Jejich postavení rozkročené mezi ruskou a estonskou společností jim pomáhá porozumět oběma a to nejen v lingvistickém slova smyslu. Pokud je můžeme považovat za produkt reformovaného ruského školství v Estonsku, pak se toto školství ubírá správným směrem, protože do dvouetnické estonské společnosti přináší porozumění.

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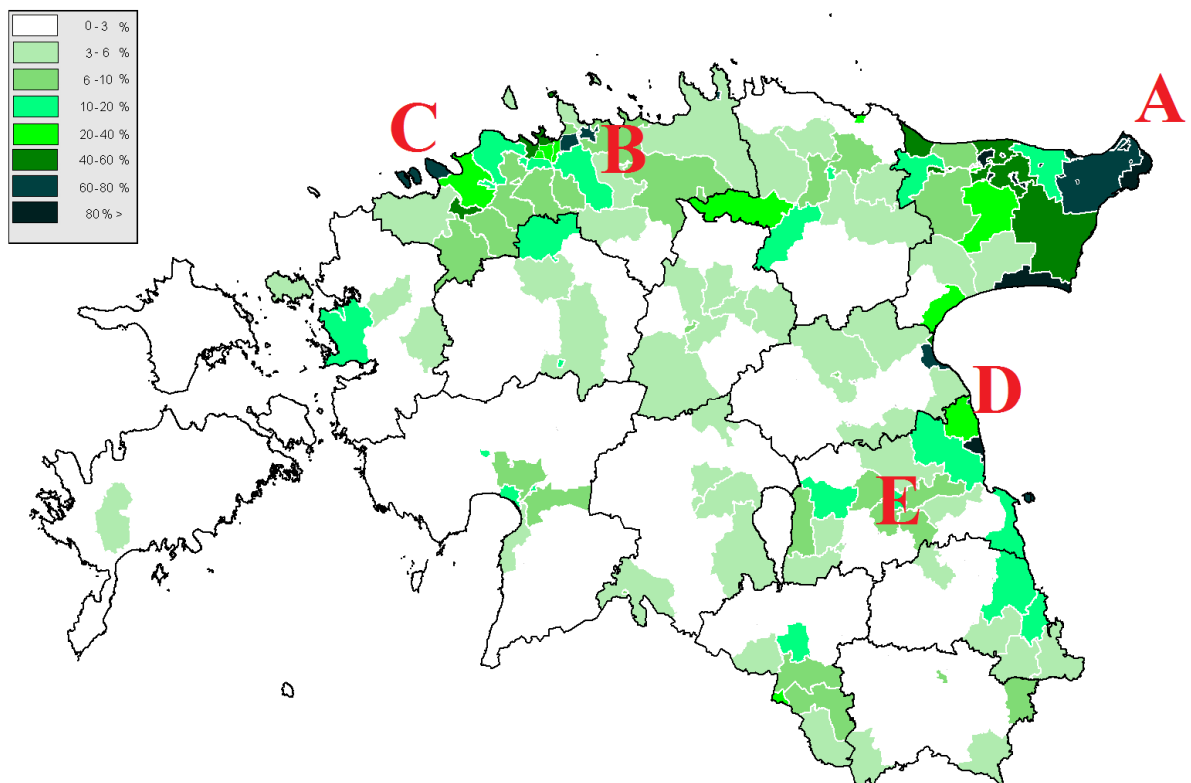
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Appendix no 1: Distribution of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia (map)

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Appendices

Appendix no 1: Distribution of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia (map)



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russians_in_Estonia; data from 2000 census; marking letters added by the author.

The northernmost district Ida-Virumaa with its capital Narva (A) is the most industrialised part of Estonia, where to most labour-migrants came from other Soviet republics during the Soviet time. Another location with significant Russian minority is the capital Tallinn and its surroundings (B) and the city of Paldiski (C), the place of a former Soviet military base. Russian-speaking inhabitants of villages on the scarcely populated shore of lake Peipus (D), are not of Soviet labour-migrant origin, but descendants of the orthodox Old Believers, who fled Russia in 17th century after the reform of the Church.

Appendix no 2: Questionnaire distributed among Russian students (questionnaire)

(Originally in Russian)

Dear respondents,

this questionnaire is a part of the research for my master thesis, which examines Russian minority education in Estonia, and it would be a big help, if you spend few minutes answering it. If there is multiple-choice question but there is no suitable answer proposed, design your own. I would really appreciate you explaining the reasons for any of your answers. You may circle more than one answer or not answer it at all, if you feel uncomfortably. Thank you for your time!

1. Your school grade:
2. In which part of Estonia have you lived for the longest time:
(if complicated, please specify)
3. *You have an Estonia citizenship / you do not have an Est. citizenship but you want to acquire it / you do not have an Est. citizenship but you do not want to acquire it*
(Why?)
4. You feel you are an *Estonian / Russian / other* (please specify)
Why?
5. Your mother is:
an ethnic Estonian / an ethnic Russian but an Estonian citizen / a Russian but she wants to acquire Est. citizenship / a Russian and she does not want to acquire Est. citizenship / other (please specify)
6. She feels she is an *Estonian / Russian / other* (please specify)
7. She speaks Estonian:
not at all or just a bit / badly but she can communicate in Estonian if needed / quite well (but with errors) / fluently
8. Your father is:

an ethnic Estonian / an ethnic Russian but an Estonian citizen / a Russian but he wants to acquire Est. citizenship / a Russian and he does not want to acquire Est. citizenship / other (please specify)

9. He feels he is an *Estonian / Russian / other (please specify)*

10. He speaks Estonian:

not at all or just a bit / badly but he can communicate in Estonian if needed / quite well (but with errors) / fluently

11. You speak Estonian:

not at all or just a bit / badly but you can communicate in Estonian if needed / quite well (but with errors) / fluently

12. You have learned Estonian:

home / in school / in private courses / elsewhere (specify)

13. Home you speak mainly: *Russian / Estonian / equally both of them / other*

14. Among your friends you speak mainly: *Russian / Estonian / equally both of them / other*

15. Classes you have attended (language of instruction: Russian / Estonian / mixed), if mixed, specify:

kindergarten	<i>R / E / m</i>
basic school	<i>R / E / m</i>
upper secondary school	<i>R / E / m</i>

16. You (or your parents) have chosen your upper secondary school, because (choose and rank – write the numbers above: 1=the most important,):

of the language of instruction / of the school's quality / of the proximity to your home / your friends went there as well / you do not know, why your parents have sent you there / other (specify)

17. What do you think about the reform, according to which at least 60% of the lessons must be taught in Estonian language since the 2011/2012 academic year in all the upper secondary schools in Estonia (including the Russian ones)?

you agree / you do not agree with the reform

It will improve knowledge of Estonian language among Russian students *yes / no* (Why not?)

It will make it easier for Russian students to study on Estonian language universities and to work in Estonia *yes / no*

It is unnecessary and stupid reform *yes / no*
 It discriminates against the Russian minority *yes / no*
 Other comments:

18. Is it hard for you to study in Estonian language? *yes / no*

Specify:

19. Do your teachers have problems with it? *yes / no*

Specify:

20. According to your opinion:

The Estonian state *is / is not* trying to eliminate Russian culture and language in Estonia.

Comment:

21. The Estonian state *should / should not* support Russian language and culture on its territory.

How, why?

22. The Russian language *should / should not* be the second official language of Estonia.

Why?

23. You plan to study at the university:

not at all / in Estonia in Narva / in Estonia elsewhere / in Russia / elsewhere .

Comment:

24. After your studies you plan to *stay in Estonia / move to Russia / move somewhere else / do not know yet.*

25. According to your opinion:

The Soviet Union was a winner of the Second World War and therefore should be celebrated / was an unwelcome occupant of Estonia and therefore should not be celebrated / you do not care / other (specify)

Comment:

26. You talk about this part of history *home / at school / nowhere.*

How? What do you remember from school/home about that? Does it differ?

27. Was/is in your school celebrated Russian national holiday of May 9 (Victory Day)?

yes / no / do not remember

How on which level and how? (for example: *Basic school – drawing thematic pictures, upper secondary school – visiting Soviet monuments on holidays etc.*)

28. Do you (or your parents, grandparents, relatives...) celebrate it? How?

29. What is your opinion in case of the Bronze Soldier?

No idea what it is / it should have stayed at its place in the centre of Tallinn / the military cemetery is proper place for it / you do not care, you were not interested in the bronze-soldier affair at all

Comments: