MAIE SOLL

The Ethnic Identity of Russian-speaking Students in Estonia in the Context of Educational Change

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The Ethnic Identity of Russian-speaking Students in Estonia in the Context of Educational Change

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This dissertation is accepted for the commencement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (in Media and Communications) in the Council of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, University of Tartu, Estonia.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation is based on the following original publications that will be referred to in the text by their respective Roman numerals.

I **Soll**, M. (2012). Why this study? A view from the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research. Toomela, Aaro; Kikas, Eve (Eds.). Children Studying in a Wrong Language. Russian-Speaking Children in Estonian School. Twenty Years after the Collapse of the Soviet Union (1–13). Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang Publishers House.

II **Soll**, M. (2012). The Role of School in Developing Ethno-cultural Identity: Ethno-cultural Feelings and Knowledge among Russian-speaking Students in Estonia. *International Journal of Sustainability Education*, 8(1), 63–77.

III Masso, A. and **Soll**, M. (2014). Change in Instruction Language in Russian Medium Schools: Multilevel Analysis of Attitudes and Language Proficiency. *Journal of Baltic Studies,* 45(4), 517–544.

IV **Soll, M.,** Salvet, S. and Masso, A. (2014). Õppekeele roll Eesti venekeelsete õpilaste etnokultuurilise identiteedi kujunemisel (The role of the language of instruction in the formation of the ethno-cultural identity of Estonian Russian-speaking students). *Eesti Haridusteaduste Ajakiri*, 2(2), 200–236.

V **Soll, M.,** Salvet, S. and Masso, A. (2015). Changes in language policy in Estonia: Self-descriptions of Russian-speaking students. Trames: Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences, 19(3), 221–247.

The articles are (re)printed with the kind permission of the respective publishers: Routledge (Journal of Baltic Studies); Common Ground (International Journal of Sustainability Education); Peter Lang International Academic Publishers; Estonian Academy Publisher (Trames); and Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus (Eesti Haridusteaduste Ajakiri).

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The contribution of the author of this Doctoral thesis to the publications below is as follows:

Study **I**:   The author wrote the article alone.

Study **II**:   The author wrote the article alone.

Study **III**:   This is a jointly written article. The author participated in the analysis of the results and wrote part of the section addressing the theoretical framework and the interpretation of the results.

Study **IV**:   This is a jointly written article. The author participated in the initiation of the study, in the development of the research tool and in the analysis of the results; the author also wrote the theoretical framework and wrote part of the section addressing the interpretation of the results.

Study **V**:   This is a jointly written article. The author participated in the initiation of the study, in the development of the research tool and in the analysis of the results; the author also wrote the theoretical framework and wrote part of the section addressing the interpretation of the results.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

I was born in 1988

No, I don't speak Estonian with an accent
Especially if I don't say my name
No, I don't speak Russian with an accent
Especially if I don't say the name of my Estonian mother

Read this poem
Without looking at my name

Read this poem
Without my name

And try telling me
That I have an accent

On this piece of paper

Yes
No
I don't want a pseudonym

Only after high school did I become

Sveta again

Before I was Svea

My mum thought it would sound more Estonian
(In my passport I have the name my dad gave me:
Sveta)

And so I walked round
From the first day at school
Saying I was someone else

No, thanks

I would rather
speak with an accent
Than

suffer from a split personality
Right?

Nana
(*Svetlana Grigorjeva*)

We live in a rapidly changing world and the diversity around us grows every day. In these circumstances we want to succeed and find out who we are and where we belong. In France, where the cartoons published in the satirical weekly magazine *Charlie Hebdo* evoked different reactions in people with different creeds, divergent interpretations resulted in the deaths of 11 people and also provoked polarisation in society and in the world at large, which could be called a conflict in communication. This is exactly why such questions as *Who am I*? and *Where do I belong?* and *What does this mean to me?* are essential. The possibility that the answers may differ from one individual to the next has to be continuously acknowledged at the level of society, in everyday life and as a problem that should be researched.

The development of ethnic identity has been addressed in the empirical studies and theoretical approaches of many different disciplines (Cote and Levine, 2002; Verkuyten, 2005; Vignoles et al., 2011). Earlier studies have revealed that a sense of belonging and positive identity are psychologically important (Verkuyten, 2005: 69) and can be connected to academic achievement, self-confidence and managing more efficiently in discriminatory situations (Brouillard and Hartlaub, 2005; French et al., 2006; Phinney and Chavira, 1992; Valk, 2003).

This thesis focuses on the development of the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students in Estonia in the context of an important educational change, i.e. the transition to Estonian-medium studies[1]. In my thesis I will use the term *Russian-speaking* to refer to both mother tongue and/or home language. The thesis is based on different theoretical approaches – sociological, socio-psychological and educational sciences. On the basis of these theoretical approaches, I will formulate the conceptual framework for the empirical research of ethnic identity in the context of educational changes. In this thesis, I will define ethnic identity as one aspect of social identity, which is constructed through interaction. In order to analyse ethnic identity in the context of Estonian-medium studies, I will use methodologically versatile empirical sources – both quantitative and qualitative data and methods are used. My main target group in the empirical studies is students, as educational change concerns them the most, but I have also used data collected among teachers for comparison.

I became more interested in the relationships between the education system and ethnic identity in connection with the implementation of new national curricula (2002). Official documents (National Curriculum of Basic School and Upper Secondary School, 2002; Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, 1993; The State Programme Integration in Estonian Society, 2000)

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[1] In empirical articles I have used the terms 'Estonian-language instruction' and 'Estonian-medium studies' as synonyms. In this overview I prefer the term 'Estonian-medium studies'. The more neutral concept of 'studies' enables analysis of the education system in general (including both legislative institutions and schools) rather than using the term 'instruction' concentrating on hierarchical teacher-pupil relationships and on classroom interactions. The term 'medium' enables the study language to be emphasised as a communication context and content (field of meanings, symbols etc.), rather than only as an instrumental means.

establish that one of the tasks of educational institutions is to support the development of cultural identity. It is entirely justified that based on the regulations stated in the official documents students and their parents will have certain expectations of the state. One may ask if this is possible, and how this is possible, given that the student body in Estonia is not homogenous with respect to language and culture and ethnic identity is not the same as the national identity. In the course of educational innovations, this issue became especially important to linguistic minorities: the transition to Estonian-medium studies has been seen as a threat to ethnic (Russian) identity (Proos, 2005; Saar, 2008) and this has provoked questions about how the language of instruction and ethnic identity are interrelated, which is the main focus of this research.

This thesis was inspired by a desire to find out *Who you are*, although this has not been expressly formulated as a research question in the thesis. As the author of the thesis, I should be able to answer this question myself. In line with the problem-setting and research questions, I have moved from the internal perspective within the education system to the broader social level. This led me to the research question of how the ethnic identity of students and the education system are interrelated in the context of social changes. I am particularly interested in analysing the ethnic identity of students in a situation where the language choices for Russian-speaking students become more diverse. On the other hand, this poses new challenges and sets new limits.

While preparing for the studies within the thesis, I set myself as the researcher a goal which would allow me to observe the developments in the education system and society based mainly on the opinions of students. As I was also working at the Ministry of Education and Research at the time, my duty was to monitor the implementation of planned education innovations and to ensure that political decisions were put into practice. I have also worked for many years at a school where the language of instruction is Russian. The fact that I performed these different roles is probably also reflected in studies **I** and **II** and in the interpretations of study **III**. In planning the next studies (**IV** and **V**), we already consciously hedged the risk that the interviewees might feel some pressure – perceiving one of the interviewers to be a representative of a state institution (and the possibility that they would give 'appropriate' answers) – by using another member of the research group as the interviewer. During the final stage of writing the thesis, I went back to school as an education adviser. Such diverse personal work experience has inspired me to interpret the results of the empirical studies in line with different sociological, socio-psychological and educational approaches. However, my thesis aims to develop a conceptual framework for empirically analysing ethnic identity in the context of educational changes rather than having a metatheoretical aim.

The thesis consists of five empirical articles. Thematically, these can be divided into three: study **I** presents an overview of the Estonian education system in the changed social and political context. In the article, I have comparatively analysed the Estonian education system with those of other countries. I have also examined issues revealed in different studies which characterise the educa-

tional path of students whose native language is not the state (majority) language. In a way, study **I** is like a point of departure in both the collection where the study was published and in this thesis, where it formulates the main problems of the development of ethnic identity in the context of educational change.

In studies **II**, **IV** and **V**, I analyse the development of the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students. Study **II** focuses on the definition of ethnic identity; how and based on what attributes students identify themselves in terms of ethnicity; and what ethnic identity means to them. On the basis of the potential components of ethnic identity, the role of the school in the development of ethnic identity is analysed. In studies **IV** and **V** the social self-identity of students, including ethnic identity and its importance in comparison with group belonging, is analysed. These studies also analyse how the students perceive various ethnic groups in Estonia (mainly Estonians and Russians) and what their positions are regarding schools with different languages of instructions in the country. In addition to factors within the education system, the role of families in choosing the language of instruction is also analysed here.

The third topic I analyse within this thesis is the transition to Estonian-medium studies as one possible trigger of changes in self-identification. Study **III** studies the (concurrent) impact of factors at the individual, school and regional levels on attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies and on self-assessed proficiency in Estonian based on surveys conducted among students and teachers. Studies **IV** and **V** analyse the attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies on the basis of the ethnic self-identification of students and the language of instruction, elaborating on these issues in the context of media use and social cohesion.

This overview is a generalised summary of the results of the empirical studies. In the article, I will first present the research problem and the focus of this thesis in the context of social and educational changes. In the chapter on problem-setting, I will present the theoretical framework for the analysis and for the interpretation of empirical data on the basis of psychological, sociological and educational science approaches. I will also provide an overview of the methods and data used in the empirical studies. The overview contains empirical results presented in three relevant areas: the meaning of ethnic identity; the attributes associated with it; and ethnic identity in the context of educational change. In the discussion part, I will explain the results of the empirical studies in the context of earlier empirical and theoretical studies. The article ends with a list of references and a summary (in Estonian).

1. PROBLEM-SETTING

1.1. The societal context of the research

In this sub-chapter, I will provide an overview of the educational changes, which concern Russian as the language of instruction and will briefly describe the context in which these educational changes have taken place. Earlier studies and analyses have indicated that developments and changes in society influence not only the organisation of education (Archer, 1984 [1979]), but also curricula and the emphasis in study content (Goodson, 2005). Therefore I presume that the transition to Estonian-medium studies in upper secondary schools previously with Russian as the language of instruction, which is the focus of this thesis, is closely connected to the changes that have taken place in society during this period – education reform is the result of certain changes in society, on the one hand, and has itself provoked certain changes, on the other hand.

Based on earlier approaches (Benedikt 1995: 42), it can be argued that the search for new ethnic identities (at both the group and individual levels) may be related to the following social influences: (1) certain political, economic and cultural structural pressure (e.g. a need or the intention to cut costs through the reorganisation of the system of education); and (2) the activation of dialogue and the evolvement of new cultural contacts in the country (e.g. in connection with Estonia's regained independence and the opening of state borders) or a shift in established cultural and power relations due to changes in the global cultural system. Next, I will explain the most important spheres of change in detail, highlighting contextual factors. I have proceeded from the fact that the changes described concerned to a greater degree those who are native speakers of Russian and who immigrated during the Soviet era, although everyone in Estonia had to adapt to major changes. Earlier studies (Vetik, 2012) have also demonstrated that several major changes were interpreted differently by Estonians and by a large part of native speakers of Russian and that these changes also included education innovations with regard to the language of instruction.

The most important change within structural changes in society, which I have taken into consideration in analysing educational changes, is undoubtedly the restoration of Estonia's independence in 1991, which entailed significant changes in all spheres of life, but also in the understandings and activities of different social groups and in the everyday life of individuals. Changes and decisions within education policy have taken place and have been implemented in parallel with other social and political changes in public governance, the economy and international relations. Estonia was faced with the challenge of setting up a free and democratic state and market economy and creating a common political space and nation on the basis of communities that to that point had led fairly separate lives and had perceived the situation differently (Estonians and historic national minorities *vs.* immigrants who had arrived during the Soviet era). In this situation, the citizenship, education and language policies

(Kalev and Roosmaa, 2012; Vetik, 2012) were seen as essential means for building up a coherent society and reducing segregation in society.

In the economy, structural changes involved the transition to a market economy, which led to the liquidation of many large enterprises (e.g. former corporations that were managed from Moscow and controlled by Soviet state agencies), which led to the risk of or caused unemployment, particularly among Russian-speaking people in Estonia (Kalev and Roosmaa, 2012). The changes in the economy and on the labour market had an impact on the entire education system and particularly on the school network – due to the changes in the economy (e.g. the liquidation of companies in some regions) families moved to other places and the number of students in certain regions decreased. Changes in employment, e.g. the increasing number of unemployed, led to an increase in the number of students whose parents were not able to support them. Essential changes that influence the organisation of education are also related to demographic changes, especially the rapid fall in birth rates. The overall decrease in the number of students has raised several acute questions with regard to the school network and has led to the closing of Russian-medium schools in regions where the number of native speakers of Russian is small and the number of students has therefore decreased.

Decisions related to citizenship policy led to a changed legal political status for one-third of Estonia's population (Estonian citizenship having to be applied for through naturalisation, one of the prerequisites for which is proficiency in Estonian). Overall, the changes in citizenship policy primarily concerned Russian-speaking students in the education system, and the changes were reflected in some measures related to the organisation of education (taking a citizenship examination and the introduction of the system of Estonian language proficiency examinations in schools also). Decisions related to language policy involved restrictions on the use of languages other than Estonian in the public domain and the need to speak Estonian in order to be competitive on the labour market.

In the international context, opportunities for learning languages and for selecting languages of instruction in schools depend on several factors, and from country to country it is possible to find different models of schooling of language minorities. In countries with one official language (e.g. Germany and Denmark), the language of instruction is mostly the official language (i.e. the majority language), while in some countries the opportunities for acquiring education in the native language at certain stages of education or compulsory education have been provided to historic national minorities (e.g. Hungary and Finland) (Eurydice, 2015). In Estonia, the existing models of education by language of instruction evolved in line with historical traditions and actual circumstances (in certain regions it was not possible to find the required number of teachers who spoke Estonian fluently). Thus, after the restoration of Estonia's independence, the primary task in general education was to create a uniform system of education on the basis of schools originating from the Soviet era and with Russian or Estonian as their language of instruction. Schools with different

languages of instruction also existed in Estonia between 1918 and 1940, whereas the curricula in Estonian-medium schools and the schools of national minorities differed in terms of languages taught and the subjects related to national cultures (Müüripeal, 1999). The organisation of studies followed the principles of Estonian education policy, and educational institutions in which the language of instruction was not Estonian formed an integral part of the Estonian education system. In education, the period from 1940 to 1991 can be characterised in terms of languages of instruction as a period of existence of two parallel school systems which were relatively independent from each other (e.g. separate in-service training for teachers at Russian-medium and Estonian-medium schools, separate curricula, the duration of studies in Russian-medium schools was 10 years and in Estonian-medium schools 11 years etc.).

The preparation and implementation of new curricula in terms of the organisation of education meant that similar conditions had to be created and established to schools with both Russian and Estonian as the language of instruction, but also greater emphasis on the Estonian state and culture in study content and, from the perspective of Russian-medium schools, major changes in learning Estonian. This meant that alongside education innovation, which involved all schools and the organisation of education in general, education policy decisions with regard to the language of instruction – which primarily concerned general and higher education and mainly schools and study groups with Russian as the language of instruction – were very critical. The decisions and changes concerning the learning of Estonian and the language of instruction were targeted at creating more versatile and better opportunities for acquiring Estonian. One of the objectives was that better proficiency in Estonian would ensure better inclusion in social life of those residents of Estonia whose native language was not Estonian. The other objective was clearly the expansion of the domain of the use of Estonian (Vetik, 2012; Vihalemm and Siiner, 2011; Kalev and Roosmaa, 2012; Vihalemm, 2011).

In Table 1, I have summarised major changes that concern the teaching of Estonian and instruction in Estonian from the restoration of independence to the present. The transition, which was initially planned to be implemented over a relatively short period (see Table 1, the decision of 1993), has lasted for more than 20 years. The studies conducted within this thesis address a somewhat shorter period, i.e. from 2007 to 2012. The presentation of a temporally longer view in Table 1 demonstrates that compared to many other education innovations (e.g. the implementation of national curricula in general education) the transition to Estonian-medium studies was planned and has been significantly longer. On the basis of the transition to Estonian-medium studies as the education reform analysed within this thesis, which has developed over a relatively long period of time, I can argue that this has been much more than just an innovation in the organisation of education, since its implementation has been influenced by different factors, including those from outside of the education system. As the aim of this thesis is to analyse the relationships between educational change in connection with language (of instruction) and ethnic

identity rather than the implementation of this specific educational change, the broader social context and that of educational changes also makes it easier to understand the period of the implementation of the educational change analysed herein.

Table 1. Changes in education in connection with the teaching of Estonian and instruction in Estonian following the restoration of Estonia's independence

Year	Change
1992	The obligation to ensure the possibility of acquiring education in Estonian and to teach Estonian in all public educational institutions and study groups where the language of instruction is a language other than Estonian is set out in the Republic of Estonia Education Act.
1993	The Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act sets out that the transition to Estonian-medium studies in all state and municipal upper secondary schools shall take place from 1993 to 2003. Students from all schools where the language of instruction is not Estonian have to start learning Estonian from the 3rd grade.
1996	The Government of the Republic approves the national curriculum of basic and upper secondary education in Estonia, which launches the transition to the same curriculum in schools with Estonian and Russian as the language of instruction and the unification of the periods of study in general education schools with different languages of instruction.
1997	The starting time of compulsory studies of Estonian is altered in the national curriculum of basic and upper secondary education in Estonia: as of the 1998/1999 academic year, the teaching of Estonian is compulsory from the 3rd quarter of the 2nd grade.
1999	The Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act establishes that as of 1 September 2000 the study of Estonian is compulsory from the 1st grade.
1999	The Preschool Child Care Institutions Act sets out the obligation to teach Estonian in kindergartens to the extent prescribed by the pre-school education curriculum framework.
2000	The definition of the language of instruction is defined according to the volume of use in the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act: the language in which studies are pursued to no less than 60 per cent of the curriculum is deemed to be the language of instruction. The exact time of the transition to Estonian-medium studies in upper secondary schools is re-established as well: the transition to Estonian-medium studies in state and municipal upper secondary schools is to begin by no later than the 2007/2008 academic year.
2002	The new national curriculum of basic and upper secondary education is approved.

Year	Change
2007	The organisation of the transition to Estonian-medium studies is established in the national curriculum of basic and upper secondary education: subjects which have to be taught in Estonian (Estonian literature, history, social studies, geography and music) are defined and the deadline for the transition by which instruction in Estonian must account for 60% of studies (the 2011/2012 academic year) is adjusted.
2008	It is decided that as of 3 years of age the learning of Estonian in childcare institutions is compulsory.
2007/08	The gradual transition to Estonian-medium studies is launched in upper secondary schools where the language of instruction is Russian.
2011/12	All schools where the language of instruction had been Russian have to guarantee that their students receive 60% of instruction in Estonian during their upper secondary studies. The city governments of Tallinn and Narva submit an application to the Government of the Republic requesting that instruction in Russian be continued at the schools they manage, arguing that the schools are not ready for the transition because of a lack of teachers who speak Estonian and the period for making preparations being too short. The Government of the Republic satisfies two applications concerning upper secondary school for adults by taking into account that their students include former drop-outs whose command of Estonian is not sufficient for continuing their studies in Estonian.

According to the results of changes in society and education, the education opportunities currently offered to the Russian-speaking population in Estonia can be divided into three: (1) a school where the language of instruction is either Estonian or (2) Russian and (3) language immersion classes. The opportunity to study in the native language (i.e. in Russian) provided in Estonia is unique in the international context, as in most countries the proportion of speakers of the second languages (31% in Estonia) (Statistics Estonia, 2015) is not high enough to offer them education in the native language within the system of public education. International studies (Baker, 2005 [1993]) have also indicated that through education in the native language national minorities are provided with the opportunity to learn their native language, on the one hand, while on the other this is also an indication that the languages of national minorities are recognised by the state (Baker, 2005 [1993]). The other option provided – to study in Estonian (as a second language) – is an efficient way of acquiring the official language or the foreign language (Baker, 2005 [1993]; Nieto, 2005; Salomone, 2010) also in the light of the experience of other countries (Baker, 2005 [1993]). In Estonia, it is possible to study in a second language in different ways, either by completing all stages of education in a school where the language of instruction is Estonian or in an upper secondary school, where 60% of subjects are taught in Estonian and the rest in Russian. The third possible

education option, the language immersion programme, had already proven its efficiency, particularly in countries with two official languages (e.g. Canada, Finland and Spain), where proficiency in both languages is equally essential. In terms of education theory (Baker, 2005 [1993]), language immersion programmes have been understood as enriching programmes targeted at the integrative acquisition of both languages of instruction. The other advantage of language immersion programmes over other bilingual learning programmes (e.g. Canada, Finland and Spain (Catalonia)) is said to be that they are voluntary (for both parents and schools, and school directors) (Genesee, 2005).

Along with changes in the education opportunities offered by the state, the education preferences of families have also altered. The shift in the education-related choices of Russian-speaking families is one reason for the decreasing number of students in Russian-medium schools: the number of families who prefer Estonian-medium kindergartens and thereafter schools in which the language of instruction is Estonian or language immersion classes has increased. For instance in 2005, of the total student body of schools where the language of instruction was Estonian, the percentage of students whose native language was not the language of instruction was 17%; by 2013 this had increased to 23% (Statistics Estonia, 2015). Whereas in 1995 the number of students in schools with Estonian as the language of instruction was 145,276 (67.7% of the student body) and in schools with Russian as the language of instruction 69,286 (32.2% of the student body), in 2013 the same numbers were 112,477 (83.1%) and 22,915 (16.9% of the student body). The number of students studying in Russian has also decreased due to language immersion as an alternative option – in the 2014/2015 academic year, 4.7% of all basic school students studied in language immersion classes (although this percentage has remained fairly stable in recent years). The decreasing number of students in schools with Russian as the language of instruction and the implementation of external assessment of learning outcomes are among the reasons for increased competition between schools. Due to this competition, schools are looking for ways to induce students to make their choice in favour of a particular school (e.g. by implementing the language immersion programme and participating in different projects). This, as revealed by earlier studies (Masso and Kello, 2010a), has increased insecurity among teachers, especially if their command of Estonian is not sufficient to teach in Estonian (Metslang et al., 2013).

The educational changes implemented and the developments associated with them have been analysed in earlier studies from different perspectives, e.g. the paradigms of nationalism and multiculturalism (Vetik, 2012). This allows us to assume that the expectations of what should change in society in connection with educational changes and the interpretations have also differed. Some, for instance, proceed from the assumption that in education, linguistic minorities should have conditions equal to those of Estonians (the national majority), whereas from the perspective of the paradigm of nationalism, the first priority should be the creation of versatile and accessible opportunities for learning the language of the country of residence and the development of loyalty there to.

Although cohesive society means – at least in declarative terms (as formulated in national integration programmes since 2008) – joint participation in Estonian society and also the valuing of ethnic cultural differences, the organisations and researchers representing the paradigm of multiculturalism interpret this rather as assimilative pressure (Vetik, 2012). Differences in interpretations, expectations and the reactions stemming from these by and large characterise people belonging to different language communities (Kalev and Roosmaa, 2012; Lauristin, 2011; Vetik, 2012). The difference in paradigms is also reflected for instance in the media. For example, compared to Estonian-language media, the Russian-language media presents a critical attitude towards the transition to Estonian-medium study more often (Salvet, 2012). The difference in the points of departure and therefore also in interpretations, however, affects both relations between nations and the changes that have taken place in different spheres. Earlier studies (Masso and Kello, 2010a; Vetik, 2012) indicate that although proficiency in Estonian has improved, especially among students, this has not had a positive effect on attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies. Despite varied efforts to boost the popularity and credibility of the Estonian-language media space among the Russian-speaking population, the changes have been minimal (Päevakajalised sündmused..., 2014) and this facilitates the persistence of different interpretations. These varying interpretations, and the fact that certain changes are perceived as degrading the social status of Russians and as assimilative in nature, have created a 'reactive' negative identity in connection with Estonia (Nimmerfeldt, 2011) or an intention to leave the country (Vihalemm, 2011).

Earlier studies (Vihalemm, 2011; Vihalemm and Siiner, 2011) have revealed that for Estonians, language is an important attribute of ethnic identity. The studies conducted in Estonia (Nimmerfeldt, 2011; Vihalemm and Siiner, 2011) confirm that language is also an important attribute in differentiating between ethnic groups for other nationalities in Estonia. Hence, political decisions concerning language planning may provoke different reactions, including in other spheres, e.g. education, if they relate to the status of languages in people's minds, and this also leads to the negation of certain political decisions. The latter has also led to the formation of movements expressing oppositionist views (e.g. the Russian School in Estonia Movement), which are mostly based on the issues of the quality of learning, but it has also been perceived as assimilation, which places the formation of ethnic identity at risk (Vetik, 2012). In a situation where many things altered within society in parallel with the implementation of various changes, it can be presumed that they made the implementation of innovations more complicated and that their influence also affected the interpretations and attitudes of individuals and ethnic groups, including their attitudes towards the processes and changes taking place in different spheres of society. In the empirical studies and articles within this thesis I focus on educational changes, which first and foremost target Russian-speaking students as the key group and analyse the relationships between these changes and identity. Therefore, I will next present an overview of the concepts of change in the

education system and identity and will formulate the conceptual framework for the empirical analysis.

1.2. Change in the education system

Below, I will focus on the changes in the education system with an emphasis on the transition to Estonian-medium studies, which is presumably connected with ethnic identity, as it concerns one of the potential differentiating attributes of ethnic groups, i.e. language. Social systems like the education system and their changes in the context of general changes in society have previously been studied within very different disciplines – psychology, sociology and education theory (e.g. Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Goodson, 2005; Habermas, 2001).

This thesis uses the concept of education system as central to explaining the institutional framework for educational changes in both the broader (e.g. political institutions) and the narrower sense (schools), according to various theoretical approaches (Dewey and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Bourdieu, 2000, 2010 [1984]; Hargreaves, 2005; Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Hernandez and Goodson, 2005; Luhmann 2002 [1984], 2004; Tillmann, 2006 [1989])[2]. Based on these approaches I define education as an intentionalised and systematised process of acquiring knowledge and skills during lessons; if some knowledge is not acquired, it will complicate the acquisition of further knowledge or the education path and career choices. As such I understand the education system as being tightly related to the socialisation process. Some authors (Luhmann 2002 [1984], 2004) make a clear distinction between socialisation (an accidental, selective process of acquiring culture and social self) and education (an intentional process of acquiring knowledge). Other authors see socialisation and education as tightly intertwined (Bourdieu, 2000, 2010 [1984]; Dewey and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Hargreaves, 2005) – education as being one possible socialisation environment itself, in which students obtain knowledge, skills and experience for acting as members of society. In this thesis I presume that the formation of the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students takes place in a combination of both socialisation (outside of the education system, like following the conduct of their parents and the news; but also within the education system in the form of relationships between pupils and teachers' subconscious examples) and education (e.g. based on the knowledge purposefully acquired at school)[3].

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[2] From the approach of Niklas Luhmann, only his attempt to implement system-theoretical concepts in middle-range education theory (2002 [1984]) rather than his meta-theoretical approach (2009[1983]) is used in this thesis when conceptualising changes in the education system.

[3] In line with approaches to ethnic identity (Hughes et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2009; Kim Park, 2007; Schwartz, 2007; Tillmann, 2006 [1989]; Hogg and Reid, 2006) it can be presumed that socialisation and education are more closely combined during school years, when the

Based on these views of the education system one might ask what the role of education is in ethnic socialisation, especially in the case of language minorities when the curriculum is presumably more targeted at developing national (state) or civic identity. Does the language of instruction play an important role in this process, and do people, speaking their mother tongue, always present their ethnic background in communication as is claimed in socio-cultural communication theories (Mead, 1967 [1934]; Littlejohn and Foss, 2011)? I assume that the education process in the Estonian education system supports, at least to a certain degree, overall ethnic socialisation, as the objectives of the curricula take into account the diversity in society and the need to succeed in a multilingual and multicultural society. For instance, students gain the ability to communicate with representatives of different cultures who speak different languages through study content (e.g. history) and extracurricular activities.

Sociological and education theoretical approaches (Archer, 1984 [1979]; Bourdieu, 1991, 2010 [1984]; Hargraves, 2005; Luhmann 2002 [1984], 2004; 2009 [1983]) suggest that all systems in society, including the education system, are connected to other systems (e.g. society, the media and the legal system). Changes in society as a whole or in one of the systems may bring about changes in other systems. This perspective of the connectedness of the education system to other systems is appropriate in Estonia's context, where educational changes have taken place in parallel and in connection with general changes in society. However, I assume that changes in society as a whole do not change the functioning of the Estonian education system itself – how the main goal is achieved – but may lead to some changes in national curricula, for instance in expectations of the knowledge and skills (and also values) of individuals who succeed in society.

The complexity of the education system – its relationships with other social systems – and internal diversity due to the numerous parties related to changes like educational institutions and individuals with various roles (pupils, teachers, parents or the public generally) also make the implementation of educational changes problematic. According to education theory (Fullan, 2006 [2001]) the success of an education innovation depends on whether and to what extent its implementers understand the importance and content (as designed) of the innovation and on how high the motivation is among local educational institutions to implement it (e.g. directors' preparedness and skills with regard to introducing changes in the organisation, the competence of teachers recruited and whether their ability to cope in the 'new' situation is supported). As studies (Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Goodson, 2005) indicate, the preparedness of implementers of education innovation depends first and foremost on the resources of the

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importance of other sources (e.g. school, texts, conversations or media) alongside role models in the family increases; the social circle also expands and becomes more versatile when growing up, and students gain more opportunities and develop a need to identify themselves as members of both groups of different types (e.g. social roles and circle of friends) and different groups of the same type (e.g. cultural groups).

individuals participating in the process (e.g. the ability of students to accomplish learning objectives, the preparedness and ability of teachers to support students in the learning process and also previous experience and knowledge of individuals acquired in the course of socialisation), their attitudes and interpretations related to innovation. This is also one reason why individuals cope with changes differently (Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Murtagh et al., 2012; Rogers, 2003 [1995]). The less they believe that an innovation will improve something and the more the innovation conflicts with their values and previous experience, the more complex the innovation is perceived as being (Rogers, 2003 [1995]).

Based on earlier studies (Masso and Kello, 2010a, 2010b; Nimmerfeldt, 2011; Vihalemm, 2011) I suppose that the transition to Estonian-medium studies is not related solely to the teaching and learning process, but also to self-consciousness, e.g. ethnic pride, and with the status of the language at the individual, but also group level. On the group level, according to previous studies, educational changes may lead to the redistribution of power and opportunities in society (Hargreaves 2005; Hernandez and Goodson 2004), or to the reproduction of existing ideologies (Bourdieu 1991, 2010 [1984]). On the individual level, educational change may lead to a need to rethink previously dominant self-definitions (Hall, 2011 [1996]; Kotov, 2005). Rogers (2003 [1995]) has indicated in his study that the groups or individuals who interpret the change as a reduction in power and possibilities are less motivated to implement it (Rogers, 2003 [1995]). Hence, I assume that national curricula in Estonia lead to the reproduction of the world-view and traditions of the national majority in the organisation of studies and in study content. On the other hand, in my opinion it is also possible that the reconstruction of social relations takes place through changes in education and society (e.g. the formation of the opinion that the language of instruction and the nationality of the student are not connected; that it is natural that students with different native languages study together and complement the world-view of one another; or that studying in a second language does not automatically mean the loss of ethnic identity).

In conclusion, in this subchapter I concentrated on the changes in the education system. Based on different sociological and education theoretical approaches I can claim that the education system as one of the sub-systems in society is related to society as a whole and to other social systems. Unlike socialisation in society, in the family or in other sub-systems, the main goal of schools is to support students' acquisition of knowledge and academic skills – as is proven in both education and sociological theories. In my thesis I concentrate on the ethnic identity of students in relation to change in language of instruction as one of the changes in the education system. Next, therefore, I will explain the selection of ethnic identity at the individual level.

1.3. Selection of ethnic identity

In this thesis, I have used ethnic identity and associated individual interpretations as one of the possible indicators for the analysis of educational changes. Ethnic identity has been studied in different disciplines and has been defined and interpreted in many different ways (Burke and Stets, 2009; Jenkins, 2008 [1996]; Keupp, 2008 [1999]; Phinney et al., 2007, 2010; Ũmana-Taylor, 2011; Vignoles et al., 2011; Trimble and Dickson, 2005).

Modern psychological concepts of social identity (Cote and Levine, 2002; Vignoles et al., 2011; Verkuyten, 2005) focus first and foremost on attributes and criteria related to personal identity and also on the cognitive and affective aspects of identity development (Cote and Levine, 2002; Verkuyten, 2005; Vignoles et al., 2011). According to social psychology approaches, identity is above all developed by comparing personal individual characteristics with different groups and, as a result, through adaptation to the norms and values of the group (Hornsey, 2008; Scabini, Manzi, 2011; Turner, 2010 [1982]; Valk, 2003). This kind of identity development is a social construction, which occurs in the combination of external comparisons (e.g. stereotypes expressed by 'other' groups) and internal comparisons (e.g. following traditions that are essential within the group or through the internalisation of external stereotypes)[4]. The aim of these regular comparisons is, on the one hand, to maintain a positive image of one's group, and on the other to find the most suitable group belonging for oneself. Ethnicity is related to family background, but in the process of socialisation individuals construct their own understanding of what it means to be a member of an ethnic group and can accept the ethnicity of their parents declaratively or reject it (Dijk, 2005 [1998]).

Although the theory of psychological identity has differentiated between many different components of identity, researchers by and large agree that the identification of oneself as a member of a certain group incorporates (1) self-identification (labelling), (2) emotions with regard to one's own and reference groups (emotional commitment, but also awareness of their differences and similarities) and (3) involvement in group activities (Cote and Levine, 2002; Hornsey, 2008; Phinney, 1990; Tajfel, 2010 [1982]; Verkuyten 2005).[5] In every specific case, these components may form very different combinations. For instance, ethnic involvement may not be as decisive in identifying oneself as a member of an ethnic group as are the emotional valuing of belonging and label-

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[4] By relying on earlier studies (Dijk, 2005 [1998], Verkuyten, 2005), I also argue in this thesis that in certain situations it is possible that external identity may be expressed without any internalisation (e.g. others see us as members of a certain group, or we declare that we belong to a certain group, but this is not reflected in our behaviour or emotional valuing of belonging).

[5] Although constructivist concepts of identity (Cote and Levine, 2002; Dijk, 2005 [1998]; Verkuyten, 2005) have differentiated between an individual approach (e.g. the representation of one's individual attributes) and a collective approach (e.g. the valuing of certain rules of behaviour or being a member of a group, being different from other groups), I will herein proceed from the assumption that identity is in both cases socially constructed.

ling. In everyday life, differences in group belonging are also most clearly expressed in behaviour patterns related to ethnic involvement and the interpretation of the world (e.g. understanding of history, language use, traditions and rituals) (Dijk, 2005 [1998]). This way, the psychological concepts of social identity enable the meanings attributed to ethnic identity and its expression to be analysed individually in this thesis.

Although the psychological approach takes into account, to a certain extent, the importance of the environment and the changes in it (for example in this thesis the importance of educational change in the development of ethnic identity), sociological approaches pay significantly more attention to the interaction between the individual and the surrounding environment in their explanations of the development of identity (Cote and Levine, 2002; Giddens, 1991; Hall 2007 [1996], 2011 [1996]; Schilling-Estes 2004; Barker 2005 [2000]). According to the sociological approach, the aim of identity creation and through this also the aim of a certain behaviour pattern is to succeed in society – identity gives us certain behaviour patterns and thus we do not have to renegotiate on behavioural norms in a new communication situation (Cote and Levine, 2002; Burke and Stets, 2009; Giddens 1991). Unlike in normative or existentialist concepts of identity, which are typical of the psychological approach (Cote and Levine, 2002)[6], sociological approaches agree that identity as a biographical narrative that is shared with others alters continuously depending on the environment, i.e. in relation to temporal and spatial circumstances (Giddens 1991: 53; Puumeister, 2012). Hence I presume that in connection with the changes in Estonian society and education, the self-identification of Russian-speaking students may also alter. This means that I see ethnic identity in this thesis as a part of an individual's agency – the capacity of the individual to act in the world. This may involve a need to develop multi-identity (Ehala, 2003; Spotti, 2005), i.e. to take pride in one's roots and at the same time to value Estonia as one's country of birth. I think that the vision of one's future and of the place where it will be realised is a critical factor in deciding which languages should be learned and a command of which is essential. Also, an individual's activeness is expressed by their attitudes towards specific phenomena, including the transition to Estonian-medium studies.

In this thesis, I have tried to combine these two approaches – the psychological and the sociological – by using Verkuyten's (2005) concept of identity in my empirical analyses. Verkuyten differentiates between four components of ethnic identity:

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[6] The theory of psychological identity (Cote and Levine, 2002; Kroger, Marcia, 2011; Verkuyten, 2005; Vignoles et al., 2011) also sees a certain possibility for a change of identity, primarily at the stage of pursuit of ethnic identity (or moratorium). At the same time it is assumed that at some point, individuals reach the final stage or the stage of obtained identity, which offers them more emotional security than an ethnic identity not yet discovered.

- ethnic self-identification and its justifications, i.e. what connects the members of the group (e.g. ancestors, homeland and external features of ethnicity);
- knowledge of one's ethnic group (e.g. culture, history, beliefs and norms of behaviour);
- ethnic involvement (e.g. participation in cultural activities, social circle and use and command of language); and
- feelings in connection with the group, recognition and valuing of the group.

In my thesis I added one component for empirical analysis: linguistic involvement. Presuming the importance of the language as an attribute of ethnic identity in Estonia creating linguistic involvement as an additional dimension does help to identify the role and importance of the language in the concept of the ethnic identity of students.

Verkuyten, unlike e.g. Phinney (Phinney 1990; Roberts et al., 1999), argues that these different components of ethnic identity exist in human consciousness relatively independently of one another. For instance, self-identification may not necessarily be related to the dimension of knowledge or ethnic involvement, while this is turn does not reduce the sense of belonging to one's ethnic group (Verkuyten, 2005). Verkuyten's approach is in my estimation appropriate in the context of this thesis, as ethnic identity in the context of language of instruction and educational change incorporates both individual components (e.g. emotional importance attributed to belonging in the context of different languages of instruction) and the social components mentioned above (e.g. whether and to what extent the acquired values and behavioural norms differ or are similar by language of instruction and how they relate to opinions with regard to educational change). Another advantage of Verkuyten's approach is its ability to be operationalised, as in addition to listing the dimensions of ethnic identity – which perfectly suit the school context, as all dimensions can be developed within the system of education – it also highlights the relationships between these components. In Verkuyten's model, the potential individual combinations of the components of identity subject to the surrounding (linguistic) environment reflect the individual's opportunity to have *choices* between different possibilities of self-identification and group belonging offered (i.e. this has to do with external educational choices). On the other hand, individuals make intentional/knowledgeable or subconscious actual *selections*, which may also be reflected in their behaviour (e.g. the selection of a specific language of instruction), but also in their attitudes/interpretations (e.g. opinions with regard to the change in the language of instruction) depending on the surrounding (linguistic) environment, situations (e.g. which types of belonging are relevant) and which aspects of group belonging are deemed to be personally more relevant.

In this thesis, I analysed the selection of ethnic identity in a situation where students and their parents are faced with prescribed choices of language of

instruction[7]. The role of the language of instruction in ethnic socialisation has been understood very differently in previous studies. The hypothesis of linguistic relativity (Deutscher, 2011 [1984]; Whorf, 2010 [1956]), which argues that an individual's understanding of the world and their way of thinking are influenced by the language they speak, has been critically overruled or further developed. Language does not always have to be the most critical attribute of an ethnic group (Fought 2006; Hatoss 2003; Liebkind, 1989; Verkuyten, 2005), as the rest of the cultural and social environment also plays an important role (Deutscher 2011 [1984]). Likewise, in the context of immigration and economic instability in today's world, the importance of language as an attribute of an ethnic group may also depend on the situation and be expressed differently by groups (Liebkind 1989; Schmidt 2008; Shin 2013; Verkuyten, 2005). This means that other attributes, which differentiate one ethnic group from another (e.g. religion and customs), may become more relevant, or language may obtain a symbolic meaning for the group (Ehala, 2007; Jaspal, 2009). Although the language used at the group level has a definite impact on the behaviour of the group members, it has also been underlined that language choices may depend on context (Fought 2006; Verkuyten, 2005). For instance, the importance of language to an ethnic group may increase if expectations or pressure with regard to assimilation or the change in status of the group and/or language have been perceived (Giles et al., 1976; Liebkind, 2010). Language may also gain importance for the group as a reflection of the values of other ethnic groups, for instance if language is an important distinctive attribute for the reference group, as has happened in Estonia (Siiner, 2014; Vihalemm, 2011; Vihalemm and Masso, 2004). Hence I argue in this thesis that in the context of educational change, other aspects of social identity may prevail over ethnic identity or alterations may take place only in certain components of ethnic identity.

In conclusion, I define ethnic identity in this thesis as a dynamic and multidimensional concept, which is in parallel both a personal construction (different dimensions are valued and acknowledged differently) and a collective construction (how cultural symbols and history are interpreted or varied phenomena are understood in the group). This is a highly complex process, in the course of which the image of the group to which one belongs is put together from pieces of information obtained from different sources (other group members, the education environment, reference groups, the media, literature etc.). As a result of this, the group's understanding of the world, its traditions etc. are adopted (if these are in harmony with self-image). In the next chapter, I will

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[7] In this thesis, I primarily focus on language as an essential element of ethnic identity in present-day Estonia by relying on earlier studies (Nimmerfeldt, 2011; Vihalemm. 2011). As the core attribute of the ethnic identity of Russians has historically been their religion and place of residence (country of birth) (Kolstø, 2011; Gatagova, 2003), I also have to take into account other cultural attributes which distinguish groups, such as shared cultural practices and cultural symbols (Barker 2005 [2000]: 196) or more formal attributes, such as common ancestors and historical territory (Phinney, 1990; Phinney and Ong, 2007; Schachter, 2004; Trimble and Dickson, 2005; Ūmana-Taylor, 2011; Valk 2001, 2003).

take a closer look at the communicative processes, which help explain the relationships between the selection of ethnic identity and ongoing educational changes.

1.4. Communicative relationships

In previous sub-chapters of this article I gave an overview of the central concepts used in the thesis – the education system, educational change and ethnic identity. In my thesis, I focus on the relationships between the education system and ethnic identity in the context of educational change. In this sub-chapter, I will explain in more detail the conceptual framework I have used for empirically analysing the relationships between these main concepts.

In previous studies the relationship between the concepts of the education system and educational change (Hargreaves, 2005, Hernandez and Goodson, 2004) and between the concepts of the education system and ethnic identity (Cummins, 1990; Genesee et al., 1978; Salomone, 2010; Shin, 2013; Tse, 1996, 2000) have been analysed. In my thesis I use the approaches of Cote and Levine (2002) and of Verkuyten (2005) as a basis for formulating the conceptual framework for interpreting the results of my empirical studies. Cote and Levine (2002: 6-8) have formulated a model for empirically analysing the formation of social identity, distinguishing the processes related to identity-building on different levels – the individual level (i.e. psychological processes like emotions) and the level of social structure[8] (i.e. societal processes like civil affiliation) – and showing the interrelatedness of the processes at these levels. Verkuyten (2005) used the model of Cote and Levine specifically for analysing the formation of ethnic identity; he analysed the relationships between the individual and society in the example of ethnic identity[9]. However, the models formulated by Cote and Levine and by Verkuyten analyse the formation of social identity by only taking into consideration the interactions between individuals and society and neglecting institutions within society[10]. When analysing the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students in Estonia, the education system, being tightly connected to the change processes in society, has a central role. Therefore I added to my analytical model the level of the education system (i.e. legislative institutions in general, and schools in particular). My aim is to explain in detail the relationships between these concepts, on the basis of

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[8] Cote and Levine use the term "social structure" as a synonym for the concept of "social system", referring to society as a whole as one source of identity construction.
[9] Cote and Levine had a theoretical goal to unite the individual and sociological identification approaches; Verkuyten had instead empirical aims, showing the mutual interactions of individuals and society (i.e. influences from society on psychological identification).
[10] Verkuyten mentions in his approach the education system as an example of a social structure in which social identity can be constructed, but does not include this concept in this analytical model.

empirical studies conducted in Estonia. The ways in which I understand the relationships between these concepts in my thesis are depicted in Figure 1.

Based on previous studies (e.g. Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Bourdieu, 1991, 2010 [1984]; Giddens, 1991; Luhmann, 2009 [1983]) I suggest conceptualising the relationships between ethnic identity, the education system and educational change through the process of communication. Based on classical communication approaches (see e.g. Fiske, 1991 [1982]; Luhmann 2002 [1984]; Wood, 2013 [1996]: 15-17). I argue that for communication in the education system to be successful[11], three prerequisites have to be fulfilled: (1) making appropriate selections for communication (e.g. the selection of suitable study content and teaching methods for achieving the learning outcome); (2) understanding the messages (e.g. by students and teachers); and (3) activities after understanding the message or the communication that follows (e.g. students put the knowledge they have acquired into practice or demonstrate it in an examination). In this thesis I assume that ethnic identity is also acquired through this process of communication and through communicative relationships with the education system and changes within it. In this thesis, I empirically analyse the relationships between society, the education system and ethnic identity through four main communicative processes (see Figure 1, each of which includes the mentioned stages of communication). As the communicative processes presented in the figure and the basic concepts – society, the education system and ethnic identity – are mutually interrelated, I analyse all these communicative processes in this thesis to a greater or lesser extent and explain them in detail below.

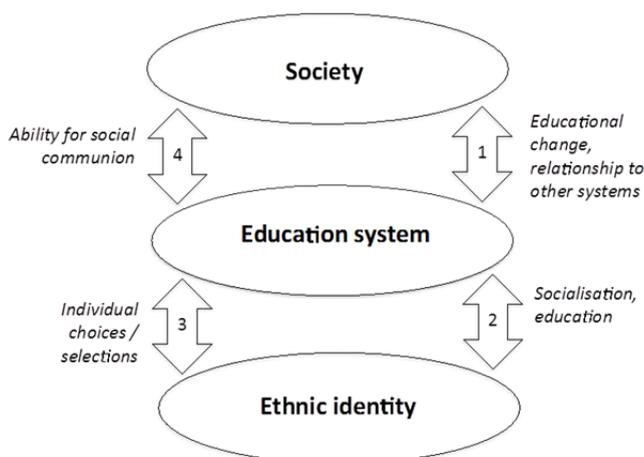**Figure 1.** Communicative relationships between society, the education system and ethnic identity

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[11] Unlike other communication approaches (see e.g. Fiske 1991 [1982]) Luhmann emphasises the selection opportunities during all communication stages and the purposefulness of communication in the education system. However, an emphasis on the understanding of communication and its reflection is inherent to both approaches.

The first communicative relationship (see Arrow 1) focuses on the relationships between educational change and other social systems. This kind of consideration of the relationships between different systems in the process of educational change has been underlined in both education theories (Hargreaves, 2005; Hernendez and Goodson, 2004; Fullan, 2006 [2001]) and sociology (Archer, 1984 [1979]; Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2004). In this thesis, I focus on the relationships between the education system and the political system or policy-making, which determines the main emphases in curricula, but also the principles of the organisation of education, including potential languages of instruction. As an outcome of communication, or in other words social agreement, the curriculum which is followed in a classroom setting during the process of studies defines the knowledge, skills and attitudes that people need in society (Archer, 1984 [1979]; Tillmann, 2006 [1989]; Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2004). However, the extent to which a curriculum contains ethnicity-related aspects and the competence of intercultural communication depends on who has created the education programme and what kind of social values it is based on. On the other hand, in connection with the transition to Estonian-medium studies as an educational change, it is essential to take into account the fact that the education system is connected with the media (as a mediator of different interpretations of educational change), but also with the economy (the question of the adequacy of resources for the implementation of innovations, e.g. in teacher training). In this thesis, I analyse this communicative relationship between the education system and other social systems indirectly, to a certain extent through secondary analysis of the results of earlier studies and theoretical approaches, but first and foremost based on the positions expressed by the students and teachers who participated in the studies.

Another communicative relationship addressed in this thesis focuses on socialisation and education, which take place in educational institutions. On the one hand, education in school and classroom settings is purposeful and may affect the fulfilment of educational objectives in broader terms (e.g. the ability to act in society as workers, citizens and members of society), but also the success of the educational change in narrower terms (how successfully it is implemented at the school level, e.g. through the acquisition of language skills). In the course of all-round socialisation, values, roles and behaviour patterns related to ethnicity are acquired not only in the education system, or in other words, the socialisation patterns obtained earlier at home or in other systems are complemented or altered. Based on the education system approach in the framework of system theory (Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2004) and some other socialisation theories (Dewey and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Tillmann, 2006 [1989]) the main goal of the education system is preparing students for their careers, for further educational choices and for living in society. To acquire the needed knowledge and skills the students have to learn to learn, i.e. how to be effective students. But learning to learn in the education system can be culture-specific (Arnett, 1995; Hofstede et al., 2010; Carrasquillo and Rodríguez, 2002 [1995]). According to other theoretical approaches (Bourdieu, 1991, 2010 [1984]; Dijk, 2005

[1998]) the school is an ideological institution and socialises students according to rules, norms and values accepted by the power. Ethnic socialisation at school can be part of formal education depending on the political decisions made at the level of the state. However, it can also form part of socialisation, which takes place within or outside of the classroom setting and not the learning objective and happens because of interaction between the teacher and the student and schoolmates. Based on socio-cultural communication theories (Mead, 1967 [1934]; Littlejohn and Foss, 2011) it could be possible that, for instance, Estonian-medium and Russian-medium schools differ, because in schools with Estonian as the language of instruction work mainly Estonians, and in Russian-medium schools mainly Russian-speaking teachers, and they also present their ethnic background in communication. In this thesis, I have analysed the expression of socialisation, education and learning as a learner primarily based on the positions of Russian-speaking students. Although students themselves may not necessarily be aware of the paths of socialisation and education they have covered, these are nevertheless indirectly expressed when they talk about their experiences at school and with the language of instruction.

The third communicative relationship presented in the figure focuses on individual selections and individual resources based on which selection is made. On the one hand, this has to do with the educational choices offered by the political system, i.e. in Estonia's context, with instruction in Estonian and Russian and language immersion. On the other hand, it has to do with personal 'prescribed' selections within the languages of instruction and educational institutions offered. This selection process includes the selection of both a specific educational institution and the language of instruction, but also selections that are made in educational institutions in connection with education and socialisation on a daily basis depending on the student's or teacher's personal resources. For instance, the results of earlier studies (Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2004; Qvortrup, 2005; Tække and Paulsen, 2014; Vanderstraeten, 2007) have indicated that it depends on teachers and their personal resources (e.g. language proficiency, attitude towards educational change and professional skills) whether and how they can select the information that is relevant with regard to learning objectives and present it to the students in an understandable way. This means, for instance, whether the teacher is trained to work in a multilingual and multicultural classroom, how they interpret the education change and their attitude towards the education innovation. However, the student's personal resources (including e.g. their linguistic cultural background) define whether they can understand the information and also their ability and motivation to acquire new knowledge and skills. In this thesis, I have analysed this relationship based on both earlier empirical studies and theoretical approaches and on original analysis of the attitudes of students and teachers.

The fourth communicative relationship marked in the figure focuses on the main expression of educational change, i.e. the individual's ability to communicate. Communicative processes at an individual level are expressed in both the internalisation of learning objectives and in their expression in school and

classroom settings (Arrow 3) and through acting in society (Arrow 4). In addition to acquiring the necessary ability to communicate within school, i.e. learning to be a learner, ethnic identity can be expressed by acting as a member of society – interpreting the world according to the views of the ethnic group (Dijk, 2005 [1998]) or following the traditions of one's own ethnic group. This is why I have defined this communicative relationship in the example of earlier studies (Qvortrup, 2005) as the ability for social communion and not simply as individual communication competence. Thus the ability for social communion means, in this thesis, both linguistic competence and the meanings attributed to it; i.e. how an individual defines their ethnic belonging (Deutscher, 2011 [1984]; Dijk, 2005 [1998]; Spolsky, 1998; Verkuyten, 2005).

Based on sociological, socio-psychological and education theories and empirical studies (Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Verkuyten, 2005; Luhmann, 2002 [1984]) I argue in this thesis that communication in the education system and therefore also the implementation of educational change may be either successful or unsuccessful. As the communicative relationships presented in the figure are interrelated, it is possible that success or failure in one communicative relationship may also lead to success or failure at other levels. For instance, if communication between a student and teacher fails, this may be used in the media to shape public opinion. Thus, one possible argument could be a threat to ethnic identity. The changes in the organisation of education that result from surroundings can either increase or decrease the probability of successful communication (through which objectives are achieved) in educational institutions (e.g. a shift in the language of instruction or teachers' uncertainty or opposition to the implementation of changes). This means that the educational change addressed in this thesis is a complex communication process, and even if an innovation solely concerns the sphere of education and the broader impact of the education innovation at the social level is indirect, there are still different stakeholders involved in the process and the success of the innovation depends on how these stakeholders interpret its objectives.

In conclusion, I would like to note that in this thesis I emphasise mutual relationships between different parts of society. Ethnic socialisation takes place as a combination of the education process (in schools) and socialisation within and outside school. Individuals, as well as organisations (schools), ethnic communities and families, interpret education change based on their previous experience, the attitudes expressed in communication at different levels, e.g. in the media and in personal communication, and the extent to which the ethnic background is valued by individuals. In this thesis I argue that certain selections of the language of instruction are made based on individual resources and previous mediated and personal experience, but also based on the expected outcome (for instance, the level at which language skills can be obtained). At the same time, the interpretations are essential in the implementation of education reforms. The implementation process and attitudes of different groups involved in education innovation can have an impact on policy-making and on society in its broadest sense – on the relationship between individuals and ethnic groups, and

on how well graduates from schools with different languages of instruction cope in the society.

1.5. Research questions

On the basis of the conceptual framework above, the main objective of this thesis is **to determine the opportunities for ethnic socialisation of language minority students in the education system – in schools with different languages of instruction and in a situation of educational change.** Estonia's example is highly appropriate for the analysis of this objective, as rapid social changes and educational changes have taken place here at the same time, and for many people in the country this has also meant the valuing of their ethnic and linguistic origins. The education situation in Estonia is also unique in the sense that it is one of few countries where minority groups have the possibility to study to at least some extent in their native language, which is said to support the development of ethnic identity according to a number of studies (Cummins, 1996; Extra, Yagmur, 2006; Nieto, 2005; Salomone, 2010). I presume that these aspects are also reflected in the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students. I have divided this broader formulated objective into three research questions with specific sub-questions:

1. What institutional choices are available within the education system for ethnic self-identification and what individual selections do students and their parents make?

1.1 What selections of identity does the Estonian education system offer based on the language of instruction? (articles **I** and **V**) What individual selections do Russian-speaking students in Estonia make in the context of the choices offered? (articles **I, IV** and **V**)

1.2. Which dimensions of identity are more/less prevalent in connection with one's ethnic group? (article **II**)

2. How is ethnic identity related to language through education and the socialisation processes taking place in the education system and outside of the school setting?

2.1. How is ethnic identity related to the education system in general and to the language of instruction specifically? (articles **I, II**, **IV** and **V**)

2.2. What resources at the individual and school level or outside of the education system are essential in making individual selections of ethnic identity? (articles **II** and **V**)

3. What aspects of educational change are internalised among Russian-speaking students and are expressed in their ethnic self-identification?

3.1. What are the patterns of individual positions regarding the transition to Estonian-medium studies of students and teachers from former Russian-medium schools? (article **III**) How are individual ethno-cultural self-descriptions and attitudes towards educational change interrelated? (articles **IV** and **V**)

3.2. How are the social expressions of ethnic identity that form within the context of educational change seen? (articles **I** and **V**)

These three research questions are connected to the communicative relationships presented in sub-chapter 1.4 above at three different levels: (1) ethnic identity; (2) the education system in the narrowest terms, in the form of what is happening at school and in the classroom setting; and (3) educational change in the context of social changes in broader terms. I have presented a summary of the empirical results of the thesis in the sub-chapters below in accordance with these three levels of analysis. To begin with, however, I provide an overview of the data and methods used in this thesis for the study of ethnic identity and of relevant methodological issues.

2. METHODS AND DATA

In the studies conducted within this thesis, I have used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer the research questions as has also been done in earlier research on ethnic identity (Cote and Levine, 2002; Vignoles et al., 2011; Verkuyten, 2005). In this thesis, the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods enables, on the one hand, representative results to be obtained with regard to the overall sample studied, which also allows different ethnic groups to be compared, and on the other hand to better understand, for instance, the importance of self-identification at the individual level and the factors that are related to it. The use of different research methods also enables the conceptual relationships between ethnic identity and the language of instruction to be explained in the context of educational change.

In the studies conducted within the thesis, I use empirical data collected between 2007 and 2012. Although this research contains some elements of longitudinal studies (e.g. the respondents who earlier participated in study **II** have been used in studies **IV** and **V**), the data were collected during a relatively short period of time. The data do not directly allow the development and possible change in the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students to be analysed over the entire period of the transition to Estonian-medium studies. However, they render it possible to understand how Russian-speaking students studying at schools with different languages of instruction identify themselves in terms of ethnicity during one stage of the transition to Estonian-medium studies and what their attitudes towards educational change are.

More specifically, I have used data collected by three different methods: (1) the formalised survey method based on a small sample of students or so-called case study (article **II**); (2) a representative formalised survey for studying students and teachers (article **III**); and (3) a qualitative in-depth interview for studying students (articles **IV** and **V**). Study **I** was theoretical in essence and was based on research conducted earlier. The development of innovative research methodology is not a direct purpose of this thesis. However, the complexity and interdisciplinarity of this topic posed a challenge in selecting appropriate methods of data analysis, which would also make it possible to analyse hidden relationships between different attributes. A more detailed overview of the three methods of data collection and analysis is given below.

A formalised case study based on a small sample of students
The empirical data in study **II** were collected via a formalised survey. Conducted in 2007, this survey included 8th grade students from Tartu, Narva and Sillamäe whose native or home language was Russian and whose language of instruction was Estonian, Russian or bilingual Estonian-Russian. For the collection of data, I used an original questionnaire that I prepared on the basis of earlier social psychological questionnaires on ethnic identity (Phinney, 1990; Valk, 2001) and theoretical surveys (Phinney, 1990; Verkuyten, 2005; Tajfel, 2010 [1982]; Turner, 2010 [1982]; Cote and Levine, 2002), adding a section which

addressed educational issues and information sources that influence the formation of identity. The questionnaire covers the following themes: ethnic self-identification; feelings about personal ethnic background; self-assessment of knowledge (acquired in school); assessment of cultural knowledge acquired; valuing of personal ethnic background; participation in cultural practices; questions related to proficiency in the native language and its necessity; main sources for improving proficiency in the native language; and the language of information sources used and the frequency of their use. In preparing the questionnaire, I relied on the four-dimensional model of ethnic identity described by Verkuyten (Verkuyten, 2005). In addition to the essential components of ethnic identity mentioned in this study (ethnic self-identification, ethnic involvement, valuing of the personal group and knowledge about the history, culture and traditions of the personal group) I added the issue of linguistic involvement to the questionnaire. Its aim was to determine the language use habits of students at school and at home, in interaction with friends and family and the importance of Estonian and Russian in the daily lives of the students, based on the assumption that in the Estonian context, language is an important ethnicity-related attribute.

In analysing the data, I used methods of multivariate analysis (the formation of indexes, cluster analysis etc.), which are appropriate in studying complex phenomena that are multidimensional in nature. The initial objective was to identify the attributes/activities that students consider essential in ethnic self-identification based on the method of index formation and to analyse the relationships between the attributes. Further analysis using the method of cluster analysis made it possible to identify the latent dimensions of ethnic identity in the data and to analyse the relationships between the components of identity found and other background attributes.

Representative formalised survey among students and teachers
The empirical basis of study **III** is secondary data, i.e. data collected among teachers and students by means of a formalised questionnaire. The survey was conducted in 2009 among 11th grade students from 32 schools where the language of instruction was Russian or bilingual Estonian-Russian and among teachers of different subjects from these schools. The representative stratified random sample of different regions, schools and classes was formed using the Estonian Education Information System (EHIS).

In the course of analysing the data, we sought to identify the attitudes of students and teachers with regard to the transition to Estonian-medium studies and the factors that may influence these attitudes. We also analysed the language proficiency of students and teachers as an indicator of their preparedness for educational change and its potential implications. We presumed in the analysis that the attitudes towards and linguistic preparedness for the transition to Estonian-medium studies may potentially stem from different factors related to individuals, schools and regions, which could be important in the context of this research. Individual factors used in the analysis include variables that describe a

feeling of being connected to Estonia (e.g. citizenship, trust in public institutions, use of media in Estonian and attitude towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies expressed declaratively). School factors describe the school on the basis of formal indicators (e.g. the number of students) and the current activities of the school for the implementation of the education reform (in-service training of teachers, the implementation of language immersion and teachers' proficiency in Estonian). At the regional level, attitudes were analysed based on ethnic/linguistic population indicators, but also on the basis of political/economic development in the region.

In the analysis, we implemented the multi-level regression analysis method in order to identify major implications that may simultaneously function on different analytical levels. In earlier analyses (e.g. Masso and Kello, 2010a, 2010b) which focussed on a single level of analysis (usually the level of the individual) in studying similar data and issues operating simultaneously at different levels, certain attributes could be either overestimated or underestimated. The analysis conducted within this thesis indicated that for studying complex phenomena, such as the transition to Estonian-medium studies, the implementation of the multilevel regression method is justified.

Qualitative method of in-depth interviews among students
Studies **IV** and **V** were conducted using the qualitative data collection and analysis method. Empirical data were collected in 2012 via a written networking interview. The sample for the survey consisted of final-year students (n=14) from schools/classes with different languages of instruction (Estonian, Russian and language immersion) from different regions of Estonia (Tallinn, Tartu and Ida-Viru County) whose home language was Russian. In order to find respondents, we combined the contacts of the students who had participated in the earlier case study and had granted their consent for further surveys (see study **II**) with snowball sampling. In line with the principles of a strategic sample (Trost, 1986), we designed a homogenous group of respondents based on their period of study (graduation from upper secondary school in the 2012/2013 academic year). In order to ensure heterogeneous answers, respondents were selected so that they had experience studying at schools with different language of instruction (Estonian, Russian and language immersion), their place of residence was in a region with varied ethnic composition (Estonian-Russian speaking Tallinn, overwhelmingly Estonian-speaking Tartu and overwhelmingly Russian-speaking Ida-Viru County) and they had different socio-demographic backgrounds. The focus on final-year students allowed us to concentrate in the interviews on the language learning experience of students at different stages of education, on the formation of their identity over a longer period of time and on the interaction of different socialisation references.

The semi-structured interview used as the means of data collection was an original creation of the members of the research team. The interviews helped to disclose the role of the language of instruction at the school in the formation of students' identity in broader terms. The interviews covered the following

themes: spontaneous self-identification; self-identification as a member of the groups suggested by the researchers; descriptions/characterisation of different ethnic groups; choice of language of instruction; descriptions of schools with different languages of instruction; attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies; habits in media use; the role of educational institutions in the development of ethnic identity; and plans for the future.

In spontaneous self-identification, we asked the interviewees to answer the question: *Who are you?* based on their social roles and group affiliation, which enabled us to analyse the extent to which and in which situations ethnic belonging is valued. With additional questions, we asked the students to speak about their self-identification spontaneously in their own words. The connection to the members of the groups suggested by the researchers enabled us to analyse which attributes have a decisive role in self-identification and which are deemed to be more essential, and also the emotional meaning of belonging. The method chosen for the collection of the data – a structured interview – probably restrained the spontaneity of the opinions and choices of the respondents. One should also bear in mind the effect of the researchers' vision on both the choice of options in regard to belonging and, more broadly, on the emphases expressed through the research questions. We sought to hedge how directing the researchers' interpretations were in conducting the interviews by minimising their intervention in the answers of the students and used additional questions only if the respondent was tongue-tied. To hedge the risk of giving the 'right' answer, the interviews were conducted by the member of the research team, who could be taken for a contemporary of the respondents and who did not have a managerial role in the education system.

As I used both qualitative and quantitative samples with varied rates of representation and research methods in this thesis, it is essential to take this into account in the interpretations of the conclusions reached based on different research studies within this thesis. The samples of all research studies, the formation principles of the samples and the procedure of the research have been described in greater detail in the articles. The only territorially representative research study is the formalised survey among students and teachers (the second method of data collection presented in this sub-chapter, study **III**); on the basis of this study, it is possible to draw conclusions across all teachers and 11th grade students from schools with Russian as the language of instruction in Estonia. The method of data collection mentioned first, i.e. the formalised survey conducted among students (study **II**), is a case study in which the sample comprises different cases of language of instruction instead of the pursuit of territorial representation and therefore the study is appropriate for analysing the relationship between identity and the languages of instruction. The third method, i.e. studies **IV** and **V,** is qualitative in nature and its objective is the specification/investigation of relationships found in quantitative analyses through open questions.

Based on the empirical studies conducted, it can be stated that for the study of ethnic identity, both quantitative and qualitative methods are appropriate, and

for the study of identity and educational change – where the research focus is complex – it is reasonable to combine them. The use of a quantitative formalised survey was relevant in this study, as I relied on established research tools and also adapted these in line with my research question. In addition, the formalised survey made it possible to present an initial overview of the relationships between the ethnic identity of students and the language of instruction. However, based on the assumption that ethnic identity as a form of social identity is situational and transformational, the use of the interview method allowed for the more specific study of the implications attributed individually to ethnic identity and everything it involves. Taking into account the main target group of these studies (students) and their online communication habits, the authors of the research felt that a written networking interview would also be appropriate for the study of ethnic identity as a relatively personal matter.

Although the empirical studies were performed using rather traditional research methods, the attempt to interpret their results using the conceptual framework presented in chapter 1.4. allows for a novel view of the education system in relation to the ethnic identity of the students and social changes in society. However, current empirical studies do not allow us to determine how the process of identity-building and the (re)production of the education system occurs, but how students understand what happens in the education system, including understandings about ethnic identity and the language of instruction.

3. RESULTS

The empirical results of the thesis have been presented below in three parts. Part 1 provides an overview of the results that concern students' understanding of ethnic identity. More specifically, I focus on research results, which concern the meaning of identity to students, or in other words, I analyse the attributes based on which students identify themselves as members of an ethnic group. Part 2 consists of a summary of the studies, which focuses on the relationships between ethnic identity and different individual references within and outside of school. The final part, Part 3, includes the results that explain how students perceive educational change and how this is connected to ethnic identity.

3.1. The meanings of ethnic identity

To begin with, I provide an overview of the implications of ethnic identity to students, the attributes on the basis of which they identify themselves in terms of ethnicity and the relevance of different aspects to them. In the quantitative analysis of the components of ethnic identity and their relationship (article **II**), I rely on the dimensions of ethnic identity formulated earlier by Verkuyten (2005). In the second stage of the study, i.e. the qualitative analysis (articles **IV** and **V**), I focus on the analysis of implications that students spontaneously attributed to their sense of belonging.

The empirical results reveal that students mostly identify themselves both ethnically and culturally on the basis of their home language or the nationality of their parents (articles **II, IV** and **V**). For a number of students, their ethnic identity is something given by birth, and even if they do not differentiate themselves from the reference group (Estonians, in this case) based on their language proficiency, for instance their family name, which can be associated with ethnic culture and traditions, does not allow them to think of themselves as a representative of another ethnic group (article **IV**) even if they wish to do so. Native language is an essential attribute of group differentiation, as also identified in earlier studies conducted in Estonia (Nimmerfeldt, 2011; Nimmerfeldt et al., 2011; Siiner, 2011; Vihalemm, 2011). The results of these studies indicate, however, that proficiency in different languages is valued (articles **I, IV** and **V**), and in the case of national minorities, proficiency in the state language, i.e. Estonian, is also considered essential (articles **I** and **V**).

The results of the qualitative analysis indicate that in spontaneous self-identification, the ethnic and cultural aspect is not necessarily the most essential for students (i.e. ethnic self-identification is not relevant to them in certain situations); instead, they determine who they are according to their social role (student), family relations (sister), place of residence (Estonian resident, European) or citizenship (Estonian citizen) (article **IV**). Based on the results of the empirical studies conducted within this thesis, it can be argued that for the majority of students, ethnic identity is an essential aspect of their self-image

(articles **I, II** and **IV**); for some students, it gains more importance depending on the situation (article **IV**), but there are also students to whom ethnic belonging is not important in their self-identification (articles **II** and **IV**). Earlier studies which have focused on other ethnic groups (Verkuyten, 2005; Giampapa, 2001; Pegg and Plybon, 2005) have also reached the conclusion that ethnic self-identification is situational.

Initially, I analysed the components of ethnic identity in study **II** with the help of five different dimensions of ethnic cultural identity formulated in earlier studies (Giles et al., 1976; Ong et al., 2010; Roberts et al., 1999; Verkuyten 2005): labelling; ethnic pride; ethnic involvement; linguistic involvement; and knowledge of personal ethnic cultural background. The results of study **II** reveal that nearly half of the students belonging to the sample do not take any pride in their ethnic identity or do not consider it relevant. The assessments of students with regard to ethnic involvement (taking part in the joint activities of the ethnic group or following traditions) and in evaluating knowledge of personal ethnic cultural background are similar. Earlier studies (Schachter, 2005; Verkuyten, 2005) have also indicated that students evaluate aspects, activities and symbols related to ethnic groups to a different extent, wherein differences occur by group.

The results of study **II** reveal that different dimensions of ethnic identity – ethnic identification, pride in belonging, knowledge about one's group and its acquisition, interaction with group members and the following of traditions – are interrelated. However, the relationship is at the same time moderate or relatively weak and this confirms the theoretical concepts (Cote and Levine, 2002; Phinney and Ong, 2007; Ong et al., 2010; Dijk, 2005 [1998]) and empirical results (Giampapa, 2001; Schachter, 2005; Verkuyten, 2005) which argue that the typical combinations of identity components inherent to ethnic groups may not exist and that the grounds for self-identification are largely individual. On the other hand, the results confirm the statements of the theory of social identity (Tajfel, 2010 [1982]; Turner, 2010 [1982]) and self-categorisation (Turner, 2010 [1982]; Cote and Levine, 2002) which argues that group belonging means something more than just external labelling.

The analysis of the associations between the components of identity (article **II**) reveals that pride in belonging to one's ethnic group and strong links with it are perceived to the greatest extent by students who follow the traditions of their ethnic group and take part in activities promoting ethnic culture or cultural events. Of all of the components of identity, self-identification and pride in belonging are interrelated most strongly. In the opinion of students, proficiency in and the use of language are most associated with the domain of knowledge, as new knowledge is first and foremost acquired via language. This, however, may also be characteristic of Estonia – it is possible to acquire education, including knowledge about Russian culture, in Russian, and there are also good formal and informal opportunities for acquiring knowledge about one's ethnic group (article **I**). The analysis performed does not allow for causal relationships to be identified, and thus the argument may be true that individuals with better

knowledge may value joint activities and traditions, but also their ethnic background more highly than others. The relatively weak relationship between the dimensions the proficiency in language and self-identification and belonging may be caused by the fact that ethnic belonging is more often perceived as innate and it does not depend on attributes that differentiate one's group from other groups. A relatively weak relationship between linguistic involvement and other dimensions may also be interpreted in self-evident and diverse possibilities for the use of Russian (Vihalemm and Siiner, 2011). This can also be conditioned by the so-called symbolic value attributed to the language – this being the primary and most important attribute that differentiates groups (Vihalemm, 2011; Vihalemm and Masso, 2004; Vihalemm and Siiner, 2011).

In addition to components of social identity, the analysis performed makes it possible to define the strength of the sense of belonging and confidence perceived. For instance, in study **IV**, a clear distinction could be made between students who identified themselves firmly as Russians, students with Estonian-Russian identity whose self-perception with regard to their ethnicity and culture was uncertain, and students who preferred alternatives to ethnicity in their self-identification (e.g. based on citizenship or location identity). In empirical study **II**, a differentiation could be made between students with strong and weak Russian identity and students who feel that ethnic cultural belonging is not relevant, but who assess their proficiency in Russian as good and who use it relatively often. However, in comparing the different identity groups, it should be borne in mind that the groups were formed on different methodological grounds. Thus the 'strong/uncertain' opposition in study **IV** means the certainty in emotional and cognitive identity perceived and verbally expressed by students. In study **II,** on the other hand, the 'strong/weak' opposition is related to the valuing of belonging, pride in one's ethnic group and the assessment given to personal proficiency in language and knowledge.

3.2. The relationships between ethnic identity and the education system

The second topic analysed in this thesis was the relationships between ethnic identity and the education system. In this subchapter the language of instruction is under consideration, but related references within and outside of the education system are also explained.

The research objectives and research questions for this thesis were initially posed with the intention of analysing the relationships between the language of instruction and the ethnic self-identification of students. The identity groups formed on the basis of the results of study **II** were students (a) with a strong Russian identity, (b) with a weak Russian identity and (c) who did not value ethnic belonging. These were split varyingly between different languages of instruction in the analysis: students with both strong and weak Russian identity study in schools with Estonian as the language of instruction; students from all

identity groups are represented in schools with Russian as the language of instruction; and among students in language immersion classes there are those who perceive their connectedness to their ethnic group to a different degree.

The identity groups formed on the basis of the results of the qualitative study (article **IV**) lead to the same conclusion: students (a) with a definite Russian focus, (b) with an uncertain Estonian-Russian identity and (c) who do not value ethnicity in self-identification study in schools and classes with different languages of instruction as well and their identity groups do not coincide with the language of instruction. Furthermore, the results of study **II** also indicate that the language of instruction does not affect the students' assessment of their knowledge of their ethnic group (including the knowledge acquired in school within the curriculum) or on their proficiency in Russian – students studying in Russian, Estonian and language immersion classes estimate their knowledge as being good. Notwithstanding the fact that the volume of native-language communication is obviously different in schools with different languages of instruction (e.g. certain differences resulting from the curriculum, such as teaching Russian as a native or a foreign language and slightly different courses of literature), this is not reflected in the subjective assessment of personal knowledge, as revealed by the results of study **II**. At the same time, the students assume, based on direct and mediated experience, that the possibility to acquire different languages in schools with different languages of instruction are not equal: in Estonian-medium schools it is not possible to acquire Russian at the level of mother tongue, while in Russian-medium schools the students do not have good knowledge of Estonian (articles **IV, V**).

Therefore, based on the results of these two different studies (articles **II** and **IV**), it can be argued that how students identify themselves in terms of ethnicity is not directly related to or conditioned by the language of instruction. The fact that there is no relationship between self-identification and the language of instruction could be explained by the rather diverse educational options in Estonia, including the option of selecting the language of instruction (article **I**). Consequently, highly differing methods of self-identification may manifest themselves in the combinations of language of instruction, family values and ethnic symbols (and their meanings) communicated in public. The results reveal that although students are aware of the differences between the schools/classes with different languages of instruction, they do not perceive these in relation to ethnic identity or ethnic group, but rather from the perspective of language learning, learning motivation and whether they would be able to succeed in their studies (articles **I, IV and V**). Given the reasons highlighted by students with regard to the selection of a school or a certain language of instruction, it can be stated that their parents also proceed, by and large, from instrumental motives (article **I**). Based on the results of study **IV**, in which all of the students observed (or their parents) had the option of selecting between different languages of instruction, choices inconsistent with the native language were made based on the expected language proficiency (which they hoped to acquire in a

certain school) rather than considering the development of ethnic identity and the role of the school's linguistic environment therein.

In the estimation of the students observed, the contribution of a school to the development of ethnic identity concerns first and foremost the improvement of knowledge and language proficiency (article **IV**). Thus it can be concluded that although study **II** revealed that there is no direct relationship between ethnic identity and language of instruction, the curricula of general education schools support the development of the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students to a greater or lesser extent. Additionally, the students interviewed (including in language immersion classes) highlighted the aspect of emotional security in connection with Russian as the language of instruction – similar understandings and habits of students create a socially supportive environment. Consequently, based on the possible dimensions of ethnic identity (Cote and Levine, 2002; Phinney and Ong, 2007; Phinney, 1990; Roberts et al., 1999; Verkuyten, 2005) a school can, in the estimation of students, support the development of ethnic identity by creating opportunities for acquiring knowledge and skills (including language proficiency) (article **I**). Through this, students prepare themselves in educational institutions for their future or for becoming a member of society (Dewey and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2004; Tillmann, 2006 [1989])). This is more likely if the students form part of the national majority (i.e. are Estonian), as students underline that regardless of the language of instruction, they acquire knowledge about Estonia at school. This proves earlier concepts (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984];) that education systems reproduce power – or in this case reproduce the culture of the national majority.

Studies **I, V** and **IV** indicate that parents (and also students themselves) make their choices with regard to the language of instruction relying on their own and other people's experiences alike (e.g. based on mediated experience, it is believed that the outcome of studying in a language immersion class will be so-called semilingualism). Analysis of the results of study **II** demonstrates that students in schools with Russian as the language of instruction and in language immersion classes enjoy excellent opportunities to get to know their ethnic culture and traditions. Students studying in schools with Estonian as the language of instructions also assess their knowledge of their ethnic culture as being good, although those who participated in study **IV** stated that in the first place they acquire knowledge about Estonian language and culture. The results of study **IV** reveal that in addition to the knowledge acquired within the curriculum which supports the development of ethnic and national identities, students perceive some discomfort in addressing certain historical issues. They also perceive that teachers have certain prejudices with regard to whether students who study in a foreign language are able to acquire knowledge and skills at the same level as students who study in their native language and that a student whose native language is not the language of instruction does not speak the language at the level of a native speaker in any case (article **I**).

Based on the results of studies **IV** and **V** it can be presumed that the attitudes prevalent in society may, among other things, also influence the selection of

school. In selecting schools based on the language of instruction, some parents proceed from the instrumental aspect (articles **I, IV**, Reek 2012a; 2012b). For instance, the explanations given for the choice of school and the descriptions of different languages of instruction (articles **I, IV)** indicate that the decisive factors in favour of a school with Russian as the language of instruction are its closeness to the place of residence, the familiar environment (other family members have also studied there) and the good results of graduates. However, the selection of a school with Estonian as the language of instruction is on the one hand based on the consistency of language use (a logical step after attending an Estonian-language kindergarten), but in most cases on the opportunities for acquiring the language: it is believed that it is only possible to acquire Estonian to the extent necessary for the future in a school where the language of instruction is Estonian. Decisions in favour of language immersion classes are also made on the basis of varied criteria; in addition, some students feel that language immersion classes are emotionally more secure than classes where Estonian is spoken, as there are students with the same native language in one classroom. The justification for selecting schools with Russian and Estonian as the languages of instruction is, on the other hand, the expectation that the improvement in language proficiency will be versatile, i.e. good proficiency in both Estonian and Russian.

The results of studies **III** and **IV** indicate that in addition to the language of instruction, several additional factors within and outside of school related to the individual influence the formation of ethnic identity. Students are aware of the opinions on the language of instructions expressed in the media (article **IV**), which may, directly or indirectly, influence their attitudes towards the language of instruction and their ethnic identity. The results (article **IV**) reveal that in comparison with other groups, students expressing a strong Russian ethnic identity also take a strong position in regard to educational change; use versatile, mostly Russian-language media sources; and are also rather active on social media. Based on earlier studies (Salvet, 2012; Setina, 2008), I presume that the students in favour of educational change are critical media users and also obtain information from other sources, as alongside official discourse, Russian-language media mostly publish critical positions with regard to educational change. Students with an uncertain Estonian-Russian identity are also characterised by the linguistic variety of the channels and media they follow. This group also includes students who virtually do not follow any media at all. The students among those interviewed to whom ethnic self-identification is not important follow different media channels moderately, while linguistic preferences with regard to the media followed depend on their language of instruction: students from schools with Russian as the language of instruction mostly read, listen to and watch Russian-language media channels, while students from language immersion classes follow media sources in different languages.

The results of study **V** indicate that the vision of one's future is also partly dependent on ethnic self-identification, and this can be interpreted as an indication of being connected to Estonia. The results of study **V** demonstrate that

students who have identified themselves through Estonian-Russian dual identity express their intention to live and work in Estonia in the future the most, although they do not, for instance, exclude studying in another country. Students for whom ethnicity is not important tend to see themselves living and studying outside of Estonia in the future. Similarly, some students who identify themselves as Russian are clearly oriented towards leaving Estonia, whereas others associate their future plans with the country, although they wish to study or work abroad for a certain period. Students who identify themselves as Russian or Estonian-Russian and students who do not wish to identify themselves in ethnic terms explain their wish to leave Estonia as being based on instrumental factors: better and more versatile opportunities for professional accomplishment and economic welfare, and for achieving success. Students who clearly see their future outside of Estonia (who identify themselves alternatively to ethnicity) also justify this by the unequal position of Estonians and Russians in Estonia and by being 'second-rate'. For some, finding a place in another European country is like a potential scenario for overcoming the opposition between Estonians and Russians, for instance by identifying themselves as Europeans, i.e. through group belonging that is more general than ethnic self-identification.

In conclusion, the results reveal that the development of ethnic identity is associated with different factors. The analyses conducted make it possible to argue that the importance of ethnic identity and the methods of self-identification do not directly emanate from the language of instruction, whereas educational institutions still indirectly support the development of ethnic identity through both curricular objectives and the attitudes of teachers. The results of the empirical study conducted indicate that ethnic self-identification is important in the evolution of the world view and understandings of students (article **III**). For instance, ethnic self-identification is related to attitudes and positions with regard to the educational landscape, which will be addressed in greater detail in the sub-chapter below.

3.3. Relationships between ethnic identity and educational change

The third topic of analysis in this thesis is educational change in connection with the language of instruction and its relationships with ethnic identity. To this effect, I studied the opinions of students with regard to different languages of instruction and the attitudes of students and teachers in connection with the transition to Estonian-medium studies both qualitatively and quantitatively. The point of departure was the results of earlier studies (Cummins, 1996; Extra and Yagmur, 2006; Salomone, 2010; Tse, 1996, 2000), which argued that a change in the language of instruction, i.e. studying in a foreign language, may influence ethnic cultural behaviour, e.g. language use, relationships and communication with compatriots.

Study **I** indicated that pursuant to Estonian legislation on education, the duty of every school, regardless of its language of instruction, is to support the improvement of students' language proficiency. Although the learning of the language of instruction is understood as being self-evident and the focus has been set on the improvement of proficiency in Estonian (article **I**), proficiency in foreign languages has also been highly valued in Estonia: curriculum-wise, opportunities have been provided for learning different native languages. The schools with different languages of instruction described by students in studies **IV** and **V** and also the explanations given for the choice of school indicate, however, that in practice some schools either fail to improve the students' proficiency in Estonian if their language of instruction is not Estonian or if the students are not native speakers of the language (Metslang et al., 2013; Toomela, 2012; Toomela and Kikas, 2012).

In this thesis (article **III**), I analysed the formation of attitudes with regard to educational change in the interaction of different factors at the individual, school and regional levels. The results of study **III** indicate that the attitudes of students and teachers towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies differ to a significant extent. Although, compared to students, the sentiments of teachers towards the transition have been somewhat more negative, the number of supporters of education reform is almost equal in both groups. The positive attitudes of teachers are more related to characteristics at the individual level, such as trust in public institutions and the use of media channels in Estonian. The opinions of students are partly influenced by the same factors that influence teachers: students who use media in Estonian more often have greater trust in public institutions, and their sentiments towards the transition are more positive. This relationship between the use of media in Estonian and the perception of being integrated in Estonian society has also been found in earlier studies (Lauristin, 2012). However, as study **III** indicates, an important difference between students and teachers is the fact that in addition to the factors at the individual level, the attitudes of students have also been influenced by factors at the school level. Students whose teachers have attended in-service training sessions more often, have taken a more positive stance towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies and who also speak Estonian better than others perceive the educational change more positively.

The results of study **II** also reveal that in the formation of ethnic self-identification, characteristics emanating from the language of instruction or the linguistic environment surrounding the school may not necessarily be important, as differences between schools matter more. It is quite likely that in schools where the in-service training of teachers is a priority, where the teachers themselves are more open to in-service training and the implementation of the knowledge acquired, which in turn probably increases the teachers' professional confidence, it is also easier for the students to understand the educational change and thereby be more motivated to acquire knowledge. It is also possible that a teacher whose nationality is the same as that of the students, who is fluent in the language of instruction and who is able to methodologically support the

students, including if their language proficiency is not yet sufficient for them to communicate freely, is a role model to the students.

Attitudes with regard to educational change were also addressed in studies **IV** and **V**. The results of study **IV** reveal that regardless of personal experience with the language of instruction, attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies differ at the stage of upper secondary education, which has also been proved in earlier studies (Masso and Kello, 2010a, 2010b). In study **IV**, the following three opinions with regard to educational change were differentiated: (1) students in favour of the transition; (2) students who are indifferent to the transition; and (3) students whose opinion of the education reform is negative. The results of the analysis indicate that attitudes towards the transition do not emanate from the language of instruction, but are instead related to ethnic self-identification. For instance, students with a Russian focus and strong identity also expressed a positive opinion towards the transition (based on arguments with regard to language proficiency – it is only possible to acquire Estonian at the necessary level by studying in Estonian) or were against the transition (referring to the risk of losing their ethnic identity or fluency in their native language). Based on the results of earlier studies (Salvet, 2012; Setina, 2008), which argue that along with the official discourse, Russian-language media mainly covers opinions that are not in favour of the education reform, I presume that the students with a strong Russian identity who are in favour of the education reform can also be critical media users, get information from sources other than Estonian-language ones and form their attitudes based on these. Students with an uncertain Estonian-Russian identity or so-called hybrid identity who do not consider ethnicity important are more indifferent to the transition or are in favour of slower reform or the introduction of instruction in Estonian to a lesser extent.

Hence, the results of study **III** reveal that in the formation of attitudes towards the educational change, factors at the individual level are more important than those at the school or regional levels. Although individual attitudes can be explained by factors at the school and regional levels to the extent of nearly 18% (e.g. the proportion of Estonians in the population or the unemployment rate in the region), the relationship between the attitudes of students and teachers refers to the previously proven argument that a school is able to amplify or reduce the impact of the external environment through the enforcement of its resources (e.g. the skills and confidence of teachers and the implementation of alternative educational models) (Hargreaves, 2005; Hernandez and Goodson, 2004). The results of studies **IV** and **V** also indicate that the choice of a school's language of instruction is not directly related to attitudes, but emanates first and foremost from the expectations of parents with regard to the knowledge and skills of their children, which are considered important in terms of their future. Attitudes towards the transition to instruction in Estonian develop from a combination of factors.

4. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the results of the studies conducted within this thesis, the following conclusions can be drawn on the issues addressed.

1. What institutional choices are available within the education system for ethnic self-identification and what individual selections do students and their parents make?

- Based on native language, the Estonian education system provides the possibility to study in Estonian, Russian or bilingually (Estonian-Russian) at the pre-primary, primary and lower secondary levels (article **I**).
- Parents mainly select the school according to their home language (article **I).**
- According to education legislation, a school, regardless of the language of instruction, should support the development of the cultural identity of its students, but this goal is not considered essential in all schools (article **I).**
- In spontaneous self-identification, the most important factor for students is their social role (e.g. a student) and being a member of their family (e.g. a daughter or sister); students also identify themselves spontaneously in terms of ethnicity and culture and based on their geographical location (a resident of my home town, a resident of Estonia or a European) (articles **IV** and **V**).
- Social (including ethnic) self-identification is individual by nature, meaning that in every specific case, ethnic cultural self-identification is formed from a combination of references on which identity is based (articles **II, IV** and **V**).
- Based on a combination of varied criteria, different groups of identity are differentiated among students whose native language is Russian: an identity group with a strong Russian focus; an identity group with a weak Russian focus; an identity group that identifies as Estonian or Russian; and an identity group for whom ethnic self-identification is not relevant (articles **IV, V**).
- In ethnic self-identification, the most important criterion is the home language and/or native language (articles **II, IV** and **V**); language is the main attribute for differentiating between ethnic groups, and language proficiency is the most important attribute in excluding belonging to other ethnic groups (article **IV**).
- In addition to language, self-identification is also based on the ethnic background of parents and culture (articles **II, IV** and **V**). Students understand ethnic identity as something obtained through family background (article **IV**).
- Language as a differentiating attribute between groups has more of a symbolic value for Russian-speaking students in Estonia. Even though language is important to ethnic Russians (article **V**), in the opinions of students the level of personal frequency of language use and language

proficiency are not associated with group belonging (article **II**). In addition to the symbolic meaning of language proficiency in differentiating between the groups, it can also be regarded as self-evident based on the positions of the students (article **V**).

- Ethnic self-identification comprises the dimensions of ethnic pride, ethnic involvement, linguistic involvement and knowledge, which are interrelated, although not strongly. These dimensions are valued and acknowledged by students to differing degrees, and different individual combinations are formed on the basis of these dimensions (article **II**).
- Students value belonging to their group, but this is not directly related to their knowledge about the group, speaking their native language or participation in activities associated with the traditions of the ethnic group (article **II**).
- Students who belong to the group with an uncertain Estonian-Russian identity describe both Estonians and Russians rather negatively. Estonians as 'the other' ethnic cultural group are described as people who have more power and better opportunities, first and foremost due to their proficiency in the official language (article **V**).
- The majority of students value living in Estonia (article **II**), while those with a strong Russian ethnic identity describe both Estonians and Russians in the most positive terms.
- The students with a focus on Russian ethnic identity acknowledge culture as an attribute that both unites groups and differentiates between them (article **V**). Students who identify themselves as Russian are not ashamed of their ethnic cultural identity; however, many students do not take pride in belonging to their ethnic group, in their proficiency in their native language or in their cultural traditions (articles **II** and **V**). Pride in one's ethnic group is not related to frequency of language use or level of language proficiency (article **II**).

2. How is ethnic identity related to language through the education and socialisation process taking place within the education system and the socialisation process outside of the school setting?
- The ethnic self-identification of students and languages of instruction are not directly related (articles **I, II**). Among students in different classes – Estonian, Russian and language immersion – there are those with a strong Russian identity, those with a weak Russian identity, those who identify themselves as both Estonian and Russian, and those to whom ethnicity is not relevant for their self-identification (article **IV**).
- In line with the languages of instruction and possible languages learned, general education schools in Estonia support improvement in proficiency in different languages, as these may lay the groundwork for students' linguistic identity or for the formation of their ethnic cultural identity (articles **I, III, IV** and **V**).

- In selecting the language of instruction for their children, parents mostly take into account the instrumental objectives related to proficiency in languages; it is not possible to predict the connectedness with Estonia or attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies based on the selection of languages of instruction (articles **I, IV** and **V**).
- Schools with different languages of instruction are not directly associated with opportunities for the formation of ethnic identity. However, students who study alongside their compatriots perceive that they are emotionally more connected to their national group and are more supported (article **IV**). Studying in a language other than the native language may facilitate the development of hybrid identity, if ethnic identity is deemed important in self-image (article **IV**).
- There are certain regional traits in ethnic self-identification in the aspects of the strength of belonging and ethnic pride, but students mainly identify themselves individually and based on different criteria regardless of the surrounding linguistic environment; they identify themselves differently even within the same region (articles **II, IV, V**).
- In the estimations of students, Estonian-medium, Russian-medium and language immersion schools and classes differ from the perspective of language learning. In schools with Estonian as the language of instruction, students acquire good proficiency in Estonian and foreign languages but proficiency in Russian remains poor (articles **I, IV**). Russian-language and bilingual (language immersion) classes offer, according to pupils, the possibility to acquire more knowledge about one's ethnic group, as teaching materials and the emphasis in study content are selected based on the language of instruction (articles **I, II**). In language immersion classes, different cultures and traditions are introduced through lessons and extracurricular activities (article **IV**), but students have not noticed any differences in the grading of their respective knowledge between students from schools with different languages of instruction. Students who study in Russian and language immersion classes estimate that they use Russian more frequently (article **II**), while proficiency in Russian, and also the level of cultural knowledge, is assessed similarly in all languages of instruction (article **II**).
- Students' proficiency in Estonian could also be explained by the implementation of language immersion as a method of study, the active participation of teachers in in-service training sessions and teachers' better language proficiency (articles **I, III**).
- The ease or complexity of learning is associated with the language of instruction, even though it is not directly related to ethnic identity, but clearly to self-image, self-assessment and future prospects in broader terms. From the perspective of the future, students assess the prospects (career and study opportunities) of students with different languages of instruction as being different. Studying in a school with Russian as the

language of instruction is said to be easiest, but notwithstanding the opportunity to acquire good knowledge, the future may bring problems, as in terms of their proficiency in Estonian and foreign languages, the students are in a weaker position (articles **I, IV**).

- The wish to leave Estonia either permanently or for a certain period (e.g. to acquire education) was mentioned in the interviews as one future strategy. This intention was most clearly expressed by students who rather identified themselves as Russians and students who did not consider ethnicity to be relevant. In certain cases, plans for the future were associated with arguments related to self-identification, and these potential relationships primarily manifested in discussions about future countries of residence (article **V**).

- The intention to leave Estonia is explained in fairly practical and instrumental terms. Working and studying abroad is interpreted as an indication of success (article **V**).

- Other supportive factors besides the education system may also turn out to be essential in assuring the sustainability of ethnic identity. The habits and motives of media use and the language of resources used is an attribute which differentiates between identity groups; students belonging to the identity group with a strong Russian focus see the media as their primary source of information; they use different media channels and operate mainly in the Russian-language media space, whereas students with an uncertain Estonian-Russian identity and students who identify themselves in ways that do not involve ethnicity use the media as a source of information either moderately or rarely, but on the other hand, they use media channels in different languages more often (articles **III**, **IV** and **V**).

3. What aspects of educational change are internalised among Russian-speaking students and are expressed in their ethnic self-identification?

- General education schools in Estonia support the formation of students' cultural and ethnic identity, in the course of which they learn to understand and acknowledge their culture and cultural diversity and at the same time to value and develop Estonian language and culture (article **I**).

- Instead of the actual language of instruction, attitudes towards instruction in Estonian and educational change in general play an important role in the formation of ethnic identity (article **V**). Implications attributed to the transition evolve in the course of an individual 'coding process' in which students' individual resources (e.g. language proficiency and media habits) (article **III**) and different sources play an important role: messages communicated by the state, interpretations presented in the media or the interpretations of family members and teachers (article **V**).

- Teachers who have participated in in-service training more often and whose level of proficiency in Estonian is higher have a positive attitude to-

wards the transition to Estonian-medium studies, and this in turn supports the development of positive attitudes among students (articles **I and III**).

- Teachers' proficiency in Estonian and their learning motivation is influenced by the surrounding environment, habits in following the media in Estonian and their citizenship: teachers with Estonian citizenship assess their proficiency in Estonian as being higher (article **III**).
- The assessment of students in regard to their proficiency in Estonian is not related to their attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies; however, considering that the use of the media in Estonian is a critical factor in the development of positive attitudes, and that the prerequisite for this is proficiency in Estonian, I may argue that perceived proficiency in Estonian is still indirectly related to attitudes (article **III**).
- Students who are fluent in both Estonian and Russian and who have an uncertain Estonian-Russian identity or alternative identity are more indifferent towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies. Those with a strong Russian focus have taken a clear position with regard to the transition – they are either in favour of it as it has been designed or are against it by expressing positions that the status of Russian should be higher and education in Russian should be available at all stages of education (article **IV**).
- Students who have a high level of trust in public institutions have taken a positive view towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies (article **III**).

5. DISCUSSION

This thesis focuses on a topic, which has received little attention in earlier studies – the development of the ethnic identity of minorities in schools with different languages of instruction and in the context of the change in the language of instruction. I have analysed ethnic identity in the context of educational change first and foremost on the basis of the opinions of Russian-speaking students, but also of teachers. Next I will explain the specific nature of the educational change implemented in Estonia by concentrating on the communicative relationships between ethnic identity, the education system and social systems as potential factors in the success or failure of educational change. With this, I will accommodate the empirical results of the thesis within the framework of the theoretical concepts and relationships presented in the first part of the thesis.

The empirical studies conducted within this thesis revealed that all communicative relationships between ethnic identity, the education system and society indicated in the theoretical part of the thesis play a role in the development of ethnic identity in the context of educational change. The first relationship I analysed concerns the identity of Russian-speaking students in connection with society and the education system in broader terms. In this thesis, I focused on the relationships between the education system and the political system, which determines the main emphasis in curricula, but also the principles of the organisation of education, including potential languages of instruction. Based on the empirical results I argue that the Estonian education system has undergone a major change: unified principles for the organisation of education have been implemented in Estonian-medium and Russian-medium schools; the importance of Estonian has noticeably increased both in curricula (Estonian as a subject) and in the overall organisation of education (instruction in Estonian), with all other languages regarded as foreign languages, which has entailed major changes primarily in educational institutions where the language of instruction is Russian. The research conducted within this thesis (study **II, IV** and **V**) reveals that the language of instruction itself is not something that allows us to argue that the schools where the language of instruction is Russian differ from Estonian-medium schools in terms of education goals and the learning-teaching process. Knowledge and skills are acquired at schools regardless of the language of instruction in Estonia, but at the same time, the details of the knowledge communicated may vary by language of instruction, e.g. interpretations (in history) and also preferences with regard to study methods may depend on native language and the language of instruction. However, in regard to all languages of instruction we can speak of an intentionalised and systematised learning process where the acquisition of knowledge (i.e. the success of communication) is monitored by applying grading methods inherent to the education system.

Based on the empirical analysis conducted within this thesis, I can argue that the transition to Estonian-medium studies as a planned educational change might be regarded as successful. For instance, there is a possibility to learn

Estonian at both the basic school and upper secondary school stages in the form of bilingual instruction (60% in Estonian and 40% in Russian), which is essential for building a coherent society. The current education system is also flexible in supporting the ethnic identity of Russian speakers and the status of their group as a whole: the possibility to acquire basic education remains and schools and school directors are at liberty to select the most suitable model for their school area so as to ensure the required level of proficiency in Estonian, and both basic schools and upper secondary schools provide opportunities to study subjects related to ethnic culture (study **I**). In connection with the educational changes implemented, schools and school directors have more freedom, but also greater responsibility in deciding which organisational measures of schools will ensure the achievement of socially agreed objectives (which are reflected in the national curricula), and from the perspective of the education system this has also created opportunities for finding flexible solutions.

The empirical studies conducted reveal that the key to the successful implementation of educational change is first and foremost successful communication within the system of education in narrower terms, i.e. in schools. For instance, attitudes towards the transition to Estonian-medium studies depend on how a school understands and formulates the transition and organises it (study **III**). Attitudes towards the transition are also indirectly related to trust in the state, which indicates that in Estonia's context, the language of instruction may still have an essential symbolic meaning (cf. Ehala, 2007, 2009; Liebkind, 2010). However, the need to also take into consideration and to support the identity of the Russian-speaking population has been neglected in public communication. Educational change, for instance, has been publicly communicated as a transition to Estonian-medium studies, although in practice it means the implementation of bilingual education. Thus, in planning educational change, communication should take into account not only factors within the education system, but by and large also the possible interpretations and reactions of different stakeholders in society. Thus the studies conducted within this thesis demonstrate that the transition to Estonian-medium studies is not just a shift in the language used for the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the classroom setting, but rather a change in a cultural code in society as a whole.

The second relationship I analysed in the thesis concerned the relationships between the education system and ethnic identity in general. The results of this research indicate that ethnic self-identity is developed both in the course of the education process in the classroom setting and in the overall interaction process at school, i.e. in the course of socialisation. On the basis of the empirical results of this thesis it can be argued that in addition to their social role (being, and learning to be, a student), individuals also express attitudes, stereotypes and interpretations characteristic of their ethnic group in the process of communication. For instance, attitudes towards one's own and towards the reference group depend on the interpretation of historical events and social phenomena at school and the ability of teachers to ensure successful communication (e.g. by taking into account students with different cultural backgrounds and native languages

in the classroom setting) (studies **IV** and **V**), which is in turn related to the extent to which individuals see themselves as valued members of Estonian society. The achievement of the purpose of the education system as defined by sociologists and education researchers (Dewy and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Bourdieu, 2010 [1984]; Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2004), i.e. that teachers should maintain their role at school and ensure successful communication in the classroom setting, is rendered more difficult by the fact that teachers are (either consciously or subconsciously) influenced by the attitudes and interpretations of their national group (studies **I**, **IV** and **V**). I strongly believe that it is possible to achieve the successful performance of teachers and thereby the likelihood of successful communication with the help of teacher training which supports the teachers in their work under changed circumstances. How much importance has been paid to preparing teachers to work in multilingual and multicultural settings and for instruction in a second language and the extent to which this is prioritised at the level of the school as an organisation does not only affect attitudes towards educational change, but also educational choices and, in the long run, the ethnic identities of Russian-speaking students.

The third relationship analysed in this thesis focused on individual selections with regard to ethnic identity in the context of the choices offered by the education system i.e. the languages of instruction and expectations of ethnic socialisation. In line with socio-psychological and sociological approaches (Dijk, 2005 [1998]; Giddens, 1991; Verkuyten, 2005; Vignoles et al., 2011), selections are made on the basis of previous socialisation experience (for instance in the family), interpretations of changes taking place in the surrounding environment and interpretations and opinions existing in society. On the basis of the results of the empirical studies conducted within this thesis (studies **II**, **III**, **IV** and **V**) I argue that from the perspective of the development and alteration of the ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students, the interpretations of the organisations belonging to the system (i.e. schools) in connection with the languages of instruction and educational change are of primary importance (cf. earlier studies by Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Cummins, 1999; Spotti, 2005; Verkuyten, 2005). Although schools were not directly connected to the selection of identity in the studies conducted herein, these connections are indirect – the skills and knowledge that can be acquired at schools with different languages of instruction create choices for parents and students through the language (e.g. it is possible to learn Russian, which supports Russian identity, at schools with Russian as the language of instruction and also in language immersion classes, but on the other hand, schools with Russian as the language of instruction do not provide proficiency in Estonian at the level required to succeed in Estonian society). The results of the studies conducted within the thesis indicate that selection of the language of instruction, which is mostly made by parents, is principally informed and is made according to (native) language. It is likely that if choices become more limited (with the opportunity to study at schools where the language of instruction is Estonian or at schools with bilingual instruction) and if negative attitudes (e.g. performance of teachers and negative attitude

towards studying in a second language, insufficient proficiency in Estonian and Russian and the insufficient level of the subject knowledge acquired, i.e. selections related to individual resources) with regard to bilingual instruction are not successfully addressed, the number of students who feel that they have been neglected in the context of the transition to Estonian-medium studies and who are uncertain of their self-identity may increase.

The fourth and last relationship analysed in this thesis focuses on output from the education system at the societal level. In line with the changes taking place in society and the education system, learning outcomes have been updated, and in addition to the acquisition of academic knowledge they emphasise succeeding in Estonian society, e.g. the valuing of Estonian language and culture, the ability to hold a dialogue in the context of Estonia, Europe and the world, and the valuing of human and cultural diversity, including proficiency in different languages. In Soviet-era curricula, the focus on Estonian language was not a top priority and not expressed as explicitly. Relying on the objectives of the education system defined in earlier studies (Bourdieu, 1991, 2000, 2010 [1984]; Dewey and Dewey, 1962 [1915]), schools can support the valuing of ethnic identity and create possibilities for practising traditions through the acquisition of knowledge, thus supporting the development of a positive self-image and contributing to overall success in society. Considering this, it can be argued that the educational change implemented has been only partially successful.

In line with Verkuyten's model of ethnic identity used in this thesis, the acquisition of knowledge in the education system (including through the language of instruction) for succeeding in life is first and foremost associated with pragmatic goals, such as further studies or finding a good job (studies **IV** and **V**). In Estonia, proficiency in the native language is an essential expression of group belonging for both Estonians and Russians, and it is the foundation of self-confidence and the sense of self-valuing which form part of the ability for social communion. Bearing this in mind, it can be argued that existing educational choices do not ensure preparedness for acting as a fully-fledged member of society in any respect. If the selection is made from the perspective of success criteria, it is probable that proficiency in the native language will remain poor, which could loosen ties with compatriots, but on the other hand, individuals do not wish to identify themselves as Estonian or do not think this possible based on the opinion that their native language or family name determines who they are. Making a decision in favour of a school with Russian as the language of instruction (including bilingual schools at the stage of upper secondary education), which supports ethnic identity, can set restrictions on career prospects and study possibilities in the future. Consequently, it is important to think of the quality of instruction (including the acquisition of fluent Estonian) in bilingual educational institutions and to take into account that not only Estonians, but also students with different native languages, study in Estonian.

The results explicitly indicate that the development of social identity, including ethnic identity, is influenced by several factors. For instance, it could be

worthwhile in the future to pay more attention to the study of family-specific factors, but also to whether and how relationships with contemporaries influence the development of ethnic identity. Bearing in mind that the education situation has changed again compared to the period when the students who participated in these studies started school, it is necessary to study the ways in which ethnic identity develops and the factors that influence it over a longer period of time by also taking into account different points of departure (e.g. existing educational choices in different regions) and also whether and how ethnic belonging is redefined in the context of the social and educational changes that take place.

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Vene emakeelega õpilaste etniline identiteet Eestis haridusmuutuste tingimustes

Me elame kiiresti muutuvas maailmas ja puutume üha enam kokku keeleliskultuurilise mitmekesisusega, end teostades ja oma kohta otsides. Just seetõttu on olulised sellised küsimused nagu *Kes ma olen?* ja *Kuhu kuulun? Mida üks või teine kuuluvus tähendab minu jaoks?* Need küsimused on aktuaalsetena teadvustatud nii ühiskonna tasandil, igapäevaelus kui ka teadusliku uurimisprobleemina.

Varasematest rahvusvahelistest uuringutest on ilmnenud, et kuuluvustunne, sh etniline kuuluvus, ja positiivne mina-pilt on olulised indiviidi tasandil (Verkuyten, 2005: 69), need võivad seotud olla akadeemilise edasijõudmisega, enesekindlusega, parema toimetulekuga diskrimineerivates situatsioonides (Brouillard ja Hartlaub, 2005; French, et al., 2006; Phinney ja Chavira, 1992; Valk, 2003).

Käesoleva töö fookuses on Eestis elavate vene emakeelega[12] õpilaste etniline identiteet ühe olulisema haridusmuudatuse s.o eestikeelsele õppele ülemineku kontekstis. Töö raames läbiviidud empiiriliste uurimuste käigus olen püüdnud leida vastused järgmistele uurimisküsimustele:

1. **Milliseid võimalusi pakub haridussüsteem ja milliseid individuaalseid valikuid tehakse etnilisel enesemääratlemisel?**
2. **Kuidas on etniline identiteet seotud keelega, arvestades haridussüsteemis toimuvat õpet ja sotsialiseerumist ning kooliväslit sotsialiseerumist?**
3. **Millised haridusmuudatuse aspektid on venekeelsed noored omaks võtnud ja kuidas see väljendub noorte etnilises enesemääratluses?**

Analüüsides etnilist identiteeti eestikeelse õppele ülemineku kontekstis olen käesolevas töös kasutanud metodoloogiliselt erineval moel kogutud empiirilisi andmeid, kvalitatiivset kui ka kvantitatiivset lähenemist, nagu seda on tehtud ka varasemates etnilise identiteedi uuringutes (Cote, ja Levine, 2002; Vignoles et al, 2011; Verkuyten, 2005). Kvantitatiivsete ja kvalitatiivsete uurimismeetodite kombineerimine võimaldab a) saada uuritava üldkogumi suhtes esinduslikke tulemusi, b) mõista paremini enesemääratlustele omistatud erinevaid tähendusi ning etnilise enesemääratlusega seotud tegureid.

Väitekiri koosneb viiest uurimuslikust artiklist (uurimused I–V), mis temaatiliselt hõlmavad kolme teemavaldkonda. Uurimus **I** esitab ülevaate Eesti haridussüsteemist muutunud ühiskondlik-poliitilises kontekstis. Eesti haridussüsteemi, sh rahvusvähemuste haridusvõimalusi on võrreldud teiste riikide haridusvõimalustega. Samuti käsitletakse erinevatest uuringutest ilmnenud

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[12] Käesolevas väitekirjas olen defineerinud vene emakeelega õpilastena neid noori, kes räägivad vene keelt ema- ja/või kodukeelena.

probleeme, mida on kogenud riigi(enamus)keelest erinevate kodukeeltega õpilased, sh etnilise identiteedi kujunemisega seotud probleemid.

Uurimustes **II**, **IV** ja **V** on analüüsitud vene emakeelega õpilaste etnilise identiteedi kujunemist. Uurimuses **II** keskendutakse etnilise identiteedi mõistele ja sellele, kuidas ja milliste tunnuste alusel küsitletud õpilased end etniliselt määratlevad. Uurimustes **IV** ja **V** analüüsitakse õpilaste sotsiaalset enesemääratlust, sh etnilist enesemääratlust ja selle olulisust võrreldes teiste grupikuuluvustega. Samuti seda, kuidas venekeelsed õpilased kirjeldavad eestlasi ja Eestis elavaid venelasi ning teisi etnilis-keelelisi gruppe ning kuidas õpilased kirjeldavad erinevate õppekeeltega koole. Lühidalt analüüsitakse ka pere rolli õppekeelte valikul.

Kolmanda teemavaldkonnana olen väitekirjas käsitlenud eestikeelsele õppele üleminekut kui etnilise identiteedi kujunemise olulist mõjurit. Uurimuses **III** on tähelepanu keskmes individuaalsed, kooliga ja piirkondliku kuuluvusega seotud tegurid, mis a) on seotud eesti keele oskamisega ja b) aitavad selgitada suhtumist eestikeelsele õppele üleminekusse. Uurimustes **IV** ja **V** analüüsitakse suhtumist eestikeelsele õppele üleminekusse lähtudes õpilaste etnilisest enesemääratlusest ja õppimise keelest, aga ka õpilaste meedia kasutamise harjumustest ning nende tulevikuplaanidest.

Varasematest uuringutest ja analüüsidest on selgunud, et ühiskonnas toimuvad arengud ja muudatused võivad mõjutada hariduskorraldust (Archer, 1984 [1979]), samuti õppekavasid ja rõhuasetusi õppesisus (Goodson, 2005). Seetõttu võib eeldada, et ka vene õppekeelega gümnaasiumide üleminek eestikeelsele õppele, millele käesolev dissertatsioon keskendub, on tihedalt seotud ühiskonnas sel perioodil toimunud muutustega. Eestikeelsele õppele üleminek on ühest küljest teatud ühiskonnas toimunud muutuste tulemus, teisest küljest aga kutsunud ise teatud muudatusi esile.

Etnilise identiteedi kujunemise analüüsimisel haridusmuudatuste, aga laiemalt ka ühiskonnas toimunud muutuste kontekstis, toetun käesolevas väitekirjas sotsioloogilistele, sotsiaal-psühholoogilistele ja haridusteoreetilistele käsitlustele. Etniline identiteet on käesolevas väitekirjas defineeritud kui dünaamiline ja mitmedimensiooniline kontseptsioon – mis on samaaegselt nii personaalne kui ka kollektiivne konstruktsioon (Phinney, 1990; Verkuyten, 2005; Vignoles et al., 2011; Dijk, 2005 [1998]). Haridus on käesolevas väitekirjas defineeritud kui süstemaatiline ja haridusinstitutsioonis toimuv teadmiste ja oskuste omandamine ning sellest lähtuvalt on haridussüsteemi peamiseks ülesandeks õpilaste toetamine, et nad õppekavas määratletud teadmised ja akadeemilised oskused omandaksid (Dewy and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Bourdieu, 2000, 2010; Luhmann 2002 [1984], 2004). Kuna haridussüsteem on teiste ühiskondlike valdkondadega tihedalt seotud, siis muudatused teistes süsteemides, sh ühiskonnas tervikuna, mõjutavad nt seda, missuguste teadmiste, oskuste (ka väärtustega) soovitakse ühiskonnas toime tulevat isiksust näha.

Töös olen eeldanud, tuginedes varasematele uuringutele et sotsiaalse, sh etnilise identiteedi kujunemine toimub interaktsioonis ümbritsevaga (Cote ja Levine, 2002; Tajfel, 2010 [1982]; Turner, 2010 [1982]; Tillmann, 2006 [1989];

Verkuyten 2005) ning haridussüsteemis toimuva sotsialiseerumise kaudu (Bourdieu, 1991, 2000; Dewey ja Dewy, 1962 [1915]). Haridussüsteemi peamiseks ülesandeks on peetud ühiskonnaliikmena toimetulekuks vajalike teadmiste ja oskuste omandamist (Bourdieu, 1991, 2000; Dewey ja Dewey, 1962 [1915]) ja õppijaks sotsialiseerumist (Luhmann, 2002 [1984], 2009 [1983]; Tillmann, 2006 [1989]). Eesti haridusseadusandlus (Põhikooli- ja gümnaasiumiseadus, Põhikooli riiklik õppekava, Gümnaasiumi riiklik õppekava) on üheks kooli, laiemalt haridussüsteemi ülesandeks peetud õpilase kultuurilise, sh etnilis-kultuurilise identiteedi kujunemise toetamist. Sellest tulenevalt võib küsida: Kas haridusasutuse ülesannete ja võimaluste hulka kuulub ka etnilise identiteedi kujundamine, eriti etnilis-keeleliste vähemust puhul, ja missugune on õppekeele roll selles protsessis. Kas etniline enesemääratlus on teadvustatud ühe olulise õpilaste ettevalmistamise vahendina ühiskonnas toimimiseks, st haridusastemete õpieesmärkide tasandil?

Kogutud empiiriliste tulemuste mõtestamiseks olen töös sõnastanud kontseptuaalse mudeli, tuginedes varasematele etnilise identiteedi analüüsi mudelitele (Cote ja Levine, 2002: 6–8; Verkuyten, 2005: 18-20). Lähtudes erinevatest sotsiaalpsühholoogilistest, sotsioloogilistest ja haridusteoreetilistest lähenemistest eeldan, et käesoleva töö seisukohalt kesksed terminid – etniline identiteet, haridussüsteem ning ühiskond – on omavahel kommunikatiivsetes seostes. Etnilise identiteedi, haridussüsteemi ja ühiskonnas toimunud muutuste kontekstis olen oluliseks pidanud järgmisi seoseid: eestikeelsele õppele üleminku seos muudatustega teistes ühiskonna süsteemides, haridusasutuses toimuv teadmiste ja oskuste omandamine ja sotsialiseerumine, individuaalsed valikud ja valikute tegemise aluseks olevad individuaalsed ressursid, haridusmuudatuse peamine väljend ehk indiviidi suutlikkus toimida ühiskonnas.

Eestikeelsele õppele üleminekut kui planeeritud haridusmuudatust võib uuringute tulemustele toetudes pidada läbimõelduks. Näiteks, võimalused omandada eesti keelt nii põhikoolis kui ka gümnaasiumitasemel kakskeelse õppe vormis (60% eesti- ja 40% vene keeles) on olulised ühiskondliku sidususe tagamiseks. Eesti haridussüsteem on paindlik venekeelsete noorte etnilise identiteedi ja rühma kui terviku staatuse toetamisel, kuna endiselt on alles võimalus omandada põhiharidus emakeeles; koolidel ja kooli pidajatel on vabadus valida oma koolipiirkonnale sobivaim mudel, tagamaks õpilastele eesti keele oskuse omandamise võimalused. Põhikoolis ja gümnaasiumis saab õppida oma etnilise kultuuriga seotud aineid (artikkel **I**).

Väitekirja raames läbiviidud empiirilistest uuringutest ilmneb, et õppekeel iseenesest ei ole midagi sellist, mis lubaks öelda, et vene õppekeelega koolid moodustavad eesmärkide ja peamiste tegevuste (õppimine-õpetamine teadmiste omandamiseks) tasandil omaette, eesti õppekeelega koolidest eristuva süsteemi. Sõltumata õppekeelest on tegemist eesmärgistatult tegutsevate ja ühistest põhimõtetest juhinduvate koolidega, kus õpilase arengut (sh kommunikatsiooni edukust) jälgitakse ning eesmärkide saavutamise edukusest sõltuvad edasised haridus- ja karjäärivalikud.

Uuringu tulemustest ilmneb, et etniline enesemääratlus kujuneb nii klassi-ruumis toimuva õppeprotsessi kui ka koolis üldiselt toimuva interaktsiooni-protsessi ehk sotsialiseerumise käigus. Käesoleva töö raames läbiviidud empii-riliste tulemuste põhjal võib väita, et lisaks sotsiaalsele rollile väljendatakse suhtlemise käigus ka etnilistele gruppidele iseloomulikke hoiakuid, stereotüüpe, tõlgendusi (Mead, 1967 [1934]; Littlejohn and Foss, 2011). Näiteks ajaloo-sündmuste ja ühiskonnanähtuste tõlgendustest koolis, õpetajate suutlikkusest tagada kommunikatsiooni edukus (nt arvestades erineva kultuuritaustaga ja emakeelega õpilastega klassis) sõltub suhtumine oma ja refentsgruppi (uuri-mused **IV**, **V**), mis on omakorda seotud sellega, kuivõrd nähakse end Eesti ühis-konna väärtusliku liikmena. See, kuivõrd oluliseks on peetud õpetajate ette-valmistamist tööks mitmekeelses ja -kultuurilises klassis ning teisekeelseks õppeks kooli kui organisatsiooni tasandil, ei mõjuta mitte üksnes suhtumist haridusmuudatusesse, vaid ka haridusvalikuid ning pikemas perspektiivis vene-keelsete noorte elukäiku, nende soovi end Eestiga siduda.

Käesoleva väitekirja raames läbi viidud empiiriliste uurimuste tulemustele toetudes (studies **II**, **III**, **IV**, **V**) võib öelda, et venekeelsete õpilaste etnilise identiteedi kujunemise ja muutuse seisukohalt on olulised eelkõige koolide tõlgendused seoses õppekeelte ja haridusmuudatusega (vrdl varasemad uurin-gud Fullan, 2006 [2001]; Cummins, 1999; Spotti, 2005; Verkuyten, 2005). Kuigi läbiviidud empiirilistes uuringutes õppekeeli otseselt identiteedivaliku-tega ei seostatud, on seosed kaudsed, näiteks teadmiste ja oskuste tase üldiselt, mida erinevate õppekeeltega koolides on võimalik omandada, samuti erinevate keelte oskuse tase (nt vene identiteeti toetavat vene keelt võimalik omandada vene õppekeelega koolis, ka keelekümblusklassis; samas Eesti ühiskonnas hakkama saamiseks vajalikul tasemel eesti keele oskust vene õppekeelega koolis ei saavuta). On tõenäoline, et õppekeelte valikute kitsenedes võib suure-neda nende õpilaste hulk, kes tajuvad end eestikeelsele õppele ülemineku tingi-mustes kõrvalejäetuna, ebakindlalt oma enesemääratluses juhul, kui ei suudeta ületada kakskeelse õppega seonduvaid negatiivseid hoiakuid (nt õpetaja toime-tulek ja negatiivne suhtumine teises keeles õppimisse, vene ja eesti keele eba-piisav omandamine, aineteadmiste omandamise ebapiisav tase).

Lähtudes varasemates uuringutes määratletud haridusinstitutsiooni eesmärki-dest (Dewey and Dewey, 1962 [1915]; Bourdieu, 2000, 2010 [1984]; Luhmann, 2002 [1984]; Tillmann, 2006 [1989]) saavad koolid toetada etnilise identiteedi väärtustamist ja luua võimalused traditsioonide järgimiseks, ning selliselt läbi positiivse minapildi toetada õpilaste üldist toimetulekut ühiskonnas. Eestis on emakeele oskus oluline grupikuuluvuse väljendus nii eestlaste kui ka venelaste jaoks, millel baseerub ka enesekindlus, enese väärtuslikuna tajumine, mis on omakorda osa suutlikkusest ühiskonnas toime tulla. Sellest lähtuvalt võib väita, et olemasolevad haridusvõimalused ei pruugi tagada valmisolekut toimida ühis-konna täisväärtusliku liikmena. Tehes valiku heal tasemel eesti keele ja võõr-keelte oskuse kasuks, mis on oluline tulevikuperspektiivis (haridus- ja karjääri-võimalused), on tõenäosus, et emakeele oskus jääb unarusse. See võib tingida sidemete vähenemise oma rahvuskaaslastega. Samas võib see tunduda ka

assimilatiivse survena ja tekitada identiteedi konflikti, kuna end kas ei soovita eestlasena määratleda või ei peeta seda võimalikuks, kuna lähtutakse arvamusest, et emakeel või perekonnanimi määrab enesemääratluse. Ühiskonnas levinud arvamuse kohaselt võib otsuse tegemine venelaste etnilist identiteedi toetava vene õppekeelega (sh gümnaasiumis kakskeelse) kooli kasuks aga piirata tuleviku karjääri- ja õpivõimalusi. Seega on oluline mõelda nii õppe kvaliteedile (sh eesti keele oskuse omandamisele) kakskeelsetes õppeasutustes, samuti arvestada, et eesti õppekeeles ei õpi mitte ainult eestlased, vaid erinevate emakeeltega õpilased.

Haridusmuudatuse eduka rakendumise võtmeks on läbiviidud empiirilistele uuringutele tuginedes asjaosaliste teadlikkus koolis (nt sellest, kuidas koolis on lahti mõtestatud ja mil viisil on korraldatud eestikeelsele õppele üleminek (uurimus **III**), millest omakorda sõltuvad õpilaste haridus- ja karjäärivõimalused tulevikus (uurimus **IV, V**). Sellest, mil viisil kool õppetöö korraldab et toetada õpilaste valmisolekut õppida eesti keeles ja nende toimetulekut õppes, võib sõltuda suhtumine eestikeelsele õppele üleminekusse (nt rakendades varajast keelekümblust). Samuti on suhtumine eestikeelsele õppele üleminekusse kaudsemalt seotud usaldusega riigi vastu, mis näitab, et õppekeelel võib olla Eesti kontekstis endiselt oluline sümboliline tähendus (vrdl Ehala, 2007; Liebkind, 2010). Avalikus kommunikatsioonis on aga jäänud tähelepanuta venekeelse elanikkonna identiteedi ja õppekeele muutuse võimalikud seosed. Näiteks on avalikult haridusmuudatusest räägitud kui eestikeelsele õppele üleminekust, kuigi reaalselt pole venekeelne komponent õppest kadunud.

Seega, haridusmuudatusi kavandades on oluline teavitustegevuses arvestada mitte ainult haridussüsteemi-siseste, vaid laiemalt ühiskonna erinevate sidusrühmade võimalike tõlgenduste ja reaktsioonidega. Käesoleva töö raames läbiviidud uuringud näitavad, et eestikeelsele õppele ülemineku korral pole tegemist vaid klassiruumis info vahetamiseks kasutatava keele muutmisega, vaid kultuurilise koodi muutusega ühiskonnas tervikuna.

Käesoleva väitekirja raames läbiviidud uuringute tulemustele toetudes võib kindlalt väita, et vajadus selle teemaga süvendatult tegelemiseks püsib. Tulemustest ilmneb selgelt, et on palju erinevaid tegureid, mis mõjutavad sotsiaalse identiteedi kujunemist, sh etnilise identiteedi kujunemist. Seetõttu vääriks tulevikus enam tähelepanu näiteks perekondlike tegurite uurimine, samuti kas ja mil viisil mõjutavad suhted eakaaslastega etnilise identiteedi kujunemist ning üldisemalt, missugune on etnilise identiteedi roll ja väljendus igapäevaelus. Arvestades seda, et tänaseks on haridussituatsioon taas muutunud võrreldes perioodiga, mil kooliteed alustasid need õpilased, kes käesolevas uuringus osalesid, siis on vajadus uurida etnilise identiteedi kujunemise viise ja mõjutegureid ka pikaajalisemalt ning seejuures erinevaid lähtetingimusi (nt olemasolevad haridusvõimalused eri piirkondades) ning ka seda, kas ja kuidas toimub oma etnilise kuuluvuse ümbermõtestamine toimuvate ühiskondlike ja haridusmuutuste tingimustes.

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1. Trasberg, K., Soll, M. (2013). Mitmekultuuriline haridus. *Mikser, R (toim). Haridusleksikon* (187–192). *Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus.*
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5. Kirtsi, M., Klaas, B., Käosaar, I., Mere, K. Lipasti, J. Pärn, H., Soll, M., Zabrodskaja, A., Tender, T. Türk, Ü. Valge, J., Vare, S. (2008) Language Education Policy Profile for Estonia. Country Report. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

6. Soll, M. (2006). The Language of Instruction in Primary School, Ethnic Involvement and National Identity: the Estonian Example. *Savickiene, I. (Ed.). Language, Diversity and Integration in the Enlarged EU: Challenges and Opportunities. Kaunas, Lithuania: Kaunas Vytautas Magnus University*, 119–129.

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Peamised publikatsioonid lisaks doktoritöö artiklitele:

1. Trasberg, K., Soll, M. (2013). Mitmekultuuriline haridus. *Mikser, R (toim). Haridusleksikon* (187–192). *Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus.*
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