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“Everything I do here is about Lithuania” -

A Comparative Study of Lithuanian Heritage Language Schools in Norway

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ABSTRACT

With about one third of Lithuania's population residing abroad, Lithuania's diaspora community is incredibly relevant to the country. The global Lithuanian community plays an important role in Lithuania's national politics, and emigration continues to transform Lithuanian society. The preservation of Lithuanian language and cultural identity can help strengthen the global Lithuanian community's connection to Lithuania. Lithuanian heritage education abroad serves as a key instrument in facilitating such a connection, allowing children with a Lithuanian background to develop Lithuanian language skills and Lithuanian cultural identity.

While current literature addresses heritage education generally and there are some studies that address Lithuania's situation, there is still limited in-depth research on the effectiveness of Lithuanian as heritage language education for children living abroad, including Norway. This thesis looks at one of the most popular language curriculums used in Lithuanian global communities: the Lithuanian heritage language (hereafter LHL) schools. The thesis compares three LHL schools in Norway to assess the different perceptions and challenges surrounding the development of the LHL education. The thesis uses original interviews to assess the perspectives of teachers and parents of students in LHL schools, as well as a qualitative analysis of the Lithuanian government's Integrated Program policy document to analyze the perspectives of the Lithuanian government and educational authorities. This program is the first attempt to standardize the curriculum for LHL education abroad and provide the advisory heritage language learning practices for LHL schools.

The interviews and qualitative analysis of policy documents reveal differences in how these stakeholders understand LHL schools and contradicting strategies for the future development of the LHL curriculum. This thesis aims to provide a better understanding of the LHL school phenomenon by analyzing these divergent views of the parents and the teachers of heritage language learners as well as Lithuanian authorities. A unified understanding of LHL schools and goals can support the development of a more effective LHL education in Norway, as well as shed light on meaningful ways to preserve a heritage language and cultural identity abroad generally.

Keywords: *heritage language, Lithuanian, heritage language schools, cultural identity.*

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ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

GDPR General Data Protection Regulation

LHL Lithuanian heritage language

MESS Ministry of Education, Science and Sportss of the Republic of Lithuania

NESH The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities

NLS New Literacy Studies

NSD Norwegian Centre for Research Data

WLC Lithuanian community of the world

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. <i>Immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents</i>	6
Figure 2. <i>The conceptual framework</i>	24
Figure 3. <i>Research sampling methodology</i>	28
Figure 4. <i>Reasons for the teachers to work in the Lithuanian heritage language schools</i> ..	42
Figure 5. <i>Challenges the teachers face in the Lithuanian heritage language education</i>	59
Figure 6. <i>Tensions and overlaps between the stakeholders</i>	90

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. <i>Lithuanian heritage language schools in Norway</i>	9
Table 2 <i>Codes and pseudonyms of interviewd teachers and parents</i>	32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abbreviations	iv
List of Figures.....	v
List of Tables	v
Table of Contents	i
1 Introduction.....	1
2 Background.....	4
2.1 Research questions	10
2.2 Literature review	11
3 Conceptual framework	16
3.1 Role of identity in relation to language	16
3.2 Language socialization and New literacies.....	18
3.3 Heritage language learning.....	20
4 Methods	26
4.1 Research design.....	26
4.2 Research sample.....	29
4.3 Data collection.....	33
4.3.1 Survey.....	35
4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews	35

4.3.3	Document analysis: The integrated program for Lithuanian heritage language education.....	36
4.4	Judging quality.....	37
4.4.1	Validity and reliability	37
4.4.2	Ethical challenges	38
4.4.3	Limitations.....	39
5	Data analysis.....	41
5.1	Perceptions of the Lithuanian heritage language education	41
5.1.1	Teachers	42
5.1.2	Parents	48
5.2	Challenges that Lithuanian heritage language schools face	57
5.2.1	Teachers	58
5.2.2	Parents	66
5.3	Literacy practices and strategies in the Lithuanian heritage language education.....	69
5.3.1	Teachers	69
5.3.2	Parents	72
5.4	The Integrated Program for Lithuanian Heritage Language Education.....	78
5.5	Discussion.....	83
5.5.1	Comparing the perceptions	83
5.5.2	Comparing the strategies.....	86
5.5.3	The tensions and the overlaps between stakeholders of Lithuanian heritage language education	88
6	Conclusion	92

7	References.....	94
8	Appendixes.....	98
8.1	Appendix 1 – Interview guides	98
8.2	Appendix 2 – Survey results	100
8.3	Appendix 3– Example of a topic plan from School C	102
8.4	Appendix 4 – Consent form.....	103

1 INTRODUCTION

The education of children takes place in various spaces and Lithuanian heritage language (hereafter LHL) schools are no exception. Recent initiatives from the global Lithuanian community ask Lithuanian government to legitimize the education in LHL schools and to provide increased financing. These initiatives have sparked a political debate. The global LHL schools' community argues that the current absence of official recognition and financing places the burden on parents and individual LHL schools' leadership, which makes it difficult for these programs to survive. The current financial support from the Lithuanian authorities is insufficient. Additionally, the official rating system for students' skills and teachers' experience is unclear, according to members of the World's Lithuanian Community (WLC) and the WLC's subcommittee on education (LRT.lt, 2019), (Asanavičiūtė, 2020).

The Lithuanians abroad have become politically stronger as Parliament mandate to represent Lithuanians living abroad in the Parliament elections 2020 has been granted (Central Electoral Commission, 2019). LHL education plays an important role in the Lithuanian global community and has become one of the focus areas in the election process of the representative for the Lithuanians abroad. Also, the discussion about Lithuania allowing dual-citizenship, and the change in Constitution remains, even after the referendum failed due to an insufficient number of voters (Ministry of Foreign affairs, 2019). Yet, this political discourse about the global Lithuanian society continues affecting various areas in the life of Lithuanians abroad including LHL education. Furthermore, the First Lady of Lithuania has agreed to WLC's invitation to be a guardian of LHL schools. She has expressed her gratitude to the LHL schools' teachers and communities as well as her responsibility to support the LHL education abroad (LRT.lt, 2020). The future vision of global Lithuania attempts to put the effort in strengthening the ties with Lithuanians and their children living abroad. In this manner, the preservation of Lithuanian language and

culture has become a key strategic element in the social and political discourse of the global Lithuanian community.

Lithuania's Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MESS) is a key stakeholder in LHL development and closely collaborates with LHL schools, the WLC Education Committee, and other Lithuanian educational authorities. The Department for Lithuanians Abroad within MESS coordinates and supports formal and informal Lithuanian education efforts abroad, including centers that define Lithuanian heritage language schools as informal Lithuanian education and aims to provide support for the schools and teachers. The support includes coordinating the financing of learning materials and organizing seminars for LHL teachers (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019c).

In 2019 MESS introduced the "Integrated Program" for LHL: an advisory program that seeks to strengthen the connection between Lithuania government entities, Lithuanian education institutions, and the local Lithuanian community's in host country involvement in social projects and children's development. The Integrated Program is the first one that officially standardizes Lithuanian language skills children of different ages have to achieve. This program aims to prepare children whose families are planning to re-emigrate and re-enter general education institutions in Lithuania. (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019d) . [Chapter 4.4](#) analyzes the program in detail. The Integrated Program still seems to lack the complex understanding of how the education of children with Lithuanian background is happening.

Behind the political initiatives and programs stand the parents and teachers of heritage language learners, managing the challenges that children of Lithuanian background face in LHL education. This study focuses on the parents and teachers of LHL communities as the main stakeholders that shape the development of children of Lithuanian background. The study also analyzes the teachers' and parents' understanding of LHL in relation to the government's policies outlined in the newly developed Integrated

Program. The title quote “Everything I do here is about Lithuania” are the words of an interviewed teacher that lead to a question – what is the LHL education and how does it work?

This thesis explores the educational strategies in Lithuanian heritage language education in Norway employed by teachers, parents, and Lithuanian authorities to preserve the Lithuanian language and cultural identity. Based on this knowledge, the stakeholders and other parties interested in LHL education can develop a more effective curriculum through a better understanding of the realities experienced by heritage language learners, their parents, and teachers.

2 BACKGROUND

The intensity of Lithuanian emigration has been one of the highest in the European Union, since 1990 more than half-million citizens left the country (Ramonienė, 2015, p. 10). As a result, numerous Lithuanian communities were formed in the United Kingdom, Germany, United States, Scandinavia, and other countries across the globe. Each community has developed its own concept of Lithuanian education for the children. The most widespread structure is the Lithuanian heritage language (LHL) school (Bagdonavičienė, 2008). This term has been chosen based on the literature review in the emerging field of heritage language education (Maloof et al., 2006; Tigert, 2020; Doerr & Lee, 2009). In Lithuanian the definition *Lithuanian heritage language school* is called *lituanistinė mokykla*, which has no direct indication of the heritage language learning or cultural aspect (Tumėnas, 2008). The term *lituanistika* defines field researching Lithuanian language, literature and folklore (Lituanistika reikšmė [meaning of lituanistic], 2020). Several translations exist in research on Lithuanian communities abroad including Lithuanian cultural school, Lithuanian-oriented school. Based on the literature review in heritage language education research, *lituanistinė mokykla* is defined and translated to English as Lithuanian heritage language (LHL) school. LHL schools are typically run by a group of parents and several teachers, lessons take place on weekends, parents pay a fee, and teaching plans and learning materials are organized by the teachers (Bagdonavičienė, 2008).

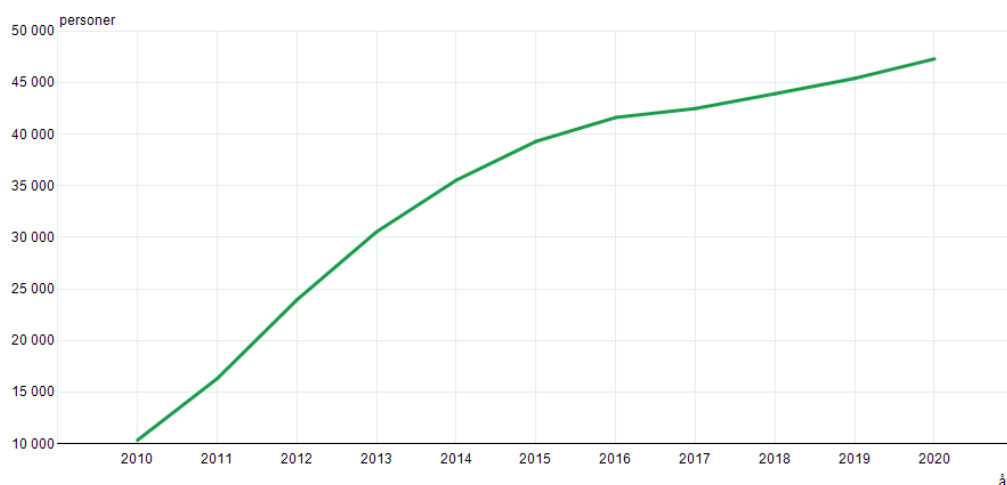
Lithuanian heritage language schools, similar to the format we have today, have a long history dating back to 1888 when a Lithuanian priest established a Lithuanian parish school in Mahanoy City, USA, according to Tumėnas (2008). Lithuanian immigrant communities have involved some type of education in the Lithuanian language for years. Lithuanian communities in the United States played a key role in conceptualizing what the LHL schools have become nowadays. Karčiauskaitė (2008) presents the historical contexts

of LHL schools among the first wave immigrants to the United States, half of them were illiterate. During both World Wars, the second wave of emigration from Lithuania emerged which mostly consisted of 'Displaced Persons' who were very educated and worked hard to preserve Lithuanian language and culture. Education in emigration faced many challenges: unmotivated students, shortage of teachers, lack of funding, outdated materials, teaching methods, and the influences of the dominant culture (Karčiauskaitė, 2008). Another wave of emigrants came to the USA after the collapse of the Iron Curtain and even though the second-generation emigrants looked down on them, the LHL schools' activities were provided for all emigrant children and the parents believed that the LHL schools could contribute to their children's development of language skills and cultural identity. However, the preservation of heritage language and culture was usually forced upon the children, which resulted in a decrease of students attending LHL schools (Karčiauskaitė, 2008).

After Lithuania became a member of the European Union in 2004, emigration to Western Europe had an enormous impact on the overall Lithuanian society. Dramatically high emigration rates have been changing the demographics of Lithuania, according to the European migration network, 619,000 Lithuanians have left the country since 2004 (European migration network, 2017). According to The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (2019), Lithuanians are the second-largest minority in Norway consisting of 38,371 registered residents. The Statistics Norway show a dramatic growth of Lithuanian immigration since the year 2010 as shown in Figure 1. The number of Lithuanian immigrants and Norwegian-born children of Lithuanian immigrant parents has increased from 10,000 up to 47,500 individuals (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents*

09817: Innvandrere og norskfødte med innvandrerforeldre, etter år. Litauen, Personer.



Kilde: Statistisk sentralbyrå

It is essential to take the statistical context of the Lithuanian minority in Norway into consideration when presenting and analyzing the LHL schools in Norway. Nevertheless, just a small percentage of all children of Lithuanian background attends the LHL schools or participates in other activities organized by the schools, it does play an important part in the Lithuanian community's life in Norway. Moreover, the increasing numbers of Norwegian born children to Lithuanian parents might suggest that more children will be attending LHL schools as they become school-aged. The Statistics Norway (2017, p. 21) present that there are 4 133 Norwegian-born to Lithuanian parents in the age of 0-5 years-old, while only 533 0-5 year-olds Lithuanian children immigrated to Norway. Another age group of Lithuanian children in Norway is 6-15 year-olds consisting of 3 229 (Statistics Norway, 2017, p. 20). The data suggest that a big number of children are born in the environment where Norwegian is the dominant language, thus they are likely to have more difficulties speaking Lithuanian. The numbers are not precise indicators of changes that the in Norway might face, as there are various reasons to explain the numbers. However, it is worth to mention the scales of this minority group in Norway in order to have a clearer representation of the LHL school phenomenon.

The first LHL school in Norway was established in 2002 in Oslo. Today there are fourteen official LHL schools registered in Norway (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019c). Increasing numbers of children of Lithuanian background in Norway and LHL schools indicate that further research on this social phenomenon is needed. Moreover, this study might be able to contribute to the more effective development of LHL schools in Norway as well as offer insight for the heritage language education of higher quality.

An extensive sociolinguistic study has been conducted with Lithuanian emigrant communities including 2026 respondents of a survey and 177 interviewees by a team of researchers (Ramonienė, 2015). This research on the relationship between identity and language in the Lithuanian emigrant communities in the United States and Germany argues that 95% of emigrants claim that Lithuanian language is important in order to be Lithuanian preserve culture and be able to communicate with other Lithuanians (Gudavičienė, 2015). The author points out that the Lithuanian emigrant community faces the difficulties to pass on the heritage language to their children and to continue using it correctly (Gudavičienė, 2015).

Family language policies play a key role in heritage language learning and the study on language and identity among Lithuanian emigrant present multiple factors that contribute to the preservation of the heritage language (Jakaitė-Bulbukienė, 2015, p. 75):

- Attitudes towards Lithuania depending on the reason of emigration
- Knowledge of family and Lithuanian history
- Attitudes towards Lithuanian language
- Predominant attitudes and use of language in the Lithuanian community on is part of
- A type of Lithuanian social environment established by the parents
- Emotional factor and Lithuanian language is chosen to be the home language

The author (Jakaitė-Bulbukienė, 2015, p. 113) also concludes the strategies that result in successful Lithuanian as home language management include:

- Willingness to pass on the heritage language
- Preservation of language is a conscious decision
- Family follows authoritarian language model
- Speaking Lithuanian is considered natural
- Lithuanian environment outside of the household (LHL schools help to improve one's language skills as well as relationships with other children who come from similar situation)

The data presented by Jakaitė-Bulbukienė (2015) implies that LHL schools have an important role to play in the global Lithuanian community and in the families of children with Lithuanian background. This study focuses on this role of LHL education and seeks to compare, contrast, and expand current studies. With this study, I aim to do so with a focus on the perceptions of the parents who choose their children to attend the LHL schools, the perceptions of the teachers towards the functioning of LHL schools, and the rationale of the Lithuanian authorities for supporting LHL education. By analyzing how the parents and the teachers perceive LHL education and how the MESS's Integrated Program reflects the LHL education this study seeks to disclose tensions and overlaps between the stakeholders' perceptions and strategies. Thus, LHL schools in Norway are researched as one of the examples of host countries where LHL education takes place. The comparison of the results with the existing data and the analysis of the LHL schools' situation in Norway can contribute to a better understanding of what this type of education is about and what trajectories the development of LHL education might take in the future.

According to the registry (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019c), fourteen registered LHL schools in Norway that are listed in Table 1. The Norwegian Register Center lists seven, including six schools registered as non-profit organizations, one

as a sole proprietorship (Brønnøysund Register Centre, n.d.). The rest of the schools either are a part of the local Lithuanian community's non-profit organization or are not registered with Register Center. The status of LHL informal *education Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga* has been given by MESS (2019c).

Table 1. *Lithuanian heritage language schools in Norway*

Lithuanian heritage language schools in Norway	Status registered in brreg.no	Status register with the MESS
Bergeno vaikų ir jaunimo organizacija (Children and youth organization in Bergen)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Drameno lituanistinė mokykla „Žilvinas“ (LHL school Žilvinas in Drammen)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Gimtosios kalbos ugdymo centras (Education Center for Native Language)	Forening/ Ideelle organisasjoner (union/ ideal/ non-profit org.)	Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokykla „Gintaras“ (LHL school Gintaras)	Forening/ Ideelle organisasjoner (union/ ideal/ non-profit org.)	Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokykla „Laimė“ (LHL school Laimė)	Forening/ Ideelle organisasjoner (union/ ideal/ non-profit org.)	Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokykla „MiLiT Studio“ (LHL school MiLiT Studio)	Enkeltpersonforetak (sole proprietorships)	Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokykla „Mokykla ant ratų“ (LHL school Mokykla ant ratų)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokykla „Rytmetys“ (LHL school Rytmetys)	Forening/ Ideelle organisasjoner	Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokykla Bergene „Abėcėlė“ (LHL school Abeccele in Bergen)	Forening/ Ideelle organisasjoner	Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Lituanistinė mokyklėlė Mosse (LHL school in Moss)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Notoddeno lituanistinė mokykla „Ąžuolynas“ (LHL school Ažuolynas in Nottodden)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Rogalando lietuvių bendrijos vaikų laisvalaikio centras (RLB VLC) „Draugystė“ (Lithuanian community's children freetime center in Rogaland)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Trøndelago lituanistinė mokykla „Baltai“ (LHL school Baltai In Trøndelag)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)
Vestfoldo lietuvių bendruomenės lituanistinė mokykla „Gandriukas“ (LHL school of Vestfold Lithuanian community Gandriukas)		Lituanistinė neformaliojo švietimo įstaiga (LHL informal education institution)

The formats of these schools vary not only by official status, but also by number of children, goals, and operational styles. For example, LHL school “MiLiT Studio” functions include individual lessons for children as well as translation of texts (Brønnøysund Register

Centre, n.d.). In contrast, the majority of schools describe themselves as non-profit organizations that offer children of Lithuanian background in Norway a possibility to study Lithuanian language, culture and history (Brønnøysund Register Centre, n.d.; Oslo lituanistinė mokykla "Gintaras", n.d.; Triondelago Lietuvių Bendruomenė „Baltai“, n.d.). According to the websites of schools, some offer a possibility to prepare for the Lithuanian language test for Norwegian highschool examination, test Lithuanian language skills at A1-B2 levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council Of Europe, 2020). Norwegian Directorate of Education allows individual students to take a “privatisteksamen“ in various foreign languages including Lithuanian (Utdanningsdirektoratet, n.d.). The ability to take Lithuanian as a second language in the Norwegian Education system plays an important role in LHL education. For many, it implies that students could “get a good grade“ for taking their mother-tongue or heritage language exam. The preservation of language and culture remains the major goal but the possibilities of examination and testing influence the existence of LHL schools in Norway.

2.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study, I pursue to answer the following research questions:

- What are teachers' and parents' perceptions of education in Lithuanian heritage language schools?
- What are the practices parents and teachers employ in Lithuanian heritage language education? What challenges do they face?
- How does the Integrated Program by MESS reflect the education in Lithuanian heritage language schools?
- What strategies do the stakeholders have for the development of Lithuanian heritage language education?

With these research questions, I aim to understand the phenomenon of LHL education by investigating the perceptions of the stakeholders involved. As the main stakeholders, the

teachers and parents shape how the LHL functions. By analyzing their perceptions, I seek to uncover the trajectories LHL development might take. The investigation of the teachers' and parents' practices and challenges shows how LHL schools work and develop.

Lithuanian authorities also influence the development of LHL education and disclose other strategies for LHL schools. Lastly, this study addresses the strategies of involved stakeholders seeking to build knowledge about the tensions and overlaps between them.

This study can contribute to a better understanding of how the LHL education can function more effectively to facilitate the heritage language learners better. It allows to deepen the knowledge of the social and political agendas surrounding the phenomenon of LHL schools. Addressing these research questions becomes very relevant in the period of upcoming Parliament elections in Lithuania that affect the LHL schools, the education system in Lithuania, migration processes, and the lives of Lithuanians abroad.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to analyze heritage language learning both in families and in Lithuanian heritage language (LHL) schools as well as the perspectives of Lithuanian cultural identity abroad, it was important to review existing research on this topic. Migration and the preservation of the Lithuanian language have been central issues in the global Lithuanian community (Ramonienė, 2015). Multiculturalism and bilingualism are encouraged in most modern societies including children's education and parenting. What are the reasons behind successful heritage language learning and how are they connected to one's identity? How LHL school contribute in this process? Are Lithuanian authorities being supportive in the preservation of Lithuanian language and identity and how? To answer these questions various studies on language and identity of Lithuanian emigrants have been reviewed. Moreover, the literature on heritage language schools in other countries has been studied. Extensive research has been conducted on the Lithuanian communities abroad and interconnections between language and identity discussed in a monography by M. Ramonienė (2015) *Emigrants: language and identity* that has been mentioned in the

background section 2. This monography “offers an interpretation of data on linguistic behavior, language attitudes and language-based identity within the Lithuanian diaspora scattered around the world over several historical periods” (Ramonienė, 2015, p. 206). This study illustrates the importance of language as a part of Lithuanian identity since the majority of migrants agree that speaking Lithuanian is important for them (Ramonienė, 2015). The authors discuss the difficulties families face trying to preserve the language in the predominant cultures from sociolinguistic perspective and mention that LHL schools also play a part in the process (Ramonienė, 2015).

Emigration and the family: problems and challenges of children’s education by Aleksandravičius and Kuzmickaitė (2008) introduce historical perspectives on Lithuanian-oriented education in emigrant communities, discusses the issues children of Lithuanian immigrant background face while integrating into the local education systems as well as the experiences of families who re-emigrated to Lithuania and the problems they encountered. While extensive research has been conducted to study Lithuanian identity and language use abroad, this study also focuses on the educational aspects of it. The scholars address the educational context of the host country the LHL school exists in and problematizes the quality of LHL education, and criticize the Lithuanian authorities for grounding the LHL education perception in the idea of re-remigration (Aleksandravičius, 2008).

Aleksandravičius (2008) claims that the Lithuanian authorities have to re-orient and begin to understand the Lithuanian communities abroad in the context of the host cultures.

Another essential document *Lituanistinis modelis* [Lithuanian heritage language education model] (Bagdonavičienė et al., 2013) has been reviewed, which also introduces the perceptions and strategies of LHL education. This study has been conducted by a team of Lithuanian scholars and financed by the Lithuanian government. The model presents the general and the special parts: the first part analyses the organization of LHL education in various countries, the activities, the problems and the needs of LHL schools, the second part introduces the website for LHL education including a virtual library, interactive learning environment and the feedback space (Bagdonavičienė et al., 2013). This model

distinguishes various tasks that would help develop LHL education such as initiating Lithuanian as second language learning in general education abroad, introduce online pedagogic qualifications course for teachers seeking a teaching certificate, and prepare recommendations and materials for children, parents and the teachers in LHL schools. The model defines Lithuanian heritage language education as an individual's ethnic self-awareness, ethnic identity awareness education using ICT and virtual spaces, and integrating intercultural education methodology (Bagdonavičienė et al., 2013).

The concepts of language maintenance and bilingual education and ethnic identity have been investigated by the linguist J. A. Fishman (1991), who addressed the issue of reversing the language shift by promoting cultural pluralism and claiming that the language transmission primarily has to be done at the family and local community level. The author discussed the *ethnically affiliated schools* in the United States and distinguished the *Weekend schools* that represent the schools analyzed in this study. Fishman and Nahirny note that “Weekend Schools normally serve recent Baltic, Eastern, and Central European groups and constitute the least intensive <...> of ethnic group schools in the United States” (1964, p. 308). The authors have also criticized the often linked correlations between religion and ethnicity, stressing that the immigrant religions have been de-ethnicized and “emasculated them¹ without gaining thereby any of the spontaneity or genuineness which ethnicity possessed” (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964, p. 317).

The empirical research and interest in the interrelation between identity and heritage language education have been growing in the past decades. It has lead to a breakthrough eliminating the assumption of heritage language learners as reclaiming the ethnonational identity and transformed the binary terms of a native speaker and nonnative as Leeman (2015) claims. Multiple articles on heritage language learning and teaching in other immigrant communities have also been reviewed to have a more general and richer

¹ ethnicity or the ethnic group school ((Fishman & Nahirny, 1964).

understanding of the challenges people of other cultural backgrounds face. The most relevant research for the case of LHL schools in Norway are examples of other minorities that have a small number of native language users worldwide, such as Estonian.

Siiner (2017) presents the situation of the Estonian language in Denmark and problematizes the minority mother language tuition. The author claims that heritage language learning becomes often available only for the resourceful families and requires 'language political agency' (Siiner, 2017, p.181). The researcher suggests that 'What the communities need to experience and what the policy initiatives may need to address more is the ownership of the language, including tolerance for different versions of Estonian and different ways of being Estonian.' (Siiner, 2017, p.181). The focus is set on the countries of minority language and the dominant language as key actors in the policy-making related to mother tongue learning, not only the parents, teachers, or children. Siiner (2017) also connects ethnic identity ('being Estonian') with the heritage language use that complements Ramonienė's (2017) findings in the study of Lithuanian communities.

Tigert (2020) presents a study of Finish heritage language schools in the US and aims to build knowledge on Heritage language learning for the teachers in general education. The author emphasizes "It is particularly important that educators develop an understanding of how informal learning contexts contribute to students' development of literacies as one of the primary means of meaning-making" (Tigert, 2020, p. 101). This study analyzes the literacy practices in a Finish heritage language school and describes the activities as joyful and creative (Tigert, 2020). The teachers base their strategies in the heritage language school on the education and experience from Finland seeking to encourage the use of Finish language in most enjoyable ways to resist assimilation and supplement children's general education (Tigert, 2020).

Maloof et al. (2006) study discusses the relations between bilingual competence and integrated identity in the context of Vietnamese heritage language schools in the United States. This study discloses that strong identification with Vietnamese culture does not

always result in additive bilingualism (Maloof et al., 2006). The findings of this study reflect Aleksandravičius's (2008) discussion of whether the loss of heritage language or the subtractive bilingualism means the loss of cultural heritage. The authors suggest that 'being mindful of the low-vitality context of heritage languages in the United States, these communities must pursue goals that counteract the loss of their languages' (Maloof et al., 2006, p. 270).

Extensive research on Japanese heritage language schools in the United States has been conducted by Doerr and Lee (2013) which analyses the construct of a heritage language learner discussing the different formats of heritage language learning, governmentality effects, and the perceptions of stakeholders in Japanese heritage language education. The authors introduce a new perspective in the studies of heritage language education:

We suggest approaching heritage-language education not merely as an effort to enhance awareness of one's heritage or instruction in language but also as a schooling process in which legitimacy of the knowledge and ways to achieve it are contested in the process of students and parents navigating what school offers, the students' linguistic proficiencies, their future educational prospects, and their diasporic subjectivities (Doerr & Lee, 2009, p. 424).

The reviewed literature discloses that there are numerous aspects that heritage language research addresses. The heritage language schools face common and different challenges and various ways to deal with them. The studies provide different angles of this phenomenon including policy-makers and teachers as actors and new ways of understanding the identity and heritage language.

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To present structured data analysis, justified findings, and discussion in this study it is essential to base it on a conceptual framework. Bryman notes that theory allows the researcher to construct a framework of a social phenomenon in focus and provide a “rationale for the research” (Bryman, 2012, p. 20).

As the data of this research project discloses, there are two underlying themes in LHL education: the importance of preservation of Lithuanian cultural identity and learning Lithuanian as a heritage language. Thus, theoretical perspectives that focus on identity and language competence constitute the core conceptual framework for this study. Heritage language education is often researched analyzing the cultural identity of heritage language learners and the sociocultural context of heritage language schools. This chapter presents relevant theories regarding these aspects of heritage language education that operationalize the analytical framework of this study by distinguishing the concepts of *integrated cultural identity* and *language competence*.

Since this research applies qualitative methods, the theoretical perspectives, and the variables of the conceptual framework have been revised after the collection and analysis of the data (Bryman, 2012). All these perspectives will be introduced in this chapter and the conceptual framework of the study will be described and discussed.

3.1 ROLE OF IDENTITY IN RELATION TO LANGUAGE

To develop the conceptual framework of this study it was essential to investigate the interrelationship between language and identity, which appears as a major theme in parents’ and teachers’ perceptions of LHL education as well as in the integrated LHL

education program. Pierce² (1995) has extensively studied the second language acquisition (SLA) process of immigrants in Anglophone Canada, which resulted in social identity theory. It describes the learners as “constructed in frequently inequitable social contexts, as variable over time and space, and sometimes co-existing in contradictory ways within a single individual” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 414). Pierce’s (1995) identity theoretical concepts are strongly connected with Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory as it also stresses how language is a part of the sociocultural context, which takes place in everyday interactions. The theoretical perspective of social identity also claims that “power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers” (Pierce, 1995, p. 12). In the instance of LHL school, the children are the target language learners, while their parents, teachers, peers, or relatives are the speakers. The interrelationship between these stakeholders is what mostly constitutes LHL education.

Moreover, the author of social identity theory presents the construct of investment (Pierce, 1995). Pierce argues that unlike motivation (a personality quality trait), investment implies that language is not only used as a tool to exchange information but doing so the learner transforms and retransforms his social identity in the given cultural context (Pierce, 1995). This understanding refers to Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital, as the learners invest in language learning to increase their resources, for example, job, education, friendships (Pierce, 1995). One of the central arguments of the social identity theory is that “Identity, practices, and resources are inextricably linked and mutually constituted” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 414). The aspects of the practices and resources in LHL education have been in focus in the process of data collection and analysis and they have a crucial role for the parents and teachers in the LHL school communities. Lastly, the authors present the concept of “imagined communities” and “imagined identities” (Norton &

² Bonny Norton Pierce has published works under different last names. In this text they are referred according to the publication.

Toohy, 2011) which refers to the learners desire to belong to a certain community, not only in the sense of being a part of a pre-existing community, but also a possibility of future social identity.

3.2 LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION AND NEW LITERACIES

Heritage language literacy practices play a key role in LHL education as language learning is strongly interrelated with the sociocultural context of LHL schools and the ideologies of heritage language learner's teachers and parents. This section will present the theoretical lenses of language socialization and new literacies that perceive learning as a social interaction interconnected with the individual's sociocultural background (Tigert, 2020). This part of the conceptual framework has been based on the theoretical framework of Tigert's study of Finish heritage language schools in the United States (Tigert, 2020). Theoretical perspectives on literacy unfold the complexity of learning heritage language and provide an analytical lens for the analysis of teachers' and parents' literacy practices in LHL education. Tigert (2020) researches how literacy practices emerge from literacy events such as cooking lessons. The author has observed a "coking literacy" event where the teacher and children were reading the recipes, discussing food traditions, and making an apple pie with vanilla sauce. This literacy event included discussing the metric system as superior and disclosed the perceptions and ideologies teachers hold and socialize to the heritage language learners (Tigert, 2020). The analysis of literacy events leads to an understanding of literacy practice, which can uncover the strategies stakeholders use in heritage language education.

As the data of this study suggest, language and literacies in Lithuanian in particular, is of high importance in LHL education. The theory of language socialization has been developed by Schieffelin & Ochs (1986), it's focus lays on the interrelationship of language and culture linking the sociological, anthropological, psychological, and linguistic fields. The authors employ Vygotskian understanding of learning and emphasize the importance of

“investigating language socialization throughout the human lifespan across a range of social experiences and contexts” (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 163). Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory approaches human development as ‘continual process of becoming’ (Gajdamaschko, 2015, p. 331). Language socialization unlike language acquisition focuses on “understanding of how persons become competent members of social groups and the role of language in this process” (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 167). Literacy as an element of language socialization investigates how reading and writing practices develop in the sociocultural environment and stress the importance of family and school in this process (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). The socialization of literacy provides an analytical lens to investigate “how individuals are presented with information, modes of negotiating or interpreting information, a world view” (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 183). This theoretical perspective focuses on establishing the relationship of linguistic resources, how the learners attain them, and how these linguistic resources are transferred in the process of literacy development (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Thus, it is essential to research the literacy practices and events that take place in the LHL schools including the interactions between heritage language learners, the teachers, and the parents.

The New Literacy (NLS) theorists critique the mainstream understanding of literacy as a set of skills that can be developed independently and argue that literacies are very complex including different types, languages, and ideologies (Tigert, 2020). The scholars of NLS conceptualize literacy as a social practice transforming in time and space (Street, 2003). This concept allows us to view LHL education as a social phenomenon that expands the classrooms and textbooks of the LHL schools. NLS view literacy as “complex phenomenon encompassing several different types and modes of literacy (e.g. print, visual, digital), multiple languages and registers, and diverse worldviews” (Tigert, 2020, p. 102). The author also (Tigert, 2020) notes that literacy events - heritage language learner’s interactions with graphic signs, allow the investigation of literacy practices, which disclose the sociocultural meanings of those interactions. In the center of heritage language

education is the development of language competence and cultural skills that the New Literacies theoretical perspective address.

Based on the language socialization and new literacies theories developed in Tigert's research (2020), this study also seeks to discuss the literacy practices used LHL education and disclose the strategies stakeholders in the LHL schools have.

3.3 HERITAGE LANGUAGE LEARNING

To build on the conceptual framework of literacy socialization, new literacies, and identity theories, this section focuses on the theoretical perspectives on heritage language learning.

Fishman and Nahirny (1964) did sociolinguistic research on “ethnically affiliated schools” in the United States and the LHL school concept falls under the “Weekend School” category as discussed in the literature review section. The authors argue that the cognitive dissonance theory justifies the problematic situation of heritage language maintenance that ethnically affiliated schools face. It stresses the dichotomy of values: preservation of heritage language and being a part of the community (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964). Fishman claims “the cognitive dissonance between the theoretical desirability of language maintenance and the practical impossibility of successfully attaining either it or its more ultimate goals is resolved by means of a sharper polarization with respect to future plans than with respect to current practice” (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964, p. 315). The authors' understanding also complements the sociocultural and identity theoretical lenses as he stresses the complexity of language preservation and group maintenance (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964). The dissonance becomes apparent in the case of LHL education as it discloses discrepancies between the stakeholders' views and strategies. This will be further discussed in Chapter 5 Data Analysis and particularly in section 5.5 Discussion.

Extensive research on Japanese heritage language schools in the US has been conducted by Doerr and Lee (2013) who analyse the construct of a heritage language learner by discussing the different formats of heritage language learning, governmentality effects, and the perceptions of stakeholders in Japanese heritage language education. The authors present the construct of an heritage language learner:

The heritage language learner does not objectively exist; rather, the label “heritage language learner” is a focus around which individuals ponder, discuss, and (re)define who they are, relating themselves to others, school programs, wider linguistic communities, and imagined homelands (Doerr & Lee, 2013, p. 146).

This understanding is applied in this study when analyzing the phenomenon of LHL school from other stakeholder’s perspectives as the heritage language learner is the epicenter of LHL education. The comparative element in the study of Japanese heritage language schools is between the Japanese government approved course with nation-building political connotations (“keishōgo”) and a less demanding course for Japanese heritage language learners (“kokugo”). The authors introduce a new perspective in the studies of heritage language education:

We suggest approaching heritage-language education not merely as an effort to enhance awareness of one’s heritage or instruction in language but also as a schooling process in which legitimacy of the knowledge and ways to achieve it are contested in the process of students and parents navigating what school offers, the students’ linguistic proficiencies, their future educational prospects, and their diasporic subjectivities (Doerr & Lee, 2009, p. 424).

Doerr and Lee (2009) emphasize the importance of educational processes taking place in the heritage language schools and constructing transversal knowledge. While language and cultural identity remain the core concepts in heritage language education, it is essential to understand the complex context where these concepts develop. This theoretical

perspective becomes extremely relevant when analyzing the Integrated Program for LHL education, considering the socio-political situation of LHL schools and establishing a multi-level comparison between the LHL schools' stakeholders.

The study of Vietnamese heritage language schools in the United States (Maloof et al., 2006) presents two elements that are also key in LHL education: *language competence* and *integrated cultural identity*. Maloof et al. (2006) also base the concept of heritage language education on Fishman's *ethnically affiliated schools* described above. The authors present Fishman's central arguments about the heritage language schools:

(1) that there is a consequential link between language and ethnicity, (2) that there is a possibility, feasibility and necessity of biculturalism and bilingualism, and (3) that the promotion of bilingualism and biculturalism occurs through planning and organization (Maloof et al., 2006, p. 256).

The conceptual framework of this study recognizes the LHL education as preserving heritage language and constructing the cultural identity as seen in the eyes of parents, teachers, and the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MESS). Yet this study also challenges this understanding by disclosing the complexity of heritage language learner's linguistic and sociocultural reality.

Language competence

Maloof et al. (2006) discuss the concept of *language competence* in terms of (1) additive or subtractive bilingualism, (2) second culture acquisition, and (3) counterbalance between the family, the schools and sociocultural environment of a heritage language learner. The authors describe additive bilingualism as being proficient in both languages and demonstrating positive attitudes and knowledge of both cultures and languages (Maloof et al., 2006). Subtractive bilingualism, on the contrary, reflects the increasing use of the host language. In the case of LHL education, Lithuanians being a minority group "bilingual education often becomes subtractive, because their first language use is curtailed"

(Maloof et al., 2006, p. 257). This claim correlates with the research conducted among Lithuanian emigrant communities, which suggests that (Gudavičienė, 2015). The authors review assimilative ideologies analyzing the second culture acquisition and discuss whether involvement with ethnic communities negatively affects an individual (Maloof et al., 2006). The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in a pluralistic understanding that “proficiency in a heritage language provides the cognitive benefit of transferring language skills and serves as a source of social capital” (Maloof et al., 2006, p. 258). This study addresses the counterbalance of heritage language learner’s heritage language school, family, and sociocultural environment in the context of LHL schools. The rationale of data analysis discusses the language competence role in LHL schools questioning how important is the development of bicultural language competence, proficiency in cognitive-academic skills such as reading, writing, or communicative abilities (Maloof et al., 2006).

Integrated cultural identity

As social identity theory argues (Norton & Toohey, 2011) heritage language competence cannot be separated from an individual’s ethnic identity. The strong belongingness to a group, the positive perception of the group’s social position, the practice of ethnic traditions tightly correlates with language acquisition (Maloof et al., 2006). The authors stress “It is the recognition of this connection of language vitality at both individual and community levels to factors in the ethnic identity of their youth that prompts communities to institute heritage language schools” (Maloof et al, 2006, p. 259). Three types of models explain the cultural identification process: the assimilative model claims that one’s identity makes *linear transformation*, the second describes the host and home cultures in *counterbalance*, and the third, views both cultures as *independent domains* (Maloof et al., 2006). The authors stress that the third model is acknowledged by academics in cross-cultural studies, it describes the cultural identity as constantly changing variable depending on the individual’s social context (Maloof et al., 2006). The authors argue that this concept reflects Bary’s acculturation strategies as (1) assimilation as privileging the host

culture, (2) integration valuing both cultures (3) separation privileging the home culture and (4) marginalisation as neglecting both home and host cultures - these can be viewed as different identity conceptualizations (Maloof, et al., 2006). Integration is the most common strategy as it preserves both cultures and reflects the social phenomenon of heritage language schools best. Thus, Maloof's (2006) concept of *integrated cultural identity* represents the understanding that an individual identifies oneself in both cultures independently and constantly navigates it in different sociocultural environments. This perception of the identity construct is essential for investigating heritage language education that tends to encounter tensions between seeing one's cultural identity as integrated and separated (valuing the heritage culture more).

Figure 2. *The conceptual framework*

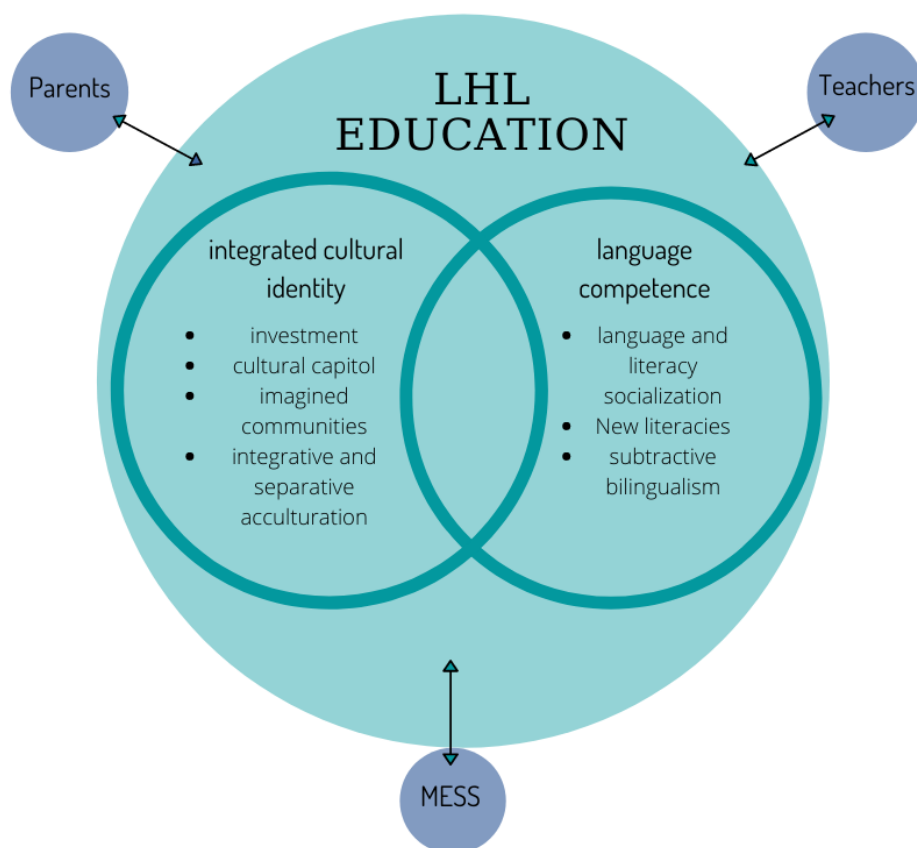


Figure 2. represents how the conceptual framework based on Maloof et al. (2006) and other authors mentioned in Chapter 3 reflects education in LHL schools. The circle in the center is the social phenomenon researched in this study – the LHL education. It includes two overlapping circles that illustrate the concepts of integrated cultural identity and language competence; these variables operationalize the analytical framework of this project as the key point is that the stakeholders view the roles of identity and language in LHL differently. I chose the term “integrated cultural identity” to stress that the heritage culture is not valued more than the host in the eyes of parents and teachers in contrast to the Integrated Program. While language competence addresses the questions of how and why heritage language is studied in the LHL schools. The language is a part of identity and this interrelationship appears addressing each research question. The arrows refer to the perspectives of each stakeholder towards LHL education. The concept of *integrated cultural identity* used in this analytical framework views identity as cultural, social, and ethnic. Constructing the phenomenon of LHL schools as a social situation of development (Gajdamaschko, 2015) the framework seeks to offer new insight into educational processes and adaptation to today’s individual LHL schools. Moreover, literacy perspectives and social identity theoretical perspectives might enable novel ways to view the connection between the heritage language and cultural identity.

This section presented the conceptual framework of this study grounding it in the literacy socialization and social identity theories. These perspectives are conceptualized in the constructs of language competence and integrated social identity (Maloof et al., 2006) This study investigates these core concepts in heritage language learning by using other theoretical perspectives that include investment, imagined communities and Bourdieu’s cultural capital (Pierce, 1995), language and literacy socialization (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) and the New literacies theory (Tigert, 2020).

4 METHODS

This chapter presents and discusses the methodological aspects of this study. Firstly, the research design, strategy, and qualitative approach of this work will be discussed. Then the research sampling will be addressed. Furthermore, the data collection process is going to be described. Lastly, the section on methods will discuss the ethical issues of this study as well as potential, and limitations to the interferences made.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A comparative research design has been chosen for this project as the main approach in addressing the research questions that focus on comparing teachers' and parents' perspectives as well as contrast it with the intentions of the Integrated Program for LHL education as outlined by Lithuanian authorities. This design aims to provide a better understanding of the LHL school phenomenon. Bryman (2012) notes 'embodies the logic of comparison, in that it implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations' (p. 73). The research is seeking to disclose common and differentiating aspects of the LHL schools phenomenon in the views of different stakeholders. The comparative design also serves the aim of this project - to develop knowledge about the educational strategies in Lithuanian heritage language education in Norway employed by the teachers, parents, and Lithuanian authorities as stakeholders to construct "Lithuanian-ness". LHL education is a phenomenon facilitating children with immigrant background; however the parents are main stakeholders since they provide the demand for these schools. The teachers accommodate this demand shaping how LHL education unfolds. The Lithuanian authorities also play a role in LHL education as their interests include strengthening the ties with Lithuanians abroad and preserving Lithuanian language and culture. In this study, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MESS) represents the views of Lithuanian authorities. The teachers, parents and MESS as stakeholders in LHL education are the cases

of comparison. The research questions (1) *what are teachers' and parents' perceptions of education in Lithuanian heritage language schools?* And (2) *what are the practices parents and teachers employ in Lithuanian heritage language education? What challenges do they face?* address the comparison of the views and experiences parents and teachers hold. Whereas, the research question (3) *how does the Integrated Program by MESS reflect the education in Lithuanian heritage language schools?* focuses on analysing the Lithuanian authorities' view of LHL education and comparing it to the teachers' and parents'. Lastly, question (4) *what strategies do the stakeholders have for development of Lithuanian heritage language education?* seeks to investigate the agendas of involved stakeholders and address the tensions and overlaps between them.

The research questions and strategy are constructed to investigate the social phenomenon of LHL schools based on the perceptions of stakeholders. Nevertheless the children are in the center of LHL education, it was decided to exclude them as stakeholders in this study due to their young age disabling the in-depth investigation of this social phenomenon concerning concepts as identity, preservation of culture and language.

The case study strategy is incorporated in the comparative design where the parents and the teachers of each LHL school are the units of analysis. Bryman (2012) points out that a multi-case comparative study allows to interpret the phenomenon in different settings and from various points of view. The design of this study applies Bartlett's & Vavrus' (2017) comparative case study approach. The scholars (2017) question the traditional understanding of case and comparison. They argue that the comparative case study concept "engages two logics of comparison: first, the more common compare and contrast logic; and second, a "tracing across" sites or scales." (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 6). This approach enables a researcher to analyze the social phenomenon in multiple dimensions: vertical, horizontal and transversal (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). Based on this logic, this study investigates the views between the interviewed parents, and between the teachers that present a horizontal comparison. Then the interview results from parents are vertically

compared to the teachers'. Lastly, a transversal comparison of results from the parents, the teachers and the MESS is presented.

Figure 3. *Research sampling methodology*

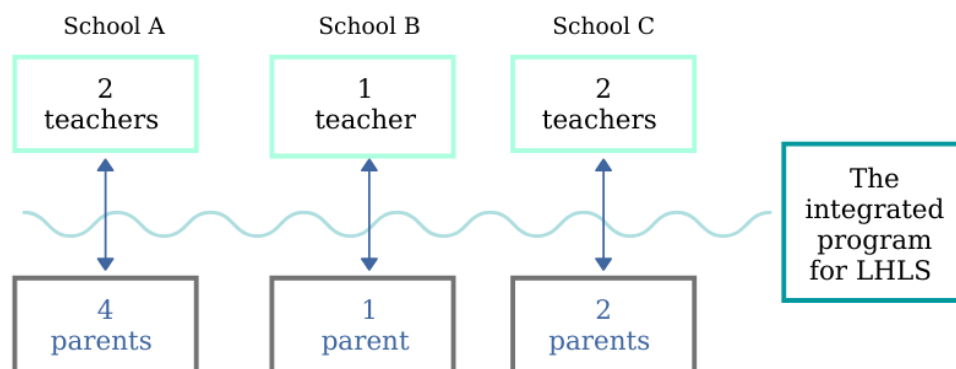


Figure 3 illustrates the design of this study. The boxes with the stakeholders represent the cases of analysis that are compared horizontally. The arrows illustrate the vertical comparison between the teachers and the parent and disregards which school participants belong to. The curved line reflects the transversal comparison between the stakeholders (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017).

This is a qualitative study seeking an in-depth understanding of the educational phenomenon of cultural schools in Lithuanian immigrant communities in Norway and to understand the perceptions of parents and teachers towards educational processes in these schools as well as the Lithuanian authorities' view that the Integrated Program for LHL schools policy document represents.

This research seeks to disclose the perceptions of several actors, thus it is most appropriate to analyse the topic using qualitative research methods. Bryman (2012, p. 380) argues that qualitative research tends to be inductive and use interpretivist epistemological perspectives where theory comes from findings and focus is set on one's views of reality.

The methodology of this study also emphasizes the transformative aspect in the analysis of the LHL school social phenomenon since it is essential in qualitative research: 'there is often a concern to show how events and patterns unfold over time' (Bryman, 2012, p. 402). The historical context and changes in society as well as in the individual provide a richer understanding of the educational phenomenon of HL school. Thus the processes of emigration, the social and political realities in Lithuania, Norway and play an important role as the aspects of the social and individual worlds of the participants defining the findings of this research. Another key aspect of this qualitative research is that it applies the grounded theory, which as Cohen argues 'emerge from, rather than exist before, the data' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 491). All the theoretical patterns and findings are discovered in the process of data collection and analysis.

Qualitative methods in this research include semi-structured interviews and document analysis as the key methods, observation is complementary. Bryman notes 'in qualitative research, there is an emphasis on greater generality in the formulation of initial research ideas and on interviewees' own perspectives' (Bryman, 2012, p.470), thus semi-structured interviews are chosen as the main method to be able to answer the research questions about parents and teachers perspectives. The online survey is of quantitative nature, however, it only contributed to the building of the interview guide and had a minor impact for the findings as a complementary method.

4.2 RESEARCH SAMPLE

The Integrated Program by MESS has been chosen as a document sample for the analysis since it is the first and only policy document to offer an advisory program for the LHL education. The document officially presents the view Lithuanian authorities have of LHL education and discloses its strategies. The researcher has been introduced to this program during the teacher seminar in Lithuanian organized by MESS. This program has

received various reactions and remarks from the global LHL schools' teacher community that inspired this project to investigate the policy document further.

Regarding the interviews, this study applied a purposive sampling technique when selecting schools, teachers, and parents for participation. As reviewed literature suggests (Chapter 2.2), the parents and teachers involved in LHL school activities are usually willing to preserve Lithuanian culture and heritage language, thus the views of Lithuanian immigrant who have different approaches will not be analyzed in this research. This excludes the individuals who might disagree with the strategies employed in LHL schools and do not have intentions for their children to study Lithuanian language and culture. Thus, the sampling reflects the research questions and includes parents and teachers that have experienced the LHL education. As Bryman notes 'the sampling is conducted with reference to the goals of the research, so that units of analysis are selected in terms of criteria that will allow the research questions to be answered' (Bryman, 2012, p. 418). Three Lithuanian cultural schools have been selected for participation in this study. They function similarly, are active and the researcher knows them, something that eased access to data collection there. These schools could be defined as typical LHL schools as they are officially a part of the local Lithuanian community, have been working for more than 4 years, activities are organized in similar ways. The schools' websites define the preservation of Lithuanian language, traditions and identity as their main goals. It is worth to mention, that even though the schools might appear as cases in this study, the research questions have guided the stakeholders to be the units of analysis. Therefore, the schools become contexts where the analysis of stakeholder's perceptions occur. Bryman (2012) indicates this as the sampling of the context, within the contexts of School A, B and C the participant sampling took place. The context of School A was more familiar to the researcher, and Schools B and C were recruited through contacts, a common method in a small qualitative study. Bryman defines this method "the researcher samples initially a small group of people relevant to the research questions, and these sampled participants propose other participants who have

had the experience or characteristics relevant to the research.” (Bryman, 2012, p. 424). Teachers that were interviewed mostly had more than one year of experience with school-age children in the LHL school. It is worth to mention that the teacher sample included the school leaders as teachers. Due to the small size of the schools the schools’ leaders were taken in the same teacher as stakeholder category as they hold very similar interests and experiences. Most of the parents also had school-age children attending the school. Regardless the higher numbers of kindergarten-age children attend, the sampling of participants purposively focused on teacher and parents of school-age children since they were more familiar with LHL education processes, had their opinions formed based on the experiences and was able to express them.

The sample size has been limited by the project’s resources, the participants’ and the researcher’s lack of time. However, a solid amount of data has been collected through the documents, interviews as well as the complementing data collection methods to address the research questions.

The teacher and the parent codes are given a pseudonym for better readability and to express their perceptions, experiences and characteristics with improved clarity. Lucy is a pseudonym for the first teacher (T1-SA) I interviewed in School A, she has worked with the pre-school group, has experience from working in Lithuanian and Norwegian kindergartens. She also knows music, believes in a child’s freedom to choose. This comes through in her being inspired by Steiner/Waldorf school methods when planning her learning activities (Lucy, personal communication, August 29, 2019). Lola (T2-SA) has been teaching the oldest student group in the School A and she is also the leader of the school. Gina (T2-SB) is from the school B, she has been in the LS since its beginning and used to be a primary school teacher before coming to Norway. Over the years she worked with children of pre-school and primary school ages. Teachers Mary (T3-SC) and Monica (T4-SC) are from School C. Mary works with children of primary school age as she used to be a primary school teacher back in Lithuania. Monica is the School C leader and has been involved in

teaching LHL school's students over the years (Mary and Monica, personal communication November 23, 2019).

The parents (P1-P8) have been assigned pseudonyms by the school code: parents' from School A names start with "A", from Schools B and C respectively "B" and "C". The parents one through five come from the School A, P1 – Ally, P2- Agatha, P3 – Amy, P4 – Aria and P5-Amelia. The P6– Beth is from School B and P7 – Cindy, P8 – Carmen from School C. The parents from the School A were very familiar with each other and even discussed each others' children in the interviews (personal communication, August 29, 2019). Amelia was the only parent interviewed from Lithuania. She and her two children were a couple months into the Lithuanian general school academic year and have been preparing for the re-emigration for several years in the School A (personal communication, December 4, 2019). Beth's son and daughter attend School B and she is very involved with the parents' committee and school's B organizational activities (personal communication, October 25, 2019). Cindy's and Carmen's from the School C children are the students of teacher Mary and both mothers have two children attending the school for over two years. Carmen's older son, however, has recently quit the LHL school (P8-SC).

Table 2 *Codes and pseudonyms of interviewed teachers and parents.*

Codes	Pseudonyms
Teacher 1 from School A (T1-SA)	Lucy
Teacher 2 from School A (T2-SA)	Lola
Teacher 3 from School B (T3-SB)	Gina
Teacher 4 from School C (T4-SC)	Mary
Teacher 5 from School C (T5 – SC)	Monica
Parent 1 from School A (P1-SA)	Ally
Parent 2 from School A (P2-SA)	Agatha
Parent 3 from School A (P3 – SA)	Amy
Parent 4 from School A (P4-SA)	Aria
Parent 5 from School A (P4-SA)	Amelia

Parent 6 from School B (P6-SB)	Beth
Parent 7 from School C (P7-SC)	Cindy
Parent 8 from School C (P8-SC)	Carmen

Sampling methods in this study also include convenience sampling since the schools and the participants not only represent typical cases but also were available to the researcher at the time of field trip. The researcher's personal network also allowed to expand the sample size, in the line with what Bryman (2012) defines as convenience sampling with accessing the closest participants at the time of planning or collecting the data. This study does not aim to generalize the results to LHL schools in other countries or different formats LHL schools in Norway.

4.3 DATA COLLECTION

Firstly, the 15 LHL schools in Norway have received an email about this research project and the teachers working there were asked to take a short survey about their experiences with LHL education. The online survey data collection process is explained in section [3.4.1](#). Then the school leaders from School A, B and C were contacted directly and were asked to participate in the semi-structured interviews and recommend teachers and parents that would be willing to be interviewed by the researcher. Since School A and B required the researcher to travel to other cities in Norway, the plan was to arrange the interviewees and schedule before the visit. School C was more flexible regarding the interview arrangements due to the short travel distance. The methods used for data collection include a short survey, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. It is important to mention, that all the communication between the researcher and the participants was in Lithuanian.

School A

Data collection in School A took place before the academic year in the LHL school started. The researcher arranged a timetable for the interviews with participants before the field trip which took place on the 28-30 of August 2019. The interviews with two teachers and four parents (mothers) were arranged individually either at their workplaces, at home, or in cafes. One of the teachers interviewed was also the school leader. All the parents interviewed have been participating in School A's activities knew each other and the researcher personally. Their children and families were also familiar with each other and the researcher. Therefore during the interviews, there was a certain level of knowledge allowing the interviewees to talk about their children, other children, and teachers in School A by name. The last interview was conducted online on the 4th of December with a mother who was a part of School A's community but moved back to Lithuania recently after her children have been attending this school for several years.

School B

The field trip to School B took place on the opening day on the 1st of September, 2019. I was invited to participate in the opening celebration and visit a few classrooms, I also had several informal conversations about the education in the school. Due to teachers' and parents' lack of time during my field trip, semi-structured interviews failed to be conducted. One teacher had to cancel our interview because of personal reasons and one parent had an unplanned journey. Thus arrangements were made to have two interviews (one with a mother and one with a teacher) online.

School C

The visit to School C had been planned with its school leader who agreed to help the researcher to arrange interviews. The interviews with the teachers and the parents took place in an empty classroom. This school was the only one having classes every weekend, compared to every other weekend in the other schools. The researcher had no previous relationships with the interviewees from School C, apart from the school leader.

4.3.1 Survey

A short online survey was made to get a general idea of how the teachers see the education process in the LHL schools, what are the main issues and goals in their schools, in their opinion. The decision was made to survey only teachers as they are the key stakeholders constructing LHL education. They have direct contact with the parents and are familiar with the MESS, the teachers can provide insight into the most important areas in the LHL schools that could be investigated in the interviewing process. The online survey <https://nettskjema.no/a/119425> was sent out to all the fourteen LHL schools in Norway to develop a good interview guide. The key points of this survey focused on the major challenges in the LHL schools and the importance of LHL schools' goals (Appendix 4). Eight responses have been received from anonymous teachers that later guided the parent and teacher interview questions. The major disadvantage of this inability to ask additional questions, low response rates and the lack of data (Bryman, 2012). However, the challenges of the survey have been overcome in the interviewing process. The survey results will be discussed in the data analysis chapter and correlated with teacher interview data.

4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviews allow a researcher to investigate the participants' point of view, they are flexible, provide rich and in-depth data (Bryman, 2012). The researcher has developed two interview guides, for the teachers and parents that provided a framework for the interviews but enabled the participants to disclose significant insight. The interview guide approach “increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent. Logical gaps in data can be anticipated and closed. Interviews remain fairly conversational and situational” (Cohen, 2007, p. 353). The main weaknesses of semi-structured interviews include increased subjectivity, researcher's biases and differences in participants' wording resulting in reduced comparability of the results (Bryman, 2012; Cohen, 2007). Yet the semi-structured interviewing method is

chosen as the key method to be able to answer the research questions on parents and teachers opinions.

A total of thirteen semi-structured interviews have been conducted including two teachers and five parents from School A, one teacher and one parent from School B and two teachers and two parents from School C. The interview guide for the teachers and parents can be found in [Appendix 1](#). The interviews in School A provided rich and deep data as the interviewees answered questions reflexively, giving numerous examples, extensively describing their experiences and explaining their points of view. The two interviews from School B also disclosed a clear understanding of the participants' views, even though they were conducted online through Facebook Messenger. The two teacher interviews from School C uncovered rich qualitative knowledge, while the interviews with the parents from School C did not display the same level of reflexivity and richness as parents interviewed in the other schools. Interview questions were presented to the participants in a naturalistic and informal manner, changing the wording and adding explanations if needed. During the interviews several participants answered some questions ahead of time, but the researcher mostly went back to the same topic asking to expand on it. Complementary questions were added during the interviewing process as the researcher aimed to get a clearer picture of participant's experience and understanding, for instance, the interviewees would be asked to illustrate some situations or explain their thoughts.

4.3.3 Document analysis: The Integrated Program for Lithuanian heritage language education

Lastly, qualitative content analysis has been performed on the Integrated Program for LHL education provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sportss (MESS) has been analyzed to present the approach Lithuanian authorities as a stakeholder has and compare it to the perspectives of the teachers and parents. According to Bryman (2012) content analysis of documents include searching for themes in the texts, and hermeneutics focus on that 'the analyst of a text must seek to bring out the meanings of a text from the perspective

of its author' (Bryman, 2012, p. 560). These methods are most appropriate to answer the research question aiming to compare the perspectives Lithuanian authorities employ. Bryman points out that the official documents derived from the state are a great source of 'textual material for potential interest' (2012, p. 549). The weakness of the document analysis in this study is representativeness since the researched policy document is unique and might not represent the most credible point of view of the Lithuanian authorities (Bryman, 2012).

4.4 JUDGING QUALITY

4.4.1 Validity and reliability

The validity issues this study might face include the researcher's Lithuanian background, working as a teacher in the LHL school in Oslo and teaching children Lithuanian language as well as previous experience with establishment of LHL school in City A and personal connections with some of the parents. Confidentiality contract with LHL school in Oslo resulted me not including it in the sample of this study as I have developed personal relationships both with the teachers and parents here. Moreover, I am involved with the management of Lithuanian education in Norway board, making my position subjective and slightly authoritative. Most of the participants were aware of my work as a teacher and a member of Lithuanian community in Norway, which might have made an impact in their answers. All these aspects affect my role as a researcher, predisposing my attitudes towards LHL education and resulting bias in the data collection and analysis process. Despite this I seek to be as transparent and objective as possible in the conduction of this study. Moreover, my background, role and experience outside of this research results a reflexive aspect in the processes of data collection, analysis and even construction of conceptual framework. Bryman notes that reflexivity can be researchers ability to present the social reality transparently, but it still reflects biased 'knowledge' (2012, p. 393). On the other hand, having some understanding of the cultural, historical and

political discourses in various aspects of this fieldwork together with the ability to speak Lithuanian and familiarity with the participants, I might be able 'to ensure a high level of congruence between concepts and observations' (Bryman 2012, p. 390) as a factor of internal validity.

4.4.2 Ethical challenges

The ethical guidelines for research have been followed in the process of this study. As The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (2016) state that the ethical norms are essential for good research practice and responsibility for the research community and most importantly for the participating individuals, communities and general society. All the participants have been informed about the aims of this project, its process and that participation were voluntary. Emails asking to fill out the survey and their forms included all the information needed as recommended by GDPR, NSD and NESH. The consent forms ([Appendix 4](#)) have been explained orally and signed by the interviewees before interviews took place. Audio data have been handled according to the GDPR and NSD guidelines respecting individual's privacy and personal information and stored in the storage of the University of Oslo. The researched cities, schools, names that were mentioned have been coded in the transcription process. However, due to the small amount of LHL schools and close connections within the Lithuanian community, it is extremely difficult to anonymize the schools completely. In addition, the leaders of school B and C have informed their communities about my visit in advance. No personal information was included in the observation process and informal conversations are not included as data.

Another ethical challenge in this project faced was the indirect involvement of children and their personal information. Both the teachers and parents talked a lot about their own students/children mentioning their names, difficulties they face and etc.

4.4.3 Limitations

As mentioned above this research project has encountered several limitations that will be discussed in this section. One of the main challenges for data collection was timing and the lack of it. The surveys were sent out during the summer holidays, which might have impacted the low participation rate.

Since the field trips required flying from Oslo to other cities in Norway, they were limited financially and time-wise. While the field trip to the City A allowed all the interviews to be arranged, they took place before the academic school year which resulted in participants being a little distant from the topic and disabled any observations in the school setting. Moreover, an interview with the leader of school A (and a teacher) had to be removed from data transcription due to very low audio quality since it took place in a café on a windy day. The field trip to the School B also had its issues, as the visit took place on the opening day, unfortunately, interviews could not be conducted as discussed with the leader of the school prior to the field trip. Timing of the visit caused it to be an atypical day at school, where the parents were busy looking after their children, discussing the current issues or getting to know the environment. The teachers had a lot of preparation work, supporting 2 new teachers and looking after their students. The interviews that were arranged in advance were cancelled due to participants unexpectedly changed plans as mentioned in the section. It is worth to mention that the opening day took place in a new setting, as this LHL school was moved to another school building in the City B. This resulted in some teachers and parents not finding their way, the inconsistencies in appointing spaces for each teacher, parents' café, etc. The field trip to School C only encountered some disturbance and lack of time for the interviews with the school leader. It is worth to mention that the mother interviewed at the School C were invited to participate by the teacher and had no prior relationship with the researcher which might have impacted their openness during the interviews, in comparison with the parents from School A and B. Differences in field trip timing and limited resources resulted in the differences of academic year

situations in the sample contexts – data from the School A was collected before the school year started, School B was visited on the first day and the interviews in School C were conducted later in Fall.

Small and the uneven sample size is also a limitation in this research project which was caused by scarce resources. Ideally, the same number of parents and teachers should have been interviewed. However, a qualitative research approach does not focus on large sample size but emphasizes the depth of data which is apparent in most of the interviews conducted (Bryman, 2012).

5 DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results of the research dividing it into sections that discuss each research question. The analysis includes the presentation and comparison of results from the survey, the interviews, and the policy document. First, this chapter will address the teachers' and parents' perceptions of what LHL education is or should be. Then their strategies and challenges will be discussed. Lastly, the analysis of the Integrated Program for the LHL schools will be presented. The differences and similarities in the perceptions and strategies of the teachers, the parents, and the Lithuanian authorities will be discussed in a comparative manner.

5.1 PERCEPTIONS OF THE LITHUANIAN HERITAGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The understanding of what heritage language education in general or Lithuanian heritage language education in particular is and how it has functioned historically and globally has been briefly discussed when providing some background in section 2. Bagdonavičienė et al. (2013) have presented a Lithuanian heritage language education model as developing an individual's ethnic identity awareness by using ICT and integrating intercultural education methodology. The examples of heritage language schools of other countries introduce the perception of heritage language education as balancing the roles of literacy practices, facing different challenges, navigating the heritage language learner's cultural identity and the strategies involved stakeholder's disclose (Tigert, 2020; Doerr & Lee, 2013; Maloof et al., 2006).

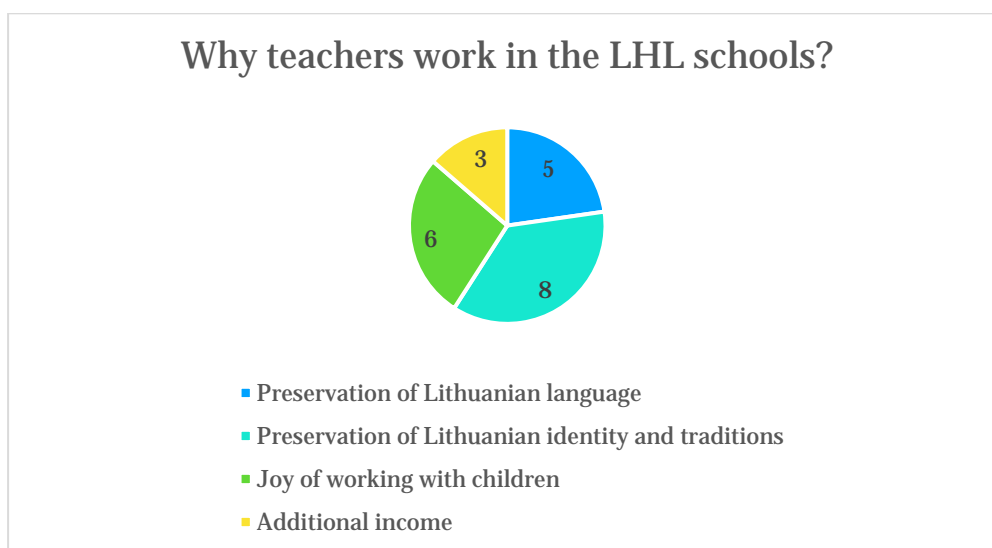
The goals of Schools A, B, and C that are stated in the official schools' websites were presented as background information in Chapter 2. They include providing the children with the possibility to communicate in Lithuanian, educate children about Lithuanian cultural heritage, history, and traditions and teach Lithuanian language. This section analyzes the perceptions of the interviewed teachers and parents and how they view the

LHL education. I look into how the stakeholders perceive the roles of language competence and integrated cultural identity by discussing their literacy practices and views on them.

5.1.1 Teachers

The teachers are the drivers of the LHL education, they are interacting with the children, preparing learning materials, and constructing what happens in their LHL school. The survey ([Appendix 2](#)) has disclosed number-based data, which highlights the importance teachers see in their work. The participants could choose several answers out of five options without a weighted order. The results from the survey show that eight out of eight teachers who participated claimed that the preservation of Lithuanian identity and traditions is one of the most important reasons for them working in the LHL schools.

Figure 4. *Reasons for the teachers to work in the Lithuanian heritage language schools*



The joy of working with children was the second major factor (six out of eight) for the teachers to work in the LHL school, and the preservation of the Lithuanian language was important for five out of eight participating teachers. These results also correspond to the interview data, which disclosed two main themes of the perception of LHL education: (1) Lithuanian language competence and (2) Lithuanian part of integrated cultural identity and the building of “imagined community” (Maloof et al., 2006; Norton & Toohy, 2011).

The survey distinguished several literacy practices regarding language competence and addressed the importance of it. Six out of eight of the teachers believe that learning spoken Lithuanian is very important, while developing written Lithuanian language skills was very important only for three of eight respondents. Learning Lithuanian in artistic ways (songs, drawing and crafts) was very important for half of participating teachers. The teachers described their point of view on how literacy practices function in the LHL schools, which is, in their opinion, closely connected to the development of reading and writing skills and Lithuanian grammar. Teacher Gina points out:

The academic learning was always happening <...>. You have all the alphabet letters and you divide it between the lessons that will be designated for learning the letters. Then we include both the word and sentence analysis, so we studied the Lithuanian language (T3-SB).

The teacher also describes that she had three lessons with the students, two dedicated to Lithuanian reading and writing, and the third for doing arts, crafts, or topic analysis (T2-SB). Developing writing and reading literacy skills play a key role in the LHL school and the interviewees believe in its importance, yet the understanding of the outcomes varies among the interviewees.

The results disclose that the teachers experience levels of pressure to achieve results in Lithuanian literacy. Teacher Mary (T4-SC), for instance, refers to her experience in LHL school as being very difficult during the first years as she had similar expectations for the kids as she had been a primary school teacher back in Lithuania. Teacher Mary expressed her worries about parents being disappointed that their children have not learned a lot at the end of the school year, her efforts trying to approach each child individually, deciding on giving homework or not. Yet, Mary concludes that she came to understand that not all of the intended results can be achieved, she highlights “The first year was like that, I really tried, I wanted a lot, but I was really happy about the result that kids learned to read in the end”

(T4-SC). The demands coming from the parents also affect how teachers perceive education in the LHL schools as teacher Lucy expresses “I do not want that they (parents) demand some kind of result from me”. She stresses that creating the space for children to play, be together, and enjoy themselves, where a teacher is their role model speaking Lithuanian, in her opinion, is the key to learn the language (T1-SA). This illustrates the result-oriented mindset of language competence development which appears to contradict the free format of LHL schools.

Teachers’ perceptions closely relate to the survey results, since the main emphasis is not on teaching the written Lithuanian, but encouraging children to practice oral Lithuanian through a variety of literacy events. The joy of working with children and appreciation of freedom are the motivating factors to teach in the LHL school based on the study results. Teacher Lucy describes how the school leader was expecting her to follow the books their school had received from the MESS, but she acted according to her own belief that the development of Lithuanian speaking skills is the most important literacy skill in the LHL school (T1-SA). Teacher Gina also claims that her main goal is to help children to speak Lithuanian (T3-SB). Based on the teacher interview data Lithuanian language competence development is not perceived as teaching of literacy skills in a formal setting, but more as a creation of sociocultural environment where literacies in Lithuanian language are developed.

Teacher Mary compares the LHL school with teaching back in Lithuania, she points out that there are less academic requirements in her work at LHL school, but they have to adapt in other ways “<...> you are required to be very flexible, to come up with good ideas how to teach what you want, how to explain to kids when they have a hard time when they do not have that intrinsic understanding of native language” (T4-SC). The interview results suggest the teachers perceive smaller achievements than expected by other stakeholders to be satisfactory. Mary highlights:

Maybe we do not have that result in grammar, that they would know the rules. But I'm happy that they communicate, they do something, they try. "Teacher, I can't do this!". Well, you can't, but when you say that it's something already. You already look at what the teacher gave you to do and even if you do not manage that, at least you react somehow" (T4-SC).

The teachers seem to be in line with Tigert (2020) in their understanding of literacies as complex and sociocultural phenomena, not limited to prescribed textbook assignments or curricula, but with a focus on what the children need to be able to communicate, regardless of grammatical errors. They also make use of a variation of literacy practices to ensure literacy socialization in Lithuanian when they make use of playing, singing as well as written dictation as learning strategies. The New Literacies and literacy socialization concepts unfold in the teachers' perceptions of LHL education. These concepts also show their ideologies and beliefs that are strongly connected with their Lithuanian identity.

Preserving Lithuanian integrated cultural identity is another main aspect of LHL education. The survey results state that five out of eight participating teachers think that organizing Lithuanian celebrations is very important and half of the participants give great importance to learning about Lithuanian culture, history, and traditions. These are the literacy practices of LHL schools that play an important role in identity formation. The teachers also view the heritage language learners as members of the pre-existing Lithuanian community including their relationships with the relatives in Lithuania, their Lithuanian parents or the local Lithuanian communities. The interviewed teachers expand on this topic explaining how they experience the Lithuanian identity formation and community building in the LHL education. Based on the interview results, the construction of an integrated cultural identity aspect comes very naturally for the teachers. Teacher Mary describes:

Everything I do is about Lithuania. If we talk about birds, it's the birds of Lithuania, nature of Lithuania, animals of Lithuania... The textbook itself is about Lithuania. I'm all for preserving the Lithuanian identity, talking about Lithuania each lesson, it is a Lithuanian school in the end. I want it, parents want it, the events are about it (T4-SC).

The development of Lithuanian cultural identity in the LHL schools includes teacher's attitudes based on their experiences, the Lithuanian celebrations, and the strategies in learning processes. Teacher Lucy also thinks that "Lithuanian-ness" comes naturally in the LHL education and it is the school's responsibility to teach about Lithuanian cultural identity by showing traditional clothing or singing folk songs (T1-SA). The teachers reflect on their personal reasons for working in the LHL schools as preserving their own Lithuanian cultural identity. For instance, teacher Monica mentions that she works in the LHL school out of guilt for emigrating from Lithuania so she could cherish her patriotism that came from her grandparents' struggles in exile in Siberia (T5-SA). This discloses how the teachers view the education in LHL school and what motivates them to put great effort into working with the heritage language learners.

Moreover, the results disclose that the teachers perceive the complexity of the integrated cultural identity in their heritage language students as teacher Mary commented on "terrible Norwegian handwriting" or the Norwegian way of always celebrating with a cake. Mary believes that Lithuanian calligraphic writing is better, but she has accepted that her students write differently in the Norwegian school and decided to embrace it. The attitude towards Norwegian aspects of students' identity and its practices appear to be slightly negative as the teachers base their perceptions on their experiences in Lithuania. However, teacher Mary simultaneously recognized that her students come from the Norwegian environment and the Lithuanian cultural practices cannot exchange Norwegian ones (T4-SA). This reflects that the teachers have difficulties navigating the complexity of the cultural identity integrating several cultures of their students, yet they realize that the

students in LHL schools are constantly maneuvering between their Norwegian and Lithuanian identities.

Lithuanian celebrations such as the national days, Christmas, Easter, and Winter Carnival *Užgavėnės*³ [Fat Tuesday] play a key role in LHL education. Preparing and celebrating these days contributes to the preservation of the Lithuanian identity and the building of the Lithuanian community. Teacher Gina highlights the importance of having the parents involved in the celebrations. She illustrates:

We did *Užgavėnės* celebration recently and before it used to be that parents get together and just chat, but now they were invited to join our circle since we said: “If you don’t participate, the children won’t either.” So everybody got involved, even without costumes, but they danced and participated in games. It’s important that parents participate in those common celebrations. Kids see how parents talk together during all those, it’s important to try to get everybody involved (T3-SB).

This short story discloses how the Lithuanian celebrations and the building of a community interact with establishing a belonging to a group element in the LHL schools, which is essential, based on the concepts of integrated cultural identity and language competence in heritage language education (Malooof et al., 2006). Participating and preparing for Lithuanian celebrations such as “*Užgavėnės*“ illustrate a type of literacy event which develops into a literacy practice constructing the Lithuanian part of heritage language learner’s integrated cultural identity. Moreover, as Gina mentions building a community plays an important part in LHL school which shows how the teachers perceive the importance of belonging to a Lithuanian community.

³ A masquerade festival celebrated before Ash Wednesday also known as Fat Tuesday or Pancake day, to mark the ending of the winter and enter Lent period.

Connecting the pre-existing membership of the Lithuanian community and building a future one in the LHL school refers to the concept of “imagined community” (Norton & Toohey, 2011). It unfolds in the teachers’ perceptions of how the Lithuanian celebrations and traditions are practiced in the LHL schools, how the parents are involved in these practices, or how the knowledge about Lithuania is developed. This explains how the LHL education influences the future Lithuanian cultural identity of a heritage language learner by introducing the Lithuanian traditions and practicing them in the LHL schools together with the teaching staff, the parents, and peers.

Language competence development unfolds in a variety of literacy practices used in the LHL schools, from doing grammar exercises to acting out a Lithuanian fairytale. The teachers constantly balance the more “mainstream” language learning literacy practices and the creative practices of HL learning that refer to New Literacies concepts (Street, 2003). The teachers’ experiences and beliefs imply that practicing speaking skills based on literacy socialization and NLS perspectives is more useful and relevant but parents’ expectations for their children to develop the Lithuanian reading and writing literacy skills have to be taken into consideration (Tigert, 2020). As teacher Mary sums up “We depend on parent’s opinions, but we are also experienced enough to hold on to certain aspects” (T4-SC).

5.1.2 Parents

According to the data collected in the study on Lithuanian language and identity (Jakaitė-Balbukinė, 2015), 93% of respondents agree that the home environment plays the key role in heritage language acquisition, yet 62% also link Lithuanian language acquisition to formal teaching and learning such as LHL school. The interviews with the parents of heritage language learners address this claim and disclose how the parents understand formal teaching and learning in the LHL schools. Based on the interview data, parents’ perceptions of LHL education also balance between the key concepts: cultural identity and language competence. A consensus on the role of integrated identity among the parents is clear - the LHL school is a place to learn about the Lithuanian culture, traditions and reflect

heritage language learners' family background and expand the child's cultural capital. Parents' perceptions suggest the integrated aspect of heritage language learner's cultural identity as valuing both host and home cultures (Maloof et al., 2006). This addresses how the parents perceive the roles of Lithuanian and Norwegian cultural identities in the LHL education. The concept of investment in heritage language learners' cultural capital also appears in the parents' views (Norton & Toohy, 2011). Agatha explains:

Our kids are born and raised here already. Sometimes it is hard for them to understand why I should be Lithuanian. Their home is here, their friends are here. Ok, you also speak Norwegian, so where is the problem? This generation is already international" (P2-SA).

This illustrates the integration of Lithuanian and Norwegian parts of the cultural identity of a heritage language learner and recognizes the international aspect of it. This insight of heritage language students not only navigating two cultures, but also belonging to multicultural society is found in other heritage language school communities (Tigert, 2020). It also addresses the problematic integrative element of the identity as both cultures are valued equally by the parents yet the navigation between the identities is difficult for their children. Nevertheless, the heritage language learners switch their identities depending on the sociocultural context and the LHL school is the place for the Lithuanian one.

The interviewed parents have expressed positive attitudes towards celebrating various Lithuanian celebrations, learning about Lithuanian history, geography, and folklore in the LHL school. This shows that literacy socialization focusing on the cultural identity is important in the LHL education according to the parents. The parents also recognize that their children are navigating between several cultures. In contrast, the understanding of language competence development varies among the parents. As the research on heritage language suggests, heritage language learners have better spoken language skills (Tigert, 2020). There are contradictions about the ways of literacy instruction, studying of

Lithuanian grammar, choice of learning materials or contents. This struggle appears to be common in the heritage language education as the parents want to provide a more formal literacy socialization setting for their children (Tigert, 2020). This section will analyze what the parents think LHL education is or should be. The participants view LHL education based on their experiences that are strongly influenced by their child's abilities and personality or parenting perspectives.

The main goals of LHL school (according to schools' websites) include creating an environment where children can communicate in Lithuanian by teachers guiding them in the activities that benefit child's development appear to mostly coincide with parents' perception of the LHL education. Three out of eight interviewed parents have expressed their trust in the existing system, the teachers, and the learning materials provided. Carmen, for instance, answers when asked about her opinion on what is taught in the school "I just trust the teachers, because I'm not a pedagogue myself" (P8-SC). This perception discloses that there are parents who do not question the LHL education they experience. One might argue that the needs and the expectations for this group of parents are fulfilled in their LHL school. The rest of the interviewed parents expressed varying perceptions and suggestions on how they think LHL schools should be improved.

A belief that there should be more focus on formal literacy instruction such as grammar, structured curriculum, and concrete lesson plans occurs analyzing the parent interview results. The data suggest that parents believe their children are missing the basic understanding of grammar rules. The limited language competence in literacy skills based on parents' perceptions imply the subtractive bilingualism (Maloof et al., 2006). As the use of Norwegian language literacy skills overwhelms the heritage language, the parents refer to the need for LHL education to socialize the literacy skills in Lithuanian. Amy, for example, explains when asked what her expectations for LHL education are:

Maybe I wanted grammar. It would be good if somebody taught them about Lithuanian special letters [*nosinės*], things like that. On the other hand, I understand that it is extremely difficult. You get together only every other week. In that case, I imagine there should be an extremely good program, you would repeat things. Because if you learn about “ū”, “o”, “uo”⁴ in one lesson, it doesn’t mean that after two weeks he will remember that. It should be more. I do not know (P3-SA).

The expectations to have a more formal literacy instruction show parents’ perceptions of the overall learning content in the LHL school. Beth, for instance, believes that the topic plan of the School B ([Appendix 3](#)) they had was not well prepared as she remembers hearing one teacher talk about harvest and another about tolerance on the same day (P6-SB). Aria stated that the whole format has to be transformed if the results in Lithuanian literacy or the needs of the children cannot be accommodated. Because of this reason, she decided that her daughter would not attend the LHL school. Aria explains:

My daughter simply got bored. Nothing new, no progress. Apart from the times before celebrations, Christmas, Mother’s Day. I have not talked to the school leader and have not given her any advice. Nevertheless, I talked to another mom and told her that this school does not give us any benefits. In my opinion, real pedagogues have to work in school. However, in reality, we don’t have pedagogues here. We don’t. Then you should organize it as some kind of after school activity. Maybe like a drama studio. Because their age is so different from 3 year-olds until 15 year-olds. So what that Abby and Bella are at a similar age. Their levels are very different. She is neither with the small ones nor with the big ones. She comes to school and goes to help the little ones. She has nothing else to do there. If they did some drama activities or something,

⁴ Children who speak Norwegian as first language tend to experience difficulties with pronouncing, reading and writing these letters in Lithuanian due to linguistic differences between languages.

maybe some poem reading, some plays, they could read, act, at least four lines for the little ones... But then at least they might be interested. Now, my kids don't enjoy it at all (P4-SA).

As Aria's reflections show, the parents also might question the content and the format of the LHL school since their needs are not fulfilled by the existing system in their school. In her opinion, the issue was the lack of pedagogical experience, knowledge from the teaching staff. Aria's daughter was one of the few who completed several grades in the Lithuanian general education system and has developed a high level of proficiency in Lithuanian literacies. Aria was expecting her daughter to take the Lithuanian language exam ("privatisteksamen" discussed in [section 1.1](#)). She realized that studying in LHL school is not enough to prepare for the exam. Aria's daughter and other children from the School A were a part of "særskilt språkopplæring" [special language program to be able to study in Norwegian], "tospråklig fagopplæring" [bilingual schooling] and "morsmålsopplæring" [native language schooling] programs. (Utdanningsdirektoratet, n.d.). The practice of these programs in the School's A municipality gave the children an opportunity to study Lithuanian as their native language as a part of general education. Aria, however, was disappointed with the current "særskilt språkopplæring" provided by the Lithuanian teacher in the general school as she only "chatted and ate cookies" with her daughter. Aria was hoping that their previous Lithuanian language teacher from the municipality school would come to their LHL school, but she was unable due to lack of time. Aria's perception of LHL education shows an opinion about the critical elements of the LHL school (P5-SA).

Yet, the majority of parents view the LHL school as a space for the development of language competence and the socialization of literacies for their children. As Beth states, "We say that Lithuanian environment and communication in Lithuanian is most important here" (P6-SB). The parents realize that it is extremely difficult for the children to develop proficiency in literacies due to having lessons a few times a month without any previous knowledge of written Lithuanian. Simultaneously, they expect to see their children

benefiting from the LHL school in some form, developing some types of literacy skills to continue their education in LHL school.

It is also worth to look into the case of Amelia and her two children; she was the only interviewee with the experience in LHL school and re-emigrating back to Lithuania (P5-SA). Preparing the heritage language learners to enter Lithuanian general education is a part of Lithuanian authorities' strategy for LHL schools, as will be discussed in [section 4.4](#). This situation, however, is not very common in the LHL schools' communities in Norway based on the interview results. As teacher Mary mentions, she recommends parents choosing "more serious schooling" if they express intentions to prepare their children for entrance to Lithuanian general education. This includes the children from pre-school age to high school students whose parents decide to return to Lithuania. Yet, Amelia expressed positive attitudes toward LHL school's support in preparations for the re-emigration, her daughter entered pre-school and her son repeated the first grade in Lithuanian school after finishing it in Norway. Amelia explains, "The Lithuanian School was a huge help. The teacher worked with my older son Gabe individually sometimes, we started to read Lithuanian books during the summer (P5-SA). The parent also mentions that she bought various exercise books bookstore consultant recommended in Lithuania, which helped a lot when working at home with her son and preparing for the school year in Lithuania. The experience of this parent illustrates that LHL schools can offer support for the re-emigrating families but individual preparations with the heritage language are needed.

All these different perceptions are interconnected and the interviewed parents express understanding that there are different opinions and needs in the parent community and the schools are constantly balancing all these expectations. Cindy highlights "There are all kinds of opinions here. I have my own understanding; I believe my kids need this. Therefore, others do not affect me really. I can say it out loud 'Only good things about school or nothing'" (P7-SC). Carmen agrees, "There are always all types of opinions, but the majority decides. The unsatisfied ones have to adapt" (P8-SC). The cooperation between the parents

and teaching staff becomes crucial for the LHL schools to function well; the experience of the participants shows the importance of communication to balance everybody's expectations. Beth explains:

The main question here is what do we expect? This question comes up in the meeting with new parents. We do not go to school to only learn grammar. We do not expect that every two weeks in three-hour classes children are going to learn how to write. They also have drama and other classes. Sure, we want that the little ones would get to know “ė, č, ą” extra letters in the Lithuanian alphabet, that in Lithuania we have something different. And the most important for us is that children would speak Lithuanian in the LHL school (P6-SB).

Beth's insights show the common perception of LHL education. She explains the role of language competence in the LHL school as developing oral Lithuanian skills and supporting literacy socialization and NLS theories that view

As interview data with the parents show, the LHL education expands the borders of the school as the development of language competence and the integrated cultural identity also forms in the context of heritage language learner's family milieu (Maloof et al., 2006). The background of heritage language learner's literacy socialization also includes family habits, children's relationships with parents, siblings, relatives, Lithuanian friends, their personal qualities, and experiences. All these elements become very relevant to the parent's perception of the LHL education. Thus, Lithuanian language competence and the integrated cultural identity as the main aspects of LHL education are strongly influenced by the informal and contextual settings of the heritage language learner. Parents often refer to experiences such as their child remembering the name of Trakai castle or legend about how Grand Duke Gediminas dreaming of an iron wolf and deciding to build the city of Vilnius when they travel in Lithuania. LHL education being a part of a family's life can influence parents feeling proud of their children, experiencing gratification from their efforts put in

LHL education. Agatha explains, for example, that she and her son started reading the Lithuanian books from LHL school's Library every day before sleep, which has become a type of routine and time for them to bond (P2-SA). Preserving the Lithuanian language and culture for parents means the ability to connect with their child. The interview data suggest that the parents realize that they lack the time, knowledge, or a special occasion to tell their children about their cultural heritage, their family roots, or other valued personal experiences. The LHL school and the teachers become the sources that can provide this knowledge and understanding of their cultural background. The parents mention that the topics that are discussed and the LHL school's classes provide them with the opportunity to tell their child about the region their family comes from, the dialect their grandparents speak, and simply bond with a child.

Child's ability to connect with their grandparents and relatives also plays an important role in heritage language learner's language competence and integrated cultural identity. Cindy explains "But when kids go back to their grandparents in Lithuania, who only speak Lithuanian and they are not able to communicate, I don't want that. So I try to not get there" (P7-SC). Connection and communication with relatives show strong influence in a child's socialization of literacy skills, as Agatha describes:

My son only started speaking Lithuanian when he was 5 years old. I had almost lost hope that he will speak at all. Even though we always spoke Lithuanian with them and around them and we still do. I tell him something in Lithuanian; he answers me in Norwegian. I left him with grandma for one week, I come back and he speaks Lithuanian suddenly. Maybe he was shy. I don't really know what that was about (P2-SA).

Agatha's story discloses that the development of language competence and cultural identity takes place in their family milieu, not only the LHL school. Simultaneously, the LHL school becomes a special place for parents where their kids can learn about their cultural heritage,

history, and traditions outside of everyday life. The language competence skills, Lithuanian part of heritage language learner's cultural identity experiences, and knowledge of Lithuanian heritage from the LHL school enter multiple contexts of family's lives and vice versa.

Lastly, the structure of the LHL school, the differences in children's abilities in Lithuanian language proficiency, and their personalities define what parents expect of the LHL education. A parent whose child is fluent or maybe even finished several grades in Lithuania does not need to study the ABC, while another child might need help understanding basic words. This is mainly a challenge for the teachers, yet the parents make a decision if the LHL school meets their child's needs. Agatha reflects how her daughter deals with learning in the LHL school:

Bella is very goal-oriented, responsible; she knows that she will have results based on how much she studied. <...> You know, I checked Bella once and she left like three mistakes. Then she told me that I don't know grammar. She doesn't have that feeling, but she knows. This week she asked: "Mom, in Lithuanian, do all letters have "nosinès" (special Lithuanian characters)?" She starts to get the system, but she is simply missing that theoretical basis (P2-SA).

The literacy practices often do not match the child's abilities and Lithuanian language competence, which leads to parents' frustration and disagreements with the teaching staff. This is a result of a small number of students in the LHL school, where the teachers are not able to facilitate each heritage language learner individually or apply differentiation strategies. Parents' needs and child's abilities are the factors that construct expectations and perceptions of LHL education. Thus, the development of language competence including formality of the instruction, stakeholders' perspectives on literacy socialization is the problematic aspect of the LHL school. The parents perceive the LHL school as an environment where their child's language competence can be developed in a more formal

way. Moreover, LHL education is also a place where the heritage language students can practice their Lithuanian identity by participating in Lithuanian celebrations and learning about Lithuanian culture. As a result, the LHL education shaped the child's pre-existing membership to the Lithuanian community as well as influencing his future identity structure. The ways stakeholders perceive the LHL education are strongly influenced by all the challenges they encounter. Such as Aria's experience addressing the lack of teacher experience and knowledge lead her to think about the change of the whole format of LHL school. Her insights are in line with Wu's et al. (2011) findings showing that the nature of teaching in the heritage language schools might be problematic due to multiple issues teachers face.

5.2 CHALLENGES THAT LITHUANIAN HERITAGE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS FACE

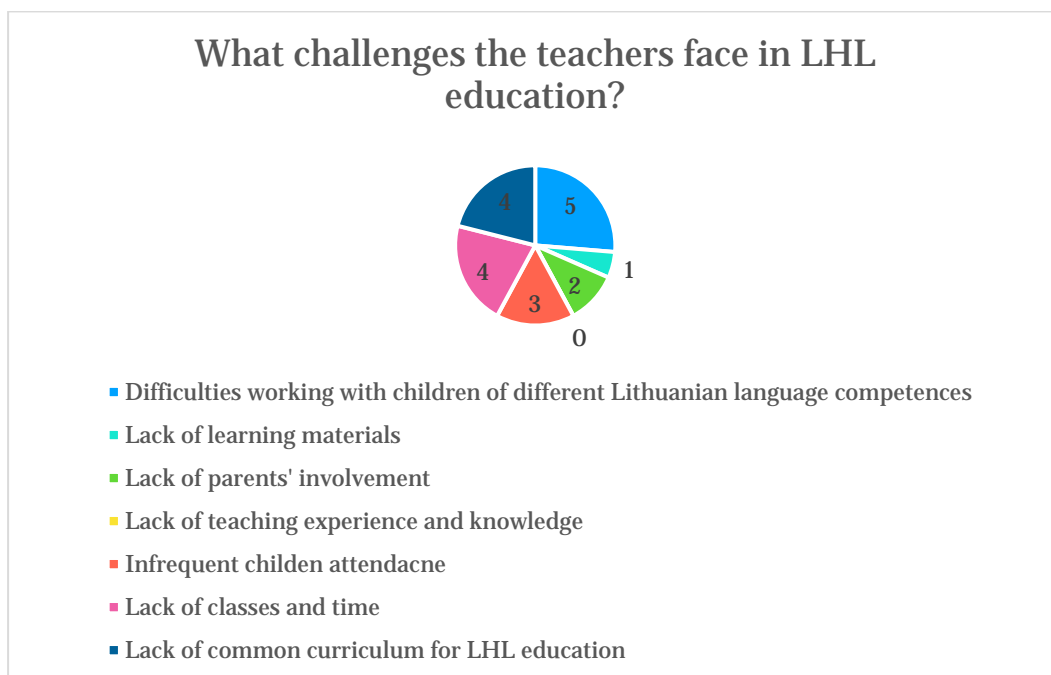
Researchers have addressed various issues that heritage language schools deal with including governmentality issues, the lack of teacher professionalism (Doerr & Lee, 2009; Wu et al, 2011; Maloof et al., 2006; Tigert, 2020). Complex educational phenomenon such as LHL schools benefits from being analyzed through different dimensions as they might be influenced and transformed by the government officials, the global or local tendencies, and the interrelations within the schools or classrooms (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014). On the macro level, the heritage language education issues vary depending on the realities of the minority communities, the host cultures, and the social and political dynamics of home countries. As introduced in [section 2.3](#), the Japanese heritage language schools, for instance, experience tensions between the more challenging government-appointed and the easier school-made heritage language learning course (Doerr & Lee, 2009). At the school level, the teachers and parents encounter problems in other ways. For example, Wu et al. (2011) have investigated the professional identity of teachers in Chinese heritage language schools in the USA. The study disclosed that teachers experience "a weak sense of professionalism, lack of materials and training, complicated relationships with parents, and viewed this as an 'extra job'" (Wu et al., 2011). The authors conclude that there is "the need to rethink teaching and learning

as a sociocultural process linked to teachers' self-worth, professional identity, and teaching contexts" (Wu et al., 2011, p. 12). On the micro-level, the individual experiences of heritage language learners, their parents, and teachers also vary and they learn differently as the study of Japanese heritage language learners disclosed (Doer & Lee, 2013). Tigert (2020) has addressed that the heritage language education based on the Finish in the US example tends to focus on the relevancy and entertainment in the heritage language learning processes to overcome the challenges. These examples illustrate a variety of difficulties that the stakeholders of heritage language education encounter. Aleksandravičius & Kuzmickaitė (2008) have also addressed the challenges LHL education has faced from the historic perspective such as outdated learning materials and teaching strategies, financial difficulties. The authors claim that today's LHL education should enter the phase of transformation (Aleksandravičius, 2008). The financial issues LHL encounters correlates with Siiner's (2017) study on Estonian heritage language school tuition in Denmark as she points out that tuition fee makes learning heritage language available only for the resourceful families. Some of the challenges in schools A, B, and C have been already mentioned in [section 4.1](#). This section will discuss the issues of LHL education that teachers and parents face in more detail.

5.2.1 Teachers

The teachers as main drivers of LHL education encounter various challenges that shape their perceptions and strategies. Teachers were asked to choose one to three challenges out of eight options that they believe are major in the LHL schools.

Figure 5. *Challenges the teachers face in the Lithuanian heritage language education*



The survey results show the main challenge teachers face is the difficulty to work with children who have very different Lithuanian language skills. Half of the survey respondents also believe that the lack of time, classes only twice a month, as well as lack of a common curriculum for the LHL schools, are the major issues ([Appendix 2](#)). The lack of the LHL program will be further discussed in section 4.4. These are among the other issues teachers named in more detail during the interviews. The results of the interviews disclose several areas where teachers believe they experience most challenges: differences in children's language skills and abilities, parent expectations, and schoolwork organization.

The interviewed teachers explain how working with children that have very different language skills and abilities unfold in their work in LHL school. Teacher Mary illustrates:

There is a girl who was going to our school for a while, and last year she joined my group. She is reading, writing, communicating fluently and so I asked the parents - which grade she finished in Lithuania? Apparently, she has never studied there and

learned everything in this school. So there are talented kids, they have it in them to learn when there are others that need to work a bit more (T4-SC).

Mary reflects on the variation of students in her group as some have attended general school in Lithuania, others have no literacy skills in Lithuanian apart from what they learn in the LHL school. Teachers mention the learning strategy of differentiation when one student is given a simpler task and another gets more complex extra exercises, as well as homework. This strategy also allows the teachers to facilitate the complexity and content to suit students' needs and abilities. Teacher Mary mentions that she often gives one exercise to one student and something different to another student. The classroom dynamics are a challenge for the teachers as they seek to socialize the literacies by creating an environment where children feel comfortable. This requires the teachers to get familiar with the children, be well prepared, and be very flexible.

An organizational issue is also closely connected to the differences in language abilities. Before each school year, new groups have to be formed. Some children do not come to school anymore, teachers change and new children join. Teacher Mary explains that her group of students went to a new teacher this year, but the same group includes new beginners and a few students from another group making it a classroom of three types of students. If a new beginner student is of the same age as his classmates, the teachers do not want to allocate him with first graders (T4-SC). This results in not only having to deal with different language abilities but also having children who attended school for several years, completed certain course materials, while newcomers of the same age have not done that. This situation makes teachers' work very problematic. Teacher Monica correlates the different student abilities to the challenges in schoolwork organization and material selection:

This year it's more complicated because we have a group of two levels. The oldest group "Oaks" was connected with "Ashes". The older ones usually leave, it happens

after 6th-7th grades, 8th grade in general education becomes more difficult and they start to focus on Norwegian school. It was very difficult because for the younger group that textbook would have been great, but for the Oaks, it was a well-known textbook which was way too easy (T5-SC).

Monica's reflections disclose the problems LHL schools encounter when forming groups of students, the learning processes, material selection that rely on the circumstances in the school each academic year.

Achieving results in literacy

As the classes take place only twice a month, the teachers feel pressure to choose the right topics, activities, and texts. They have a hard time achieving the required results in literacy as the children tend to forget what they have learned in the previous lesson. In case they miss one day of classes, there is a gap of almost a month; therefore achieving results in Lithuanian literacy becomes problematic. A lot of repetition happens. The teachers often balance between literacy socialization in creative and fun ways versus more formal types of instruction and striving for results. Teacher Mary remembers that there was an agreement in their school to start using ink pens and teach students to write in calligraphy, but after few exciting lessons, the students returned to using pencils and left pens at home. She believed that one could not change the learning habits that are formed in the Norwegian general school (T4-SC). The teachers' experience shows, to achieve high levels of Lithuanian language competence and literacy skills only in the LHL education is very difficult, thus the teachers tend to focus on the socialization of literacy in the most relevant, enjoyable manner.

The interview data also suggest that the teachers experience issues with the learning materials. Textbooks are often quite boring for children. The pictures are not of the best quality so the teachers have to put effort to make the materials more interesting and

relevant for the students. Teacher Monica names the materials as the main challenge in the LHL education. She also explains how they tried to improve the learning materials:

How to find a text that wouldn't be only about birds and flowers for the older kids. Very difficult. That is why we had the newspaper, so we wrote about the relevant topics for the kids that are of the reading age. About other schools, for example. Reading is not only about boring literature texts, but also short anecdotes, crosswords, something that is interesting for them. That it would not be *Šaltinėlis* text with relatively difficult words, childish pictures, they want skateboards, computers. If you give them a text according to their age, say 8th grade, they do not understand it (T5-SC).

The results show that a lot of trying and failing take place in the LHL schools as the teachers always try to improve the learning objectives, teaching practices, and materials.

Working in the LHL school

The interview data suggest that the teachers often experience challenges that are related to the organization of work in the LHL school and its changes. The teachers reflect on the difficulties they encountered in the process of development of their school and professional transformation. Teacher Mary explains how difficult the beginning in LHL school was as she was not familiar of such format which caused a lot of stress to her “It was hard because I wanted the kids to learn things like reading, grammar, like how we work in Lithuanian schools” (T4-SC). The change of mindset on how to approach working with heritage language learners is a challenge, the teachers who worked in the Lithuanian education system are not prepared for. Based on interview results, this transformation is both personal and strategical – a teacher is required to adapt and figure out a way to work in an unfamiliar context. Simultaneously the LHL school itself is growing, changing, or might even be on the verge of closing down. Teacher Lucy mentioned, that at the time of the interview she was unsure if their school will continue working as too few children were

registered. Teacher Gina, for example, told about the first years when her school was being established and no materials were available, teaching staff had no experience in heritage language education and the only way was to constantly adapt, rethink and be flexible. She remembers how they simply printed out lots of exercises for one class and had to reduce the volume or change the tasks each time (T3-SB). Teacher Lucy also points out the transformation within the school as the school formats, the leaders, and the students change - the organization of work does change as well. She describes her experience about the transformation to a more formal school format:

I think it was from the school administration, the leaders. That education should be more formal. The administration did not really consult the teachers at that point. If that is something we want to do or not. She came and said, “this is really good, let’s do this”. I talked to somebody from the US. They use it, so will we. Well...Ok, then (T1-SA).

Lucy’s experience shows that working in the LHL school requires adaptability and flexibility from the teachers since the strategies of stakeholders involved might change and lead to transformations in how LHL education is perceived in the school’s community. The teachers working in LHL schools experience a lot of changes as they have to constantly adapt to the situations personally, professionally, and as members of LHL schools’ community.

The financial and administrative support is also a challenge for the LHL teaching staff since schools usually function from tuition fees and limited MESS support for the learning materials. This aspect of heritage language shapes various elements in the LHL schools including heritage language education’s availability, schoolwork organization, teacher’s ability to develop professional skills, and access to learning materials. From the teachers’ perspective, interview data disclose that financial resources influence the work in LHL schools. Teacher Mary mentions that she can only dedicate Saturdays for the LHL

school as she also has a full-time job and sometimes is not able to participate in the seminars or other events (T4-SC).

According to the survey, seven out of eight of the participant teachers said that support from the MESS is lacking and six out of eight would like the Norwegian authorities to support LHL education better. Local Norwegian municipalities allow the LHL schools to use general school buildings, yet the learning materials often have to be brought to school by teachers themselves. The financial situation often influences the choices and the variety of learning materials. For instance, purchasing individual exercise books for the children is rare as the school tries to reuse the materials. Thus copying exercises and texts is the most usual practice.

Financial resources have a strong influence on LHL schools' functioning including teacher's professional development, improvement of learning materials, and facilities.

Parents expectations

The interview data suggest that the main challenge teachers face in the LHL schools overall is dealing with parents' expectations which often puts them in uncomfortable situations. Teacher Gina reflects "I'd say a challenge is parents' expectations. They form an illusion for themselves in the beginning, but later they understand that miracles will not happen." (T3-SB). Teacher Monica also explains that sometimes the conflicts lead to parents leaving the school altogether due to the differences in understanding what the LHL school is.

Teacher Lucy expresses her concerns regarding parents' involvement, she believes that it is essential for teachers to work closely with parents, since adapting to each child's abilities is crucial in LHL education, and parents are the ones that know that children best (T1-SA).

The lack of motivation is also one of the key issues in the LHL education according to the teachers. Pierce argues that motivation “should be mediated by an understanding of learners' investments in the target language” (1995, p. 20) that are also connected with heritage language learners' cultural identity. The author claims that being a motivated student might not indicate that the individual is invested in various social situations (Norton & Toohey, 2011). This logic grounds the role of parents investing in LHL education and suggests a rationale for the strategies stakeholders hold. The interviewed teachers mention that the parents complain about their kids not wanting to go to school. Based on the interview results the most common explanation is that the LHL school takes place on Saturdays when most all their Norwegian peers have days off while these kids have to go to school. Yet teachers highlight that kids do enjoy themselves at school. Teacher Mary explains:

Parents use to tell me “Oh the kids don't want to come, it's a tragedy to wake up in the morning and come here...” But then I tell them that when kids come here they feel good, they play, they learn, they chat, they get wild, they chat together, they forget that it was hard to wake up in the morning. It's just child psychology. Some say “Why it's like this!? Do kids get in fights here or something”, I say “No, it's all great here.”
(T4-SA)

heritage language learner's investment in language competence development is situational, from the moment children enter the LHL school they begin to identify as their peers of Lithuanian background, not Norwegian. Thus the integrated cultural identity of an HL learner allows Lithuanian language competence to develop. The investment factor is also connected with the parents' involvement in the LHL education. Teacher Gina believes that it is parents' responsibility to motivate their child, she states:

Of course, that motivation when parents inspire their child to come to school, it's work. Many, like my friend's kids say, “they don't want to go” and parents tend to

“jump around” their kid nowadays and they don’t let their kids {to the Lithuanian school}. Here, exactly here, I see the issue. It is the parents who are supposed to motivate their children to go to school (T3-SB).

The lack of motivation reflects the heritage language learner’s investment in the development of language proficiency and literacy skills. One might argue that this challenge is the result of the subtractive bilingualism issue in the LHL education and the parents as well as the students in LHL schools experience difficulties navigating their integrated cultural identities (Maloof et al., 2006).

5.2.2 Parents

The challenges parents in LHL schools face, vary depending on their child's abilities, personal experiences, and perceptions of LHL education. Based on the results, one of the key issues in LHL education for the parents is the school’s ability to adapt to their child's needs which corresponds to the question of the heritage language learner’s language competence. Generally, the interviewed parents have very positive attitudes towards the LHL school and they're satisfied with the instruction, literacy practices, events, and the environment. The most discussed difficulties in the LHL education according to the parents’ views are the ways their children are socialized into the literacies; how the literacy practices in the LHL school are organized, what the learning contents are.

Based on the interview results one of the major issues parents as well as teachers names, are the differences in language skills and age within the groups of students. It is very apparent in the School A. Agatha and Amy stress that the group of all the students are at different levels, which makes learning very problematic. Amy points out that when her son entered the group of the oldest students, he was the only 9-year-old while there were kids 13 or 14-year-old. She remembers that he would come back with tears as the tasks would be too difficult for him (P2&P3-SA). On the contrary, Aria whose teenage daughter was also a part of the same group, decided to drop out of the school starting the academic year the

interview took place. She believes that the exercises were too easy and boring for her daughter Abby, not matching her Lithuanian language skills (P5-SA). Agatha's teenage daughter Bella also belonged to the same student group, however as she was already born in Norway and never studied Lithuanian before, the exercises were well suited for her in comparison to Aria's daughter.

To sum up, the challenges related to the differences in students' language skills and abilities are caused by having students born in Lithuania who completed some schooling there, and children that have been attending the LHL school since a young age or joined in later years all in one group. This leads to child's frustrations, lack of motivation, and struggles in the learning process. The struggles that teachers and parents experience are strongly connected. Most parents do realize the situation that teachers end up with having to adapt to every child's needs. However, the parents focus on their child's language competence development above all. Amy describes the issues her son experienced doing dictations that were too hard for him, which made his mother address the issue with the teachers. She stressed "But if it's difficult for the teachers, it's difficult for me, then we got to do something. So we were finished with all the dictations very rapidly." (P3-SA). This situation relates to the Agatha's and Amy's insights about a task to read "The Little Prince" at home, this was an example of a problematic school activity that came up in both interviews. They believed the text to be a bad choice as the book did not resonate with pre-teenagers and the words were too difficult for the children to understand (P2&P3-SA).

Financial resources, lack of time, and motivation to attend the LHL school is another set of challenges related to LHL education that can be found in the interview data. The interviewees did not distinguish the tuition as an issue, yet Carmen believes it might be a challenge for some parents (P8-Sc). The reviewed literature on LHL schools abroad has also discussed that financial resources, mobility issues, and the lacking children's motivation to study in heritage language school are the challenges the parents face (Celešiūtė, 2008). Agatha, Amy, and Carmen mention that managing children's extracurricular activities,

responsibilities for the general school, and family time often interfere with LHL education (P2,P3&P8–SA&SC).

The issue of heritage language learner's motivation from the parents' perspective also makes the LHL education problematic. The study on Lithuanian emigrant and family (Celešiūtė, 2008) suggests that the parents experience the lack of motivation as their children get older, start questioning the need for Lithuanian language and identity. It becomes difficult for the parents to motivate the children. The most common motivating factor is presenting the ability to use the language as social capital for the child's future (Celešiūtė, 2008). Interestingly, as the heritage language learners grow older they begin to show positive attitudes toward Lithuanian language and identity as Agatha's and Aria's reflected about their teenage daughters (P2&P4-SA). The interviewees express similar experiences and tendencies that correlate with the findings of the study "Emigration and the family: problems and challenges of children's education" (Celešiūtė, 2008).

All the different aspects of LHL education disclose difficulties that expand from the LHL school to the home environment, that the teachers and the leaders of schools face when planning and exercising the literacy practices in the LHL schools. Without a doubt, there are multiple challenges parents of heritage language learners face in their family environment but this study seeks to focus on parents' issues related to the LHL education based on the interview data. As the results show, for the parents to cooperate well with the teachers, the school staff has to be experienced in this special type of education, use well-developed learning materials and organize the LHL school's literacy events attentively. According to the interviewed teachers and parents, the understanding of language competence development through literacy socialization in LHL education is the key to success and consistency. Cooperation between the parents and the teachers allows to overcome the challenges more effectively and better adapt to every heritage language learner's needs.

5.3 LITERACY PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES IN THE LITHUANIAN HERITAGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The strategies used in LHL education unfold in the stakeholders' understanding of LHL education and the literacy practices they exercise. Language socialization and New Literacy theories operationalize the investigation of the literacy events described in the interview data that show the ideologies and beliefs of involved stakeholders (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). This section will take a closer look into the literacy events and practices that parents and teachers use in the LHL education.

5.3.1 Teachers

Based on the interview data there are few elements that describe the literacy practices used by the teachers which including (1) the use of learning materials in the literacy events and (2) the organization of literacy practices in the school.

Choosing proper textbooks has been a challenge for the teachers in the LHL schools. They have described their experiences and thoughts on working with several Lithuanian language books including ones made specifically for the LHL schools as *Labas, Kalba mane augina, Kelionė į Lietuvą*, and textbooks used in Lithuanian general education as *Šaltinėlis* and *Pupa*. It is worth to mention that textbooks appropriated for LHL education are relatively recent, published in 2010, 2012 and 2015. Teacher Gina tells about the beginning of her work in School B “There were no special programs for the Lithuanian schools abroad, that is why we worked with the Lithuanian *Šaltinėlis* to fit the age of my group” (T3-SB). The series of books for LHL education has been financed by the MESS and introduced to the LHL schools' teachers in seminars providing several books for each school. Ministry's sponsorship of learning materials is not systematic, each LHL school has to apply for funding to receive the materials they need. Therefore, the choice of textbooks and other learning materials is often based on the school's financial resources or the learning materials provided by the MESS. Teacher Mary points out “We did not buy the exercise

books for it (*Šaltinėlis*), because the school already had some other type and I did not want to use more money” (T4-SC). The interviewed teachers explain that they usually copy a variety of texts and exercises from different textbooks or other online sources for the students to work with. If a school has a sufficient number of textbooks to use for the students, they are being collected and used over the year. Exercise books, however, can only be used for one school year as students fill them in. Therefore copying of exercises is the most common practice by the teachers. Selecting various sources for the lessons also allow the teachers to appropriate learning materials to the topic of the day. The choices and plans of the day’s topic play an important role in LHL education. For example, School B presents a year plan of topics that might include celebrations of national days, seasonal topics, topics that are about Lithuanian culture, history, or traditions. In School B, all the teachers prepare their lessons based on that topic, adapting the learning materials regardless the age. The sheet with the topics was given to the researcher by the school leader and an example of a few topics can be found in [Appendix 3](#). The school C, for instance, practice developing lesson plans by each teacher and only recently started discussing if the Integrated Program is going to be used instead (T4&T5-SC). The learning content of the LHLS is mostly shaped by the topics teachers choose individually or together as well as the contents of the textbooks used, it usually involves topics as Lithuanian national days, nature, family, or Lithuanian legends and historical events. The contents of literacy practices in the LHLS disclose how the integrated cultural identity is being shaped. For instance, Mary describes one of her literacy events:

I make presentations for, for example, animals where you can think of different kinds of activities, some movement, say birds, their voices, their looks. I would show a picture, then kids tell the Norwegian name and we try to find the Lithuanian version (T4-SC).

This description shows how the teacher employs the Norwegian and Lithuanian language competences as well as the cultural identities in her literacy practice. The complex

integrated cultural identity of a student allows the proficiency in Lithuanian language to be developed with the help of Norwegian language – the language and literacy are socialized by the teachers.

Teachers highlight that a lot of the activities they do are based on their personal preferences, for instance, teacher Mary says that she enjoys showing the children the beauty of language reading poems, explaining certain expressions. She describes “That beauty of the language, like sayings or certain words <...>. I was always into finding that beauty in the communication, when we read “look, how nice and beautiful this sounds” (T4-SC). Teacher Lucy, for instance, works with younger kids and emphasize the focus on the body movement, dancing, and singing, she describes “Now I will start with “hi” song. My mom works in a musical school so she sent me this song - “Hi” and you say your name and so on. Then we continue with that meditation saying the vows. After that, we do cat, dog, and cow yoga” (T1-SA). The ability to express the teacher’s personal preferences in activities or learning materials illustrates how dynamic and complex LHL education can be. All these literacy events uncover teachers’ personal ideologies and values (Tigert, 2020).

Teachers mention that the question of homework is often debated, a large volume of learning materials are provided to kids at home but it is not compulsory and is not evaluated. The parents are responsible to decide if they want to dedicate time to Lithuanian school homework or not, this mostly depends on parents’ involvement, child's time management with is the general Norwegian school, and all the extracurricular activities. Teacher Gina notes “At lot is left for kids to do at home. Homework is you know, some do it, some don’t. It’s not like we evaluated it in any way and asked to do their homework. They have plenty to do at their general school already” (T3-SB). The interviewed teachers emphasize that if parents express their wish to get some extra reading or writing material the teachers always provide it.

The expectations come not only intrinsically or from the parents, the leaders of the schools set the guidelines as well. Teachers expressed different experiences of how the school leaders view the educational processes of LHL schools. Gina, for example, tells that the school leader in her school allows freedom, while Mary mentions that their leader requires a degree of accountability from the teachers (T4-SC). Teacher Monica explains the teacher accountability approach in their school:

There is some control, I go to watch the lessons, go through the lesson plans and collect them. Some teachers have it for the upcoming month, some for the semester or year. I allow whatever works better. I just want them to enjoy working here. But there is some level of control (T5-SC).

Monica as the school leader sometimes watches the lessons and discusses with the teachers if some texts or exercises are too difficult or not appropriate and always tries to improve the education quality in the LHL school (T5-SC).

A factor of constant change also plays an important role in LHL education dynamics and schoolwork organization according to the teachers. Teacher Mary explains that they “figure something out” each year since the needs change – student groups have to be formed in other ways, parents might want the kids to have more celebrations or study more Lithuanian grammar. She explains “Since last year there has been a need for younger kids to attend our school. This year there were even more of the little ones, so a new group was formed. We act according to the need” (T4-SC). Adapting to the needs of the LHL school’s community makes the teachers to always re-think the literacy practices depending on the age, student’s abilities, and circumstances.

5.3.2 Parents

Literacy practices the parents exercise in LHL education are very complex and include: doing homework that LHL school’s teachers provide, talking with children about the topics that were discussed in the LHL school, reflecting on what their children learned,

language socialization habits, relationships between siblings, other Lithuanian friends or relatives. According to Maloof et al. (2006), the use of heritage language in the family milieu strongly influences heritage language learners' language competence as well as cultural identity since it is able to counterbalance the host language as mentioned in the section 4.1.2. The literacy practices in the heritage language are a part of family language politics and management discussed by Jakaitė-Bulbukienė (2015). The author defines the most important aspects of family language politics including the attitudes and the knowledge of Lithuanian cultural heritage, the attitudes towards language use and the sociocultural environment of heritage language learners (Jakaitė-Balbukienė, 2015). This section analyzes how parents practice these elements by illustrating the literacy events that take place in their children's lives.

Based on the interview data, the parents show positive experiences about being able to discuss the LHL school's topics in the home environment. Beth mentions that she always checks out the topic of the day, talks about it on the way to school and when they return home, she asks her son some questions about it. She points out that the topics sometimes are not very clear, but some were very interesting for the children such as talking about the president of Lithuania before the elections (P6-SB). Amy also enjoys that the school introduces kids to the legends, regions, and traditional clothing, she reflects "But it's like you get a plan about what to speak to your child" (P3-SA). These examples illustrate how language is socialized to the heritage language learners by their parents with the help of LHL education integrating the development of language competence and knowledge of Lithuanian cultural heritage.

The homework is another element of LHL education literacy practices that parents get involved with. As schools only take place twice a month, a lot is left to do at home and it usually depends on the parent's attitude towards it. The interviewed parents presented slightly different approaches to homework from the LHL school. Amy, for instance, puts a

lot of effort into the development of literacy skills with her son at home. She describes how they dealt with the dictations, which were very difficult for her son:

I asked them to give me the dictation text before the class, we will train a bit and he will come more prepared. Therefore, they send me a link as if we can write those. That is not what I wanted; I wanted him to be prepared for that exact text as in the classroom. There are practices like that. You read the text at home and when you get to school, you show how you learn it. The same here. I thought; show me that dictation, we prepare ourselves, come and write. But somehow..." (P3-SA).

Some parents believe in their child's ability to study and do their homework independently. Agatha illustrates:

Once she woke up and I said, "We eat and it's time for Lithuanian school". She looked at me with big eyes and asked why I haven't reminded her yesterday. She has forgotten the homework and felt bad about it. So she hurried, did as much as she could, I think it was reading (P2-SA).

As the example of Agatha's daughter shows, doing LHL school's homework becomes the heritage language learners and the parent's investment in the process issue. The parents apply different perceptions towards preparing for the LHL classes at home. Cindy describes her experience with LHL school's homework comparing her son and daughter "I have two kids and both are different stories. One is always interested in the classes, she always does her homework. While the other, I can't make him, he cries, he doesn't want to" (P7-SC). She notes that the teachers decided to make homework optional, as it is hopeless to expect them all to be prepared, therefore one has to ask the teacher for homework (P7-SC). Based on Cindy's experiences one might argue that the LHL school's homework is a challenging practice for the parents as it is not obligatory, doing homework or not ultimately depends on the child's abilities and preferences as well as parent's perception of its importance. The communication between children and parents becomes challenging in the process of

literacy socialization as the children do not see parents as teacher role models. Agatha illustrates with an example:

She asks me to listen to her reading. Then you have to turn on all the diplomatic sensors. For example, she will read something wrong, I correct, but she would be like "That is what I said". She might even close the book and leave (P2-SA).

Parents also take into account how much homework their children have from the general Norwegian school are other activities, Agatha explains how she approaches children's time management:

Unless it completely crashes with other activities, but so far we haven't experienced that. Maybe now Bella will face that since they are preparing for a competition and they will be working every weekend. Her whole team gathers, she might have to miss a couple of classes in the Lithuanian school (P2-SA).

Parent's views on the LHL school's homework illustrate how this literacy practice varies for heritage language learners. The parents employ different strategies in regards to their children's Lithuanian language competence varying from developing a high level of proficiency in literacy skills to seeking basic skills of spoken Lithuanian.

Parents' interview data suggest that traveling in Lithuania and being with Lithuanians reflects what the children have learned in the LHL school. Agatha also tells about their family trip in Lithuania, how they played the game *Surink Lietuvą* [Collect Lithuania] collecting magnets from different towns all across the country and she was really happy that her kids remembered learning about the towns in their LHL school (P2-SA). She came to realize that even the achievements are sometimes not visible, but they exist.

Aria describes her attitudes towards parenting techniques and family language policies in the home environment. She emphasizes that Lithuanian is the language spoken in her home and even when children from other Lithuanian families come to visit them, she

does not allow them to speak Norwegian together (P4-SA). All the interview with parents stress their efforts to encourage their children to use Lithuanian language, the only exceptions might be when their non-Lithuanian peers are around. Beth illustrates a situation she experienced with her son:

We were driving with his Norwegian friend in a car from the kindergarten, and his friend would talk to me in Norwegian and I might answer something, but my Nick wouldn't say a word. So I asked, "Why aren't you talking with us?" and he would be like "You speak in Norwegian, so it's not for me then". Now for his birthday, I spoke with somebody in Norwegian and then he reacted. But there was a time when he wouldn't react to Norwegian at home at all (P6-SB).

As Beth's example shows, her and her son's language socialization practices have evolved into patterns of their family language policies. Family language policies and parenting approaches also influence the education in the LHL school since it shapes the heritage language learner's language competence and cultural identity (Jakaitė-Balbukinė, 2015). One of the most common literacy practices used by the parents is watching Lithuanian movies or TV shows with their children. Carmen describes that a literacy event - every Sunday morning their family has a tradition to watch the show called *Tūkstantmečio vaikai* [Millennial Children]. Lithuanian students compete by answering general knowledge questions, she notices that her kids have difficulty understanding the words but she believes that it is still worth watching. The aspect of strictness, responsibility, and family relationship dynamics appears are of key importance and these types of situations and are the preconditions of Lithuanian language competence and Lithuanian cultural identity (Jakaitė-Balbukinė, 2015). Reading in Lithuanian as a literacy practice becomes too hard of a challenge for children, as their language skills might not match their maturity levels, the vocabulary is hard (P8-SC). Carmen explains "Books? They don't read Lithuanian books really. They have some books that they got as presents, but they just look through them and put aside. They do not understand a lot of Lithuanian words, it's too difficult" (P8-SC).

These examples disclose a variety of literacy events that take place in the family milieu. The literacy practices show how parents try to employ certain strategies to develop their children's Lithuanian language competence and identity.

Motivation is also an important strategic element of LHL education used by the parents. The ways to motivate children vary based on the interview results. Mostly the parents describe it as an investment for their children's future. Amy explains how she tries to motivate her son:

I say "But you will learn Lithuanian, it's going to be great with both Norwegian and Lithuanian. Especially when your dad has a company in Lithuania, so you can work with him and sell in Norway." So I try to motivate him, but it's hard sometimes to be honest (P3-SA).

Career perspectives represent parent's responsibility to provide economic, pragmatic benefits for their child's future. This strategy is in line with viewing language and cultural proficiency as the concepts of investment and cultural capital (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Other techniques that parents use also appear in the interview data as Amelia points out "parents are bribing the children. With candy and all. <...> some kids came only because they would get a phone to play during the break. I don't think it's a good way to handle this" (P5-SA). This example illustrates the difficult and complicated reality the HL learners face in the LHL schools. Often the parents do not manage to motivate the children to attend LHL school unless such measures are taken. Agatha explains that LHL school becomes one more responsibility among many others from general school and the extracurricular activities (P2-SA).

Parents employ multiple complex strategies in LHL education including helping the child with homework, connecting the knowledge from the LHL school to the life of their family, participating in the activities, and motivating the children.

5.4 THE INTEGRATED PROGRAM FOR LITHUANIAN HERITAGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The Integrated Program of Lithuanian Heritage Language Education [Lituanistinio švietimo integruota programa] (further the program) has been signed by the Minister of Education on the June 17, 2019 and was recommended to be used in LHL schools. The pilot version of the program had been introduced to several LHL schools globally including School C a year before it was released. The analysis of this policy document focuses on the first section of the program as it represents the general goals, provisions applied to the LHL education phenomenon by the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, Science and Sports. The goal of this program is to help Lithuanians living abroad to learn Lithuanian language, preserve it, preserve ethnic identity, develop civic values, learn about the country's history and culture, so Lithuanians abroad aim to strengthen and preserve connections with Lithuania. The program can be applied to prepare for returning or entering school in Lithuania (Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, 2019). The goal correlates to the goals of School A, B and C presented in their websites, seeking to preserve the Lithuanian language and identity. Yet the Program also states that it seeks to prepare children of Lithuanian background for remigration. Point 4.1-4.5 addresses the role of cultural identity and stresses the importance of preservation of Lithuanian-ness in LHL education. Points 5-10 present the recommendations for language competence approaches in LHL schools.

The Program presents the definition of Lithuanian identity as being the base of personal and communal identity for Lithuanians and Lithuanian citizens living in Lithuania and abroad. It reflects national and political mentality, language, cultural texts, ideas, and values that are expressed by developing the identity, language, history, and traditions, everyday activities of the community and general cultural environment. The document claims that the knowledge of Lithuanian culture and language is a part of ethnic and civic personal value and a precondition of self-respect for each Lithuanian in a global world. Learning Lithuanian language and culture, according to the Program, has to be an

acceptance of it as his own in order to strengthen one's identity, self-value so children develop to be free, self-confident, critical thinking, creative, responsible individuals (Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, 2019).

The program defines the elements needed for successful LHL education according to the MESS. It includes the integration of various subjects in language learning such as history or geography, creating of sociocultural environment to practice Lithuanian, the importance of child's use of other languages and inclusion of it to the learning processes in LHL schools. Point 8 claims that student's skills in another language can be transmitted in learning Lithuanian since the correlation of languages in the learning process results in better understanding and usage of the languages. This point argues that such an approach seeks to develop a multi-lingual and multi-cultural competence. (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019a). Interestingly, this perspective presented by MESS discloses tensions in viewing the HL learner as identifying himself being Lithuanian reflected in points 1.-7., in contrast to developing a multi-cultural competence presented in point 8. (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019a). This contradiction reflects that constructing the HL learner's development on the bases of Lithuanian identity might be difficult and unrelated to the complex HL learner's reality.

The program also stresses the role of parent involvement, participation in the events of local Lithuanian community and activities, contests organized in Lithuania. Point 9.6 emphasized the usage of interactive materials and the role of ICT in LCS education. Lastly, the first part of the program recommends promoting peer interaction and cooperation between the LHL schools (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019a). These elements reflect the heritage language education as building the "imagined communities" for the future identity of the heritage language learner (Norton & Toohey, 2011). The interactions between the heritage language learners such as participating in the local Lithuanian festivals and other events establish a feeling of belonging to a community, which is essential for cultural identity. Interestingly, such concept of community refers to the

imaginative aspect, as it becomes the Lithuanian community of heritage language learners in a particular host country. In addition, the interactions that take place in Lithuania or with Lithuanian entities online lead to another “imagined community” aspect referring to global transversal interactions that also form heritage language learner’s identity.

The second part of the document describes the language level qualifications dividing it into pre-school, primary and middle school education. Language levels are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (Council Of Europe, 2020). The description distinguishes the following elements: communicative intentions, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and text type. Each section is structured by contact hours per year, the age for the preschool and grades for primary, and middle school students. The program describes learning objectives and strategies for children of various ages, suggesting examples of educational games, exercises, and texts. The program also provides topics such as “My family”, “Home” or “Time and everyday life” including specific activities or texts that suit the topic. For instance, a topic “We are from Lithuania” suggests reading poems by V. Nemunėlis, A. Matutis, learning about Lithuanian anthem, flag, drawing a family tree and comparing the traditions in Lithuania and the country students live in (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019a). The document analysis aims to address the perceptions and strategies of the Lithuanian authorities (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019a). This program is a part of the implementation of an interinstitutional activity plan for the 2018-2030 strategy of demographics, migration, and integration.

Regarding the survey result noting the lack of a general program for LHL education one can argue that there are several reasons for this (mentioned in [section 4.2.1](#)). Some teachers are not yet familiar with the program that has been released, as teacher Lucy how's that it's only the first year they got introduced to this program and she has not yet looked at it (T1-SA). Another reason might be that the teachers experience that the existing program does not accommodate student needs. The program might have to be improved taking into account all the specialties LHL education has

The interview data also include the teachers' reflections on the program. School A has been introduced to the program recently, therefore the teachers could give only their first impression of it. Teacher Lucy express her opinion:

Too early to say. I haven't looked at it and haven't tried any of it yet. Honestly, I simply know the topics so far. I'll see what the need is. From my own experience... The small kids, the ones we have from three to five-year-olds, their developmental levels are very different and they embrace different things. They also have different Lithuanian language skills. So to apply something that would be the perfect middle would be extremely difficult. It's great that the programs exist (T1-SA).

Teacher Gina from School B mentions that she is not very familiar with the program, but their school leader cherishes freedom and allows teachers to express their creativity. Yet she assures that if the use of the program becomes essential, they will adapt to the situation (T3-SB).

In contrast, School C has tried out the program before its release and has some reflections on it. Teacher Monica pointed out that they have adapted the Integrated Program in their school by simplifying the content and organizing according to their needs. In school A the program has changed the lesson plans (T5-SC). Teacher Monica explains that she used the program when working with the preschoolers. She analyzed the program and appointed the topics to the lessons to suit her needs. Based on the topic, she selected fairytales, poems, and games. Monica reflects that the program was a great guideline for her and it also presents the LHL school's learning contents to the parents (T5-SC). Interviewed teachers from School C provided slightly contrasting opinions as teacher Mary found the program not suitable for her students, while Monica adapted it. They note that their school gave their feedback to the MESS and explained that their learning plans, content, and organization are similar to the program. Yet, teacher Mary states:

I looked at those programs and they do not really fit for our kids. We can partly implement them. Firstly, I cannot call my kids first graders, they are all very different and the system “1st-2nd grade” does not work. I can’t really adapt that program for my class (T4-SC).

The program provides a structured guideline that can exchange the resources teachers have to put into developing the lesson plans. It can also present the LHL education content to the parents in an official manner. Yet, it does not address the differences between the children’s language competence in one group and categorizing the students by the grades is not suitable for the LHLS format.

The interviewed parents were not familiar with the existing program, although teacher Monica mentioned that she had introduced it to the parents of School C. One of the program’s strategies – to support HL learners planning to enter general Lithuanian education can be illustrated with Amelia’s (P4-SA) experience. Her family’s example was discussed in [section 4.1.2](#) and disclosed how Amelia’s son received individual help from his teacher in School A and put effort and time to work with Lithuanian literacy development at home. This implies that Amelia and her son were invested in the learning process, yet the learning strategy was individualized. Amelia’s son’s teacher was not following the program. However, LHL education appeared to make a positive impact on successful re-emigration and entrance to the Lithuanian general school. However, the other heritage language learners in the same group were not as invested in the Lithuanian language competence development as Amelia’s son. Thus, the instruction had to be personalized for him suggesting that if the program aims to facilitate all types of HL learners it has to be very flexible and able to adapt to each HL learner’s needs. The example of this family shows how HL education might function for the HL learners planning to enter general Lithuanian schools (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019b)

Based on the interview results, the program is not widely implemented, as it is very recent. The teachers lean towards counting on their personal knowledge and creativity unless the use of the program becomes required. Otherwise, the common practice in the schools is lesson plans or a common topic plan to guide the learning content through the academic year. It is likely that in time more LHLs in Norway begin to adapt the Integrated Program for their schools. Nevertheless, this decision depends on multiple reasons including the program's weaknesses, teachers' and school leaders' preferences, and possibly the parents' attitudes.

5.5 DISCUSSION

This study sheds the light on the tensions and overlaps between the stakeholders of LHL education: the parents', the teachers' and the Lithuanian authorities' views. The research on the preservation of Lithuanian culture and language abroad shows that the most important preconditions are the attitudes and sociocultural environment of the heritage language learner's family and the LHL school is a part of it (Jakaitė-Balbukinė, 2015).

The data analysis has disclosed that the key elements of LHL education are the integrated cultural identity and language competence that blend in the perceptions, challenges, and practices stakeholders employ. The analysis of these LHL education elements uncover the strategies each stakeholder has, which indicate the existing agendas in LHL schools. This section addresses the tensions and the overlaps in the stakeholder's perspectives seeking to provide a better understanding of the LHL school phenomenon and offer critical insights.

5.5.1 Comparing the perceptions

The Lithuanian heritage language model presented a perception of LHL education as developing heritage language learner's Lithuanian cultural identity in multimodal literacy practices (Bagdonavičienė et al., 2013). This definition, however, implies how the

Lithuanian authorities view the heritage language education and the program expands and distinguishes the roles of the language competence and the Lithuanian cultural identity in the LHL schools. These concepts are also the main elements discussing how the stakeholders perceive the LHL education. The program presents a perception of heritage language education as primarily preserving and constructing the heritage language learner's Lithuanian cultural identity. The integration of language competence of the host country is mentioned in the points 8-9.1 and solely point 8 suggests the heritage language education perception as developing multicultural and multilingual competence. The rest of the document emphasizes the use of bilingual language competence to serve the development of Lithuanian language skills (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019a). The program claims that Lithuanian-ness is a precondition for an individual's psychological safety, which discloses that this document values the Lithuanian part of the heritage language learner's integrated cultural identity more than the host one. Such perception implies that the program is developed based on the separation acculturation concept, which privileges the home culture (Maloof et al., 2006). Language competence development is viewed as a means to construct heritage language learners Lithuanian cultural identity by providing guidelines for literacy practices. This suggests that language competence development to preserve Lithuanian identity is the program's strategy for LHL education. The teachers and the parents, however, provide a different angle of the LHL education perception.

The data suggest that the main tension is the focus on the results in the formal literacy instruction question between the teachers and the parents in LHL schools that refers to the role of language competence development in the LHL education. The parents expect the child to study literacy skills in a formal setting – to develop the literacy proficiency in Lithuanian language, which is a tendency among the parents of heritage language learners (Tigert, 2020). Practicing speaking skills, developing knowledge about Lithuanian culture, and participating in Lithuanian traditional festivals tend to be the secondary goals for the interviewed parents. Prioritizing the goals of language competence

in this way results in contradicting views on literacy practices, learning materials, and contents. The interview results show that LHL education is not always able to facilitate each student's need for effective and successful Lithuanian language competence development. The reasons for this include different language skills, ages, lack of experienced teachers, well-developed materials, and the financial resources. The teachers experience that achieving results in Lithuanian language literacy is problematic and the spoken language competence of heritage language learners is a primary focus for them. By developing the Lithuanian sociocultural environment of LHL school, the teachers base their perceptions of LHL education on the concepts of literacy socialization and New literacies. The interview data illustrate how these tensions between the teachers and the parents unfold in the discussions regarding the results in literacy, for instance, the knowledge of special Lithuanian alphabet letters. The discrepancies in the teachers' perception of LHL education are the result of personal experiences, the influence parents and the global LHL community have on teachers.

One of the main factors that leads to the tensions between the teachers' perceptions and the parents' perceptions of LHL education is personal experiences and strategies. The teachers are in a tight spot to adapt to every child's abilities, parent's needs, school leader's requirements, and their personal goals. The teachers are required to create a learning environment where all the children in the classroom can develop language competences together. It is difficult when children's backgrounds, language skills, or parents' involvement are very different. The parents, however, come with their personal experiences and expectations. Some of them have been attempting to develop their child's language skills in the best possible way, some have the possibility to spend extensive periods in Lithuania and spend a lot of time with Lithuanian speaking grandparents, cousins, and friends. Others come to school without high expectations; they do not have the resources or knowledge to be strongly involved in their child's heritage language learning process. Due to these differences, the MESS's program is not able to suit every heritage language learner's

language competence development needs. Yet, both the teachers and the parents feel responsible for preserving the Lithuanian identity and cultural heritage, therefore they expect the LHL schools to become a place to accommodate this. These results correlate to Maloof's (2006) findings suggesting that heritage language learners might strongly identify as members of their ethnic groups, but still lack the heritage language proficiency. The authors offer an insight "an integrative cultural identity, with its appreciation for values of both cultures and dual sense of belonging, is a feasible outcome of acculturation, even when additive bilingualism is not present" (Maloof et al., 2006, p. 268). As the results disclose, the tensions in LHL schools mostly involve mismatching expectations and possibilities between the parents and the teachers in the development of language competence.

Creating a space for integrated cultural identity construction, however, discloses overlaps of perceptions among the teachers and the parents in the LHL schools. Whereas LHL schools' influence in language competence development is insignificant, LHL education plays an important role in the heritage language learner's construction of integrated cultural identity (Maloof et al., 2006). In contrast to the perception that the MESS's program holds about the privileging role of Lithuanian cultural identity in the LHL education, the teachers and the parents perceive the complexity of heritage language learner's identity. Based on their views the LHL education shows value in both the home and host cultures and reflects the integrative aspect of heritage language learners' cultural identity.

5.5.2 Comparing the strategies

The analysis of the teachers' and parents' perceptions and practices in the LHL education disclose their strategies. The program for LHL education released by the MESS also discloses the perceptions and strategies Lithuanian authorities have by analyzing its recommendations on how the identity and Lithuanian language competence should be developed. The stakeholders' strategies uncover what type of actions are being utilized to achieve the goals of the LHL schools.

The survey results suggest that the majority of participating teachers distinguished parents' involvement and teacher's qualifications as the most important factors for quality education in the LHL schools. This is an example showing the key role the parents and teachers as stakeholders have in the LHL education. Besides, this interrelationship between the parents and the teachers leads to some tensions that appear by analyzing their literacy practices and discussing the strategies they have in the LHL education. Based on the interview data, parents have expressed their attitudes towards being involved with homework preparation and other activities for LHL school, as they believe in their children's ability to learn independently. Whereas the teachers emphasized the importance of parents showing the efforts in Lithuanian literacy practices in the family environment including preparing the homework together, using Lithuanian language at home, and participating in the celebrations of the LHL school's community. Here tensions between the parents' and the teachers' strategies appear as the field of each stakeholders' responsibilities is unclear in the case of LHL education. Another aspect that causes tensions between the stakeholders of the LHL education is learning content or the materials as *The Little Prince* example mentioned in [section 4.2.2](#) shows. The parents often express their opinions about the learning content as some of the topics or materials seem to be unfit for them. The teachers' attitudes toward the existing learning materials and its contents are also critical; the program suggests a lot of literature or exercises that are irrelevant or too challenging for the heritage language learners. For instance, the topic about the establishment of Lithuania's capital Vilnius is interesting and appropriate for all of the stakeholders, but the texts the program offers are boring or difficult for the heritage language learners, thus the teachers put effort to find a better-suited text or appropriate a creative activity referring to the same topic.

The MESS's program presents a framework for Lithuanian competence development as a means to preserve the Lithuanian identity. This strategy also employs various formal, standardized aspects that might not facilitate the heritage language learners well. For

instance, grounding the categorization of language competence on CEFR does not address that heritage language learners might have different language skills at various ages. Being in the third grade in the LHL school does not mean that the heritage language learner is, for example, familiar with the Lithuanian alphabet. In this case, the teachers decide to group the heritage language learners accordingly or apply differentiation strategies.

5.5.3 The tensions and the overlaps between stakeholders of Lithuanian heritage language education

Different understanding of what the LHL school is, or should be, exists among parents, teachers, and the MESS. The construction of a child's Lithuanian cultural identity is not in focus for the parents as they hold a belief that their children are free to choose and navigate their own identity. Yet, building knowledge about Lithuanian culture and traditions is a part of the general child's development according to the parents. In contrast, the Integrated Program for LHL schools presents the preservation of Lithuanian cultural identity as a precondition for an individual's self-respect and self-value (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2019b). This indicated that MESS approaches LHL education as a means to preserve Lithuanian-ness in children of Lithuanian background. The teachers as stakeholders appear to be on the middle ground regarding the Lithuanian social identity construct. Lithuanian-ness plays a key role for them and the practices reflect that. Yet the teachers comprehend the complexity of heritage language learners' social identity and realize that their students navigate their identities themselves. For the teachers, the goal is to introduce the students to their cultural heritage.

The parents often express their expectations for the child to improve language competence by having better-suited activities, studying more grammar, and having a more structured and goal-oriented learning process. Thus, the tensions regarding language competence are more complex and often in the center of attention. The discrepancies between the parents' and teachers' attitudes to heritage language learning include parents' high expectations for their child to develop literacies in Lithuanian that are too difficult for

the teachers to achieve. The teachers confront complicated situations trying to act according to parents' demands, which is a result of the financial structure of LHL school. Experienced teachers, strong leadership, and active parent community are the preconditions for good cooperation in LHL school. Interestingly, the parents tend to view language competence not only as the ideological aspect of Lithuanian cultural heritage or ability to communicate, but also as an investment in the child's future career perspectives. This perspective, however, is not strongly expressed among the teachers, which shows a discrepancy between the parents' and teachers' perceptions.

One of the key results in this study is the contradictory strategy between the teachers in LHL schools and the MESS's Integrated Program. It is the categorization of heritage language learners and the standardization of LHL education. The teachers generally express positive attitudes towards the program as it sets guidelines for learning content, the description of literacy event options is also helpful. The program can provide a framework for the lesson plans thus the teachers spend less time and effort on the preparations as the experience of School C has shown (T5-SC). Experienced and creative teachers however, value the freedom and flexibility in the LHL education based on the views of Lucy and Gina (T1-SA, T3-SB). As the program is only advisory, the LHL schools are not required to apply this program. The example of School B illustrates this as teacher Gina pointed out their school leader and teaching staff preferred the independent choices of learning content and materials. These results suggest that the program might provide a type of structured framework for the schools, yet it contradicts how the teachers and parents perceive the role of Lithuanian cultural identity in the LHL education and how the literacies are practiced in the LHL schools.

Figure 6. *Tensions and overlaps between the stakeholders*

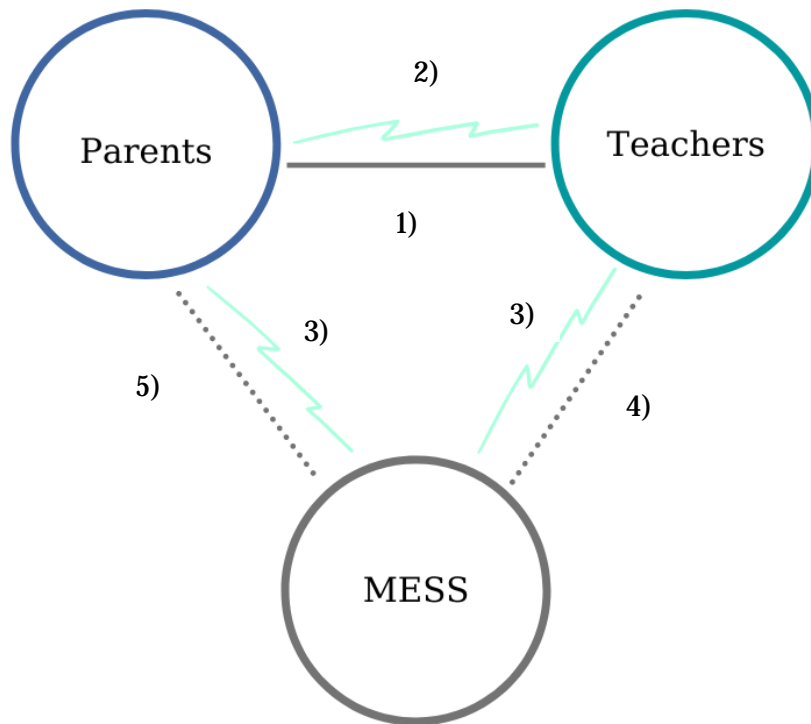


Figure 6 illustrates the discrepancies and congruencies between the stakeholders in LHL education: the parents, the teachers, and MESS representing Lithuanian authorities. The straight line indicates overlapping perceptions and strategies, the dashed line shows overlapping views with some exceptions while the lightning line reflects where the stakeholders' views contradict. Line 1) shows the congruence between the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the role of cultural identity in the LHL education as these stakeholders perceive the complexity of heritage language learner's identity and try to embrace. The teachers and the parents seek to develop heritage language learner's knowledge of Lithuanian culture but also recognize the importance of Norwegian identity. The parents and the teachers seek to develop heritage language learner's cultural capital and integrated cultural identity by building a feeling of belonging to Lithuanian community in addition to the Norwegian one. Lightning line 2) between the teachers and the parents,

however, shows that there are tensions regarding the development of the Lithuanian language competence in the LHL schools. The parents are expecting the results in literacy by formal standards heritage language instruction in the schools, yet the teachers perceive the role of language competence as the development of speaking skills and multimodal literacies in a Lithuanian sociocultural environment. Lightning lines 3) between the teachers and the parents versus MESS indicate the tension in how the role of cultural identity is perceived. As the interviewed parents and teachers view the cultural identity of a heritage language learner as *integrated* and valuing both home and host cultures, the program that represents MESS discloses *separated* aspect of the cultural identity, which privileges the Lithuanian home culture. Dashed line 4) illustrates how the program supports the teachers in the development of Lithuanian language competence but still has weaknesses. Although MESS lacks the flexibility, it has standardized language competences of heritage language learners and categorized them, it provides the teachers with a structured framework of topics and examples of activities that teachers might choose to use in the heritage language literacy practices. Dashed line 5) suggests that the MESS and the parents might have similar approach to the Lithuanian language competence development. As the results indicate, the parents of heritage language learners expect a formal type of instruction, which seeks to achieve results in literacy. The MESS's program provides those formal aspects by basing the language levels on CEFR and distinguishing the competences of heritage language learner at each stage. Nevertheless, this correlation is not direct as the parents and Lithuanian authorities do not interact the way MESS interacts with the LHL schools' teachers such as in the LHL education seminars or training.

6 CONCLUSION

Extensive research has been conducted to study Lithuanian identity and language use abroad in the past decade, which faced dramatically increased emigration. As the literature review on Lithuanian communities abroad including LHL schools suggested, the preservation of Lithuanian identity and language have been the core issues for sociolinguistic fields. This study, however, aimed to focus on the educational aspects of the LHL school phenomenon viewing Lithuanian-ness as a part of heritage language learner's integrated cultural identity. As the current political and social realities influence the LHL schools, it was essential to take a look at the views the teachers, parents, and Lithuanian authorities involved in LHL education hold.

This study contributes to the field of LHL education research by addressing the different agendas the Lithuanian authorities, the teachers, the parents and likely heritage language learners hold. The tensions between these stakeholders unfold as their understanding of what the LHL school is and how it works differs. The Lithuanian authorities intend to facilitate heritage language learners and their families that are planning to re-emigrate by focusing on the Lithuanian self-identity construct. Whereas, the teachers and especially the parents are aiming to support heritage language learners in building a bicultural competence. The structural issues of LHL education organization also appear to cause tensions. The program categorizes heritage language learners by grades and language proficiency levels, the teachers constantly face difficulties adapting to the abilities of each student. The main challenge parents experience is heritage language learners' low motivation to attend the LHL school. These mismatching realities disclose the discrepancies in the stakeholder's strategies in LHL education. One might question - what is the agenda of a heritage language learner then? Is the development of language proficiency or the Lithuanian-ness the ultimate goal for a child of Lithuanian background in an LHL school? These issues suggest that the parents, the teachers, and Lithuanian authorities need to

consider the complex sociocultural and linguistic reality of a heritage language learner. For the LHL school program and the schools to develop and be more effective, these contradicting strategies and perceptions have to be recognized. Moreover, the political and social debate regarding LHL education might uncover new insight into the realities of LHL schools in Norway. A unified understanding of LHL education can support the development of a more effective LHL schools in Norway, as well as shed light on complex ways to approach the heritage language learning and cultural identity generally.

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8 APPENDIXES

8.1 APPENDIX 1 – INTERVIEW GUIDES

LHLS teacher interview guide	
<i>General</i>	
How long have you been in Norway? Why did you move here? What do you work with?	
Please tell me about your teaching qualifications? What are your teaching experiences from previous workplaces?	
<i>Education at LHLS</i>	
Please tell me how did you start teaching in this LHLS?	
How did you find out about the school, what was your first contact?	
What was your experience in the beginning?	
What do you think about the education goals of this school? (1) vaikų liuanistinis ir meninis švietimas, supažindinant su krašto istorija ir papročiais, 2) liuvybės ir pilietiškumo ugdymas.)	
Why do you work in a LHLS?	
I have heard that the ministry of education made a recomendational LHLS program? What are you thoughts about it?	
Are you planning to implement any of it? If so, how?	
What are your favourite/most used books for your classes at LHLS?	
If you suddenly become the leader of LHLS what would you do? How would you change things?	
<i>Teaching and learning</i>	
What are your perspectives on pedagogics in general? How do you implement it in the LHLS?	
How do you make your lesson plans? What works for you class best?	
Please tell me about your typical class at LHLS.	
Tell me about some activities that you thought were successful and beneficial for kids.	
What are the challenges you face when working with your class? Parents? Community?	
If you are asked to train a new teacher in LHLS, how would you do it?	
What are your main goals when teaching kids in LHLS?	
Would you like to add something that we have not covered?	
Parents interview guide	
<i>General questions</i>	
How long have you and your children lived in Norway?	
What do you think about moving back to Lithuania or you plan to stay in Norway?	
<i>Family language policies</i>	
What are you language usage habits at home?	
What is your opinion about correcting your child's mistakes when speaking lithuanian?	
Expand on: -We spend a lot of time with other Lithuanian families. -My children like talking Lithuanian and they are able to express them. -Our family is interested in Lithuanian pop culture, arts and music. - Family holidays in Lithuania and your children experiences there.	
<i>Lithuanian schools</i>	
Why you bring your children to Lithuanian school?	
Please tell me a bit about your experience with education in LHLS?	

<p>What are the problems you face in Lithuanian school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -parent community -your teachers -school administration 	
<p>In your opinion, what are the challenges your kid faces in Lithuanian school?</p>	
<p>What kind of homework or other activities your child does to learn Lithuanian language at home (reading books, playing board games, online games or Lithuanian cartoons)?</p> <p>What are your children favourites?</p> <p>What kind of role you try to play in that?</p>	
<p>Why do you think your child should learn in Lithuanian school?</p>	
<p>What motivates you and your child to go to Lithuanian school?</p>	
<p>How do you feel about the focus on “being Lithuanian” in Lithuanian school?</p> <p>What is the ideological focus in the school in your opinion. Should it be transformed?</p>	
<p>What do you think about Lithuanian schools should embracing cultural diversity and including more of Norwegian culture? Such as ‘bring Norwegian friend to school’ and etc?</p>	
<p>What is your opinion about including other subjects such as science, arts or other be included in LLS activities?</p>	
<p>Would you like to add something that we have not covered?</p>	

8.2 APPENDIX 2 – SURVEY RESULTS

Kokios yra pagrindinės jūsų darbo lituanistinėje mokykloje priežastys? (LT) [What are your main reasons for working in the Lithuanian school?] (EN)

Answer	Total
Lietuvių kalbos išsaugojimas	5
Lietuvybės ir lietuviškų tradicijų išsaugojimas	8
Džiaugsmas dirbant su vaikais ir mokytojaujant	6
Papildomos pajamos	3
Kita	0

Ar esate patenkintas(a) parama, kurią gaunate dirbdamas(a) lituanistinėje mokykloje? (LT) [How satisfied are with the support you get when working as teacher in Lithuanian school?] (EN)

Answer	Total
Labai patenkintas(a)	1
Patenkintas(a)	3
Nei patenkintas(a), nei nepatenkintas(a)	3
Nepatenkintas(a)	1
Labai nepatenkintas(a)	0

Jūsų nuomone, kas turėtų suteikti daugiau paramos lituanistinių mokyklų mokytojams? (LT) [In your opinion, who could provide more support for teachers in Lithuanian school?] (EN)

Answer	Antall
Tėvai	2
Lituanistinių mokyklų vadovai	0
Švietimo, mokslo ir Sportso ministerija	7
Norvegijos valstybinės įstaigos	6
Globali lituanistinių mokyklų bendruomenė	4
Kita	0

Jūsų nuomone, kokia pamokų veikla šiais mokslo metais buvo sėkmingiausia? (LT) [In your opinion, which activity in your class was most successful in the past school year?] (EN)

Answer	Total
Individualus projektas	0
Grupinis projektas	2
Žaidimas lavinantis kalbą	3
Žaidimas lavinantis meninius gebėjimus	0
Judrus žaidimas	1
Individualus darbas su rašymo, skaitymo užduotimis	0
Darbas grupėje su rašymo, skaitymo užduotimis	2
Kita	0

Nurodykite kokia tai buvo veikla. (LT) Specify the activity (EN)

- Spektaklis apie Lietuvos istorinį įvykį.
- Alias žaidimas, kurio metu kiekvienas vaikas aiškina žodžius, kiti spėlioja. Žaidimo pradžioje vaikai buvo nedrąsūs, vėliau įsitraukė visi. Sužinota daug naujų žodžių, vaikai skatinami kalbėti.
- Tai buvo žaidimas „Alias“, kuris buvo pagamintas mokytojos. Žaidimo metu mokiniai lavina skaitymo įgūdžius ir tuo pačiu kalbos įgūdžius. Mokinys perskaitęs žodį turi jį apibūdinti kitiems vartojant sinonimus.

Kokios svarbos yra šie faktoriai siekiant kokybiško ugdymo lituanistinėse mokyklose? Pasirinkite vieną atsakymą nuo 1 iki 5. (LT) How important for improving education in Lithuanian school are the following factors. Please choose one answer in the scale from 1-5. Choose an answer from 1 to 5. (EN)

	1 (Tikrai sutinku)	2 (Sutinku)	3 (Nei sutinku, nei nesutinku)	4 (Nesutinku)	5 (Tikrai nesutinku)
Tėvų įsitraukimas į vaiko ugdymą liuanistinėse mokyklose yra svarbus.	6	2	0	0	0
Finansinė parama yra svarbi liuanistinėje mokykloje užtikrinti kokybišką ugdymą.	2	3	3	0	0
Mokymosi medžiagų gausa ir kokybė yra svarbi užtikrinti kokybišką ugdymą liuanistinėse mokyklose.	2	2	4	0	0
Lituanistinių mokyklų mokytojų aktyvumas, kvalifikacija ir patirtis užtikrina kokybišką ugdymą.	6	1	1	0	0
Aktyvios užduotys ir žaidimai užtikrina kokybišką ugdymą liuanistinėje mokykloje.	4	2	2	0	0

Jūsų nuomone, kas labiausiai motyvuoja vaikus mokytis liuanistinėje mokykloje? (LT) In your opinion, what are the main factors of motivation for students in Lithuanian school? (EN)

Answer	Total
Lietuvių kalbos mokymasis.	2
Žaidimai ir kita liuanistinės mokyklos organizuojama veikla (spektakliai, koncertai, šventės ir pan.).	6
Bendravimas su vaikais iš labai panašios aplinkos.	7
Tėvų auklėjimo metodai (dovanos ar kitos linkmybės už tai, kad lanko liuanistinę mokyklą)	3
Kita	0

Jūsų nuomone, kokie yra pagrindiniai liuanistinių mokyklų iššūkiai? (LT) In your opinion, what are the major challenges in Lithuanian schools? (EN)

Svar	Antall
Sunku dirbti su vaikais, kurių lietuvių kalbos gebėjimai skiriasi.	5
Trūksta mokymo(si) medžiagos (knygų, užduočių, vaizdo medžiagos ir pan.)	1
Tėvai negali skirti pakankamai laiko padėti vaikui su liuanistinės mokyklos namų darbais.	2
Trūksta mokytojavimo patirties, kvalifikacijos ir žinių.	0
Nepastovus vaikų lankomumas.	3
Per mažas pamokų kiekis ir laiko stoka	4
Trūksta bendros mokymo programos skirtos liuanistinėms mokykloms.	4
Kita	0

8.3 APPENDIX 3– EXAMPLE OF A TOPIC PLAN FROM SCHOOL C

			Gatvėje? Ir t.t.	spalvų reikšmę, piešti vėliavą. Su vyresniais plačiau paklausti, galima remtis vaikų Konstitucija ir apžvelgti teises ir pareigas.
5.	2019 -11- 09	Sveikame kūne, sveika siela. Ar žinau kas tai yra sveika mityba?	Kas tai yra sveikas gyvenimo būdas? Sveika mityba? Sveikos mitybos piramidė?	Lapkričio 9 diena – jokia diena. Bet lapkričio 8 diena – sveikos mitybos diena. Tai gal čia būtų galima netik pakalbėti apie sveiką mitybą, bet ir padaryt kulinarijos pamoką. (Kristina) Lapkričio 6 Lietuvoje minima pyragų diena, dar galvojau apie tokią iniciatyvą? (
6.	2019 – 11 - 23	Labas Tau ☺	Kokie yra stebūdingi lietuviški žodžiai? Ar dažnai juos vartoji? Kodėl mandagumas yra svarbu? Kodėl reikia sveikintis? Laiškas rašytas ranka? Atgyvena ar dovana?	Lapkričio 23 diena – tai yra Lietuvos kariuomenės diena, bet rašau labai įdomią dieną lapkričio 21. Tą dieną minima sveikinimosi diena. Įdomus dviejų brolių sumanymas tą dieną visiems pažįstamiems išsiųsti laiškus, tapo gražia tradicija. Vaikai taip pat galėtų piešti ar rašyti laiškus savo giminaičiams ar draugams gyvenantiems Lietuvoje. Man dar visai patiktų gaminti su vaikais pvz. Kalėdinius atvirukus, kuriuose užrašytume eilėraščių tekstą su šventėmis ir gal juos nusiųstume vienišioms senelias, kuriuos galėtų išdalinti Maltiečiai, ar senelių namų administracija. Artėjanti adventinė gerumo akcija.(
7.	2019 – 12 - 07	Adventas. Gerų darbų ir minčių metas	Adventas. Krikščioniška ir pasaulietinė prasmė. Kodėl gerumas gali mus padaryti laimingais? Ar moku dalintis?	Gruodžio 7 diena – Nors advento pradžia minima lapkričio 30, bet gal būtų galima skirti pamokas advento temai gruodį. Kaip tik savaitę prieš Kalėdinę šventę. (Aš į Adventą norėčiau žvelgti iš kitos prizmės, kad nebūtinai tai būtų pasiruošimas trankiai paminėti Kalėdas. Adventinis pasninkas, nebūtinai turėtų būti susilaikymas nuo mėsos, gal tai būtų susilaikymas nuo saldumynų, kompiuterinių žaidimų, pramogų, o daugiau laiko skiriant savo šeimos nariams, draugams, liūdiintiems, gal pvz. Pakalbinus tėvelius galėtume surengti akciją, ir kiekvienas vaikas peržiūrėjas savo žaislus, žaidimus knygeles, norėtų tai kas jam nebeįdomu, padovanoti to stokojančiam, gal tai būtų gerumo akcija į Lietuvą, vis tik mes čia turime daug daugiau, nei kai kurie ten?...)
8.	2019 – 12 - 14	Kalėdų šventė		Kalėdų šventė.

8.4 APPENDIX 4 – CONSENT FORM

Consent form (English)

Would you like to participate in master thesis project “A Comparative Study of Lithuanian Cultural Schools in Norway” where you, as a parent or a teacher could share your perceptions of education in Lithuanian schools?

This master thesis belongs to Comparative International Education program at University of Oslo (UiO). The interviews in this project seek to discover how parents and teachers experience teaching and learning processes in Lithuanian school and what they think about it. The interviews will be 30-45min long. They will be recorded, stored in UiO's database, transcribed and deleted in the end of the project. So your personal information (contact, name, city and etc.) will be protected by all GDPR requirements, anonymous and coded in the final work. The estimated end of the project is 01.06.2020 The goal of this study is to develop knowledge about education processes in Lithuanian cultural schools.

The supervisor of this project is prof. Heidi Biseth (Heidi.Biseth@usn.no) tlf. +47 31 00 87 72 / +47 959 95 313.

You may also contact NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17 if you have any questions about protection of your personal data.

Your rights

As long as you can be identified in data material, you have the right to:

- check what kind of personal information is registered about you
- correct your personal information
- delete your personal information
- get a copy of your personal information
- send complaint to personvernombudet or Datatilsynet about the handling your your personal data

What gives us rights to handle your personal data?

It is based on your consent.

I received and understood the information about the project and was given chance to ask questions. I agree to participate in the project and allow my personal information to be handled until 01.09.2020.

(Signed by participant of the project, date)

Consent form (Lithuanian)

Ar norėtumėte sudalyvauti magistrinio darbo “Norvegijos lituanistinių mokyklų palyginimas” tyrime, kuriame galėtumėte pasidalinti savo patirtimi ir požiūriu į lituanistinį ugdymą.

His magistrante darbas priklauso Comparative International Education (*Tarptautinio palyginamojo švietimo*) programai Oslo univresitete. Grindžiantis interviu su mokytojais ir tėvais medžiaga šis projektas sieks išsiaiškinti mokymo(si) lituanistinėse mokyklose Norvegijoje ypatybes, iššūkius ir tikslus. Interviu užtruks apie 30-45min, bus įrašytos, užkoduotos ir saugomos universiteto duomenų bazėje iki projekto pabaigos kuomet bus ištrintos. Jūsų asmeninė informacija galutiniame darbe bus anonimizuota, apsaugota pagal visus BDAR (GDPR) reikalavimus. Preliminari projekto pabaiga 01.06.2020.

Jeigu turite klausimų, su manim susisiekti galite mob. +47 46210685 arba el. paštu justina.karoblyte@gmail.com. Bio magistrinio darbo vadovė prof. Heidi Biseth, su kuria galet susisiekti el paštu Heidi.Biseth@usn.no arba tlf. +47 31 00 87 72 / +47 959 95 313. Dėl jūsų asmeninės informativos apsaugos gallito susisiekti su NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, el.paštu (personverntjenester@nsd.no) arba: 55 58 21 17.

Jūsų teisės:

Jeigu jūsų asmeninė informacija gali būti identifikuojama, turiste teisę:

- pasitikrinti kookie informacija apie jus yra užregistruota
- pataisyti save asmeninę infromaciją
- ištrinti save asmeninę informaciją
- gait asmeninės informacijos kopiją
- nusiųsti skundą personvernombudet arba Datatilsynet arie jūsų asmeninės informacijos naudojimą.

Kas mums suteikia teisę naudoti jūsų asmeninę informaciją?

Jūsų sutikimas dalyvauti tyrime.

Informaciją apie tyrimą gavau ir supratau. Taip pat man buvo suteikta galimybė klausti. Sutinku dalyvauti projekte ir leidžiu naudotis mano asmenine informacija iki projekto pabaigos (01.09.2020)

(Dalyvio parašas, data)