

**“Coverage of the Russian-speaking minority in
Latvian-language news media and its role within
Russo-Latvian socio-political relations.”**

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Thesis Abstract

This thesis explores the ways in which Latvian-language news media represents the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia and how these representations impact on the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Through an assessment of six Latvian-language news media sources, the thesis offers an understanding of the type of stories published and broadcast in Latvian-language news media. Furthermore, the thesis also analyses the Latvian-language newspaper coverage of the Language Referendum in 2012. By assessing the ways in which the referendum was discussed, the thesis establishes links between the representation of the Russian-speaking minority and the representation of Latvian national identity in the media. The analyses of the Latvian-language news media are then furthered by an analysis of interviews conducted with Latvian speakers, in which the respondents were asked to discuss their understanding of both the media and the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia.

The thesis concludes by offering a clear outline of the way Latvian-language news media constructs stories, both those discussing Russian speakers and related issues, as well as the stories which aim to promote Latvian national identity. Furthermore, by reflecting on the interview data, the thesis also highlights existent perceptions and the way they are perpetuated by Latvian speakers, contrasting such notions with those expressed in the Latvian-language news media analysed throughout.

Acknowledgements.

Aged eighteen, I came home one day and said to my mum that I was going to drop out of high school because I hated it. She nodded and said “Okay, what are you going to do instead?” Surprised, I asked if she wasn’t going to try to talk me out of it. Vividly, I remember my mum giving me a look and shaking her head. “No one,” she told me. “Will ever stop you from doing something you’ve decided on.” I owe my mum a world of gratitude for all the support and help she has provided to me throughout my life. A thank you is never going to be enough to represent that. Paldies, mamma!

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Image 1



Image 2

1. Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis concerns itself with assessing, analysing and investigating the ways in which Russian-speaking minority is represented in Latvian-language news media. The aim of the thesis is to establish how such representation has been constructed and what potential impact it has upon the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Of all the former USSR countries, Latvia contains the largest Russian minority per capita (CSB, 2011). The 2011 census showed that 26.9% of the population described themselves as self-recognised Russians, with 62.1% of the population recognising themselves as Latvian. At the same time, the census reflected that only 7.7% of Latvia's population were citizens of the Russian Federation, and 85.4% Latvian citizens. It is, thus, the discrepancy between those who self-identified as 'Russian' whilst being either Latvian citizens or Latvian 'non-citizens' (a term which will be addressed later) that initially sparked the interest for this research of the relationship between the Latvian speakers and the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

World War II and the Soviet rule transformed the demographic and linguistic situation in Latvia and disrupted established patterns of Russo-Latvian inter-ethnic relations. The size of the Russian minority in Latvia increased drastically during the Soviet rule (Muižnieks, 2006: 12) and thus changed the makeup of Latvian society. The break-up of the USSR in 1991 shifted the way Latvian and Russian speakers interacted socially and politically. From 1960 to 1989, the continued influx of immigrants speeded up the russification of Latvia, in fact if not in policy. Almost four hundred thousand Slavic workers settled in Latvia during these thirty years and fewer than 20% of Russians living in Latvia at the time could speak Latvian (Frucht, 2004: 135). Upon regaining independence in 1991, the change from the former communist regime was slow and the transition difficult.

Twenty-six years after the fall of the USSR, the issues relating to the relationship

between Latvian and Russian speakers remains heated within the politics and the ideological positions in Latvia. Zepa and Šūpule (2006) argue that political parties continue to engage in political confrontation over ethnic policy, hindering social integration instead of promoting it, thereby enhancing ethnic tensions in Latvian society. Representatives of the political elite continue to exploit ethnicity to mobilize their supporters in elections, thereby acting as a key catalyst of ethnic tensions (Zepa & Šūpule, 2006: 36). Thus the issue of ethnic belonging has not diminished since the breakup of the USSR and has been a permanent feature in Latvia's political and social structure. Arising from such a premise, this thesis is interested in assessing the role that news media played in furthering (or bridging) this cleavage. Furthermore, the research is concerned with discovering how such media portrayal was, or was not, reflected in the views held by Latvian speakers in regards to their relationship with Russian speakers in the country, as this would reveal any potential links between media and the socio-political relationship in Latvia between the two communities.

The research set itself three main aims: (1) to consider the ways in which contemporary Latvian-language news media represent Russian-speaking minority in Latvia; (2) to outline and analyse the socio-political issues concerning Russian speakers in Latvia through analysing the content of Latvian-language news media; and (3) to explore if and how the Latvian-language news media potentially problematise the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the country. As the research progressed, these aims were further sub-divided to offer (4) an identification of the notions and definitions relating to the term 'Latvian national identity'; (5) an assessment of the Latvian speakers' perception of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia; and (6) a highlight of any existing links between particular perceptions held by Latvian speakers and Latvian-language news media in their understanding/portrayal of the Russian-speaking minority.

Brigita Zepa and Inese Šūpule note that 'conflicts over ethnic policy [in Latvia] are largely political and social constructs created by the political elite and the mass media' (2006: 37). Through the key objectives, this thesis explores if, as Zepa and Šūpule state, the mass

media, and in particular the Latvian-language news media, created conflicts over ethnic policy. Furthermore, the investigation is concerned with analysing *how* such constructs were created and how that indicates about the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. The notions that media played a significant role in how the political and social relationship between the two communities in Latvia was inspired this thesis to further investigation.

One of the most significant events relating to the Russian-speaking minority that has taken place in recent years in Latvia was the Language Referendum in 2012, in which voting-eligible Latvian citizens were asked to vote whether Russian should be introduced as a second official language in Latvia. The referendum saw the biggest turnout of voters in independent Latvia's history, with 70.73% of all voting-eligible citizens participating (CVK, 2012). The proposal failed with 74.8% votes cast against it. However, such a significant turnout reflected the importance of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. This research has been in particular concerned with investigating how the referendum was portrayed in the Latvian-language news media and what such coverage might illustrate about the wider socio-political relationship between the two communities.

Stephanie Larson writes that 'all news that includes minorities convey messages to readers and viewers that help them develop, reinforce, or challenge assumptions about race' (Larson, 2006: 82). Whilst this research is not concerned with race specifically, it is interested in investigating how minorities (the Russian-speaking minority, specifically) were represented in news media, or more narrowly, how such messages were conveyed to audiences by Latvian-language news media, and, furthermore, the significance that such portrayal had.

Since the fall of the USSR, a handful of studies have been conducted in order to establish the structure of the Latvian media. They have mostly concentrated on discussing the ownership of different Latvian media outlets, rather than any potential impact that the coverage might have. Or, perhaps more significantly, *what* that coverage even *is*. For example, a study conducted by Auksė Balčytienė (2009) considered the market-led approach often taken by the

Baltic states' media. She remarked that 'media systems and journalistic practices in the Baltic states' often tended to be seen as belonging to a 'single cluster with shared characteristics' such as belonging to a 'small market' which possesses 'liberal media regulation and weak media accountability' (ibid.: 41). Ingus Bērziņš and Ilze Šulmane (2009) similarly discussed the lack of media accountability, noting in their research that no regulating body exists in Latvia whose responsibility it would be to assess and monitor media and their accountability (ibid.: 166). The majority of the research conducted about the media in Latvia, and the Baltic states, tends to concentrate on the political discourses surrounding the country due its shared history with Russia, and to discuss the market control of media. However, this research often fails to offer any conclusions regarding the influence this has upon Latvia's media and, by associating, Latvia's citizens. A more thorough analysis of existing research will be offered in the Literature Review section of this thesis.

Aivars Tabuns also argues that the divide between Latvian and Russian speakers is partially emphasised by media in Latvia. He claims that Russia has a significant influence within Latvian media and therefore allows Russian speakers in Latvia to identify Russia as their homeland (Tabuns, 2010: 226). Despite such claims, however, almost no audience research has been conducted to explore the issue of the Latvian-language media and its reception. Although academics such as Tabuns, Zepa and Šūpule refer to the Latvian-language media, their research has often been based on assumptions drawing upon a limited number of sources, with no direct grounding of their claims. There has also been some significant research of Russian-language media in Latvia and Russian speakers in Latvia (see, for example, Cheskin, 2016), but almost no research exists that specifically considers *Latvian-speaking media* and *Latvian speakers* specifically.

This research, then, sets out to assess what significance, if any, Latvian-language news media had in terms of exploring the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. The research was also interested in understanding what type of news were offered in relation to the

Russian speakers in Latvia, specifically concentrating on the Latvian-language news media and the views expressed both within it and by Latvian speakers at large. It was important for the research to place the news media and its representations in relation to the understanding of the relationship that Latvian speakers had. Therefore the thesis has been structured in three main parts: (1) an overview of Latvian-language news media; (2) a case study of the Latvian-language newspapers and their discussion of the 2012 Language Referendum; and (3) a qualitative analysis of interviews conducted with Latvian speakers in relation to their understanding of the media, the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking population in the country, and the link between the two.

Particular word choices have been made for this research project, specifically, the research has chosen to refer to the Russian-speaking population of Latvia as 'Russian-speaking' rather than 'Russian'. Ammon Cheskin writes that 'Tabuns (2010: 260-4) has argued that the Russian language has emerged as a central form of identification for *Russian speakers*' (Cheskin, 2016: 9). He further explains that the term (in Latvian *krievvalodīgie*, in Russian *rusškoiazychnye*) 'is used in place of other terms such as Russians, Russian diaspora, Russian settler community and so on'. Cheskin concludes that the use of 'Russia speaker' and 'Russian-speaking' 'is evident not only in media discourse but also in academic studies' (ibid.). This is partially why this research has also chosen to use 'Russian-speaking' in preference to 'Russian' when discussing the Russian speakers in Latvia.

Importantly, however, Cheskin's research (2013) also queried Russian-speaking focus groups in Latvia about their feelings towards the term 'Russian-speaking', which in parts has allowed this thesis to argue for the use of 'Russian-speaking'. Cheskin found that participants in the focus group aged 40-60 found the term offensive, remarking that 'there's the word 'non-citizen' right? That's the word they thought up for us, and here they thought up 'Russian speakers' (ibid.: 293), thus comparing the phrase to a much more controversial and politically charged term - the non-citizen. However, the other two focus groups conducted by Cheskin,

aged between 19-20 and 22-25, both consisting of undergraduate and postgraduate students, respectively, did not find the term 'Russian-speaking' insulting, but rather appropriate, with one person proclaiming 'Well, it's our term!' (ibid.: 294). Thus, whilst this project recognises the complex nature of the term 'Russian-speaking', the term is not meant in a derogatory fashion, but aims to highlight the difference between Russian and Russian-speaking that may exist within a given context.

First, I would like to reflect on my own position in relation to the thesis. I was born in Latvia, to Latvian-speaking parents, and attended a Latvian-speaking school. This, undoubtedly, has shaped who I am and what, then, my subjective view of issues discussed in the thesis might be. However, I emigrated from Latvia over a decade ago, and whilst my family still all live in Latvia, I am not a Latvian resident. I do, however, still consider myself as Latvian. In terms of this research, I have been aware that my position as a Latvian may raise questions of objectivity. It is for this reason that the thesis has set out to have a rigorous methodology, which ensures an objective analysis as much as possible, as no research can truly ever be completely objective. Nonetheless, my position as a Latvian was something that I had to recognise and be self-aware of during the research. What proved a perhaps more interesting positioning was how my Latvian nationality was recognised by others involved within this research. The following exchange will highlight some of the negotiations I had to have and the self-awareness that they prompted throughout the research in regards of who I am and how my research engages with Latvian national identity as a whole.

When asked what it meant to be a Latvian, a 23 year old male respondent in an interview conducted in 2015 gave the following answer: 'There's, you know, being born and dying in Latvia. There, you are a Latvian'. The interviewee was aware that I, the researcher, emigrated to the UK eight years before this interview was conducted. With this information in mind, the follow-up question attempted to establish whether he saw *me* as a Latvian. 'Well, no.

You can't count yourself as a Latvian, because you left', the interviewee explained, an argument that to him appeared self-evident. When prompted again, with the question 'If I haven't lived here my whole life and died here, then I'm not a Latvian?' he gave a quick nod and a reply of 'yeah, exactly'. This division between being *allowed* to consider myself a Latvian or not was a peculiar one. The conversation followed on from a discussion in which the interviewee had emphasised the importance of one's passport and the information it carried. This had been in a direct link with the interviewee's statements regarding the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia and what he perceived as the way *they* identified with Latvian national identity, or not, as was his claim.

With a reminder of his earlier statement, I asked for a clarification. 'So am I better or worse than those who live here but think of themselves as Russian? My passport, too, says that I am a Latvian,' I offered. Without hesitation, he replied that I was worse. 'Because those Russians that live here and say they're Russian, in reality they're Latvians. They say they're Russian but they live here,' he explained, perhaps drawing on his earlier claims of having been born and living in Latvia, rather than those comments which he had made in relation to the Russian speakers and their alignment with the Russian Federation instead of Latvia.

'So I can't say that I am a Latvian?' I asked finally. 'No, you can say that you are a Latvian,' the interviewee assured me, before adding 'but you have no grounds to say that'. Thus, in the eyes of at least one Latvian, who had been born and was living, and presumably expected to die in Latvia, I could not consider myself to be a 'true' Latvian, for I did not live in Latvia. Having stripped me of at least one national identity, the interviewee did not offer an alternative of what I should be allowed to call myself. Nor, notably, did he offer an alternative for the 'Russians' he so distinctly argued against.

It is this positionality, of being a Latvian but also, at least to some, *not* being a Latvian, that has in part shaped the research for this thesis. However, I would argue that the impact this had was positive, rather than negative. By being a Latvian emigrant, my research benefited from

the ability to objectively reflect on my own position as a Latvian, but also allowed me to establish links within Latvia, especially during the interview stage of the research. Furthermore, as a native Latvian speaker, I was able to gather data in Latvian and provide my own translation, something that will be further addressed in the methodology section of the thesis.

The thesis is broken down into multiple sections, each of which aided the next in creating a comprehensive analysis that allowed the research to concentrate on answering the set research questions. First, following on from the Introduction, the thesis starts with a Literature Review. The Literature Review establishes the current academic research in multiple fields which impacted on the thesis structure and subsequent analysis. The section predominantly aims to position the thesis in contemporary debates, as to allow for a more narrowed analysis to follow. The Literature Review starts by positioning the thesis within the context of Latvian history and offering an overview of the way Latvian- and Russian-speaking populations' relationship in Latvia had developed over the years. It then considers the contemporary research on Latvian media and how that shaped the thesis as a whole. As the thesis relies heavily on such concepts as national identity and its role in the construction of particular perceptions, the Literature Review considers theories related to national identity, both in the context of Latvia and academic theory as a whole. This allows the research to position its claims within a specific context.

The chapter following on from the Literature Review looks at the type of methods employed in this thesis. The section is designed to give an overview of the methods, as each of the content chapters then further expands on the types of methods employed for the specific case studies. Thus, this chapter concentrates on providing an outline of the overall methods required for the research rather than the specific approaches. The chapter reflects upon mixed-methods approaches, such as quantitative and qualitative analyses, content analysis and the ensuing coding used in the research.

The first of the three main content chapters in the thesis (Chapter Four) offers an overview of the Latvian-language news media, considering three newspapers and three news broadcasters for a closer analysis. In this chapter, data from six sources was gathered during a sample period of six weeks. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were then used to assess the type of stories in the sources relating to the Russian-speaking minority. By understanding the frequency with which such stories were published, the research was able to establish a basis for an average coverage: by considering the ways in which stories that mention Russian speakers and related issues were constructed, the chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the general coverage of Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media at the time.

Leading on, the second content chapter (Chapter Five) uses the Language Referendum of 2012 as a case study, by investigating the way issues relating to Russian speakers were covered during the event. After offering a quantitative overview of all articles published on the referendum, the chapter specifically considers opinion pieces from three nationally available Latvian-language newspapers (*Latvijas Avīze*, *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*), as a way of mapping the stories thematically and offering an analysis of the choices made in their construction. Overall, the section provides a point of comparison with the previous chapter, as it considers a specific event and the newspaper coverage relating to this event (the referendum). The chapter also continues to assess how particular viewpoints relating to the Russian-speaking minority were shaped and portrayed in the newspapers during the period leading up to and shortly following the referendum. This analysis aids in establishing the questions required for the third content chapter, which sets out to assess the views held by the Latvian-speaking population in regards to their relationship with Russian speakers, the media and their own national identity.

Thus, the third content chapter (Chapter Six) analyses the data gathered during the interview stage of the research. The section first offers an overview of how the interviews were designed and explains the choice of questions. The qualitative analysis, then, follows on to

established the themes that emerged from the interviews. Through a consideration of these thematic occurrences, the section demonstrates the ways in which Latvian speakers expressed their understanding of the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities in Latvia. The section also draws upon the analyses of the Latvian-language news media and emergent patterns, in order to contrast and assess the ways in which interviewees reflected ideas already expressed in the news coverage. This section stands out as the only one not to consider media specifically. This choice was made to better place the analysis of the Latvian-language news media in the context of social understanding of both the media and the Russian-speaking minority.

Finally, the research and its findings are summarised in the conclusion, drawing all three of the content sections together. The conclusion highlights the main themes that emerge from the research and reflects on the research questions introduced earlier in this section. The conclusion also serves to reflect upon the project as a whole and discuss the overall findings, placing them in the context established here and throughout the Literature Review.

This thesis offers the following original contributions to the research in fields related to Latvia, Latvian national identity and Latvian-language news media: (1) a quantitative overview of the representation of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, as constructed by the Latvian-language news media; (2) a qualitative analysis of the way Latvian-language news media construct a particular narrative in relation to historical, social and political events; (3) a qualitative analysis of interviews conducted with Latvian speakers regarding their opinion of the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking populations in Latvia; (4) a recognition of the way Latvian national identity impacts upon opinions held within Latvia and their perpetuation within the Latvian-language news media.

2. Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1. Introduction

This Literature Review intends to position the research in a clear way, rather than to offer an extensive overview of Latvian history. However, in order to explore the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, as well as to account for how both the media and Latvian speakers perceive this relationship, it is important to establish a background that will allow for further discussion. The thesis will address the impact such a shared history might have on both the political and social understanding of the relationship, but also of Latvian national identity and the role Russian speakers might play in its construction and its recognition by the Latvian-speaking majority.

Firstly, the Literature Review will provide a short overview of the Baltic States' history, with a more specific consideration of Latvia's history. By establishing the ways the population has shifted throughout the twentieth and early-twenty first century in Latvia, the Literature Review will illustrate the necessity for acknowledging the historical contexts surrounding the research. Secondly, a brief overview of theories regarding national identity will be given. Whilst the use of literature will be expanded and developed further as the research progresses, in the instance a demonstration of a coherent understanding of the existing academic debates regarding national identity will be provided. After considering ideas of national identity on a broader scale, the Literature Review will assess the specific aspects of national identity relating to the Baltic States, and thereafter Latvia in particular. This section will also explore the reasons for considering the Baltic States altogether in the Literature Review, rather than initially concentrating on Latvian national identity.

Thirdly, the Literature Review will specifically engage with the political structures in Latvia. Providing a description of the contemporaneous political situation, the section will

illustrate the complicated nature of the Latvian political spectrum. This section will allow for a further consideration of the policies implemented by the Latvian government regarding its Russian-speaking minority. Similarly, an overview of the political situation in Latvia will also allow for an exploration of any questions relating to issues of citizenship. This will further the discussion of national identity and concepts of belonging. Fourthly, the Literature Review will assess the role of language in Latvian society. Following the discussion of the political situation, the role of language will be linked to the policies that have been implemented. Further, the research will establish the social use and importance of language in Latvia. This will generate a better understanding of language as a factor in relation to notions of national identity.

An engagement with the role of the media will be provided in order to discuss overall issues of representation in the media, which will then lead to a more thorough consideration of the media in Latvia. The section will introduce an overview of the developments in the Latvian media since the reestablishment of independence in 1991. By looking at different policies and the impact of politics on the media in Latvia, the research will provide a basis for a more specific consideration of the Latvian-language media. Assessment and exploration of the choice to concentrate on the Latvian-language media in particular, will illustrate a clear link with minority representations and the construction of a national narrative. The different aspects of Latvian media provide a comprehensive outline of the research that will be undertaken in the thesis.

Finally, an overview of theories relating to the concept of 'othering' will be introduced. In this research the notion of 'other' and the binary opposition of 'us' versus 'them' will feature heavily. By establishing the way academic theory has positioned the 'other', the Literature Review will highlight the ways in which the concept will be used and understood throughout this thesis.

2.2. Brief overview of Baltic and Latvian history

V. Stanley Vardys and Romuald J. Misiunas (1978: 1) explain that studies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are often faced with the question of diversity and similarity. They note that until recent times, observers have tended to assert the similarity of the area almost as an expression of the obvious. Vardys and Misiunas further remark that the Baltic identity has been forged by fate. According to them, the interwar political and social experiences, the wartime occupation by great-power belligerents, and the post-war imposition of the Russian embodiment of Marxism have illuminated the existence of past bonds (ibid.). Therefore in an analysis of the historical, political and social developments in Latvia, the wider subject of such developments in the Baltic States has to be considered first. Whilst the research does acknowledge that the element of diversity between the three nations is important, the Baltic States, to a degree have to be considered together first because they have been studied as a group.

The native inhabitants of the three present-day republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are directly descended from tribes who settled on the Eastern shores of the Baltic some 4000 years ago (Gimbutas, 1963: 43). When Rīga was founded in 1200s, the Baltic region, which had been a tribally-based community for thousands of years, came predominantly under the German rule, with Albert of Buxhoeveden instated as the third Bishop of Livonia by Pope Innocent III (Plakans, 2011: 36). After the Great Northern War, concluding in 1721, Russia had added Livonia (modern day Latvia and Lithuania) and Estonia to its western borderland (ibid.: 119). The collapse of the Russian and German empires in 1918 and the ensuing revolutionary upheavals dramatically affected the whole of northern Europe, and the repercussions of these events are still being felt today (Kirby, 1995: 317).

On 18 November 1918, Latvia declared independence, shortly followed by a *de facto* recognition by the Allies (Hiden & Salmon, 1994: 32). Kārlis Ulmanis, the fourth president of Latvia, and his government, began a policy of Latvianisation between the 1920s and mid-1930s. The state effectively ended educational autonomy by placing minority schools under the direct control and supervision of the Ministry of Education; and introduced language laws curbing the

public use of foreign place names (Kirby, 1995: 335). On 23 August 1939, the non-aggression pact between Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union was signed (ibid.: 350), drawing an end to the Baltic independence, as the free existence of the Baltic republics was unacceptable to the totalitarian Soviet Union (Vardys & Misiunas, 1978: 12).

In September-October 1939, just weeks after the division of Poland between Germany and the Soviet Union, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were forced to accept mutual assistance pacts that authorized the Kremlin to keep Red Army bases on Baltic territory (Vardys & Misiunas, 1978: 13). By 18 June 1940, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia were annexed by the Soviet Union (Lane, et al, 2013: 21). For the Soviet authorities the elimination of opposition and the transformation of the Baltic economies went hand in hand. Deportations were a key instrument of Soviet policy. Carried out between 1944 and 1952, the deportations involved much larger numbers and represented a more deliberate attempt to reshape Baltic society than those of 1940-1941 (Hiden & Salmon, 1994: 129). The demographic consequences of occupation and war were severe: it has been calculated that Lithuania lost 15% of its population between 1939 and 1945 alone, Estonia 25% and Latvia as much as 30% (Kirby, 1995: 377). In Latvia and Estonia the balance between the autochthonous inhabitants and the non-native population changed significantly (ibid.: 418).

In 1935, Latvians made up 77% of the population of the republic, with only 8.8% of the population being Russian. In 1989, the Latvian population had dropped to 52%, whilst the Russian population had risen to 34% (CSB, 2015). Immigrants were drawn to the Baltic republics primarily to meet the demand for labour in the new industrial complexes under construction. The immigration remained largely outside the host community, where immigrants were regarded with a mixture of contempt and hostility, fuelled by resentments over housing allocation and the inability or unwillingness of immigrants serving the public to speak the local language (Kirby, 1995: 419).

On 23 August 1989, the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Nazi-Soviet pact, an estimated two million people linked arms in a human chain from Tallinn to Vilnius to demand the restoration of independence - an impressive and poignant demonstration of the popular mood across the Baltic States (Kirby, 1995: 433). The Supreme Councils in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania declared *de jure* independence in 1990, and *de facto* independence in August 1991 (Lieven, 1997: 276). The Estonian and Latvian governments restricted automatic citizenship to those who had held it before 1940 and their descendants (Kirby, 1995: 436), whilst the rest of the population became 'non-citizens'. Both countries also referred to their Russian population as 'colonists', and argued that they had no right to be in the countries (Lieven, 1997: 307). When Latvia joined the European Union in 2004, 470,220 people held the status of 'non-citizen' in Latvia (Morris, 2005: 252), accounting for more than a quarter of the overall population.

There has been notable academic discussion in relation to Latvian nation- and state-building theory. David J. Smith (2016: ch. 1) draws the conclusion that 'a quarter of a century on from the restoration of independence' these processes are still 'ongoing'. This is further highlighted by Andrejs Plakans' comment that there is a difficulty in constructing a 'master narrative' when discussing the Latvian history and ensuing state-building theories (see Smith, 2016). Smith refers to Matthew Kott's observations, which highlight 'a persistent trend towards the securitisation of ethnicity and the 'ethnification' of social issues' and underscore the resulting 'vicious circle of radicalisation that has consistently hindered the consolidation of an open, pluralistic, and inclusive polity' (Kott in Smith, *ibid.*). Furthermore, Kott claims that this has 'given rise to a nation "constructed to view itself as constantly under threat"' (Kott in Smith, *ibid.*) thus emphasising the complexities relating to Latvian state- and nation-building.

Whilst this thesis acknowledges such intricate elements, often based on political theory, this research primarily adopts a more humanities-based approach when discussing claims and analysing data, as this enables a more appropriate application of media-related methods. State- and nation-building theories are highly significant in understanding how the Latvian state has

come into being and continues to function. By offering an overview of the history and noting the political relevance to such history, this thesis in particular concentrates on the ways in which media *specifically* move and shape historical and social narratives.

This section has illustrated that many of the events that have shaped Latvia as an independent country are closely linked to the history of occupation. This research will reflect on how such historical struggles have impacted on the way in which Latvian political and social environments have been shaped. Furthermore, the research will also consider the way that this history has been used to emphasise and narrate a particular understanding of Latvian national identity, and in turn, allow for a particular positioning of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

2.3. *Notions of national identity*

Nationalism, identity and nationality are three highly analysed concepts in both social sciences and cultural studies. The three often interlink and exist in a relation to each other. This section aims to illustrate some of these debates in order to analyse the role they play when considering Baltic and, more specifically, Latvian identity. Importantly, however, as a thesis informed by discussions in the field of humanities, this research does not aim to present a political framework and instead argues for the relevance of particular theories relating to national identity specifically in the context of the media and social content analysed for this research.

Discussion of nationality has been prominent in academic studies for some time. Despite this, the definition of 'national identity' and 'nationality' has been very context-dependant and, at times, exceedingly confused. Psychologists have argued that identity is developed as a natural function of the brain, a means to contextualise one's surroundings, making a reference to a 'social identity' and only thereafter a 'national' one (see Hogg & Abrams, 1998; Hogg, 2001). Social Identity Theory proposes that as a result of the cognitive processes associated with categorization of the social environment into groups, individuals come to identify with particular

groups (Wethrell, 2010: 209). Furthermore, the theory asserts that the motivation to achieve positive group distinctiveness may lead to the derogation of outgroups (see Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This thesis is, in particular, interested in how national identity is shaped in a given social and historical context, and in assessing the extent to which Tajfel and Turner's proposed 'derogation of outgroups' (ibid.) might play a role in shaping national identity.

Ernest Gellner (1998) offers a link between the more psychology-driven and sociological accounts of national identity. In exploring Gellner's views on nationalism, Brendan O'Leary (1998: 54) summarises some of Gellner's points when he notes that 'nationalism invents nations, rather than the other way around'. This is further emphasised by Tom Nairn (1998: 113), who explains that the advantage of nationalism for autocrats 'lies in its fictive kinship', as the 'idealised nation is perceived as a vastly extended family'. This echoes Wethrell's earlier point, but places the social processes above those of cognitive processes. Nairn adds that the perceived extended family is 'supposed to bestow a general sense of psychic belonging and community' (ibid.). This thesis concentrates on untangling and further exploring concepts such as 'belonging' and attempts to understand the processes assigned to the ways in which national identity is perceived in Latvia.

Pierre van den Berghe (1987: 6) argues that 'culture is important but not all-important', instead he proposes that 'ethnic and racial sentiments' felt by particular groups 'are an extension of kinship sentiments' (ibid.: 18). He ascribes, in large part, the ideas of 'kinship sentiments' to 'a genetically based mechanism of animal sociality' (ibid.: xi). However, van den Berghe further proposes that 'ethnicity can be rationally manipulated' by particular groups or individuals. In turn, his argument develops to propose that 'ethnicity can only be understood in relation to other social formations' (ibid.: 256). The argument links the notions of behavioural, scientific and socially based construction of identity and national belonging. O'Leary (1998: 40) quotes Gellner when expanding this theory, noting that 'nationalism is a principle of political legitimacy for us precisely because culture has become so important that it "does not so much underline

structure: rather, it replaces it". Due to the strong ties between nationalism and culture, this thesis primarily explores what role Latvian language news media play in shaping the ideas of Latvian national identity and the way culture is used, created and presented through storytelling. The thesis is also interested in how such storytelling structures might be replicated by and echoed in target audiences' responses to the media content.

Without any doubt, culture is a significant element in any consideration of when discussing the shaping of nationalism and nationalist thought. Will Kymlicka (1997: 64) states that 'the language and culture does not really need much explaining' but rather 'it reflects a pervasive and commonsensical attachment to one's language and culture that is also found among national majorities'. This claim that culture is perceived as 'commonsensical' can be seen as both accurate and inaccurate. The argument lends itself to emphasising the ways in which culture has been perceived, but alternatively also demonstrates the significant need to break such 'commonsensical' perceptions in order to assess *why* and *how* they become so.

This is even more significant when positioned against Gellner's (2000: 101) argument that 'the ideological system of a society does not merely contribute to the stability of the system by persuading its members that the system is legitimate'. Instead, he explains that its role is 'far more pervasive and complicated', arguing that such an ideological system allows for the possibility to implement what he calls 'coercion' (ibid.). This coercion, according to him, provides coercers with 'principles of organization and of resolving internal disputes' (ibid.). Thus, 'commonsensical' attachments provide more complex and potentially systematic *constructions* that are necessary for specific reenactments of ideology, nationalistic or otherwise. Bernard Yack (1999: 109) clarifies this notion, adding that 'modern citizens tend to imagine political community as something distinct from the state and the political processes it defines'; he states that it is 'a kind of cultural community that makes use of the state for purposes of self-government' (ibid.). Here, culture can play a multifaceted role in the construction of national

identity, including the way political ideology is constructed in order to devise a nationalistic approach to identity.

Zygmunt Bauman (1992: 677) argues that national identity exists within an activity of artificial 'boundary-drawing'. He explains how this places national identity as always 'contentious and contested' but, perhaps more importantly, also as 'glossing over some (potentially disruptive) differentiations and representing some other (objectively minor) differences as powerful and decisive separating factors'. This concept of national identity as constructed in a *particular* way is significant throughout this research. A more complex view of the so-called 'boundary-drawing' practices is expressed by Umut Özkırımlı (2005: 24), who notes that 'since all nations lay claim to a unique place in history and to certain boundaries, all national identities are exclusionary'. The notion of a historical role within the construction, recognition and perpetuation of national identity and thought is furthered when considering Eric Hobsbawm's (2000: 263) argument that 'in some sense it is the idea of "us" as a body of people united by an uncountable number of things "we" have in *common* - a "way of life" in the widest sense'. He adds that it is a '*common* territory of existence in which we live, whose landscape is familiar and recognizable' and that it is the existence 'of *this* which the influx from outside threatens'.

This argument is supported by Graham Day and Andrew Thompson (2004: 82) who argue that the most important notion is that the idea of 'nation' brings to mind not only cultural distinctiveness and the sense of belonging to a community held together by cultural solidarity, but also ideas of shared memories and sovereignty (*ibid.*). They note that populations do not just develop an awareness of these ideas as individuals. Rather, people need to be encouraged to think of themselves as a community and a nation, with all the cultural and political implications this concept entails (*ibid.*). Day and Thompson also note that 'members of the society occupy well-defined social positions and "know their place"' (*ibid.*: 45). It is this knowledge, then, that allows both a unity in a 'way of life', as claimed by Hobsbawm, and a sense of something that can be threatened, which provides bounds for identifying national

thought and, importantly, identity in relation to understanding of nationality. These concepts of creating such sense of *commonness* are explored by Benedict Anderson (2006) and his theories relating to national identity as an imagined community - a construct which defines a national identity as shared, despite most people in a nation never meeting each other physically. Both Day and Thompson's and Anderson's approaches to national identity represent a more constructivist based analysis. These concepts, which position national identity as constructed, will be used throughout this thesis, as the research attempts to untangle the complex narratives *structuring* national identity, both in terms of the way it is understood by Latvian speakers but also in relation to the bearing such ideas subsequently have on the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia.

Returning to Gellner's (2000: 101) argument that 'the ideological system of a society does not merely contribute to the stability of the system by persuading its members that the system is legitimate' and the conclusion that such an ideological system must instead use 'coercion' (ibid.) to establish a 'commonsensical' attachment, this research partly explores what might be understood by 'coercion' and how it is re-enacted. It is the idea of a nation as an imagined community with a shared *commonness* that both supports arguments of structured conceptions of a particular identity, but also highlights the difficulties arising within the concepts of national identity. Johann Georg von Zimmermann (1797: 79-80) reflects that 'a nation thinks itself brave, when it does not possess any bravery', which, he argues, allows it to take 'pride founded upon imaginary valour', appearing 'in an excessive estimation of [their] own courage', and, perhaps both more significantly in this research, 'an unjust contempt for [their] enemies'. This argument again links to Hobsbawm's claim that such thought processes allow for any outside force to be perceived as a threat. Simon Keller (2007: 67) demonstrates the influence these concepts have on the ideas of patriotism, which he notes is not 'just a combination of affection, love, concern and identification', but also motivates an interest in maintaining a certain characterization of one's country, whilst denying the actions as affected by such a motivation

(Keller, 2007: 69). In simpler terms, Keller's argument asserts that feelings of national identity, and the ways in which it is performed, heavily rely on a unified understanding of *commonness*. The different approaches and theories are drawn together throughout this research to show how national identity is not exclusively 'coerced' or 'maintained', but rather jointly re-enacted and perpetuated.

The construction of national identity as a wider concept will be discussed further within the thesis. By applying theories relating to national identity, this research will explore Latvian national identity in particular, with an examination of the way it has been both historically and socially constructed.

2.3.1. Baltic national identity

This section will address the ideas of national identity, with a more specific focus on developments of Baltic national identity. Despite differences, the Baltic States do share a history, as illustrated above; a history that often positions them to be considered as a group, rather than individually. Due to the fact that much of the research considers the three together, this section will refer to the national identity as developed within the Baltic States, and only thereafter consider national identity in Latvia specifically. There are many similarities between the three Baltic nations. Richard C.M. Mole (2013: 19) notes that 'nothing serves to unite and mobilize people as effectively as memory of a shared victory, or, in particular, collective suffering'. As the history of the Baltic States illustrates, it is easy to argue that the three countries do, in fact, share a memory of collective suffering.

The academic discussion of national identity within the Baltic States has splintered into different arguments. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, under the influence of the Enlightenment, individual German landowners had begun to give peasants rights on their own estates. John Hiden and Patrick Salmon (1994: 16) note that economic and social

advancement, combined with the allowed ownership of land, began the 'awakening'¹ of Baltic nationalism (ibid.). Agita Misāne and Aija Priedīte (1997) refer to this as the beginning of the national idea within the Baltic States. This, then, draws a historically linear line of progression in Baltic nationalism. Furthermore, it positions the ownership of land as a crucial element in the development, or the preferred 'awakening', of national identity.

Culture, however, is also understood to play a large part in the development of identity in the Baltic States. Aukse Balčytienė (2012: 2) notes that in the Baltic countries, 'the recognition and protection of national languages' and 'cultural traditions have played an instrumental part in their national awakenings' (ibid.). This provides two distinct categories to be considered when assessing and defining Baltic national identity: 'language' and 'culture'. Lieven (1997: 51) explains that in the early 1900s the Baltic nationalist intelligentsia viewed education in the Baltic languages as the single most important factor in the strengthening of their nations and national identity (ibid.). Arguments regarding the role of language in the sustenance of Baltic national identity, link the pre-war and post-war periods. Dovile Budryte (2005) and Evija Kļave (2011) further assess language as having played an important part in the identity of the Baltic States during the Soviet rule between 1940s and 1991. Their arguments concentrate on exploring the effects of 'russification' during this period. Budryte proposes that the migration and russification policies pursued by the Soviet Union in the Baltic States played an important role in establishing nationalist movements within the three countries (ibid.: 56). This argument is supported by Hiden and Salmon (1994: 56) who acknowledge the guerrilla formations which operated across the Baltics, particularly during the early years of the USSR but also into the late 1970s. Budryte recognises these formations as the first of 'three wave sub-state nationalist movements in the Baltic States' (ibid.). For her, the second wave started in the 1970s, with political demands to

¹ A term widely used within the Baltic States, and adopted by academics, regarding the three national revival movements in Latvia (1850s-1880s; 1918; 1987-1991).

stop russification. The same demands were heard during the times of perestroika (1985 to 1991), which Budryte regards as the third wave of nationalist movements.

Notably, all three waves of nationalism that Budryte identifies position the Baltic States in a defensive position, identifying *against* rather than *with*. This is important when assessing the historical impact such identification has had upon the Baltic States and upon Latvia more specifically. Jaeger (cited in Mole, 2013: 83) explains that upon regaining independence in 1991, due to the Soviet practice of conflating Soviet with Russian, a tendency developed among Balts to conflate 'Russia with the USSR' and cast '*everything Russian* as a threat through [...] a discursive "chain of equivalence"' (ibid.). This deserves further investigation and consideration. By identifying 'everything Russian' as a threat to Baltic national identity, the national identity of those Russian speakers in the Baltic countries who may not identify with Russia as their homeland is questioned.

Despite having often been considered as a group, the Baltic States have not always embraced the notion. Most notably, when the European Council announced in 1998 that it was considering the inclusion of Estonia in the EU on its own, rather than with Latvia and Lithuania, Latvian Foreign Minister Valdis Brikavs argued that 'our [the Baltic States] goal of entry into the European Union will be achieved only after all three Baltic States become members of that organization', further noting that 'one cannot imagine a united Europe without the three Baltic States' (Brikavs in Mole, 2013: 157). The threat this posed to Estonia was that if Brussels decided to wait until all three of the Baltic States were ready to be accepted in the EU, Estonia would have to wait for the second round of accession to EU membership, rather than join in the first. In response, Estonia argued its own individual identity as separate from Latvia and Lithuania. Foreign Minister Toomas Ilves claimed that 'what the three Baltic States have in common almost completely derives from shared unhappy experiences imposed upon from outside' (Ilves in Mole, 2013: 157). Thus Ilves suggested a common denominator rather than a shared identity.

This section has explored notions of national identity within the Baltic States. Many arguments position the three countries as a group due to their shared history, which is important. However, a shared history does not define a shared identity, as both Ilves (1999) and Mole (2013) have remarked. The Baltic States have been brought together by shared experiences and suffering, yet they differ in culture and language. Another common aspect in the identity within the Baltic States has been their self-positioning *against* Russia, and the russification that they experienced during Soviet era. It is clear that distancing Estonia from Latvia and Lithuania was motivated by political benefit, and in the majority of cases the Baltic States still stand together on the world's political platform. This requires further analysis and an establishment of the threat the three countries feel that both Russia and the Russian-speaking minority in their countries poses to them.

2.3.2. National identity in Latvia

This section aims to illustrate how many of the ideas regarding Baltic national identity can and do interlink with Latvian national identity. Similarities between the three countries exist. However, writers also acknowledge differences between the three (see Vardys and Misiunas, 1978; Budryte, 2005; Balčytienė, 2011). By addressing Latvia in particular within this section, I will narrow the arguments for a further exploration of Latvian society and politics more specifically.

2.3.2.1. Culture

Ilzīte Jakoba and Līga Paula (2011) propose that Latvian identity was amalgamated from a combination of ideas, values and cultural symbols through which someone's ethnic identity both aided and built the understanding of Latvian-ness. This amalgamation, they explain, allows one to ethnically 'belong' to the Latvian nation, and further a collective consciousness (ibid.: 154). By addressing the cultural element in building one's national identity, Jakoba and Paula

argue that Latvian identity is furthered by engagement with the cultural elements. For example, the celebration of Midsummer² and attendance of the Latvian Song and Dance Festival, Jakoba and Paula claim as an important element, which allows Latvians to sustain their identification with Latvia. Their argument does not engage with the historical development or the impact of Latvian national identity, but rather only focuses on its sustainability. Whilst this limits the discussion of links between historical ramifications and contemporaneous recognition of national identity in Latvia, the research does provide a commentary on the impact of culture. Their notions of 'belonging' to Latvia are clearly linked with active participation in culture and heritage. There appears to be no definitive explanation of what is understood by 'belonging' if it is not an active participation in the cultural events noted.

This section demonstrates that an acknowledgement of cultural impact exists, but has no clear outline of what 'culture' entails. This thesis will address elements of 'culture' as understood by Latvian speakers, as well as the impact such elements hold upon the notion of 'belonging'. Furthermore, the research will also explore the ways in which such 'belonging' is constructed to fit within particular norms and expectations, rather than adapt to a wider sub-section of people who may identify - or wish to identify - as Latvian.

2.3.2.2. Language

As briefly discussed earlier, the element of language is recognised as important in defining Latvian national identity. In September 1992, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council, explained why the Russian language was considered to constitute a threat to the Latvian language, despite Latvia having regained control of the state:

No other country in the world, as a result of occupation by two criminal regimes, the Communist and the Nazi, has lost as many of its native

² A pagan celebration, traditionally celebrated in honour of the Latvian deiti 'Jānis'. Now an official holiday, widely celebrated across the country.

inhabitants. But this has happened in Latvia. Therefore, now in the state of Latvia huge efforts must be devoted to saving the country's language, the basic mark of the Latvian nation. (Gorbunovs, quoted in Mole, 2013: 84)

This is illustrative of the role that language was believed to have played in the development, and, more importantly, sustenance of the Latvian nation. Mole argues that promoting Latvian and demoting Russian were seen as 'two sides of the same coin' which were 'underlining the new cultural hierarchy and highlighting the constitutive outside of Russian-ness' (ibid.: 84). This positions the Latvian language *against* Russian. A link emerges between Latvian language as 'nation building' and Russian, in turn, in a binary opposition to it. Budryte (2005) similarly argues that the Russian language is recognised as a threat not only to the Latvian language but also to Latvian national identity as a whole. This resonates with Gorbunovs, and potentially even more so with Jaeger's earlier point, regarding the tendency to associate 'Russian' with 'Soviet' and therefore 'a threat'.

2.3.2.3. *The Russian-speaking minority*

Due to the large population of Russian speakers in Latvia, consideration must be given to a national identity that is not necessarily defined as 'Latvian'. A varied view of the splintered national identity in Latvia is held, for example, by Aivars Tabuns (2006: 32), who claims that the Russian-speaking minority generally identify with Russia rather than Latvia and tend to oppose the pro-Western style of government in Latvia (ibid.). Such notions are contested by other academics and researchers, as a 2014 report demonstrated that 74.6% of respondents felt a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Latvia (SKDS, 2014). This illustrates the problematic nature of questions relating to national identity in Latvia, as a singular identity struggles to be established. Ivars Ījabs (2006) explores the question of national identity further, arguing that despite many Russian speakers having struggled to adapt to their minority status in a post-

Soviet country, they attached significantly less importance to national identity than Latvians. He points out that, while the majority of Latvians (53%) saw their national identity as important, most Russians (63%) did not regard it as a question of primary significance. Two difficulties in terms of research arise from this. Firstly, the question of what the Russian-speaking minority recognise as being their national identity; and secondly, possibly more important, what the reasons might be why 63% of the Russian speakers do not regard national identity as important.

This section has shown that debates surrounding national identity, within the Baltic States and in Latvia in particular, are deeply connected with discussions of culture and language. There does, however, appear to be a lack in definition of what the terms represent. A presumption runs through the majority of the discussions that 'culture' and 'language' define and sustain Latvian national identity. For this research, it is necessary to provide a more precise understanding of these terms specifically in the context of Latvia. This, in turn, would allow for a more identifiable analysis of the way national identity is positioned. The research discussed so far points to the opposition between Latvian and Russian, and does not emphasise or explore the links that might exist between the two. The large population of Russian speakers in Latvia suggests that this research has to consider 'culture' and 'language' in a way that would provide an understanding of how the two groups co-exist rather than clash with each other. If the identities of Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia stand in binary opposition, this, too, has to be identified more clearly. Similarly, the positioning of national identity of Latvian and Russian speakers has to be accounted for.

2.4. Russian speakers in Latvia: politics and policies

Due to the role ascribed to language in Latvia, politics and policies become an important aspect in the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. As noted earlier, the Latvian government has positioned itself as a defender of the Latvian language and culture, and as a

means of protecting the nation itself. This section aims to provide a brief assessment of governmental policies regarding Russian speakers in Latvia in more detail. Firstly, the section will consider issues of citizenship, and, secondly, discuss the changing policies regarding education in Latvia. Thirdly, this section will briefly discuss the political spectrum in Latvia and its complex nature in relation to Russo-Latvian relations.

2.4.1. Non-citizens

One of the most important policies implemented by the Latvian government upon regaining independence in 1991 concerned citizenship. The announcement by the Latvian government in 1992 that only those who had been citizens in 1940 and their descendants would be automatically given Latvian citizenship, meant that one third of Latvia's population was classed as non-citizens. Due to the nature of immigration during Soviet rule, the majority of the newly established 'non-citizens' were Russian speakers. In 1994 the new Citizenship Law was adopted, which was justified as ensuring the development of Latvia as a 'single-nation state'. When it became clear that large numbers of those who had come to Latvia during the Soviet period would not be eligible for Latvian citizenship for a number of years, Latvia introduced legislation aimed at regulating the status of its non-citizens (Mole, 2013: 91). Importantly, those born to non-citizens in Latvia automatically still fell under the 'non-citizen' status, rather than being granted Latvian citizenship, with no clear justification offered to such policy.

The law 'On the Status of those Former Soviet Citizens who do not have the Citizenship of Latvia or that of any Other State', adopted in 1995, stated that all non-citizens were to be granted permanent resident status and enjoy the right to preserve their native language, culture and traditions. Furthermore, they would be granted internationally recognized travel documents and be exempt from military service. However, they were not given full political rights, were barred from practising certain civil-service and legal professions, and were faced with restrictions on the ownership of land (Mole, 2013: 92). These restrictions, many of which were

still in play at the time of the research, have been a point of tension between political and social forces both within and outside Latvia. Russia, in particular, has expressed dissatisfaction with the way that the Latvian government has chosen to address its minority issues. This may account for Budryte's (2005: 9) proposal that the issues between Latvian and Russian speakers can in part be ascribed to Latvian fears about Russia and its intent to use Russian speakers to assert influence in Latvia (*ibid.*). However, the issues of non-citizenship have differing links and sources. Whilst some do reflect a historical fear of Russia, many are also connected with notions of protecting a national identity, which is generally perceived as being endangered by the Russian language itself. Furthermore, these issues are also linked to Russian speakers' association with the Russian state. All of these factors combined build a complex background to any discussion about the role of the Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia.

In the 2011 census (CSB, 2011), 295,122 people stated that they were non-citizens, thus accounting for 14.25% of the overall population of Latvia. Latvian citizens accounted for 83% of the population. This is illustrative of the cleavage still existing between citizens and non-citizens.

2.4.2. Education

During the first period of Latvian independence (between 1918 and 1940), the Latvian government introduced a policy of 'Latvianisation', wherein a single language education was introduced (see Hiden & Salmon, 1994). A similar agenda towards Latvian-only education had been proposed and slowly introduced in Latvia since 1998. Pavlenko (2011) describes the Latvian government's policy of introducing Latvian-only education as contemporaneous 'Latvianisation', although she does not draw parallels with the policies of the 1920-40s. She explains that in 1998, Latvia adopted an education reform that set a deadline for the transition to

Latvian-only secondary education by 2004. The protests sparked by this reform led to an amendment to the legislation in 2004, which allowed for a transitional period during which Russian-medium schools would teach at least 60% of subjects in Latvian and up to 40% in Russian (ibid.: 43). In 2014, the Latvian government announced that all secondary education was to be taught through the medium of Latvian by 2018, marking the end of the transitional period introduced in 2004. Similarly, since 2012, all final exams for the secondary education diploma have been centralised and can only be taken in Latvian, regardless of the language students have been taught in.

The proposed changes in the education law represent the Latvian government's growing policy of 'Latvianization' and illustrate the push for a change within society. However, the protests by the Russian-speaking community, in response to the change in education laws, illustrate an already existing conflict.

2.4.3. Politics

The political situation in Latvia has been partially unstable since 1991. The ruling parties have created and dissolved coalition governments since the declaration of independence. Denis Hanovs (2016: 136) notes that 'since the 1990s, the Latvian political elite, predominantly ethnic Latvians, viewed the restoration of the interrupted political culture of the so-called 'first' Republic (1918-1940) as their top priority'. Ieva Brika (2016: 231) explains that by 2010, 'Saskaņas Centrs enjoyed considerable popularity and succeeded in receiving 26% of the popular vote in Latvian Saeima elections. However, despite the party's surge in popularity and electoral success it was excluded from the government coalition. Auers further highlights this as indicative of the 'ethnic divide' which has become 'a normal part of Latvian political discourse' (Auers, 2013: 101). In 2011, Valdis Zatlers, the then president, called for a referendum to dissolve the government, stating endemic corruption in the Latvian political system (ibid.: 85) as a justification. After the elections that followed in September of the same year, the salience of the

Latvian/Russian speaker ethnic cleavage emerged during the process of new government coalition formation (ibid.).

This section has shown the complex nature of the Latvian government, both in its practices and policies regarding the Russian speakers. One of the major gaps in the research done so far, however, is the representation of Latvian society's views regarding these issues. Similarly, as in the case of national identity, many of the discussions of policies provide presumptions about the reactions of Latvian-speaking people. Whilst engaging with policies, and at times politics, the published research lacks a discussion of social opinion about the Russian-speaking minority. This research will address this gap by investigating the views held by Latvian speakers towards the Russian-speaking minority through more than just an exploration of existing and proposed governmental policy. Interviews discussing Latvian-speaking opinions relating to national identity, the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking population and understanding of how this relationship is represented in media will feature heavily in offering an overview of how particular ideas are understood and sustained within the Latvian-speaking society.

2.5. Media

This section addresses a variety of issues related to the development of the media in Latvia, as well as the media and representation in a broader sense. Firstly, a section on media development in Latvia will discuss the emerging academic field of media history. Secondly, the role of regulations will be assessed. The section will also explore the differences between Latvian-language media and Russian-language media currently available in Latvia and outline the reasons for the choice made in this research to concentrate on Latvian-language media in particular. The latter part of this section will engage with issues of the media representation and the applicability of different theories when considered in the Latvian-speaking context.

2.5.1. Stages of media development in Latvia

In order to position this research in the context of social and political discourses about the Russian-speaking minority in the Latvian-language news media, it is important to understand the ways in which the Latvian media have developed over the years. Inta Brikše, Ojārs Skudra and Rolands Tjarve (2002: 67-8) have proposed an outline of the six stages of mass media development in Latvia between 1985 and 2001:

1. 1985 - 1987: democratisation of media content during the period of *perestroika* and *glasnost* in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev.
2. 1987 - 1990: the media system and individual media outlets increasingly served as properly functioning, informative communications channels.
3. January-August 1991: major transformations in the national press and state radio and television stations, ascribed to the regaining of independence and thus change in political ideology and press freedom.
4. 1991 - 1992: stagnation and narrowing of the media market.
5. 1993 - late 1990s: the emergence of a new media market involving the commercialisation and consolidation of the media.
6. Late 1990s - early 21st century: national market for mass communication stabilizes, global communications industry strengthens its presence in the local market.

This timeline illustrates the change in regimes between the Soviet and the newly independent Latvia; a change from a state-owned and state-run media to more commercially run media creates a change in both political ideology and economic notions of the free market. The establishment of a democracy in Latvia in place of the Soviet rule was evident in the media developments, as a more democratic approach emerged. This is represented by transformation from a monopoly and state-run media, to the introduction of commercial and global structures during the late 1990s.

The findings of Sergei Kruks and Janis Chakars (2010: 58) support this perspective. They analysed the television programme *Labvakar*, which was favoured by the Latvian Popular Front³ and recognised as a place to 'consolidate political ideas' (ibid.), as a case study for a further discussion of the media in the late-Soviet era and as an attempt to establish a connection with the type of broadcasting produced after Latvian independence. Kruks and Chakars explain that *Labvakar* sought to condemn russification, thus fitting in the first stage of the media development in Latvia, as suggested by Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve - the liberalisation from the Soviet ideology. However, Kruks and Chakars add that *Labvakar*, due to its strong links with the Popular Front, was increasingly representative of what they refer to as the 'elites' (ibid.: 64). These consisted of politicians and did not necessarily reflect the views expressed by a wider society. Notably, they also argue that a Soviet influence could still be felt within the programme, which may not have been recognised at the time (ibid.). This contrasts with the model provided by Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve, who outline a liberalisation of Latvian media and do not appear to acknowledge the Soviet impact on post-independence media development. This example, and the discrepancies within the research conducted, is representative of the type of analysis and considerations that this thesis will explore. Throughout the following chapters, the notion of the historical impact and the recognition of the Soviet influences will become prominent and notable when assessing the way Latvian-language media construct their narrative and portrayal of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

A part of the model provided by Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve is also illustrated by Balčytienė and Lauk's (2005) discussion of the development of the free market in the media. They argue that market-oriented journalism and media production have shaped the ways in which the media have developed since the fall of the USSR. Balčytienė and Lauk place emphasis on the foreign investments and privatisation of the media in discussing the effects of globalisation. This creates a link between Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve's division regarding

³ A political party between 1980s and 1990s which called for full independence for Latvia.

commercialisation of the media in mid- to late-1990s and ‘the strengthening of the global communications industry and its presence in the local market’ (2002: 67) during the early 21st century.

Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve’s breakdown of the media development in Latvia, however, lacks a discussion of the more contemporary media. Published in 2002, the research understandably does not provide an account of more recent developments. One change that deserves acknowledgment is the development of media technology and the internet. Anda Rožukalne (2012) argues that there has been a decrease in traditional media use and an increase in the popularity of social networking. Access to the internet provides more choice in information sources and complicates issues of media ownership and political ideology. The structure provided by Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve does, however, allow for an analysis of the impact the developments they discuss have had on more contemporaneous media. Importantly for this research, these developments also position the press and television channels whose content will be thoroughly analysed within the thesis. Whilst this thesis acknowledges the impact that social media and online-only publications can have in shaping a particular media discourse, the research focused on printed and broadcast news media as primary sources, in order to discuss nationally available news that was accessible to the widest possible audience. A more detailed account of these choices is provided in the Methodology chapter and the Conclusion of the thesis, when outlining scope for further research.

2.5.2. Regulations.

The issues of press regulation and particular policies introduced in Latvia regarding the media are an important consideration, as they can be representative of political involvement. This section will explore the links between the Latvian government and press regulatory bodies. Similarly, the section will also discuss press freedom drawing on aspects of such press regulation.

The media market and media regulation in Latvia is considered as liberal (see Balčytienė, 2008; Balčytienė, 2009; Harro-Loit, 2010). This is due to limited regulation of both media and media ownership, and very few test cases to set a legal precedent, which have allowed for the media policy in Latvia to remain extremely liberal (Lauk, 2008: 60). Balčytienė argues that liberalism was the only way forward for the media, while statutory media regulation was considered politically unacceptable. Therefore, any attempt to impose stricter regulations and deliberalise media markets would have been interpreted as a step backwards (2009: 47). In turn, this means that the media regulation in Latvia is still weak and an overall governing body does not exist.

One of the few cases that have set a legal precedent for the Latvian media-related laws is explored by Richard Caddell (2009) in his article 'Public Interest Speech and Investigative Journalism: Latvia, the *Diena* Case and the European Court of Human Rights'. In the article, he analyses press freedom in Latvia through an assessment of a court case between *Diena*⁴ and Latvia in the European Court. The case reached the European Court after an appeal by *Diena* when the Latvian Court found the newspaper guilty of slander in 2002. *Diena* argued that the Latvian Court had infringed on press freedom. The European Court ruled in favour of *Diena* and stated that Latvia had broken Article 10 of Human Rights, which allows for freedom of expression. Caddell argues that this was not an unexpected result, as 'media law is considered to be very much in its infancy in the countries of the former Soviet Union' (ibid.: 177). Whilst a notable period of time has passed since *Diena vs. Latvia*, it is still a case which reflects that, more than a decade after the reinstatement of Latvia's independence, questions relating to the Latvian media were based on the acknowledgement of its underdeveloped position. The case contributed to a debate on press freedom in Latvia and is therefore notable in having set a precedent for future journalistic practices in the country.

⁴ *Diena* is one of the biggest nationally available daily papers in Latvia and will be explored in more detail throughout the thesis.

The liberal media regulations regarding press freedom can also be ascribed, in part, to the absence of an overseeing regulatory body. Balčytienė (2012: 8) argues that there is a political influence on the media, due to a lack of 'editorial autonomy', which is manifested in 'a media system that has not yet been fully separated from the existing political system' (ibid.). Media regulatory bodies that currently exist in Latvia are in large parts sponsored by the government, and thus arguably hold a pro-government bias. Šulmane (2011) supports Balčytienė's argument, noting that a confusion is expressed by Latvian journalists over media practices due to a lack of a single regulatory body, and, presumably, a clear media policy.

2.5.3. Ownership

This section aims to highlight the complex nature of media ownership in Latvia, which has been deemed to lack transparency since independence in 1991 (see Brikše, Skudra, Tjarve, 2002; Šulmane, 2006; Dimants, 2010). This has created a problematic environment for the discussion of the media, media policy and most importantly, issues relating to political bias. Šulmane (2006: 7) points out that the lack of transparency concerning the ownership of the media in Latvia has fostered a belief that 'the media can, and often are, linked to Russia' (ibid.). The lack of transparency in media ownership makes it difficult to accurately assess the media in Latvia. Whilst Šulmane's point of the media's perceived links to Russia is interesting and relevant in the analysis of audience perception, it does not provide proof for such claims.

Ainārs Dimants (2010) expands the ownership argument by noting that in 2009 two of the local newspapers in Daugavpils⁵ were owned by non-Latvians.⁶ Furthermore, Dimants argues that the politicians in Latvia, many of whom were Russian speakers, worked for Latvian-based Russian-language and Russian-based⁷ media before entering the political scene in

⁵ Second biggest city in Latvia, with a large Russian-speaking community.

⁶ One a Russian citizen, another a Ukrainian.

⁷ The media available in Latvia that are directly broadcast from Russia are perceived to present a different political ideologies than the Russian-language media broadcast from Latvia. In 2014, the multiple

Latvia (ibid.: 32). This both supports Šulmane's point and further links media ownership with issues surrounding political involvement. These are both crucial issues to consider when discussing the perception of the media in Latvian society, as media ownership and the political involvement demonstrate a confusion between fact and myth.

2.5.4. Latvian- vs. Russian-language media in Latvia

This section will discuss the splintering of the media space in Latvia by exploring the differences between Latvian- and Russian-language media produced and available in Latvia. Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve explain that a segmentation based on language and spheres of influence played a large role in the media development when, in the late 1990s, the state-controlled mass media shifted to more commercially based media. In contrast to the early 1990s, by 1995 the Russian-language media market was both strengthened and more developed (2002: 97). This segregation of the media into two languages has also affected the readership and viewership of the available mass media and the media market in Latvia more generally. Brikše, Skudra and Tjarve point out that an audience that is already small, in the context of the modern media and advertising markets, is even smaller because it is divided between Russian and Latvian outlets (ibid.: 83). It is also notable that both Latvian- and Russian-language media are often perceived to portray different stories or the same stories differently (see Dimants, 2010; Rožukalne, 2012). The differences between the two complicate the analysis of both, since they can not be assessed as a bilingual media, but rather as representative of two differing audiences - Latvian- and Russian-speaking. Similarly, there is also an overlap of those Latvian speakers who engage with the Russian-language media and vice versa.

media regulatory bodies in Latvia also claimed the inability to regulate Russian broadcast media, which has led to the ban of several Russian channels, most notably *Rossija RTR* and *Pervyj Baltijskij Kanal (PBK)*.

Šulmane adds that the Russian-language media in Latvia do not fulfil the functions of typical minority media outlets. The Russian-language press, she argues, represents not just the citizens of a minority, with specific interests and needs, but also non-citizens, who see the newspapers as a means to access the public sphere (2006: 64). This means that Russian-language press holds a large political influence over the relationship not only between Latvian and Russian speakers, but also between citizens and non-citizens. The force of this argument can be illustrated through the levels of trust placed in the press by the Latvian society. Šulmane shows that 80% of Latvians trusted the Latvian-language press, with 41% of Russian speakers also expressing trust in the Latvian-language press. 71% of citizens and only 26% of non-citizens expressed such trust. In turn, only 27% of Latvians trusted the Russian-language press. Contrasting this, 72% of Russian speakers expressed trust in the Russian-language press. 41% of citizens and 74% of non-citizens claimed to trust the Russian-language press (Šulmane, 2010: 229). In large part this may be explained by two factors discussed earlier: firstly, the majority of the non-citizens are Russian speakers and thus may prefer, or only be able to, engage with the media in Russian. Secondly, the differences in the media content may play a part in both preference and trust that the audience has expressed to Šulmane in the course of the research.

Contrasting the Latvian-language media to the Russian-language media in Latvia, Dimants discusses both Russian-language media and Russian media available in Latvia. He argues the Russian-language media represent a different ideology to that of the Latvian media, which he describes as characterized by 'Western thought' (Dimants, 2010: 36-7). The claim defines the Russian-language media in ideological opposition to Latvian media. Dimants further proposes that the difference in ideology within the two different-language media affects Latvia's ability to unify the Latvian- and Russian-speaking population and may, in fact, be used by Russia to perpetuate segregation (ibid.). This can be further linked to the discussion of ownership and spheres of influence. Dimants' points are, arguably, rather drastic in their

assessments of the Russian-language media. The arguments do not provide a thorough analysis of the Russian-language media audience, which complicates Dimants' proposal of Russia's influence in Latvia through the use of the media. Motives for Russia's influence are left to a 'possibility to achieve political goals' (ibid.), without further expanding on what such 'goals' might be.

Jānis Juzefovičs (2017: 137) remarks that, in Latvia, 'different public spaces/sphericules are not completely isolated and do meet at some points, though, no doubt, one could wish to have more points of meetings'. In such points, Juzefovičs argues that there would be a possibility to offer more 'interaction, exchange and negotiation of [Latvian and Russian speakers'] versions of the national identity, culture and past', further noting that this could 'create more solidarities and trust between both communities' (ibid.). Such observations further highlight the way Latvian-speaking media currently lacks a distinct voice that allows for any bridging of issues between Latvian and Russian speakers. This is a point which will be analysed in greater detail throughout the thesis. Similarly, Juzefovičs' research also notes the way Russian speakers opt for Russian-language media, which aids the points already made by Dimants and Šulmane.

Although at times lacking definition, Dimants does illustrate the existence of differences between the Latvian and the Russian-language media. Together with Šulmane's assessment of the trust placed in the media by different audiences, it is reasonable to assess only one of the two different language media. Latvian-language media are trusted by Latvians and citizens more than the Russian-language media. This contrasts to the trust placed in the Russian-language media by Russian speakers and non-citizens. The trust placed in the different language media proposes that it is possible to find a political and social commentary by analysing only the Latvian-language media. However, a clearer definition of the differences between the two is required.

The section on the media so far has identified multiple gaps in published scholarship. A contemporaneous discussion of developments in Latvian media is necessary. Furthermore, the section has discussed issues regarding media regulation and ownership, which show a need for further analysis. By providing an analysis of issues regarding development, regulation and ownership of media, it will be possible to place the Russian-language media in a clearer context.

2.6. Media and representation

This section will explore the research relating to minority representation in Latvian-language media, in order to illustrate the need for research on the representation of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media.

2.6.1. Minority representation in Latvian-language media

A small number of research studies regarding the representation of minorities in Latvian media have been done. Most of these studies, however, are in Latvian and concentrate on particular case studies. This section will discuss the existing research and analyse the conclusions it draws. This will allow for a better understanding of the gaps that exist when considering the Russian-speaking minority and the ways that they are represented in the Latvian-language media in particular.

A case study by Kruks and Šulmane (2006) assessed the ways in which the Latvian press represents minorities. Their study concentrated on an analysis of seven newspapers - four published in Latvian and three in Russian. Whilst their research predominantly concentrated on the less populous minorities referred to in the Latvian press (such as Jews, Roma and Muslims), they note that most coverage in the papers they studied was given to the Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia. Curiously they do not draw any conclusions regarding this representation, concentrating instead on the less populous minorities. This suggests that Kruks and Šulmane do not recognise Russian speakers as a minority that falls into the same category

as Jews, Roma and Muslims. The level of coverage given to the Russo-Latvian relationship, however, illustrates the necessity for new research focusing on a more thorough analysis of the representation of the Russian-speaking minority.

Another assessment of minority representation is provided by Kruks and Chakars (2010) in their study of the television programme *Labvakar*, mentioned earlier. *Labvakar* is recognised by Kruks and Chakars as a highly influential programme during the breakdown of the USSR and the reinstatement of Latvian independence between 1988 and 1991. They offer a careful analysis of the way *Labvakar* interacted with politicians and the stories the programme chose to portray during the three-year period. Kruks and Chakars remark that the use of general non-specific designators in the programme, like 'many', 'some', 'few' and 'several', created an implicit sense of the Russo-sceptic tenor of the programme's discourse (ibid.: 61). The research also provides an insight into the levels and nature of the representation that Russian speakers received during the change from Soviet rule to Latvia's declaration of independence. As noted earlier, Kruks and Chakars conclude that the involvement of the Popular Front in the creation of *Labvakar* accounted, in large parts, for the programme's content.

The third study regarding minority representation in Latvian media is by Edgars Skunstiņš and Jānis Ķūsis (2011). They have assessed the ways in which minorities have been represented in the Latvian-language regional press. Their research concentrated on four regional newspapers, one from each of the four regions in Latvia (Vidzeme, Zemgale, Kurzeme and Latgale). They found that questions of tolerance and intolerance towards minorities were not widely discussed in these newspapers, concluding that, in general, the representation of minorities in the regional press was positive (ibid.: 59). This research was highly quantitative and did not discuss the different newspapers, their content or, more importantly, what exactly Skunstiņš and Ķūsis deem a 'positive' representation.

The three studies highlight a large gap in research regarding Russian-speaking minority's representation in the Latvian-language media. Furthermore, many of the conclusions

drawn by the research so far do not offer a clear understanding of what a particular representation in Latvian media means. My research aims to explore the representation of the Russian-speaking minority and build clearer links between the political contexts of the media and society.

2.7. Conclusion

This Literature Review identifies a number of areas which require further research. They are:

- Definition of national identity in the context of Latvia's diverse population. Such a definition should provide an outline for questions regarding citizens, non-citizens, Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia and their perception of national identity.
- An assessment of the Latvian-speaking population's views on the Russian minority in Latvia. This should also make a distinction between governmental policies and social perceptions.
- Discussion of the differences between Latvian and Russian speakers. A clear outline of recognised social, cultural and political differences is required.
- Illustration of the Latvian mass media development during the last decade, with an analysis of the developments so far.
- A clear outline of the differences between Latvian- and Russian-language media in Latvia.
- Analysis of Latvian media's representation of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

3. Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter of the thesis aims to provide a summary of the type of methods that the research utilised. Each individual content chapter will offer a methodological breakdown of the particular approaches used for the specific case studies to offer focused detail. This section is thus aimed at providing a brief outline of the methods used in order to create a roadmap for following through each approach as it is explored more thoroughly in the individual chapters. In addition, this section will also offer a breakdown of a text-based pilot study, which tests categories then employed in the analysis of Latvian-language news stories collected for the research. This allows for a rigorous method to be applied across the analysis of the case studies.

3.2. Mixed-method approach

The thesis adopts a mixed-methods approach in order to provide the most appropriate and thorough analysis of the case studies. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber refers to 'triangulation' as one of the reasons for using mixed-methods. Quoting Todd D. Jick, she explains that it 'refers to the use of more than one method while studying the same research question to "examine the same dimension of a research problem" (Jick, 1979: 602)' (Hesse-Biber, 2010: 4). She adds that 'triangulation ultimately fortifies and enriches a study's conclusions, making them more acceptable to advocates of both qualitative and quantitative methods' (ibid.). It is the ability to provide a way to draw strong and enriched conclusions that has led this research to employ the mixed-methods approach. According to Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie (1998), methodological triangulation involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, and data to study the same phenomena either within the same study or in different complementary

studies (ibid.: 18). It is the intention of this thesis to apply mixed-methods in a way that furthers the discussion of arguments arising from the case studies. Norman K. Denzin (1973) identifies four types of triangulation: data; investigator; theory; and methodological (ibid.: 301). This thesis uses the elements of Denzin's triangulation throughout, predominantly in the application of 'data' and 'methodological' divisions, but also with a reflection on 'investigator' and 'theory'.

As Denzin notes, triangulating 'data sources' allows analysts to 'efficiently employ the same methods to maximum theoretical advantage' (ibid.). The triangulation of 'data sources' for this research consisted of multiple media (newspapers and televised news) and interview data. The use of varying methods, such as thematic analysis and content analysis, enabled the research to analyse the individual data sources in the context of an overarching ambition to answer the set research questions. It is, however, the notion of a triangulated method that provided a way to draw these approaches together in a managed implementation. The use of multiple data sources was also crucial to the research as it demonstrated the ways in which particular patterns emerged *across* the sources, rather than individually.

Denzin explains that 'investigator triangulation' means 'multiple as opposed to single observers are employed' in the research, arguing that 'most investigations, in fact, do employ multiple observers, although all of them may not occupy equally prominent roles in the actual observational process' (ibid.: 303). The use of multiple, but not equally prominent, observers occurred in this research predominantly in its two pilot studies. The text-based pilot study, which will be explored in more detail in the following section, relied on a second and third coder, to ensure inter-coder reliability, and thus a degree of objectivity. Similarly, the interview-pilot study in advance of the interviews, used three pilot subjects in order to highlight any issues arising from the original interview questions. Denzin states the importance of having a second coder by reflecting that 'triangulating observers removes the potential bias that comes from a single person, and ensures a greater reliability in observations' (ibid.). It is thus the 'investigator

triangulation' that offered this research a strong basis for claiming objectivity of the observations made during the study.

When highlighting the importance of theoretical triangulation, Denzin explains that the consideration of such triangulation is 'an integral feature of the research process' that is especially visible 'in those areas characterized by a high degree of theoretical incoherence'. After noting the difficulty of theoretical triangulation, Denzin states that 'the recommended procedure is to utilize all of the propositions that currently exist in a given area as one designs his research' (ibid.: 303-4). For Denzin, the difficulty of theoretical triangulation arises from what he terms 'researcher's already existing knowledge' (ibid.) and demands the interaction from data triangulation and investigator triangulation in order to strengthen an argument (ibid.: 306). Such an approach has been enacted in the research here through the theoretical triangulation being placed in the context of data sources, allowing the data triangulation (as enforced by investigator triangulation) to lead the need for a theoretical triangulation. In other words, theory was used to unpack the data and seek the meaning within it for the purposes of creating an overarching argument.

Methodological triangulation, then, involves all of the other means of triangulation, as noted by Denzin. He highlights that 'every action in the field provides new definitions, suggests new strategies, and leads to continuous modifications of initial research design' (ibid.: 310). It is the methodological triangulation and its involvement in a 'complex process of playing each method off against the other so as to maximize the validity of field efforts' (ibid.) that allows research to demonstrate an *overall* triangulation of all the approaches. The combination of all forms of triangulation, Denzin claims, are 'the most refined goal any investigation can achieve' and 'with it, all of the advantages that derive from triangulating single forms are combined into a research perspective that surpasses any single-method approach' (ibid.). Thus, by employing all four triangulation approaches - data, investigator, theoretical and methodological, this thesis has set a strong premise for the methods used in its investigation of the research questions.

3.3. Translation

As all the primary data presented in this research was originally in Latvian, translation had to be considered as part of a methodological approach. All translations for this research were done by the researcher. In order to ensure accuracy, multiple elements of translation studies had to be recognised and acknowledged. Reflecting on translation as a problem-solving task, Erik Angelone (2010: 17) further explains that 'the translation task is essentially a chain of decision-making activities relying on multiple, interconnected sequences of problem solving behaviour for successful task completion' (ibid.). Thus, this thesis had to negotiate different 'problems' in order to provide the most accurate translation. Angelone lists three fundamental cognitive processes in relation to translation: '(1) source language comprehension, (2) source language - target language transfer of meaning, and (3) target language text production' (ibid.). All of these required to be taken into account during the production of translation for this research.

Addressing the first of Angelone's points, that of source language comprehension, as a fluent Latvian speaker I was able to understand the original text. It was, however, the latter two of Angelone's points that became crucial considerations, with careful recognition of the 'transfer of meaning', since that became the most important element for the research when considering translation and the ensuing analysis of the translated text. Antin Fougner Rydning and Christian Michel Lachaud (2010) explain that 'when the concept or idea in the message has been understood, the translator seeks to reformulate it in the most intelligible way for his readers, using the signifiers of the target language, and not merely converting those of the source text' (ibid.: 86). This reflects that any translation is affected by the translator's ability and capability to understand and thereafter *reproduce* the meaning in the original text. Translation, thus, relies upon both the understanding and knowledge of the language itself. In addition to the care taken

in translating primary source materials for this research, the original, Latvian-language text will be offered in footnotes throughout the research, where possible.

3.4. Content analysis

The method of content analysis considers the space between people and textual matters, such as symbols and mass media contents, and proceeds to make sense of the connection between them. Content analysis can be both quantitative and qualitative, and branches out in multiple different directions: discourse analysis, social constructivist analysis, and rhetorical analysis are just some examples. Discourse analysis tends to focus on how particular phenomena are represented, whilst social constructivist analysis, in addition to being concerned with discourses, focuses on how reality comes to be constituted in human interactions (Krippendorff, 2004: 16).

The method of content analysis benefits from the ability to 'draw conclusions from content evidence without having to gain access to communicators' as well as allowing the researcher to consider content that 'often has a life beyond its production'. The method is also 'virtually unlimited in its applicability because of the centrality of communication in human affairs' (Riffe et al., 2005: 39). However, the conclusions of content analysis can be ambiguous at times as the meaning of a particular word, phrase, or image is often dependent upon the context in which it is used. Despite such disadvantages, the method has proven to be productive for this research. Considering the way content analysis has been developed by the Glasgow Media Group and associated academics, the research has drawn on what Greg Philo and Mike Berry (2004) refer to as *thematic analysis*. This analytical method is based on the assumption that in any contentious area there will be competing ways of describing events and their history (ibid.: 95). Within this thesis, content analysis, and, more specifically, thematic analysis, allowed for an exploration of the ways in which Latvian-language news media represented the Russian-speaking minority, with a specific consideration of Latvian history.

The thesis also employs another type of content analysis method: framing. Framing considers the nature of coverage, rather than simply the number of reports. The method has featured in classical studies on news coverage: for instance, Steve Chibnall (1977) in his research on crime reporting, has referred to 'ideological frameworks' in order to discuss ideologies, which he recognises as 'structures that must be organised and regulated by operational rules or codes, or usage' (ibid.: 11). This thesis employs framing to establish the relation between national and historical contexts in Latvia and the way they were reflected by both the Latvian-language media and the Latvian speakers whose views shaped part of the thesis.

3.5. Text-based pilot study

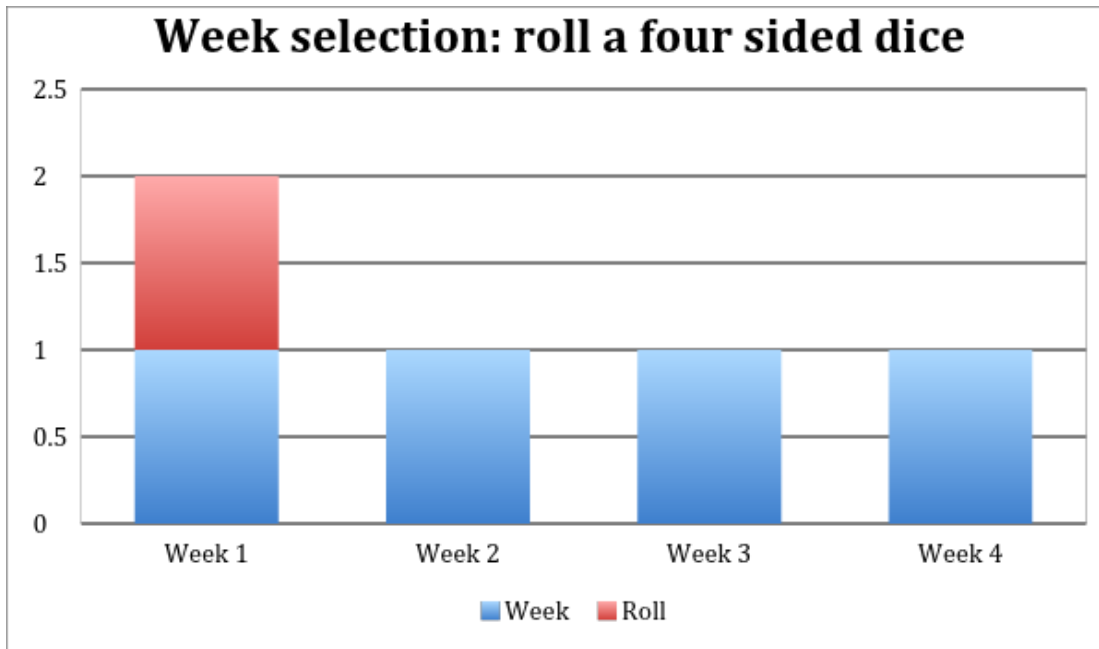
The text-based pilot study was introduced in order to create manageable and functional categories for the analysis of news items in the research. By analysing, in full, two sources - *Latvijas Avīze* and LTV1 news broadcasts - the text-based pilot study established what the best approach would be for researching all of the sources in the full news analysis throughout the thesis. The two sources were selected as both also feature in the main research. As will be illustrated, the text-based pilot study applied content analysis and then, with the help of a second-coder, ensured that all categories provided a functional and objective way to manage the data collected for the research.

3.5.1. Sample Selection

For the text-based pilot study, a combination of two sampling techniques was employed. Both were random sampling techniques that, as Kimberly A. Neuendorf (2002) notes, require itemization of all units, which thereafter create a 'sampling frame' (ibid.: 83). Such units were acquired through the use of convenience sampling, which Klaus Krippendorff (2004) identifies

as 'motivated by analytical interest in an available body of text that is known not to include all texts of the population that analysts are concerned with' (ibid.: 120). The nature of the text-based pilot study limited the availability in random selection, thus convenience sampling allowed for choosing a limited time period that would take place before the full study. Setting the pilot in the month of August 2014 allowed for a convenient sample whilst also providing 1 out of 4 weeks for selection. It is important to note that there are no significant national holidays in Latvia during August, nor are there any other predictable events that may affect the legitimacy of the text-based pilot study by skewing the contents or emphases of the sample texts.

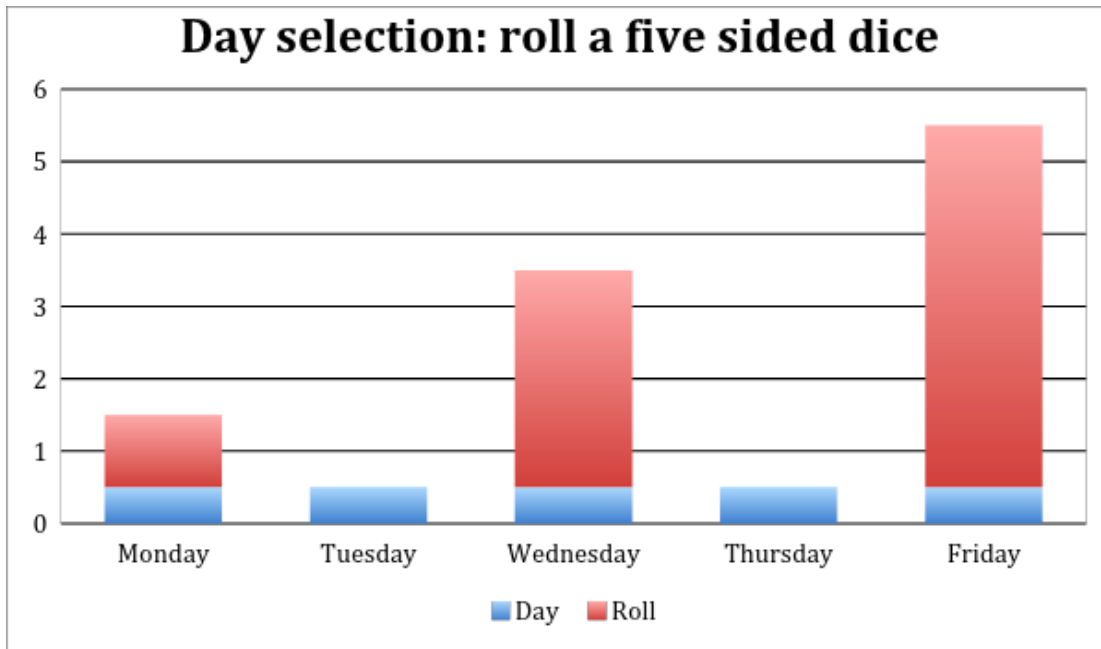
In order to select one of the weeks, a second type of selection technique was employed, that of simple random sample, which - as Krippendorff explains - requires the researcher to enumerate (or list) all sampling units to be included in or excluded from the analysis. He further notes that the researcher is then required to apply a randomisation device to the enumerated units to determine which will be analysed (ibid.: 114). For the text-based pilot study, the randomisation device chosen was dice. Basing on Neuendorf's suggestion to itemise all units, each week in August was allocated a number from 1 to 4 (see Graph 1). The weeks considered were between the August 4 and August 31, as the four weeks then each start on a Monday and end on a Sunday. A roll of four-sided dice identified the chosen week as 1, in correlation with the first week, dated August 4 to August 10.



Graph 1

As the text-based pilot study required a manageable sample size, the selected week was narrowed down to three days. In order to establish which days in week 1 were selected, a five-sided dice was employed. The text-based pilot study also aimed to analyse both the LTV1 news broadcast and the issue of *Latvijas Avīze* published on the same day. By using the same day for both media, the text-based pilot study was able to interact with a larger coverage of stories, as the chosen LTV1 news broadcast is a summary of the day's events, in contrast to *Latvijas Avīze*, which is published in the morning, thus covering the events from the previous day.

To allow for a random selection of the dates in the first week of August, each day was itemized as 1 to 5, excluding Saturday and Sunday, as *Latvijas Avīze* is not published on the weekend (see Graph 2). The roll of the dice randomly selected numbers 1, 3 and 5, which correspond to Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The days correspond to the 5th, 7th and 9th of August 2014.



Graph 2

3.5.2. Recording and collecting the news

In order to gather data, the issues of *Latvijas Avīze* were purchased on the three dates noted above. For the recording of LTV1's news broadcasts, a program called *BSR Screen Recorder 5* was employed. The program allows a computer to record the news broadcast once it has been published online on LTV1's website.⁸

3.5.3. Design of the coding protocol

The content of the news broadcasts and newspapers collected on the selected dates was coded in full by two coders (and in part by a third coder), including advertisements and all other information published but not related to news. The coding aimed to establish an overview of the news covered, rather than to respond to a particular research question, as such overview would *then* allow to address the majority of the research questions.

⁸ LTV1, LNT and TV3 (all used in the main data collection phase) publish their news programmes online post-broadcast. The archives are available for a limited period of time, depending on the broadcaster.

Multiple units were established for the coding protocol. Krippendorff notes that content analysts must justify their methods of unitizing, and to do so, they must show that the information they need for their analyses is represented in the collection of units, not the relationship between the units, which unitizing discards (ibid.: 84). The text-based pilot study allowed for both the establishment of clear units of categories and their further adjustment for the main study. A clear outline of the units ensured that the information gathered was equally represented and analysed.

The units established for the pilot were as follows:

For televised news: channel; date and time of airing; length of the programme; presenter; story; position; duration; broadcast type; length; number of clips; type of clip; source; voiceover; interviewees; interviewee's language; interviewee's views (regarding the topic); location geographically; domestic location; theme/topic; journalist;

For newspapers: paper; date published; issue number; headline; theme/topic; page; page on which continued; location; section; page label; format; article size; word count; count of pictures; source of picture; type of picture; content of picture; geographic location; domestic location; journalist; interviewees; interviewee's views (regarding the topic); article's opinion; source.

The majority of the units also contained sub-units to allow for more specific coding. For example, the unit 'interviewee's language' used for the coding of televised news, had the sub-units of 'Latvian', 'Russian', 'English', 'other', 'Latvian dubbed in [code]', 'Russian dubbed in [code]', etc. All sub-units were assigned numbers for the convenience of coding. For example, when coding the interviewee's language, instead of coding 'Latvian', the number '1' would be coded for the category instead. This provided a quicker way of coding, and facilitating later testing and organising of the data.

Some of the units contained a long list of sub-units, for example those of 'themes' were divided into multiple categories. In order to illustrate how the sub-units acted in practice, I

applied the coding units to the first story appearing in LTV1's *Panorāma*⁹ shown on 4 August 2014. The overall story concerned the heat-wave in Latvia at that particular time and the health risks it potentially posed for the population. The category of 'story' was coded with the numbers 96, 91 and 92, which correspond to the sub-units 'natural disaster', 'employment: other' and 'health: general' respectively. The next category with sub-unit coding was 'broadcast', coded as 3, corresponding to the sub-unit 'pre-recorded'. This was followed by the category 'type of video', the sub-units used for these categories were coded as 2, 27, 13 and 19 ('interview with the channel', 'other (fans)', 'people walking on the street' and 'other civil service car(s)' respectively). The category of 'source' was coded 1 ('original'), followed by the category titled 'voiceover'. The sub-units used for this category were the same as for the category 'story/theme' and thus corresponded to the numbers 96, 91 and 92 again ('natural disaster', 'employment: other' and 'health: general'). The category 'interviewees' was coded with the following sub-units: 27, 38 and 6 ('medic', 'member of the public (adult male)' and 'named government representative' respectively). This category was followed by 'interviewee's language' and coded as 1 ('Latvian') for all interviewees.

The 'interviewee's views' category was coded with the sub-units 1, 2 and 5, corresponding to 'positive', 'negative' and 'positive and neutral' (as opposed to 'neutral' and 'negative and neutral'). This particular category was one of the more complex ones to code with sub-units and the most important to focus on in terms of inter-coder reliability, as it referred to views and opinions and had to be further analysed by applying discourse analysis. For this reason, both the coding sheet and the second coder sheets were accompanied by a few comments describing the choice in using a particular sub-unit. In the example used, these comments read as follows: '5 (positive and neutral) has to work despite the heat, does work', '1 (positive) is coping with the heat by wearing trousers), etc. Coding the 'interviewee's views' in such fashion allowed for an easier implementation of discourse analysis further in the research.

⁹ Title of LTV1's evening news programme.

The category following 'interviewee's views' was titled 'location' and the sub-unit used in the example was 1, corresponding to 'domestic'. The next two categories also concentrated on geographical locations. The category 'country' was coded 97 ('Latvia') and the category 'domestic area' was coded as D1 and D107, corresponding to 'Rīga' and 'Talsi municipality'. The category 'topic' was used for a brief description of the story, rather than coded in sub-units. This was done in order for the coder to objectively reflect on the things covered within a story. In the example used, the category 'topic' reads as follows: 'hot weather, working during the heat-wave, ambulance calls, law regarding working in hot weather'. The last category 'journalist' was coded with the journalist's name, which allowed for the creation of sub-units for the category further on in the research.

The categories and their sub-units were tested by a second coder to identify any changes and adjustments that needed to be made to the coding sheets. This served as a test of inter-coder reliability and established the applicability of the categories for the method to be employed in the main study.

3.5.4. Inter-coder reliability

The aim of having a second coder to complete the coding sheets used in the pilot was to ensure that the original coding was objective, as well as to discover any problems arising from the current categories and sub-units. The second coder employed was a female in her early 20s, currently studying for a law degree at Latvia University. The following section will compare the coding of primary and secondary coder to illustrate any discrepancies or disagreements that arose. The categories discussed will be those where opinions differed the most, rather than such easily-codable categories as 'channel' and 'duration'. Examples of the first and second coder sheets are attached in the appendices (see Appendix One and Appendix Two).

Televised news story 1:

Category	First Coder	Code Identification	Second Coder	Code Identification	Agreement
Story/theme:	96, 91, 92	natural disaster; employment: other; health: general	82, 94/103, 96	employment: general; welfare/other; natural disaster	63.3%
Type of video:	2, 34, 13, 19	interview with the channel; other; people walking on the street; other civil service car(s)	2, 7, 9, 10, 13, 17, 16, 24, 28, 29	interview with the channel; road, with cars; multiple buildings; inside a building; people walking on the street; ambulance car(s); police car(s); park; food; bus	14.28% (second coder noted more things, which skewed the average)
Voiceover:	96, 91	natural disaster; employment: other	82, 93, 96, 94/103	employment: general; health: illness; natural disaster; welfare/other	58.3% (second coder offered similar codes in different categories)
Interviewees:	29, 38, 6	shopkeeper; member of public (adult male); named government representative	50, 29, 32, 6	other; shopkeeper, pensioner; named government representative	70.4% (similar codes in different categories)
Interviewee's views:	5, 1, 1, 4, 3	positive and neutral; positive; positive; positive and negative; neutral	3, 1, 1, 5, 3	neutral; positive; positive; positive and neutral; neutral	60%

Table 1

Televised news story 5:

Category	First Coder	Code Identification	Second Coder	Code Identification	Agreement
Story/theme:	12	(Latvia and...) elections	6	(Community relations) elections	87% (similar category, different code)
Type of video:	1, 2, 28, 30	press conference; interview with the channel; food; Saeima (in process)	1, 2, 30, 10, 28	press conference; interview with the channel; Saeima (in process); inside a building; food	80%
Voiceover:	6	elections	6, 19	elections; politics: other	50% (the second coder felt that 'politics: other' had to be included)
Interviewees:	5, 3	named politician; named Minister	5, 3	named politician; named Minister	100%
Interviewee's views:	3, 1	neutral; positive	1	positive	50%

Table 2

Televised news story 9:

Category	First Coder	Code Identification	Second Coder	Code Identification	Agreement
Story/theme:	29, 24 (185)	occupied territories; other country (Ukraine)	25, 21, 29, 32	war; Russia; occupied territories; other	25% (second coder provided more codes)
Type of video:			2, 19, 32, 33, 26, 28, 26, 8, 26, 26	interview with the channel; other civil service car(s); soldiers; flag; (army base); food; (ruble); single building; (leaflets); (guns)	70%
Voiceover:	29, 25, 24 (185), 24 (145)	occupied territories; war; other country (Ukraine); other country (Russia)	25, 21, 29, 32	war; Russia; occupied territories; other	75%
Interviewees:	26	police officer/other law enforcement	26	police officer/other law enforcement	100%
Interviewee's views:	2	negative	6	negative and neutral	50% (agreed on half)

Table 3

Story in a newspaper 1:

Category	First Coder	Code Identification	Second Coder	Code Identification	Agreement
Topic:	93	illness	93	illness	100%
Interviewees:	27, 31	medic;	50	(other)	70%

		business owner;			
Interviewee's opinion:	1, 2	positive; negative	2	negative	50%
Article's opinion:	6	negative and neutral	2	negative	50% (category varies marginally)

Table 4

Story in a newspaper 5:

Category	First Coder	Code Identification	Second Coder	Code Identification	Agreement
Topic:	19	(Politics - Latvia and...) other	4	(community relations) problems with (Russians)	70%
Interviewees:	51, 5	other (journalist); named politician	5, 36	named politician; political analyst	57% ('other (journalist)' and 'political analyst' refer to the same person)
Interviewee's opinion:	6	negative and neutral	1, 2	positive; negative	50%
Article's opinion:	4	positive and negative	2	negative	50%

Table 5

Story in a newspaper 15:

Category	First Coder	Code Identification	Second Coder	Code Identification	Agreement
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Topic:	82	employment (general)	82	employment (general)	100%
Interviewees:	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Interviewee's opinion:	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Article's opinion:	6	negative and neutral	3	neutral	50%

Table 6

What these examples illustrate is that whilst there are some discrepancies between the first and second coder, many of them still refer to similar sub-unit classifications. The overall level of inter-coder reliability averaged to over 70%. Since many of the discrepancies in the coding stemmed from the coders employing similar categories, this average was allowed to stand without any major corrections. Thus, the method of coding proved to be an efficient tool in sorting stories into categories. Appendix One offers a sample of the finalised databases for the study.

3.6. Selection for interviews

Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) explain that in order to provide a representative selection of population, it is important to do so in a way which would allow the results to be effectively generalised, noting that the more representative a sample is, 'the greater is the probability that the research findings have "population external validity"' (ibid.: 63-5). They highlight that from a quantitative perspective the issue of external validity is not limited to generalisability of the population of individuals, but 'also includes generalisability to situations other than the one researched and definitions of each constructed other than the ones used' (ibid.: 65). In referencing Rosnow and Rosenthal (1998: 158-9), Tashakkori and Teddlie establish that in order to define external validity 'as approximate validity by which we can infer that the [...]

relationship can be generalised across alternate types of persons, settings, times, and measures', an external validity has to pertain to the degree to which obtained results 'can be generalised to other ways of measuring each construct' and further suggest that 'selected items, observations, or measures' - interviews in the case of this research - 'are actually "samples" of the possible population of ways of measuring or documenting those attributes' (ibid.).

In turn, when discussing generalisation in relation to qualitative analysis, Tashakkori and Teddlie reflect that it is 'not desired' because, for qualitative research, 'the working hypotheses are only time- and context-based' (ibid.). However, they go on to note that a degree of generalisability is crucial to all research as there might be a need 'to generalise from a sample to a population, or from one setting to other similar settings, or to transfer conclusion/interferences from one context to another' (ibid.: 66). To Tashakkori and Teddlie, the negotiation of the need for generalisation is where mixed-methods approaches feature prominently, as they allow for a switch between different modes of generalisability when addressing a research question dependant on the context and need for generalisation (ibid.).

When making a selection for the interviews, both quantitative and qualitative methods and notions of generalisability were taken into account. This led to the use of both methods in order to offer the most appropriate sample, which then would fit with the Tashakkori and Teddlie definitions of the requirements for generalisation. Where to them, quantitative study allowed a population sample to be generalised and the qualitative study 'desired' a less generalised result, this research negotiated both, firstly by applying the quantitative measures and then analysing the data with qualitative approaches.

4. Chapter Four: Representation of Russian speakers in Latvian-language media

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will explore the coverage given to stories concerning the Russian-speaking minority across the news appearing in the three main Latvian-language television channels and newspapers respectively. By analysing the themes and types of news coverage across the six sources during a six-week period, the chapter will illustrate the current trends in the representation of stories regarding the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media. Through the analysis and an application of theoretical arguments, the chapter will demonstrate the way in which particular perceptions were constructed and framed for the audiences. Furthermore, the chapter will assess what specific news stories can and do illustrate about those who create the content.

The chapter starts with an overview of the sources analysed, with specific consideration given to the representation of the Russian-speaking minority in the Latvian-language media. Through these assessments, the section will seek to highlight any issues and gaps arising in the way that such representation is constructed within the Latvian-language news media. A discussion of the text-based pilot study and its integration within the main body of analysis will be provided. By assessing the methods employed in the text-based pilot study (detailed in Chapter Three), any problems and benefits will be noted before the methodology is expanded into a more thorough analysis. The following section will explain the choices made in selecting the particular sample period analysed in this chapter. A clear outline of and justification for the coding protocol will be presented, as well as an account of the calculations used in providing a quantitative outline of the stories covered in the six sources analysed in this chapter. Finally,

any changes needed to the methodology as a result of the text-based pilot study, will be outlined.

The chapter will be divided in two major sections: an analysis of the televised Latvian-language news and an analysis of the printed Latvian-language news. Both sections will establish the quantitative results of the analysis. Thereafter, a qualitative analysis outlining common themes and patterns within the overall stories will be discussed. This will allow the research to highlight any complexities arising from the particular choices made by broadcasters and publishers. The conclusion of this chapter will then draw together the emergent textual patterns to illustrate the similarities and differences found within the coverage across the six sources. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a summary of the ways in which the Latvian-language news media cover stories that consider and reflect on the Russian-speaking minority, and provide a clear direction for the subsequent research.

4.2. The sample period

The sample period chosen for this study (20/10/14-30/11/14) was selected on the basis that it should, as far as possible, capture what is 'typical' about news coverage in Latvia, and thus avoided any times when major news events relating to the Russian-speaking minority were likely to happen, such as Victory Day celebration on the 9th May.¹⁰ By not having any major events related to the Russian-speaking minority in this sample period, the research aimed to establish a baseline of the type of coverage given to Russian speakers and related issues. This stands in contrast, for example, to the time when the 2012 Language Referendum took place. This dealt directly with questions about language politics and identity, issues at the core of this research, and will be explored as part of a standalone case study in a later chapter (Chapter Five). The sample period started a week after the general election in Latvia, which accounts for

¹⁰ Holiday that commemorates the victory of the Soviet Union over Nazi Germany, it is celebrated by some of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, and opposed by the Latvian-speaking majority.

some specific stories that refer to the election, such as the interview with Jānis Urbanovičs in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* (27 October 2014) and Juris Paiders' article also in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* (5 November 2014). However, such stories were not frequent in the sample period. The sample period also incorporates the Latvian Independence Day (18th November). Any time-period chosen for a study would have include a number of national celebrations or mourning days,¹¹ and would thus have the same level of impact on the material gathered and analysed. None of these events, however, were directly linked to any issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority.

The period analysed in this chapter started on Monday, 20 October 2014, and concluded six weeks later on Sunday, 30 November 2014. The period covered 42 news broadcasts by LTV1, 41 news broadcasts by LNT and 36 news broadcasts by TV3, amounting to 3,069 minutes or 51 hours of footage. As all the newspapers were published on the same days, the period analysed in this chapter covers 27 issues of each newspaper, amounting to 81 newspapers in total.

Initially, a quantitative approach was employed in the analysis of the materials in order to provide a summary of the instances where news coverage was given to any issues regarding the Russian-speaking minority. Averages were used to approximate the total number of stories; this allowed the research to note the approximate percentage of stories covered by each of the sources in the review period. Discourse analysis was then employed to generate a qualitative analysis of the stories regarding the Russian-speaking minority across the six sources. The analysis will aid the discussion of the type of stories covered, as well as allow for an introduction of a thematic categorisation. Furthermore, the analysis informed the research in terms of the implications that the coverage might have in relation to the overall representation and relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia.

¹¹ Latvian mourning days are official remembrance days. The Latvian law currently lists nine officially observed mourning days.

4.3. Overview of Sources

4.3.1. Television

The research considered the three main Latvian-language channels: LTV1, LNT and TV3. In June and July 2014, TV3 accounted for 10.3 to 10.6% of the audience share, LNT held an audience share of 9.6% to 10.1%, while LTV1 came third with an audience share of 8.6 to 9.8% (TNS, 2014). This made them the three most watched Latvian-language television channels. In the same time period, programmes on LTV1 accounted for 11 out of the 20 most-watched, five of those being individual episodes of the news programme *Panorāma* (TNS, 2014). This is an important element in identifying the appropriate sources for a study of the representation of Russian-speaking minority issues in the Latvian-language news media. Out of all the television channels discussed, LTV1 also had the widest coverage, being accessible across 99.6% of Latvia (NEMCL registry). Whilst LNT and TV3, alongside other less-viewed channels, are commercial channels, they had a very high coverage, reaching 99% of the country. LTV1 qualified as one of the most-watched channels in Latvia, and can be viewed free-of-charge, unlike its commercial counterparts. It was estimated that, in 2014, only 6 to 7% of Latvia's population did not pay for extra broadcasting services (LETA, 2013) and whilst this is not a large figure, it is still important to recognise that there are parts of the population for whom LTV1 might be the main and/or only access to televised news. The aim of the text-based pilot study was to select television content based on its universality of access, where LTV1 and its sports-orientated sister channel LTV7 represent two of the few television channels available free-of-charge to the Latvian population as a whole.¹² LTV1 is thus an important channel to consider, as its news programmes have a high viewership.

¹² In 2013, 66.5% of Latvia's population had watched at least a minute of television a day. (TNS, 2014).

There is an important difference between the ownership of the channels. LTV1 falls under the Public Service Broadcasting remit; this affects the channel's licensing agreement, as well as its funding. However, another important distinction exists between LTV1 and its commercial counterparts. In January 2014, LNT and TV3, both owned by the Modern Times Group (MTG), stopped being free-view and moved to a paid digital television platform. This meant that very few channels remained accessible free-of-charge, and only one channel could then be categorised as 'most-viewed' - LTV1. Alongside LTV1, four other channels are freely accessible across Latvia - OTV, Re:TV, RigaTV24 and LTV1's sports-orientated sister channel LTV7. The first three, however, were new to Latvian broadcasting at the time of the study and had not yet established their audiences. OTV, Re:TV and RigaTV24 are also commercial broadcasters unlike LTV1 and LTV7, whose broadcasts and original programming have to meet the stricter (public service) broadcasting standards set out by the government.

Another significant difference between the aforementioned channels is the requirements set out by their individual licenses. The most notable differences are in the regulations regarding the use of language in original programming and the requirements relating to the broadcasting of news. The license issued to LTV1 stipulates that 100% of its original content must be in Latvian (NEPL, 2013). In comparison, its sister-channel LTV7 is required to produce no less than 90% of its original programming in Latvian (NEPL, 2013). To a degree, this particular example might be ascribed to the policy of integration, as the 2012-2018 policy requires LTV to produce a set number of programmes in Russian to facilitate integration (Cabinet of Ministers, 2012). Furthermore, the licensing requirements vary hugely for the commercial channels. The original content produced by the commercial LNT in a foreign language must not exceed 9%, as its license stipulates that 91% of original programming must be in Latvian (NEPL, 2014). TV3's original programming, as stipulated in its license, must be at least 75% in Latvian, thus allowing for up to 25% of the original programming to be in another language (NEPL, 2014), which is not exclusive to, but most often tends to be, Russian. This positions LTV1 as the only nationally

available channel that is required to produce all of its original programming in Latvian. These language requirements are important to consider within this study when assessing the target audiences for these channels, as Latvian-speaking audiences are more likely to view Latvian-speaking news.

The licenses issued to the broadcasters also differ in their requirements for broadcasting news. Once again, LTV1 airs more news content per week than other TV channels in Latvia, because its license stipulates that it must broadcast no less than 600 minutes of news programmes per week. Its sister-channel LTV7 is required to broadcast only 175 minutes of news per week. However, LTV7's license also notes that the channel is predominantly intended to cover 'niche segments' for audiences between the ages of 14 and 49, and to produce programmes for minority groups and people with special needs (NEPL, 2013). In contrast to such programming regulations, the commercial broadcaster LNT's license requires that the channel must broadcast no less than 504 minutes of news programming per week. TV3's license has the lowest requirements for news programming, stipulating that no less than 151.2 minutes of news must be broadcast per week. Such regulations, in part, account for LTV1's selection for the text-based pilot study.

As the primary research questions deal with news coverage and representation, the fact that LTV1 produces most of the news on Latvian-language television was an important factor in the channel selection for the text-based pilot. Four key considerations - accessibility, funding, popularity and its public service broadcasting status - underpinned the selection of LTV1. All four were important for a variety of reasons. Accessibility and popularity were highly influential in the text-based pilot study's discussion regarding representation. Funding and LTV1's position as a public service broadcaster require the channel to both engage with particular representations, as well as respond to obligations associated with being funded by and broadcast to a nationwide public. As the text-based pilot study and the research as a whole intended to explore

issues of representation in Latvian-language news media, these factors were important and necessary to address when discussing the data that were gathered.

LTV1 and LTV7 also stand out from the other channels due to their status as public service broadcasters. James Watson (2008: 32) identifies public service broadcasting as 'available to the whole community, placing public interest over commercial interest and that these principles be enshrined in regulation'. Public service broadcasting has also been associated with the promotion of national identity and culture (Mendel, 2013: 8). This is illustrated in LTV1's mission statement, where the channel brands itself as promoter of information, education and cultural values (Kolats, 2012: 4). Furthermore, LTV1's mission statement asserts that the channel aims to 'improve the quality of life for Latvian citizens' (ibid.: 3). This positioned the public broadcaster as a promotional tool for national identity. However, the phrasing potentially excludes those who do not fall within the legal classification of 'Latvian citizen' despite having been born in Latvia (non-citizens). Jānis Juzefovičs explores Latvian- and Russian-speaking publics responses to the Latvian public television LTV as a nation-building project. In his research, Juzefovičs claims that both audiences use their viewing habits as a way to 'protest', especially when choosing to *not* view LTV (2017: 131). For Juzefovičs, Russian speakers 'have chosen to be loyal nationals differently' than Latvian speakers, 'namely within localized transnational Russian television' (ibid.: 133). Thus, arguing that majority of the audiences for LTV are Latvian-speaking.

Due to its nature as a public service broadcaster, LTV1 receives annual subsidies from the government. According to its website, the share of this funding is 60%, while the other 40% is raised through advertising¹³ and other (unspecified) means, which presumably include donations and DVD sales of their programmes. The subsidy allocated each year has to meet or exceed the previous year's funding, as stipulated in the Latvian constitution (Saeima, 2010). Being a public service broadcaster, LTV1 was distinct from the channels mentioned above (with

¹³ <http://ltv.lv/lv/par-ltv/> (Accessed: 21/8/14.)

the exception of its PSB sister-channel LTV7). However, LTV7's licensing, as mentioned earlier, demands a very specific programming and lacks overall news programming content. LTV1 has also always held more of the audience share than LTV7.

LTV1 transmits news programmes throughout the day, with broadcasts at 6:30am, 6pm, 8:30pm and 11:15pm. *Panorāma*, differing from other news broadcasts in name and length, and aired at 8:30pm, is LTV1's most-viewed news programme (TNS, 2014). The daily programme lasts approximately 25 minutes on weekdays, and 15 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays. *Panorāma* is one of the most watched news programmes in Latvia as a whole, accounting for 17 to 19% of news viewership in 2010/2011, and 19 to 20% in 2011/2012 (TNS, 2011). Its main competitors are news programmes broadcast by the previously discussed LNT and TV3, but since both are commercial broadcasters, LTV1 is the only one of out of the three to provide free news available nationally.

4.3.2. Newspapers

There are three main Latvian-language daily newspapers available nationwide: *Diena*, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* and *Latvijas Avīze*. The main differences between the three relate to popularity and ideology. Whilst the overall project will analyse all three of the newspapers, for manageability only one of the newspapers was selected for the text-based pilot study. This selection was made on the basis of the paper's popularity and, to a lesser extent, its ideology.

In 2014, *Latvijas Avīze* counted 90,000 copies sold per day (Rumka, 2014). In comparison, *Diena* averaged 83,000 copies sold daily,¹⁴ whilst *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* averaged 82,000 copies sold every day (KNAB, 2013). Whilst the sales figures do not differ greatly, it still sets *Latvijas Avīze* ahead of the latter two. Further, in 2013, *Latvijas Avīze* was the 7th most read publication in Latvia by Latvian-speaking audiences (TNS, 2014: 32), claiming 7.5% of the Latvian-speaking readership share (ibid.: 33). The only other newspaper in the TNS ranking was

¹⁴ <http://www.dienasmediji.lv/produkti/laikraksti/diena> (Accessed: 13/9/14.)

Diena, in 10th place with a share 7.3% of the Latvian-speaking readership. When considering all readership (Latvian and ‘other’), *Latvijas Avīze* is 6th, overtaken by only two other Latvian-language newspapers - *Diena* and *Latvijas Santīms*, the latter being only published in the capital city, Rīga. *Diena* takes 5.2% of the overall readership share, whilst *Latvijas Avīze* has 4.9% (ibid.: 33). *Rīgas Santīms* claims 9% of the overall audience share (ibid.: 33), but is not a nationally available newspaper. *Rīgas Santīms* also promotes itself as an ‘advertising newspaper’ and is available free-of-charge in Rīga (*Rīgas Santīms*, n.d.). This may account for its wide circulation, and distinguish it from *Latvijas Avīze* and *Diena*, as both newspapers cover current affairs/events, where *Rīgas Santīms* does not.

Addressing particular newspapers’ ideologies is complicated, because they are not always clearly outlined, but they are relatively easy to identify from the content. *Latvijas Avīze* identifies itself as a ‘nationally conservative daily newspaper’ (*Latvijas Avīze*, n.d). The paper, established in 1989, is one of the oldest independent newspapers launched during the transition period between Soviet dependence and an independent Latvia (Ruska, 2014). Until 2003, *Latvijas Avīze* was titled *Lauku Avīze (Countryside Newspaper)*; it still widely reports on agricultural news. Similarly, its biggest competitor *Diena*, established in 1990 (*Dienas Mediji*, n.d.), also outlines its political ideology as conservative (*Diena*, n.d.). However, *Diena*’s political ideology arguably tends to be somewhat more left of centre than that of *Latvijas Avīze*. The third nationally available, daily Latvian-language newspaper, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, does not provide a clear outline of its ideological perspective. Its website lacks any description of the newspaper whatsoever, and the only remarks made about its political standpoint can be found on a social media platform, where the newspaper identifies itself as ‘always being on your side’.¹⁵ An attempt to contact the newspaper for clarification was made for the research; however, no response was received. Certainly, no explanation about who ‘you’ might be is provided, or what ‘side’ they might occupy. However, as the general readership of the paper is Latvian-speaking,

¹⁵ <http://www.draugiem.lv/nra.lvriga> (Accessed: 12/9/14.)

the 'you' can easily be identified as 'Latvian' and the 'side' being one that represents the dominant structures of perceived Latvian identity. The ideologies outlined by the newspapers, therefore, position *Latvijas Avīze* as the most nationalistically oriented of all the daily Latvian-language newspapers.

This links to the selection of a newspaper for the text-based pilot study and complexities therein. Due to its much subtler differences, when compared to the television channels, *Latvijas Avīze* was the most rounded choice. As illustrated above, *Latvijas Avīze* has the largest readership of people who identify themselves as being Latvian. Furthermore, its nationalist-conservative ideology offers an insight into the contentious representations of the Russian-speaking minority. Whilst the larger project also analysed *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, the text-based pilot study concentrated on *Latvijas Avīze* with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the type of coverage provided by a popular, conservative and well-established newspaper.

4.4. Overview of televised Latvian-language news

News broadcasts from three different Latvian-language television channels were selected for this research. The three channels are those with the highest viewing figures and reach on Latvian-speaking television - LTV1, LNT and TV3. As noted earlier, the period researched collected 42 news broadcasts from LTV1, 41 news broadcasts from LNT and 36 news broadcasts from TV3, as all three channels had different broadcasting patterns.

Within the six weeks that were analysed, the number of stories dedicated to, or making any mention of, the Russian-speaking minority across the three channels was limited. On average, LTV1 broadcast 279.72 stories in the six weeks, with an average of 6.66 stories per news broadcast. In the same period, LTV1 broadcast only four stories that in any way referred to Russian speakers and any issues related to them. This means that, of all news stories broadcast by LTV1, approximately only 1.43% consisted of stories related to the Russian-

speaking minority. LNT was similar in its broadcasting patterns, featuring approximately 287 stories in the time period considered in this research, with approximately seven stories per broadcast. Only three news stories were dedicated or made reference to the Russian-speaking minority on LNT in the time period analysed, which thus accounted for approximately 1.05% of all stories broadcast on LNT.

Despite having the smallest number of news broadcasts, TV3 averaged 396 stories in the period under review, with an average of eleven stories per news broadcast. In comparison to the other two channels, TV3 produced more stories, but in general they tended to be shorter, thus accounting for an average of four more stories per news broadcast than LTV1 and LNT. In the six weeks, TV3 broadcast six individual news stories dedicated or relating to the Russian-speaking minority. Overall, these stories accounted for approximately 1.52% of all stories broadcast on TV3 news in the period analysed.

4.5. Overview of Latvian-language newspapers

Three of the main, national, Latvian-language newspapers analysed during the sample period were *Diena*, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* and *Latvijas Avīze*. None of the papers were printed on Saturdays and Sundays, which meant that 27 issues of each were analysed from within the six-week sample period. On average, the overall number of stories covered by the papers varied. Similarly, the number of stories dedicated to, or making a mention of, the Russian-speaking minority were both limited, with *Latvijas Avīze* offering more coverage than the other two papers. The potential reasons for this will be further explored later in the chapter.

On average, *Diena* published 953.1 stories in the six weeks, with an average of 35.3 stories per paper. In the same period, *Diena* published only five stories that made a mention of the Russian-speaking minority, which accounted for approximately 0.52% of its overall coverage. *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* was similar in its average coverage of any issues concerning the Russian-speaking minority. On average *NRA* published 1,015.2 stories in the six-week

period, with only five dedicated or referring to the Russian-speaking minority. This meant that only approximately 0.79% of all *NRA*'s stories considered the Russian-speaking minority in any way. The largest difference in stories relating to the Russian-speaking minority appeared in *Latvijas Avīze*. The newspaper published a total of 1,134 stories in the six weeks analysed here, with 27 stories dedicated or making a reference to the Russian-speaking minority. This accounted for approximately 2.38% of all stories published in *Latvijas Avīze*. Whilst statistically still only a small number, the figures place *Latvijas Avīze* far ahead of the other two newspapers, in terms of any mention of the Russian-speaking minority. This emergent pattern will be discussed in more detail later.

Source	All stories	Stories about Russian-speaking minority
LTV1	279.72	1.43%
LNT	287	1.05%
TV3	396	1.52%
<i>Latvijas Avīze</i>	1134	2.38%
<i>Diena</i>	953.1	0.52%
<i>Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze</i>	1,015.2	0.79%

Table 7

4.6. Thematic categories

In order to discuss the types of news stories that all three channels broadcast and the types of news stories published in the three newspapers, the content was thematically categorised. Eight different themes emerged from the analysis. As Guest et al. (2011: 11) have noted, moving beyond explicit words or phrases and focusing on identifying and describing 'both implicit and explicit ideas within the data - themes - thematic analysis' allows for capturing of 'the complexities of meaning within textual data set' (ibid.). Thus the thematic subsections were

introduced in relation to the most common types of stories across the six sources. The thematic divisions reflected stories relating to the Russian-speaking minority on the following topics: (1) politics; (2) Russia; (3) education; (4) a poster (this category will become self-explanatory through the analysis); (5) patriotism; (6) integration; and (7) miscellaneous. An extra category, titled (8) 'Gombergs', was introduced to group together an article by Jevgenijs Gombergs published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 3 November 2014 and the subsequent six responses, which were also published in the newspaper during the following three weeks. The 'miscellaneous' category refers to stories that did not fit into the other seven thematic categories. These categories were devised after collecting all the stories and assessing recurrent themes. Some of the stories that were analysed fell within one or more of the categories. Thus, some of the sources may at first glance appear to have more stories than noted earlier, whilst in actuality they simply are placed in more than one theme. However, the qualitative analysis of the stories acknowledged their multi-thematic content. Due to the low number of stories addressing or touching upon issues regarding the Russian-speaking minority, the televised news were not dominant in any one of the themes. None of the channels covered all of the themes, with one category not being covered by the televised news at all. For example, whilst both LTV1 and TV3 dedicated one of their stories to politics, LNT did not. Similarly, both LNT and TV3 dedicated one story to educational issues, in the context of the Russian-speaking minority, whilst LTV1 did not. In the subsequent paragraphs, a summary of the stories covered by each channel will be provided, alongside the thematic categories they were placed in.

POLITICS	RUSSIA	EDUCATION	POSTER	PATRIOTISM	INTEGRATION	MISC	GOMBERGS
20/10/14 LA - Kuzmina	21/10/14 LA - Vikmanis	20/10/14 LA - Kuzmina	11/11/14 LTV1 - Krenberga	11/11/14 LTV1 - Kince	29/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Kokareviča	21/10/14 LNT - Kristapsons	3/11/14 LA - Gombergs
23/10/14 LA - Reire	21/10/14 LNT - Kristapson	29/10/14 LA - Kuzmina	11/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Binders	14/11/14 Diena - Bērziņa	31/10/14 NRA - Kairiņš	22/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Sprūde	7/11/14 LA - Readers (?)
23/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Antonevičs	23/10/14 LTV1 - Krenberga	10/11/14 LA - n/a	12/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Ulmanis	17/11/14 TV3 - Lazdiņš, Medvedevs	3/11/14 LA - Gombergs	24/10/14 LA - Vikmanis	20/11/14 LA - Kriņa
23/10/14 Diena - Zandere	29/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Kokareviča	17/11/14 LNT - Balčiute	14/11/14 NRA - Veidemane	26/11/14 LA - Līce	4/11/14 LA - Līce	25/10/14 TV3 - Zariņš	21/11/14 LA - Blūma
24/10/14 LA - Strelevičs	3/11/14 LA - Gombergs	17/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Ulmanis, Stankēvičs			11/11/14 Diena - Putinceva	5/11/14 Diena - Kezberis	21/10/14 LA - Vikmanis
27/10/14 NRA - Krautmanis	4/11/14 LA - Līce	28/11/14 NRA - Orupe			13/11/14 LA - Zemītis, Rudzītis	7/11/14 LA - Readers (?)	24/11/14 LA - Kallis
29/10/14 LA - Līcītis	7/11/14 LA - Readers (?)				17/11/14 LNT - Zoldners	19/11/14 LA - Sokolovs, Ločmelis, Lucāns	25/11/14 LA - Dubrouska
5/11/14 NRA - Paiders	11/11/14 Diena - Putinceva				20/11/14 LA - Vanga		
11/11/14 Diena - Putinceva	18/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Medvedevs				20/11/14 LA - Kriņa		
18/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Medvedevs	19/11/14 LA - Sprūde				21/11/14 LA - Blūma		
19/11/14 NRA - Avotiņš	27/11/14 Diena - Putinceva				24/11/14 LA - Liepiņš		
21/11/14 NRA - Lulle	28/11/14 LA - Rudzītis				25/11/14 LA - Dubrouska		
24/11/14 LA - Kallis					27/11/14 LA - n/a		
27/11/14 Diena - Putinceva					28/11/14 LA - Rudzītis		

Key:	
LTV1	Diena
LNT	NRA
TV3	LA

Figure 1

¹⁶ Matching patterns represent stories which appear under more than one category.

4.7. The stories

4.7.1. Politics

POLITICS
20/10/14 LA - Kuzmina
23/10/14 LA - Reire
23/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Antonevičs
23/10/14 Diena - Zandere
24/10/14 LA - Strelevičs
27/10/14 NRA - Krautmanis
29/10/14 LA - Līcītis
5/11/14 NRA - Paiders
11/11/14 Diena - Putinceva
18/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Medvedevs
19/11/14 NRA - Avotiņš
21/11/14 NRA - Lulle
24/11/14 LA - Kallis
27/11/14 Diena - Putinceva

Figure 2

The first theme was 'politics'. This category contained fourteen individual stories from four different sources, with five stories also being relevant to other categories. The stories categorised under this theme varied in tone and subject; however, all engaged with politics. The main topics linking the articles were: government; changes to the law; individual politicians; regulations; election-related issues; and NGO activities linked to the government. Crucially, coverage of the Russian-speaking minority within this particular section demonstrated an inherent, if not always explicit, distinction between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities. The nature of these distinctions will be explored throughout the chapter.

The first was published on 20 October 2014 in *Latvijas Avīze*, and was written by Ilze Kuzmina. The article discussed the issues raised by an organisation called the Non-Citizen Congress (NCC) regarding the 'traditional values' taught in schools. The leader of the organisation, Elizabete Krivcova, had signed an open letter to the government, alongside such organisations as Papardes Zieds (which promotes sexual health) and Marta (which represents women's and LGBT rights). The letter expressed a concern that 'traditional values in the public space have become those of religious intolerance, disapproval of differences between people and the judgement of their choices, the highlighting of one nation's superiority and the fight for giving privilege to one particular model of family'.¹⁷ This was introduced by Kuzmina, noting that 'it is strange to see' the NCC aligning itself with such organisations. The article more generally discussed the relevance of the claims expressed in the letter but questioned 'what does it have to do with "highlighting of one nation's superiority"?', further adding 'which, perhaps, is voiced by some of the more radical opinion holders, [but] definitely is not considered as a 'traditional value' in the public space'.¹⁸ The proposition of such a question implies a complete dismissal of the points made in the letter, thus undermining its purpose altogether. It is important to recognise

¹⁷ "Mūs satrauc, ka publiskajā telpā par tradicionālajām vērtībām kļuvusi reliģiskā neiecietība, cilvēku dažādības nepieņemšana un viņu izvēļu nosodīšana, vienas nācijas pārākuma izcelšana un cīņa pret privilēģiju piešķiršanu vienam pareizajam ģimenes modelim."

¹⁸ "Taču kāds tam visam sakars ar 'vienas nācijas pārākuma izcelšanu', kas, ja arī kādreiz izskan no kāda radikālu uzskatu pārstāvjiem, noteikti nav uzskatāma par publiskās telpas 'tradicionālu vērtību'?"

that Kuzmina failed to accept or further discuss any issues related to the potential problems between Latvian- and Russian speakers and nationalities. Kuzmina also did not discuss the significance of the letter in relation to the perspective held by Papardes Zieds and Marta, although both organisations also signed the letter. This, perhaps, illustrated the generally dismissive attitude towards both of the organisations.

Whilst the NCC does not represent all Russian speakers and rather campaigns for their rights, Kuzmina's article almost attempts to use the organisation and those whose interests it represents as synonymous. Van Dijk (cited in Avraham, 2003: 34) discusses the pre-existing biases in the representation of minorities in Western-media. He reflects that reporters function within a dominant ethnic consensus and express this ideology in their writing when covering minority-related events. This is achieved by 'using certain definitions, referring to people as "us" and "them", and plays 'an important role in the construction of power'. Eli Avraham (2003: 35) proposes that 'groups that are seen as closer to the "desired" social consensus will be covered differently from groups considered to be distant'. By linking the two, it is possible to argue that Kuzmina uses a dominant ethnic consensus in generalizing and clustering a group seen as more distant (Russian speakers). The generalization of grouping all Russian speakers with the NCC demonstrates a type of 'othering', which allows the author to place anyone not fitting the predetermined 'us' (Latvian-speaking) into the loosely defined 'them' (Russian-speaking), whether appropriate or not.

The next 'politics' story was also published in *Latvijas Avīze*, written by Gunda Reire and appearing in the 23 October 2014 issue. The article discussed Latvia joining the UN Human Rights Committee, addressing the potential impact this might have on the country. The article noted that one of the things that Latvia would have to do in the future is to 'continue the clarification work in regards of the national history and language, and minority politics'.¹⁹ The article did not further explain what this meant or what the 'clarifications' were. Whilst it may

¹⁹ "Turpināt skaidrojošo darbu par mūsu valsts vēsturi un valodas un minoritāšu politiku."

implicitly refer to the disagreements regarding the technical definition of the Latvian occupation by the Soviets, this was not explicit in the story.

Another ‘politics’ story from *Latvijas Avīze* was published on 23 October 2014. The piece was an interview conducted by journalists Voldemārs Krustiņš and Māris Antonevičs, with Dzintars Rasnačs, a politician with the *Nacionālā Apvienība*, a right-wing political party in Latvia. The interview started with an explanation why Rasnačs had been invited to be interviewed by *Latvijas Avīze*. Krustiņš claimed that the Latvian Russian Union,²⁰ an organisation in Latvia, had expressed support for Russia in its actions on Crimea in 2014. This was a view which, according to the organisation, was supported by the majority of Latvia’s Russian speakers, but was not condoned by one of the Latvian Ministers, when he was directly asked about it. According to party member Ināra Mūrniece, Rasnačs was going to be nominated as a replacement for the Minister in question. The introductory question in this published interview arguably served as a very convoluted way of asking Rasnačs whether he was still a potential candidate for the ministerial position. Rasnačs did not acknowledge the claim regarding Latvia’s Russian-speaking population expressing support of the Russian Federation’s actions. This point placed the article, and specifically the Russian-speaking minority, in a complex position, because there was no clarity about whether the minority-language speakers had actually expressed support for the Russian Federation and its political actions, or whether this was simply unfounded claims made by an organisation.

Also published on 23 October 2014 and placed thematically in the category ‘politics’, was an article appearing in *Diena*. The article, written by Aļona Zandere, informed the readers of complaints people had expressed about the Latvian Russian Union (LRU), which had sent them their political manifestos before the election. The issue arose due to people having received the manifestos after signing a petition that called for the introduction of a law that would stop LGBT education in Latvia. The petition was organised by the LRU. The rest of the

²⁰ Latvijas Krievu Savienība.

article discussed the petition and noted that not enough signatures had been collected in order for it to be discussed in Saeima, the Latvian parliament. Overall, the article did not explore why the LRU, in particular, had begun the petition or addressed the fact that those interviewed for the article were exclusively Latvian-first-language speakers. By not providing accounts of Russian speakers who also could have received the political manifestos, the newspaper implied by default and/or omission that the Russian-speaking community did not have an issue with such materials. Although the fact that this perception was likely to be untrue, the lack of such coverage served to suggest that the Russian speakers did not share the same opinion as the Latvian speakers as a whole.

A reader's opinion piece was published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 24 October 2014. The text, written by Lindars Strelēvics, posed the question 'what would non-Latvians prefer - listening to Latvian politicians' bad attempt to speak Russian on Russian-language channels or having their speech translated [into Russian from Latvian]'.²¹ This reader's comment made reference to multiple occasions when Latvian-speaking politicians had spoken Russian in televised interviews by Russian-language channels, rather than speaking Latvian, with a translation provided in post-production. The piece was linguistically different from the general tone that *Latvijas Avīze* used in its articles, as it directly called Russian speakers 'non-Latvians', a linguistic choice arguably only acceptable due to the nature of the piece being a reader's commentary. The overall language used in the newspaper did not necessarily adhere to a tone that could be identified as 'neutral'; however, the newspaper referred to 'Russian speakers' or 'Russian-speaking community' rather than 'non-Latvians'. The right to call Russian speakers 'non-Latvians' within this piece is questionable, as it positions them as distinctly outside the perceived 'Latvian-speaking community'. Furthermore, the argument also claimed that 'non-Latvians' may prefer to hear a Russian translation rather than 'bad attempt to speak Russian',

²¹ "Kas nelatviešiem patiktu labāk - klausīties, kā krievu TV kanālos latviešu amatpersonas cenšās runāt samocītā krievu valodā, vai ja šīs amatpersonas izteiktos latviski un viņu teikto pārtulkotu krievu valodā?"

thus implying that most of the Russian speakers would not be able to understand Latvian; a claim that is statistically untrue when 90% of first-language-Russian speakers claim to understand at least some Latvian (Kibermane, et al., 2014: 29).

Such use of categorisation, in terms of linguistic theory, can be considered for its use of 'unmarked' and 'marked' categorisation. In a simplified explanation, Edwin L. Battistella (1990: 1) notes that 'the term *markedness* refers to the relationship between [...] two poles of an opposition', adding that 'the terms *marked* and *unmarked* refer to the evaluation of the poles; the simpler, more general pole is the unmarked term of the opposition while the more complex and focused pole is the marked term' (ibid.). Thus, within the context of the news stories discussed here, 'Russian speakers', 'Russian-speaking community' and 'non-Latvians' all become marked categories, whilst 'Latvian speakers', 'Latvian-speaking community' and 'Latvians' all are used as unmarked categories. This further highlights the distinction made between the 'us' - as the unmarked 'Latvians' - and 'them' - as the marked 'others'. Nikolai Trubetzkoy's formulation, referenced by Jadranka Gvozdanović (1989: 49), explains 'that member of the opposition which is admitted in the position of neutralization is from the viewpoint of the given phonological system unmarked, whereas the opposed member of the opposition is marked' (ibid.). In his criticism of unmarkedness as denoting 'normalcy', Werner Winter (1989: 104) argues that the identification of such normalcy introduces a set of complications, predominantly the question of one's ability to classify 'normalcy', 'naturalness' or 'unmarkedness' as such (ibid.). Winter further adds that 'markedness', or degree of normalcy, or degree of naturalness, 'is not the property of a form, but a form when used - even more: when used under ultimately specifiable conditions' and that 'markedness' is thus understood as 'a context-sensitive feature' (ibid.: 105), noting the evolution within the term itself. In the case of 'Latvian' and 'non-Latvian', the former is working from the position of a 'context-sensitive' understanding of neutralisation in its categorisation as an unmarked term, with 'non-Latvian' standing as its opposite marked category. The recognition

of 'unmarked' and 'marked' categorisation here further demonstrates the use of binary opposites employed in many of the stories.

An interview published in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* on 27 October 2014 was also placed in the category 'politics'. The interview was with Jānis Urbanovičs, who, at the time, was a politician with the Saskaņa party. In the interview, he discussed the most recent election and the political coalitions established in its aftermath. The interviewer, Māris Krautmanis, noted that 'it appears as if the Saskaņa voters crossed out all the Latvians, apart from those known as long-time Saskaņa supporters',²² to which Urbanovičs responded by stating that both he and the party leader, Nils Ušakovs, had hoped for a higher vote both from and for the Latvian candidates. He blamed the loss of the Latvian voters on the party's neutral stance on the situation in Ukraine at that time.²³ Urbanovičs also added that Saskaņa hoped to leave behind its party's history as an 'ethnic' party, noting that 'all parties have a past, but we have existed for so long and we shall exist for even longer'.²⁴ This revealed a confidence in securing future votes *despite* the losses experienced in the election addressed.

Published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 29 October 2014 was an article by Egils Līcītis, which adopted a sarcastic tone to discuss Jānis Urbanovičs' political campaign. In the piece, Līcītis mockingly wrote: 'Jānis has fought for the civic peace, where a stone on a stone won't stay, he has patiently split a large part of the minority, that, shortly and curtly spoken to, will run to vote for the Russian speakers' defenders and will secure 20-30 beds (sic) in the Parliament for Saskaņa'.²⁵ Līcītis thus managed to question both Urbanovičs' political position and the choices of those voting Saskaņa, therefore disregarding any Latvian speakers who might have voted for

²² "Rodas iespāids, ka Saskaņas vēlētaji ir svītrotuši arī visus latviešus, atskaitot tos, kas jau ir zināmi kā ilggadējie saskaņeši."

²³ The Ukrainian territory of Crimea was annexed by Russian Federation on 18 May 2014.

²⁴ "Katrai partijai ir pagātne, bet mēs jau ilgi dzīvojam un mums ir vēl ilga nākotne."

²⁵ "Jānis cīnījās par pilsonisko mieru, kurā akmens uz akmens nepaliks, viņš pacietīgi nošķēlis lielu minoritātes daļu, kas, īsi un aprauti uzrunāti, metīsies balsot par krievvalodīgo aizstāvjiem un nodrošinās 20-30 guļamvietas Saimē Saskaņas biedriem."

the party. Overall, the tone of the article came across as dismissive of and hostile towards Urbanovičs, his party and Saskaņa voters, who Līcītis implied were Russian speakers only.

On 5 November 2014, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* published an article by Juris Paiders, discussing the general election results in Latgale. The title proclaimed that the results had been decided by nationality and the article itself outlined the votes received by particular parties, referring to ‘Latvian citizens - non-Latvians’²⁶ as having a different preference in who they voted for than Latvians did (presumably, Latvian citizens - Latvians). The article was highly problematic due to the way in which it divided and explored the complex nature of national identity in Latgale. Identifying Latvian citizens as ‘non-Latvians’ shows a particular perception of Latvian identity, both in terms of the Russian speakers in Latgale and also more generally across Latvia. Such use of the terms demonstrated that there was a distinction being made between who is a ‘Latvian’ and who happens to be a ‘Latvian citizen’ without identifying what being a ‘Latvian’ might mean.

An article published in *Diena* on 11 November 2014 was an interesting example of a multi-category piece, thematically coded as ‘politics’, ‘Russia’, and ‘integration’. Written by Kristīna Putinceva, the article began with a quote from the mayor of Krāslava in Latgale,²⁷ who expressed his frustration with the politicians in Rīga, who, according to him, were not taking the threat of the Russian Federation’s political agitation in Latgale seriously. The article explained that the poorest of Latgale’s population were often visited by people attempting to convince them that the region should one day re-join Russia. This opinion was countered by the quote from a director of a school in Krāslava, who stated that he did not believe that his pupils had encountered such political agitation, despite two thirds of his students being Russian speakers. The rest of the article, however, discussed the possibility of political agitation and the lack of action from both politicians and security police. Although the article noted that those most likely

²⁶ “Latvijas pilsoņi nelatvieši.”

²⁷ See Image 2.

to be approached on the matter were the poorest of Latgale's population, there was no further discussion of the potential measures needed to address the problem. The article also failed to provide any actual proof of the existence of such agitation.

A story relating to the Russian-speaking minority was broadcast on 18 November 2014, and was also placed in the thematic category 'Russia'. Covered by Guntis Meisters and Sergejs Medvedevs, the story discussed the Non-Citizens Organisation (NCO).²⁸ TV3 informed its viewers that Aleksandrs Gapeņenko, an activist with the NCO in Latvia and one of the two leaders of the language referendum in 2012, had been detained at Riga International Airport the day before the broadcast. Gapeņenko himself, in a phone interview, noted that he did not wish to provide TV3 with a comment, as he did not trust the channel to be unbiased in favour of the police. It is unclear whether Gapeņenko had previous experience with the channel, or whether such opinions were based on the personal perception of the broadcaster. The channel broadcast a recording of a phone conversation, in which Gapeņenko expressed these views instead of an interview which he had declined to give. TV3 then showed an interview Gapeņenko had given to the Russian Federation broadcaster NTV, in which he stated that during the organization of the Russian-as-a-second-language referendum, Latvian ministries and the police were instructed on how to 'fight Russian activism'. TV3 also noted that no official comments from the police or border guards were made regarding the situation at the time of the broadcast.

On 19 November 2014 *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* published an interview with composer Imants Kalniņš conducted by Viktors Avotiņš. Avotiņš commented that 'we still have "Latvian" and "Russian" [political] parties', to which Kalniņš responded that 'you can't get over your home's threshold unless you step over it. We don't step over it. We still have Latvian parties -

²⁸ Political organisation that campaigns for Russian-speaking non-citizens' rights in Latvia.

here, Russian parties - there'.²⁹ He continued to voice his belief that more political power should be given to parties like *Saskaņa*, as it would be representative of voters' choices. This was in reference to the political coalitions at the time, which were actively excluding *Saskaņa* from the majority government due to its perceived status as a Russian-speaking party.

Also placed under the category 'politics' was another interview published in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. Appearing in the 21 November 2014 issue, Baiba Lulle interviewed Rūta Dimanta, the manager of *ziedot.lv*, a charitable donation website. The two discussed the Zolitūde tragedy, an event that had occurred a year earlier, when the roof of a supermarket collapsed in Rīga, killing 54 people. Lulle noted that Dimanta had mentioned the fact that after the tragedy *ziedot.lv* received many donations from the Russian-speaking population in Latvia. According to Dimanta, before the Zolitūde tragedy donations to various causes by the Russian-speaking community had not been as prominent as they were after the tragedy. Lulle then asked Dimanta's opinion why this change had occurred. Dimanta responded by saying that she believed that 'the ethnic theme is often easy for the politicians, but in a tragedy we do not sort people'. She added that 'politicians who use the ethnic card should ask themselves whether the short term support received is positive for the society in the long term', and that 'there is still an ethnic vote, the voter is [used] as an instrument in a political fight'.³⁰ This highlighted the way in which there is a perceived difference in the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers as portrayed by the government and the experienced by the general population.

The last article coded as 'politics' was published in *Diena* on 27 November 2014. Written by Kristīna Putinceva, it served as a direct follow-up to her 11 November 2014 article in *Diena*, discussing the political agitation that the Russian Federation had been accused of committing in

²⁹ "Tu nevari tikt pāri savas mājas sliekšnim, ja tu tam nepārkāp. Mēs nepārkāpjam. Mēs uzturam te - latviešu, tur - krievu partijas."

³⁰ "Jā, domāju, tas parādīja, ka etniskā tēma bieži ir politiski ērta politiķiem, bet nelaimē mēs nešķirojam tautību. Bet politiķiem, kas izmanto entisko kārti, vajadzētu uzdot sev jautājumu, vai īstermiņā iegūtais karstāku prātu atbalsts arī ilgtermiņā sabiedrībai nāk par labu. Jo projām ir etniskais balsojums, vēlētājs ir kā līdzeklis varas cīņās."

Latgale. In the first half of Putinceva's article, she interviewed those living in Krāslava, with all interviewees noting that they had personally had no direct experience of such political agitation. A few remarked that they had heard of others having received materials and information urging Latgale to join the Russian Federation. Yet, the majority of the article claimed that there was no need for political agitation, as the Latvian government already sorted the population of Latvia in accordance with its policies regarding Russian speakers. A woman who was interviewed for the article remarked that 'when the new Prime Minister started working, I listened to what she had to say, but then before the election she said that Saskaņa getting in the parliament would be the worst thing that could happen - I felt that as a slap to the face for all of Latvia's Russian-speaking population'. Such feeling was most likely due to the fact that the Saskaņa party had openly campaigned for the rights of the Russian-speaking community in Latvia and the proclamation that the party getting into power would be 'the worst thing that could happen' could easily be seen as undermining the minority issues that the party campaigned for. The article concluded by reflecting on the extra finances allocated to integration in Latgale. Whilst the article overall provided some discussion of why the political agitation in Latgale was important to consider, it did not offer an alternative for or comparison between the situation in Latgale and the rest of Latvia. This article was also placed under the theme of 'Russia', as it explicitly stated that the political agitation came from the Russian Federation.

4.7.1.1. Summary.

This section has illustrated the emergence of a particular set of issues linked to the way Latvian-language news and newspapers represent Russian-speaking minority stories. There were four significant ways that the coverage was presented and discussed. Firstly, the majority of articles discussed in this section appear to have been written from a position that ascribes and presumes audience knowledge on a given topic. In this case, the topic is evidently that of the Russian-speaking minority and its relation to the Latvian-speaking majority in Latvia. Most of

the articles and news items seem to have been written or produced from the position that the audience is exclusively Latvian-speaking. More importantly, not only is the audience a Latvian-speaking one, it is also *Latvian*. The concept of what it means to be 'Latvian' was not explored in the news reports but an assumed position was adopted as the status quo. Without explaining what this definition was, the majority of the stories automatically positioned the reader as not only Latvian-speaking but also within the category of 'us'. Linguistically, many of the articles employed the phrase 'us' in reference to their readers. By default, 'them' therefore referred to Russian speakers, independently of any particulars required to identify someone's political or social position. Such an automatic binary did not appear to be a new development, but rather was a standard practice in how minority-related issues were covered.

This positioning of the audience as a singular, *Latvian* unit, draws on Anderson's (2006) point regarding imagined communities. More so, however, it links to his explanation of a shared sense of identity as witnessed by consuming information from the same, identical source (see Anderson, 2006: 35-6). Here, the *presumption* that the audience share such an identity, flags the potential limitations articulated in the articles as they fail to differentiate audiences, instead presuming a *commonness* (as proposed by Hobsbawm and discussed in the Literature Review). These particular views on identity shape the ways in which these stories were presented, but just as importantly, they also explain the *lack* of stories relating to the Russian speakers. Here Nairn's (1998: 113) points relating to the sense of a nation being perceived as a 'vastly extended family' plays an important role. Nairn notes that this perception is supposed to 'bestow a general sense of psychic belonging and community', something that then allows for an exclusion to occur, as Hobsbawm argues that things which are not categorised as 'familiar and recognizable' bolster the perception of an external influx of threats (2000: 263).

Another notable trend indicated a wider issue with how Latvian-language news were conveyed. The majority of the claims made in the articles and news broadcasts lacked a reference and/or a further explanation. For instance, the articles discussing claims that the

Russian Federation was distributing leaflets in Latvia (Putinceva, *Diena*: 11 November 2014 and 27 November 2014) failed to interview a single person who had received such leaflets. Furthermore, the article could not even provide a description of the content of this so-called 'agitation'. Journalism lacking such evidence therefore provided an *imagined* problematization of the issues discussed, often appearing to deem the issues related to the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities as a given, rather than engaging in details. This also linked to the previous point about the presumed knowledge ascribed to the audiences of these news stories. However, by not offering a more thorough analysis and explanation of particular stories, especially those that cover more controversial issues (such as the story linking the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia to the support of the Russian Federation's actions in Crimea), the news failed to demonstrate an awareness of the overall issues experienced by Russian speakers in Latvia. By using generalisations, the news portrayed the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia as 'them', whilst simultaneously casting the Latvian-speaking majority as 'us'. Such a position did not acknowledge and/or include any attempts at integration, and more importantly failed to acknowledge individuals who do not have negative personal experiences with any of the Russian speakers in Latvia.

A minor but still notable pattern in how the stories engaged with issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority was the choice of interviews and vox populi employed in the news coverage. The majority of 'audience views' that were articulated in the news reports, whether as quotes in the newspapers or recorded interviews in the televised news, were expressed by Latvian speakers. In both, context distinctions were made on the basis of the interviewees' distinctly Latvian names, with the addition of the non-accented Latvian spoken in televised news. Whilst this is not to say that there are no Russian-speaking minority representatives with Latvian-sounding names and non-accented Latvian, the emergent patterns suggested that the news appeared to deliberately privilege interviews only with those who had Latvian-sounding names, as interviewees with Russian-sounding names seemed to simply not feature in the

reports. Such a distinction is important for two reasons: firstly, the news coverage does not appear to give a voice to any Russian-speaking minority members; secondly, the practice of only conducting interviews with Latvian speakers is highly problematic. It is unclear what the journalistic practice in Latvia regarding vox populi is. However, in Rīga, where the majority of the interviews for the news are conducted, the Russian-speaking population is statistically almost as high as the Latvian-speaking one (40.2% and 46.3% of Rīga's population, respectively (CSB, 2011)). Therefore, it is doubtful that any journalist setting out to interview people for their story would only encounter Latvian speakers. By all appearances, the selection of only Latvian speakers further distanced the two communities. It also carried the implication that only one set of opinions had 'value' in terms of news coverage. Such an apparent divide also perpetuated the notion that the two communities share different opinions on any given topic, because there was no evidence to the contrary.

The last clear pattern that emerged from the stories discussed under the theme 'politics' was the casting of Latvian speakers as 'us' and Russian speakers as 'them'. This ran across the majority of the news stories discussed. Not only were the Latvian speakers automatically placed in the category of 'us', arguably more importantly this category was reified to include *all* Latvian speakers, in as much as the category of 'them' involved *all* Russian speakers in Latvia. With a perceived audience of only the Latvian-speaking population, both the newspapers and the broadcasters discussed stories that seemed directed at this audience. Whilst it is arguable that the majority of Latvian-language broadcasts and newspapers are viewed/read by Latvian speakers, it is still likely that some Russian speakers also engaged with the content. Such a binary between 'us - Latvians' - and - 'them - Russians' - is unlikely to provide an all-encompassing coverage for either of the communities.

4.7.2. Russia

RUSSIA
21/10/14 LA - Vikmanis
21/10/14 LNT - Kristapson
23/10/14 LTV1 - Krenberga
29/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Kokareviča
3/11/14 LA - Gombergs
4/11/14 LA - Līce
7/11/14 LA - Readers (?)
11/11/14 Diena - Putinceva
18/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Medvedevs
19/11/14 LA - Sprūde
27/11/14 Diena - Putinceva
28/11/14 LA - Rudzītis

Figure 3

The next category under which stories were grouped thematically was 'Russia'. This category featured a total of twelve stories from five of the sources, ten of which also appeared in other categories. *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* was the only one of the six sources analysed in this research not to publish any stories relating to Russia in the sample period. The stories that were placed in this category were chosen for their content dealing with the Russian Federation, including people from the Russian Federation and citizens of the state in Latvia. All stories also dealt with the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, or made a mention of it. Those stories that shared their category with 'politics' have already been outlined and will not be noted again in the following section. The three stories in this category relating to Jevgenijs Gombergs will be discussed under the section 'Gombergs', in order to offer an easier overview of the responses his original article received.

First to appear in the category was a story broadcast by LNT on 21 October 2014. It discussed the music festival *Jaunais Vilnis* that used to take place in Jūrmala but was moved elsewhere due to Latvia's ban on many of the Russian Federation patrons.³¹ The story was covered by the journalist Kārlis Kristapsons, who noted that whilst the Latvian-speaking population of Jūrmala did not feel particularly disadvantaged by the fact that *Jaunais Vilnis* would no longer take place in the city, the Russian-speaking population of Jūrmala felt that this would be a loss. This was illustrated, in the story, by interviews with three of Jūrmala's residents: a young, Russian-speaking woman and two elderly Latvian-speaking people, a man and a woman. The Russian speaker expressed concern about the financial impact that the departure of *Jaunais Vilnis* may have upon Jūrmala and Rīga, whilst the two Latvian speakers both stated that they did not believe there to be serious repercussions of the festival no longer taking place in Latvia. Kristapsons did not discuss the age and gender differences of the interviewees, despite the fact that such demographic details might have been relevant to the

³¹ For their expressed support of the Russian Federation's actions in Crimea, the Latvian State in 2014 banned many notable Russian artists from entering Latvia. This resulted in *Jaunais Vilnis* being moved from Jūrmala to Sochi, Russia.

shaping of particular opinions. This issue will be discussed in more depth later in the chapter, when addressing historical and social preconceptions and their influences on potential views held by the audiences.

Latvijas Avīze published a story by Ģirts Vikmanis in its 21 October 2014 issue. The article discussed the Russian Federation's Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky's visit to Latvia. In the article, Vikmanis noted that the political analyst Kārlis Daukšts had referred to the visit as an 'expedition' for Medinsky, to find out the mood of his 'compatriots'.³² Whilst noting that the Minister unveiled a monument dedicated to a Russian writer, the article primarily focused on a discussion of Daukšts' remarks, which indicated that the nature of the visit was tied to the Russian speakers in Latvia (and finding a way to politically influence them and their choices), rather than prioritising the cultural elements in their own right. Problematically, the article did not explore the claimed reason of the visit, nor in turn, what the Russian Federation would achieve by sending a Minister to engage the Russian-speaking communities in any of the post-Soviet countries. Echoing other articles and news stories across the six sources analysed in this chapter, there appeared to be an unspoken and unwritten ideological perception of the knowledge and understanding held by the audience on the topic. This presumed knowledge relied on the audience believing that the Russian Federation had a strong interest in engaging the Russian-speaking community in Latvia, and more specifically implied an understanding that any such engagement would be negative and against the Latvian state's ideology.

On 23 October 2014, LTV1 broadcast a story which addressed the Russian Federation's introduction of new benefit payments to the veterans of World War II; this was sorted under the category 'Russia'. The story was covered by Odita Krenberga and explained that, whilst in the past only Russian citizens had been able to receive benefit payments if they were veterans of World War II, this would now be extended to include both Latvian citizens and non-citizens. A

³² "Politologs Kārlis Daukšts nedēļas nogalē notikušo Krievijas kultūras ministra Vladimira Medinska vizīti sauc par 'izlūkbraucienu', kā patiesais mērķis varētu būt noskaidrot 'tautiešu' noskaņojumu."

ninety-three year old woman was interviewed for the story, who had been a radar operator during the war and thus qualified for the newly introduced benefits. In the interview, she noted that the gesture was 'laughable' and too late. Stating that her mother had died of hunger, the woman claimed that money would not repay the suffering that had been experienced. Both the interviewee and Krenberga claimed that such a gesture had been extended in 'Putin's interests', which would lead to 'unionization'. Such emotive language throughout the story, as well as the introduction of the potential threat such financial support may cause, led to the conclusion that the new benefit payments were potentially dangerous for the Latvian state. Krenberga concluded the story by stressing the fact that those who acted against the Latvian people during the war would also qualify for the benefit payments. Such a statement at the end of the story appeared rather dismissive and critical about whether such payments should be further scrutinised.

Also placed in the category 'Russia' was an interview published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 29 October 2014. It was conducted by Voldemārs Krustiņš and Dace Kokareviča with Igors Vatoļins, the leader of an organisation called European Russian Initiative. The interview opened with a series of questions: 'what do Russians in Latvia think, what values are they ready to stand for?'³³. In the interview, Vatoļins reflected that 'in Latvia there still isn't a political nation - as one nation for all the people in Latvia'. Instead, he explained 'a part [of the people] feel castaway. Everyone agrees that Latvia is the only place where the Latvian culture exists and that you can [only] reproduce it [here], that is, to keep it and pass it on to future generations'. However, Vatoļins follows this by noting that 'those people, whose identities structurally are also Russian or of other ethnic [and] cultural dimensions, sometimes [they] don't see an opportunity in Latvia to reproduce their [own] identities, as they understand it, [the reproduction of one's

³³ "Ko domā krievi Latvijā, par kādām vērtībām viņi gatavi iestāties."

identity]’.³⁴ The interview then discussed Russian culture and, more specifically, Russian culture in Russia, as well as the Russian Federation’s actions in Crimea and the resultant politics at an international level. After the interview, a paragraph was added, urging readers to submit their comments and responses, specifically noting ‘for example, whether the Russian language should be given a special treatment [in Latvia]?’³⁵. Such a leading question arguably encouraged the readers to respond to a particular point that was made in the interview regarding the Russian language specifically. Such encouragement for the readers to write responses to interviews published in *Latvijas Avīze* is not a common practice for the paper, and did not appear in any of the other interviews published in the six-week sample period. This interview was also thematically categorised under ‘integration’, due to the way that the interview defined Latvian national identity as something attainable only by ‘Latvians’ and therefore not those whose ‘identities structurally are also Russian’.

Published on 4 November 2014, in *Latvijas Avīze*, was an opinion piece by Anda Līce, which was placed in the thematic category of ‘integration’, as well as that of ‘Russia’. Līce’s article discussed a memorial day in Russia held to remember the victims of Stalin’s regime. In the article, she encouraged the introduction of a similar memorial day in Latvia, noting its usefulness, as Līce argued, in raising more cultural and historical awareness. However, Līce also wrote that ‘Latvia should invite the organisers [of this event], so they can come here and tell those from other nations who live here the truth about the past, and the present. Even though there are many so-called “vatņik”,³⁶ which Līce went on to explain as ‘people with their minds stuck in the Soviet times’ she added that it was possible, however, to talk to ‘their children and

³⁴ “Latvijā joprojām nav politiskas nācijas - kā visu Latvijas cilvēku nācijas. Daļa jūtas atstumti. Visi piekrīt, ka Latvija ir vienīgā vieta, kur pastāv latvietība un to var atražot, tas ir, saglabāt un nodot nākamajām paaudzēm; taču tie cilvēki, kuru identitātes struktūrā ir arī krieviskums vai kādas citas etniskas, kulturālas dimensijas, brīžiem neredz iespēju Latvijā atražot savu identitāti tā, kā viņi to saprot.”

³⁵ “Piemēram, vai krievu valodai jāpiešķir īpašs status?”

³⁶ Slang term for a stupid person who always walks around in a heavy winter jacket (‘vatņik’).

grandchildren who have seen the world'.³⁷ She concluded by emphasising the importance of culture but made an exception for so-called 'propaganda masked as culture'³⁸. Overall, Līce's article played a strange role in relation to representation, as the implication of her original support for a remembrance day (which would reflect on the suffering of Stalin's victims) appeared to be a positive statement. However, the article then proceeded to make divisions between those that she perceived to have an accurate understanding of Latvian history and those who did not. The remarks regarding 'propaganda masked as culture' sound rather more poetic than critical, as Līce did not explore the term any further. However, the very use of 'propaganda' was notable, as it positioned the event in a very particular way by assigning its intention to a propaganda message.

Also placed under the thematic category 'Russia' was a news item written by Viesturs Sprūde on 19 November 2014, published in *Latvijas Avīze*. The article quoted and referenced a Russian historian and, in a rather scaremongering fashion, proclaimed 'Russian historian [says that] Latvia could be the next target'.³⁹ This, presumably, was in reference to the Russian action in Crimea, claimed to have been carried out to protect the ethnic Russians (Russian speakers) there. This, in turn, implied that Russia may be able to use a similar argument in relation to Latvia.⁴⁰ The article itself attempted to defend its title by quoting the Russian historian Boris Sokolov as having stated that Latvia might be a target for Russian military action due to its 'large pro-Russian minority'.⁴¹ Sokolov was also quoted as having said that Vladimir Putin had made reference in his speeches to 'Russian speakers' rather than 'Russians', specifically to appeal to 'those "Soviet people" who live outside Russia, but can not accept that the countries

³⁷ "Latvijai vajadzētu aicināt šīs organizācijas ļaudis, lai viņi brauc pie mums un stāsta šeit dzīvojošiem cittautiešiem patiesību par pagātni, gan tagadni. Kaut arī Latvijā ir daudz tā saucamo vatņiku, cilvēku ar padomju propagandā iestrēgušu apziņu, ar pasauli redzējušiem viņu bērniem un mazbērniem ir iespējams sarunāties."

³⁸ "Izņemums varētu būt vienīgi ar kultūru maskētā propaganda."

³⁹ "Krievijas vēsturnieks: Latvija var būt nākamais mērķis."

⁴⁰ <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/05/140502-russia-putin-ukraine-geography-crimea-language/> Accessed: 17 August 2016.

⁴¹ "Jo te ir skaitliski vislielākais prokrieviskais mazākums."

where they reside have a “foreign” power’. Overall, the article provided no counter-argument and did not attempt to discourage Sokolov’s claims. Despite the fact that the article noted the official reason for the visit, Sprūde’s tone made it clear that he did not believe it and, using statements issued by Sokolov, provided the readers with a one-sided view of the issue.

4.7.2.1. Summary

Some of the patterns that emerged within this section were similar to those from the ‘politics’ theme. On the whole, the news coverage lacked an analysis of the majority of issues discussed, and also strongly relied on the idea of a perceived audience. However, both themes also merged into a stronger pattern of biased and selective reporting. All of the stories in the sample shaped the Russian Federation as a negative agent in representing its interactions with Latvian politics, governance and population. This type of reporting on issues relating to Russia may once again echo the arguments made by Hobsbawm when considering external threats (2000: 263). None of the stories engaged with the Russian Federation as a positive or even neutral body within the political situations discussed. Furthermore, stories such as the one written by Vikmanis (*Latvijas Avīze*, 21 October 2014), which ascribed the visit to Latvia by the Russian Federation Culture Minister a far greater and politically meaningful reason than the official explanation, indicated a particular way of reporting stories about Russia. Throughout all of the stories, there was a sense that the audience would accept such portrayals of the neighbouring state. Whilst this research does not deny that the relationship between Latvia and Russia is complex, the ways in which Latvian-language news chose to portray it was questionable and none of the sources successfully explained their editorial control in offering such coverage.

Alongside the style of reporting stories relating to Russia as one-sided, this category also revealed that such stories were reported in a highly selective way. Almost all of the stories discussed here concentrated on positioning the Russian Federation as attempting to infringe on

Latvian freedoms, whether they be political, social or historical. The one exception to such a specific way of reporting was the interview conducted with Igors Vatoļins in *Latvijas Avīze* (29 October 2014), in which Vatoļins stated that, whilst Latvian culture was important, so was Russian culture. It is important to note that, immediately after the interview was concluded, *Latvijas Avīze* invited its readers to write in with any comments they had - a practice not common to the newspaper. It thus emerged that whilst the newspaper offered an opposing view of their general editorial line, it also encouraged its readers to disagree with it.

Overall, the section on stories relating to Russia and the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia was an interesting example of a very selective style of reporting by five out of six sources analysed for this research. Much like the 'politics' theme, this category illustrated a distinct lack of analysis on the part of the news outlets, together with a strong dependence on an 'us' versus 'them' narrative. This category offered a more defined version of 'them', in that the pronoun was used to stand for 'Russia'. However, many of the stories also gave the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia the same status of an 'other' as ascribed to the Russian Federation. The stories portrayed Russian-speakers and the Russian state as synonymous with 'threat' to Latvian culture and independence. No attempt at distinguishing the two was made by any of the sources. This further indicates that such perceptions were seen as established and thus rarely if ever questioned by the sources.

4.7.3. Education

EDUCATION
20/10/14 LA - Kuzmina
29/10/14 LA - Kuzmina
10/11/14 LA - n/a
17/11/14 LNT - Balčiute
17/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Ulmanis, Stankēvičs
28/11/14 NRA - Orupe

Figure 4

The next thematic category was that of ‘education’, which featured stories from four different sources. The news items placed in this category were ones that dealt with any issues relating to education and the Russian-speaking minority. All of these were linked to Russian-language teaching and Russian-language schools in Latvia and is, in part embedded within the media coverage of the language referendum (to be discussed in the next chapter). Approaching the sample chronologically, the first article by Ilze Kuzmina was also categorised under ‘politics’ and has already been discussed above.

The second article on this theme was also written by Kuzmina, and was, published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 29 October 2014. It addressed the Latvian-language use in Russian-speaking minority schools, and Kuzmina noted that, by 2018, all schools were expected to teach 100% of their material through the medium of Latvian. The law at the time this article was written required no less than 60% of classroom teaching to be in Latvian, allowing for 40% to be in Russian. The article claimed that teachers in Russian-speaking schools would often teach in Latvian during inspections but would switch to Russian as soon as the inspectors had left. The article concluded by acknowledging the remarks of a representative from the Education and

Research Ministry, who noted that more support was required for teachers working in bilingual schools.

Adding an extra dimension to the above article, the next piece in the 'education' category was a news item about the use of minority languages in the education sector. Published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 10 November 2014, with no named author, it informed the readers that, up until 1 November 2014, many teachers working in minority-language schools had been fined for their low-level knowledge of the Latvian language. The article noted that the fines had been issued after complaints about teachers, as well as in the aftermath of unscheduled visits by the National Language Centre.

Also categorised under 'education' was a story broadcast by LNT on 17 November 2014. The story, delivered by the journalist Skirmante Balčiute, discussed the reasons behind the high number of teachers in minority-language schools fined for not knowing Latvian to a level sufficient for teaching. Such a discussion was the first to be offered in the coverage of language issues relating to school-teaching, despite the previous two items already covering a similar topic. In an interview with the headmistress of one minority-language school, Balčiute was informed that any teacher would be valued for their subject knowledge over their language skills. Other opinions presented in the story indicated that too much time had elapsed since independence and thus teaching in Latvian should no longer present such a challenge, although it evidently still did. The story concluded with remarks from the head teachers of minority schools, stating that they believed that 2018 was too early for the ratified legislation on school reform to come into force, and that children's education would suffer as a result. Overall, the story offered a positive portrait of the Russian-speaking teachers and argued that the current practice of fines and structures was not optimal.

TV3 also broadcast a story on 17 November 2014 that discussed the schooling of Russian-minority children. The story started by listing multiple issues linked to minority schools and education, such as: Latvian youths participating in a Russian Federation military camp;

comments made by a schoolteacher on the radio, in which he noted that he felt no loyalty to the Latvian state; another teacher, from the same school, having liked an anti-Latvian poster on social media; and the fines received by multiple teachers across Latvia for their inadequate Latvian-language skills. The journalists (Guntis Meisters, Aigars Ulmanis, Ilmārs Stankēvičs) stated that, according to statistical research, older Russian speakers were more likely to express themselves as Latvian patriots, whilst the younger generations did not share these feelings. The statistics quoted in the story provide some contrast to the majority of research done in the field of Latvian national identity and patriotism (see 2.3.2. in the Literature Review). They reflect research done in 2014 (see *Piederības Sajūta Latvijai: Mazākumtautību Latvijas Iedzīvotāju Aptauja* (SKDS, 2014)), which showed a significant acknowledgement of the sense of belonging to Latvia by the multiple age groups that were queried. The story further explored whether there was enough government control over what happened in minority-language schools. The government response included in the story indicated that the government did, in fact, control the situation. No analysis was offered of what such 'control' might entail or how it might be enacted.

The last article thematically categorised under 'education' was written by Aisma Orupe and published on 28 November 2014, in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. The piece addressed the differences in bilingual education received in Latvian- and Russian-language schools. Orupe wrote that in some schools, despite a law that required a certain level of Latvian-language skills in the profession, teachers were still failing to instruct their pupils in the national language. Through interviews with various politicians and representatives of Russian-language schools, Orupe noted that, in some instances, the financial support for the integration of Russian speakers into Latvian society had been an issue. Arguably, the title of the article ('Bilingual education: for Latvians, not Russians?'⁴²) can be seen as misleading, as this referred to one particular example given in the article, where a Latvian politician noted that her children were

⁴² "Bilingvālā izglītība: latviešiem, ne krieviem?"

taught by Russian-speaking teachers in Daugavpils and had to learn Russian due to the teacher's lack of knowledge of Latvian. The article offers a complex narrative in its coverage of the issue, as it portrays the problem as predominantly impacting on the Latvian speakers rather than addressing the educational problems for Russian-speaking children in minority-language schools. This indicates that the news did not prioritise the education of the Russian-speaking community and instead concentrated on the contemporaneous inconvenience this caused for Latvian speakers. The item made no acknowledgement relating to a future issue that might arise from struggles within education.

4.7.3.1. Summary

The stories in this section once again reveal the recurrent issue of a lack of analysis of the topics that featured within and across the sample under review. The majority of the stories discussing the difficulties experienced by Russian-language schools focused on teachers' lack of the ability to speak Latvian. With the exception of Balčiute's reportage (LNT, 17 November 2014), all of the stories emphasised the perceived importance of education in Latvian rather than Russian, avoiding any further discussion of the reasons behind the many fines issued to teachers who failed to meet the language requirements. The need for support was acknowledged, but no further details were noted about what could/should constitute that support. Similarly, with the exception of Balčiute's reportage, none of the items expressed a concern for the impact that a change in the teaching language would have on the Russian-speaking pupils. The stories in this category continued to disregard the impact that the Russian-speaking minority may experience, preferring to concentrate, instead, on the Latvian-speaking angle of the story. Such selective coverage once again implied an intended audience, and made clear that it was not Russian-speaking.

4.7.4. 'Nositeli' poster

POSTER
11/11/14 LTV1 - Krenberga
11/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Binders
12/11/14 TV3 - Meisters, Ulmanis
14/11/14 NRA - Veidemane

Figure 5

The fourth thematic category was 'poster', and was less obviously self-explanatory than the first three. This category was included to enable special references to be made to a picture that was published on the social media prior to Latvian Independence Day (18 November). It appeared on the social networking website Facebook and, in Russian, warned people of the 'Latvian plague', that would be at its highest between 11 November (Lāčplēsis Day⁴³) and 18 November (Independence Day). Four news stories discussed this picture, which is reproduced in Image 3 overleaf.

⁴³ A memorial day for soldiers who fought for the independence of Latvia in 1919.



Image 3

The first report was by Odita Krenberga and was broadcast on 11 November 2014. Krenberga noted that one of the people to have clicked the 'like' button underneath the image on Facebook was a female school teacher in a minority-language school in Rīga. Drawing attention to the woman's occupation and potential role as an educator of Russian-minority children arguably raised a concern about the way Russian-speaking schools engaged their pupils on matters such as Latvian identity. However, the news segment did not analyse what the implications may have been, thus assuming that the audience would be able to draw its own conclusions. Any sense of potential engagement was prevented by not outlining the issue directly, thus dis-allowing a more educational and societal debate.

Also on 11 November 2014, a similar story was broadcast by TV3 and reported by Guntis Meisters and Juris Bindars. The journalists explained that a school-teacher from a minority-language school had liked the picture post online. Building on the coverage of the story offered by LTV1, they added that the school where this teacher taught had already faced multiple scandals, most notably when another teacher stated on the radio that he did not

support Latvia and was not loyal to it. The news segment did not provide any further analysis or detail.

The following day, on 12 November 2014, TV3 broadcast a second story regarding the poster. This time reported by Guntis Meisters and Aigars Ulmanis, it explored how the poster was perceived to undermine a Latvian national symbol: its flag. Meisters and Ulmanis informed the viewers that the Security Police had begun an investigation into who was responsible for the post on Facebook. Similar to the previous day's coverage of the subject, Meisters and Ulmanis noted that, due to a school teacher having liked the picture online, the Education Ministry had also become involved in investigating the matter.

Finally, an opinion piece by Elita Veidemane was published in the 14 November 2014 issue of *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. Veidemane began by remarking on the celebration of Latvian Independence Day, but moved on to discuss the poster. In the piece, she claimed that 'on this occasion, everything is obvious: the 5th column⁴⁴ is going into a fight against us, against all those for whom Latvia is the only one - as a homeland, as a mother, as heaven'.⁴⁵ Such use of emotive language constructs 'being Latvian' as both a privilege and something inherited, as the reference to viewing the country as 'a mother' indicates a sense of belonging. Moreover, 'a mother' also carries the innate implication of a blood connection, which is presumed to create a sense of nurturing relationship. This belonging further extends in the understanding of 'homeland', which to Veidemane is clearly positioned as understood by the readers. The use of 'heaven' then, to join the former two, also highlights the way Latvia is presented as a divine rather than constructed place, one which those belonging to as 'a homeland' and referring to as 'a mother' have an inherent right to inhabit. She went on to reflect on Latvia's history of the struggle for independence, concluding by urging the readers to believe in their country. Such

⁴⁴ A fifth column is any group of people who undermine a larger group—such as a nation or a besieged city—from within, usually in favour of an enemy group or nation. A term originating from the Spanish Civil War.

⁴⁵ "Taču šajā gadījumā bija skaidrs: 5. kolonna iet cīņā pret mums, pret visiem, kam Latvija ir vienīgā - kā dzimtene, kā māte, kā debesis."

emotive language masked the overall issue and illustrated a more general trend in reporting of this kind; one which perpetuated the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ narrative that has already been identified. Whilst Veidemane’s article is clearly an opinion piece, it can still be used to demonstrate the choices *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* had made in publishing stories relating to Russian speakers. Veidemane’s description of what she believed Latvia meant to some is problematic, especially when considering her remarks about ‘the only homeland’, thus implying that some of Latvia’s population might not perceive the country as their only homeland or as homeland at all. As she neither explored nor expanded on the issue, the readers were left to draw their own conclusions about who those that ‘fight against us’ might be.

4.7.4.1. Summary

The four stories covered in this category all approached issues created and emphasised by the anti-Latvian poster in a rather one-sided fashion. The first three stories, all covered by television news, explained the issue and focused greatly on the school-teacher who had been one of the people to ‘like’ the post online. However, none of them explored the reasons why such material was created and shared on social media. This was particularly apparent in Veidemane’s article (*Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, 14 November 2014), in the context of the emotive language used. Whilst the article was an opinion piece rather than a news report, the notion of the Russian-speaking minority being not only a generalised construction of ‘them’ but also representing a ‘them against us’ dichotomy was clear. In fact, Veidemane specifically referred to a ‘fight against us’. Importantly, though, neither she nor the other three journalists offered a clear definition of who ‘they’ might be, presuming that the audiences would know and automatically associate the idea with the Russian-speakers. The lack of investigation into the original posting of the picture and the social commentary created by the poster is evident throughout all four stories.

4.7.5. Patriotism



Figure 6

The fifth category under which articles were thematically categorised was ‘patriotism’. Four individual stories appeared in this category, from four different sources. Only one of the stories shared its category with another - ‘integration’. The stories were placed in this category since they all specifically refer to the term ‘patriotism’ (*patriots, patriotisms*). All of the stories appeared in November issues and footage, starting from 11 November, which is the Lāčplēsis Day celebration in Latvia. The last of the stories, published on 26 November, also referred to Independence Day (18 November).

Chronologically, the first report to appear in this category was a LTV1 story broadcast on 11 November 2014. The story was part of larger coverage about the celebration of Lāčplēsis Day. Whilst discussing the results of a poll that asked people whether they would rate themselves as Latvian patriots, the news anchor, Laura Vonda, noted that since 2013 the number of people who identified themselves as Latvian patriots had risen. A studio-anchor to field-reported exchange, the story was expanded by journalist Aija Kince, who explained that patriotism was becoming more apparent in Latvia; the report cut to footage of young people

discussing their feelings towards Latvia. In the story, Kince reflected that the statistics regarding patriotism were generated by interviewing both Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. She added that almost half of the Latvian-speaking interviewees stated that they were Latvian patriots, with only 18% of Russian speakers giving the same answer. Kince made no further remarks regarding the split between the two language-speakers' answers, allowing viewers to draw their own conclusions from such statistical outcomes. Without providing more context, such presumptions could easily lead to the perception that Russian speakers felt less patriotic towards Latvia - a viewpoint that would position this as a negative issue, rather than considering it as a combination of multiple issues which should be addressed further in order to assess why Russian speakers might feel less patriotic than Latvian speakers. This creates a complex narrative in which the audiences are led to presume a negative implication, instead of being offered a representation that may account for or explain the statistics in a different way.

An article by Anna Bērziņa, published on 14 November 2014 in *Diena*, discussed patriotism in Latvia and the annual Independence Day (18 November). In the article, she wrote about a competition in which school pupils were asked to write their own presidential speeches relating to Latvia. The concluding part of the article referred to a poll in which '67% of those interviewed considered themselves to be Latvian patriots, with 77% of those coming from Latvian-speaking families and 51% from Russian-speaking families'.⁴⁶ The potential reasons for these statistics were not explored in the article. Notably, these statistics also do not match the ones used in Kince's story for LTV1. Neither source discussed the method used to gather such statistics, thus limiting the audiences' ability to properly engage with the figures.

Also placed under 'integration' was a story broadcast by TV3 on 17 November 2014. In it, Aigars Lazdiņš and Sergejs Medvedevs explored statistics relating to people considering themselves to be Latvian patriots. Lazdiņš and Medvedevs emphasised that those making such

⁴⁶ "67% aptaujāto mūsu valsts iedzīvotāju sevi uzskata par Latvijas patriotiem - tā domā 77% cilvēku, kuriem sarunu valoda ģimenē ir latviešu, un 51% ģimenē krievu valodā runājošo."

statements varied heavily depending on their nationality, with ‘only 51% of those of different nationalities considering themselves [to be] Latvian patriots’.⁴⁷ These statistics appear to match those used by Bērziņa in her article for *Diena*. The story concluded with a statement claiming that it was important to acknowledge that it was now more common to celebrate 18 November, irrespective of whether one was Latvian or a different nationality. Overall, however, whilst the story acknowledged a discrepancy in answers depending on nationality, it did not explore any reasons (e.g. demographic variables) for differences beyond the label of ‘nationality’.

The last story to appear in the category ‘patriotism’ was an opinion piece published in the 26 November 2014 issue of *Latvijas Avīze* and written by Anda Līce. This was the only one of the four stories to also appear in another thematic category (as ‘integration’). In the piece, Līce discussed nationalism and the dangers it may pose. She wrote that, for her, ‘personally, nationalism which places one nation above another, undermining and pushing [the other] away, is unacceptable’.⁴⁸ This remark was made in reference to some Latvians who had loudly proclaimed to be Latvian at a march during the Independence Day celebrations, which Līce thought had made Russian-speaking youths leave the event. Līce concluded by stating that unity will and should be the only way for the Latvian state to progress. The article failed to explain or offer ways in which such unity may be achieved, or even highlight the fact that acknowledging a lack thereof may be beneficial.

4.7.5.1. Summary

As in the previous categories discussed, the stories placed under the theme ‘patriotism’ also demonstrated an issue similar to the coverage within the other categories. The first three stories in the sample all dealt with statistics and people’s personal identification as a ‘patriot’. A

⁴⁷ “Te gan jāpiebilst, ka šie viedokļi ļoti stipri atšķirās atkarībā no cilvēka tautības. Un starp cittautiešiem tikai 51% sevi uzskata par Latvijas patriotu.”

⁴⁸ “Man, personīgi, nav pieņemams tāds nacionālisms, kas paaugstina vienu tautību, noniecinot un atgrūžot citas.”

difference was implied in relation of how many Latvian versus Russian speakers identified with the term. However, none of the stories assessed why Russian speakers accounted for a lower percentage of those considering or identifying themselves as patriots. As already noted in the Literature Review, Keller (2007: 69) argues that patriotism is re-enacted not only through 'affection, love' and 'concern' for one's country, but also importantly, with a denial that such motives exist. The stories discussed in this section reflect that no clear definition of 'patriotism' was provided, but it is possible to argue that this is precisely because of what Keller has called a denial, or a lack of acknowledgement, of patriotism as equally negative in counter to the positive ideas expressed. The news reports did not address any negative implications that the term might carry, or that they might also have played an influential role in why fewer Russian speakers than Latvian speakers had identified with the term. Without further analysis of such statistics, or the implications such information may hold, the stories all illustrated a tendency to ascribe its audiences with pre-existing knowledge that they would apply in order to understand the information provided. Due to the Russian speakers being in the minority of those who identified as Latvian patriots, a further analysis of what was recognised as being 'patriotic' would have aided in the exploration of the issues relating to national identity. No such analysis was provided by the news outlets, again revealing embedded assumptions and a taken-for-grantedness of facts.

4.7.6. Integration

INTEGRATION
29/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Kokareviča
31/10/14 NRA - Kairišs
3/11/14 LA - Gombergs
4/11/14 LA - Līce
11/11/14 Diena - Pučiņeva
13/11/14 LA - Zemītis, Rudzītis
17/11/14 LNT - Zoldners
20/11/14 LA - Vanga
20/11/14 LA - Kripa
21/11/14 LA - Blūma
24/11/14 LA - Liepiņš
25/11/14 LA - Dubrouška
27/11/14 LA - n/a
28/11/14 LA - Rudzītis

Figure 7

The sixth category to appear in this research was 'integration' and fifteen stories from four different sources were coded as belonging to this theme. Nine of these also cross-coded with other themes and have already been discussed above. All of the stories placed in this category considered integration, in relation to its political, legal and/or societal dimensions. The majority of the news stories dealt with the progress and limitations of integrating the Russian-speaking minority into Latvian culture.

The first story placed under 'integration' was an article by Voldemārs Krustiņš and Dace Kokareviča, published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 29 October 2014 and has already been outlined the category 'Russia'. The second was an interview with Viesturs Kairiņš, a film director, in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* and was published on 31 October 2014. In his discussion of Latvian culture and what may or may not sustain it further, Kairiņš referred to the integration of Russian speakers, which he recognised as a positive action, because not integrating them would allow for them to 'water down our culture and mentality'. He continued by stating that 'for example, the Polish influence on Latgalian language, culture and mentality is huge'.⁴⁹ However, Kariņš also noted that a language and a culture could only survive if it is fluid and keeps changing. He did not propose a solution for how this could be achieved, apart from mentioning the process of integration in its own right. No further discussion about the difficulties of integration was included.

The next article categorised under 'integration' consisted of two different readers' opinion pieces, both published on 13 November 2014 in *Latvijas Avīze* in response to the interview with Igors Vatoļins (discussed under the thematic category 'Russia' but sharing its category with 'integration'). In the interview Vatoļins discussed the benefits of allowing some businesses to use Russian language in order to increase economic growth by appealing to a wider business infrastructure. The first opinion, written by V. Zemītis, opened with the reader asking 'what, then,

⁴⁹ "Viņi varētu veiksmīgi atjaukt mūsu bāliņu asinis un mentalitāti. Piemēram, poļu ietekme uz latgaliešu valodu, kultūru un mentalitāti ir milzīga."

do the Latvian-Russians want (in reality Russians and Russified nationals)? I think that they want the environment, here in Latvia, to be Russian only'.⁵⁰ The opinion piece continued by stressing that language courses did not seem to have the desired effect of integrating Russian speakers by providing them with Latvian-language skills. The reader felt that, at times, Latvia already sustained a sense of being a part of Russia. However, such a claim was not explored, thus lacking an explanation of how exactly Latvia created such an atmosphere. The piece concluded with the words “non-citizens” are the problem of non-citizens’, demonstrating a disregard of the original piece, which had suggested giving more recognition to Russian culture in Latvia.

The second opinion by a reader named Jānis Rudzītis, appeared under the same heading as the piece by V. Zemītis. Whilst it was shorter, it offered a similar commentary, noting that ‘it is a shame that the status of the Russian language [which was] established in Latvia during the occupation still has not been eliminated’.⁵¹ Rudzītis then continued by stating that the government was to blame for this situation and urged for the Russian language to be actively removed from Latvia. There was no proposal for how such action may be implemented.

Also categorised under ‘integration’ was a story reported by Aleksis Zoldners for LNT on 17 November 2014, covering the celebration of Latvian Independence Day. As part of the segment, Zoldners interviewed multiple people on the streets of Rīga, asking whether they planned to celebrate 18 November. One of the men interviewed in the news story, speaking in Russian, noted that he did not intend to celebrate Independence Day. He explained that, despite living in Latvia for the past six years, he had always felt that the Latvian- and Russian-speaking societies lived parallel lives. He further noted that ‘as a Russian, I don’t feel that the Latvian side accepts me’, before expressing that he would like to celebrate, presumably if he felt more welcome to do so. In conclusion, Zoldners added that the number of non-Latvian speakers

⁵⁰ “Ko tad īstenībā grib Latvijas krievi (faktiski - krievi un pārkrievojušies nacionāļi)? Manuprāt, tikai to, lai šeit Latvijā būtu krieviska vide.”

⁵¹ “Nožēlojami, ka okupācijas laikā Latvijā iedibinātais krievu valodas statuss vēl nav likvidēts.”

who celebrated 18 November had actually risen. He made no further comments regarding the sorts of attitudes that might create an atmosphere in which some people felt unable to participate in the celebration.

Another 'integration'-themed story, published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 20 November 2014, was a two-page written sermon by the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church archbishop, Jānis Vanga. The sermon reflected upon ideas of nationalism and national identity more widely, and urged the readers to cherish their country. The sermon also noted that Russian speakers, just like Latvian speakers, wished to preserve their culture and language, and that this had to be acknowledged by Latvians. The sermon concluded with an anecdotal example, suggesting that if people wait for change, they will have to wait for a long time.

Also published in *Latvijas Avīze* was an opinion piece written by Agris Liepiņš, appearing in the 24 November 2014 issue. In the piece, Liepiņš discussed being a Latvian citizen and the importance of knowing Latvian history. However, he also reflected that 'many [of those who] have Latvian citizenship in their soul are the offspring of migrants who [feel that they] belong to a different nation; that showed during the language referendum'.⁵² Liepiņš continued by suggesting that, if Latvian history was more thoroughly taught to Russian-speaking children, they would not grow up to 'want to make Russia's national heroisms into a part of cultural and national identity'⁵³ and added that they would feel more like they belonged in Latvia. There was no explanation or example as to why Liepiņš believed that a curation of Russian national identity in Latvia existed in the country. This is potentially very indicative of the fact that such claims might be highly improbable to defend.

The last story belonging exclusively to the 'integration' category and appearing in *Latvijas Avīze* on 27 November 2014, was a piece that contained four readers' opinions on

⁵² "Daudziem ir Latvijas pilsonība, kaut dvēselē migrantu pēcteči ir piederīgi citai valstij, ko paši uzskatāmi pierādīja valodu referendumā laikā."

⁵³ "Varbūt tad Latvijas pilsoņiem - krieviem, būs mazāka vēlēšanās Krievijas tautas varoņdarbu padarīt par kultūras kodu un nacionālās identitātes sastāvdaļu."

integration in Latvia. All four people who were interviewed expressed positive opinions regarding the progress of integration in Latvia. However, three out of the four also referred to governmental incompetence as having a negative effect on the process.

4.7.6.1. Summary

The category of 'integration', more so than any of the previously discussed categories, demonstrated a cleavage between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities. The majority of the stories in this category addressed the limitations experienced by the country's population as a result of integration policies. However, notably, none of the stories explored in any detail what those limitations were, either legally or socially. Overall, the stories failed to analyse the reasons behind the integration policy, or even explain what the contemporaneous integration policy in Latvia was. In line with the sort of issues outlined elsewhere in this chapter, the stories under the theme 'integration' also demonstrated an 'us' versus 'them' divide between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities. Such phrasings as 'Latvian-Russians' explained as 'in reality, Russians and Russified nationals' (Zemītis, 13 November 2014) and claims that 'many Latvian citizens' having 'the soul of a migrant's offspring' (Liepiņš, 24 November 2014) did little to engage with members of Russian-speaking community as part of the identity structures that would arguably allow people to identify as Latvian. The shape of the stories is, however, reminiscent of the point made by Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998: 96) who noted that a particular tendency existed in speaking of one's 'natural homeland [where] the ancient indigenous nationality' was Latvian. Furthermore, their argument continued to note a perception that 'the political homeland is the only territory where core nation has a historical homeland' (ibid.: 106). This was contrasted by Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth who noted that Russians, then, have 'their own homeland elsewhere' (ibid.: 107). These concepts might account for the particular representation of integration across these stories, and

especially the lack of any engagement with potential Russian-speaking audiences, as their 'historical homeland' would be located elsewhere.

Similarly very little analysis and background information was offered within the news stories in the category 'integration'. A perceived lack of impact within the integration programmes existed, despite the fact that no outline of practical integration elements was discussed. Such a lack of analysis arguably positioned the issue of integration as viewed negatively and non-progressively, with opinions replacing a serious engagement with the actual policies.

4.7.7. Gombergs

GOMBERGS
3/11/14 LA - Gombergs
7/11/14 LA - Readers (?)
20/11/14 LA - Kripa
21/11/14 LA - Blūma
21/10/14 LA - Vikmanis
24/11/14 LA - Kallis
25/11/14 LA - Dubrouska

Figure 8

The category called ‘Gombergs’ contained all responses relating to Jevgenijs Gombergs’ original piece, which was published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 3 November 2014. The original article concentrated on discussing Gombergs’ point of view regarding Latvia’s practice of offering residency permits to foreigners who bought properties in Latvia priced 250,000 euros.⁵⁴ The story received six responses, also published in *Latvijas Avīze*. For ease of analysis, a separate category was introduced for this story to collate the responses to the piece, which argued for the

⁵⁴ A residence permit is a document providing a foreigner with the rights to reside in the Republic of Latvia for a definite period of time (a temporary residence permit) or permanently (a permanent residence permit). From 1 January 2014 it became possible to receive a residence permit upon purchasing of property, if the payment exceeded 250,000 euros.

benefits of Russian businesses in Latvia and easier legal processes for Russian-speaking investors.

The first response to the article was published in *Latvijas Avīze* under the section 'Readers' voices', on 7 November 2014. In short opinion pieces written by multiple readers, the responses varied between one reader praising Gombergs' article and another calling it the representation of Vladimir Putin's 'soft power'. According to Andrei P. Tsygankov (2006: 1079-80), the term refers to 'all aspects of Russia's attractiveness to foreigners', such as 'Russian mass media, a large and efficient economy, familiar language and religion, aspects of historical legacy, family ties, and electronic products'. However, he goes on to note that Putin's critics have claimed that such soft power is 'just another tool for restoring an imperial control' (ibid.). The article itself did not provide any clarification of the term, thus implying that there was an expectation that readers knew what the term meant. However, when considering the use of 'soft power' in relation to Gombergs, the author appeared to use a very specific definition, which was to be appropriated by the readers. This, in turn, raised questions about what the *presumed* understanding of the term is and the consequences such an application may have. Within the article, the phrase was used negatively, but its meaning was not actually addressed, thus perpetuating any potential misunderstanding.

Also placed within the category of 'integration' was an article published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 20 November 2014. The reader, Jānis Kripa, wrote that Gombergs failed to recognise that the Latvian people and the Latvian nation could not and would not forget what it endured during the years of Soviet occupation and therefore was not ready to blindly accept business relations with Russia. He continued by stating that all non-Latvians living in Latvia should learn its language and culture, because not doing so, he claimed, was disrespectful.

The following day, 21 November 2014, another reader's response to Gombergs' article was published in *Latvijas Avīze*. The reader, Renāta Blūma, wrote that she agreed with the majority of the original article and expressed respect for Gombergs' opinions. She concluded,

however, that ‘an absolute understanding from both sides is impossible, so everything will depend on compromises’.⁵⁵

A reader’s response to Jevgeņijs Gombergs’ article was published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 24 November 2014, and was also categorised thematically as ‘politics’. The reader, Rūdolfs Kallis, agreed with the points raised in Gombergs’ article and noted that the disagreements between Latvian and Russian speakers were directly upheld by ‘chauvinistically thinking politicians and their hirelings’.⁵⁶ This was one of the few responses to Gombergs’ article that agreed with his points completely.

Published on 25 November 2014 in *Latvijas Avīze* was another reader’s response to Gombergs’ article. The reader, Zinita Dubrovskā, wrote that she disagreed with the majority of what Gombergs argued, calling him ignorant of Latvian history. However, whilst Dubrovskā referred to those in Latvia who were unwilling to learn Latvian, she did acknowledge that forgiveness and respect were required to move the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers forward.

The last story relating to Gombergs’ original piece was published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 28 November 2014, and was written by another reader, Valters Rudzītis, who disagreed outright with Gombergs’ points, accusing him of being stuck in a non-progressive loop. Rudzītis referred to some people in Latvia as ‘russified’ and claimed that those were people who represented the greatest threat to Latvia, due to their affiliations with the Russian Federation. He concluded the piece by noting that the Russian Federation would not hesitate to sacrifice its own people if it was politically productive to do so.

4.7.7.1. Summary

⁵⁵ “Bet absolūta saprašanās no abām pusēm gan nav iespējama. Tā ka noteicošais būs kompromisi.”

⁵⁶ “Šo naidu kurina un uztur šovinistiski domājoši politiķi, viņu algotņi un pakalpiņi.”

As all of the articles in this section appeared in *Latvijas Avīze*, their content was only reflective of the style and content of articles more generally related to that particular newspaper. All articles, including Gombergs', were also discussed in other categories. 'Russia' and 'integration' were the dominant themes as well as the issues regarding the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. Overall, the response to Gombergs' original piece, which urged a recognition of Russian culture and business in Latvia, was negative. Many of the readers who responded to the story synonymously used concepts of the Russian speakers and Russia, failing to acknowledge any distinctions in relation to culture and/or national identity. Furthermore, the kind of phrasing often used in the articles was negative and presumptive, lacking analysis, explanation or context. However, some articles acknowledged the need for further integration in order to bridge the cleavage between the two communities. The role that the Russian Federation played in these stories was, nonetheless, clear, as the articles portrayed Latvia's neighbouring country as a threat which may be aided by the Russian speakers in Latvia. Once again, no definite explanation or exploration of such claims was made.

4.7.8. Miscellaneous

MISC
21/10/14 LNT - Kristapsons
22/10/14 LA - Krustiņš, Sprūde
24/10/14 LA - Vikmanis
25/10/14 TV3 - Zariņš
5/11/14 Diena - Kezberis
7/11/14 LA - Readers (?)
19/11/14 LA - Sokolovs, Ločmelis, Lucāns

Figure 9

The last thematic category grouped together a range of topics and was labelled 'miscellaneous' to account for those stories that did not fit in any of the other categories, with two exceptions, which were also categorised under the theme 'Russia' and have already been discussed. Overall, the category contained seven stories from four different sources. The majority dealt with culture, history and language as influenced by or impacting on the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. The first was an LNT broadcast on 21 October 2014 reported by Kārlis Kristapsons and already discussed in the 'Russia' category.

The second story in the ‘miscellaneous’ theme was published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 22 October 2014. It recounted an interview with Kārlis Kangars, a history professor, conducted by Voldemārs Krustiņš and Viesturs Sprūde. In the interview, Krustiņš and Sprūde asked Kangars about the ‘Cheka bags’,⁵⁷ as Kangars was the head of the committee dealing with the materials that they contained. Further, the interviewers asked Kangars’ opinion on an article that had been published in one of the Russian-language newspapers (*Latvijas Avīze* did not name the newspaper), which claimed that all of those who had been member of the secret surveillance organised by the KGB had been Latvian. Kangars responded that, in his line of work, consideration needed to be given to all of those who might have been involved, but added that they ‘would not be able to publish a counter-article in this newspaper, as it would not be accepted’, and added that it is questionable ‘how much a historian should fight the press’.⁵⁸ However, the article did not explore the issues surrounding the portrayal of the historical events linked to the ‘Cheka bags’ or the reasons behind the Russian-language newspaper making such claims, nor did the article address any of the other issues regarding historical narrative and disagreements.

Also categorised under ‘miscellaneous’ was another article published in *Latvijas Avīze*. Written by Ģirts Vikmanis and published in the 24 October 2014 issue, it concerned itself with the Russian-language bookstores in Latvia and the books that they stocked and sold. Vikmanis argued that one of the bookstore chains he visited sold books that were defamatory to Ukraine, in direct correlation to the Russian Federation’s annexation of Crimea. Whilst the article also discussed other bookstores that did not sell such books, Vikmanis quoted a professor of politics,

⁵⁷ “In Latvia, parliamentary deputies who demanded entry to the KGB headquarters in Rīga [...] were able to seize roughly 4500 KGB registry cards similar to the ones reportedly incinerated in Tallinn. Because the cards were discovered in a pair of burlap bags, the find would come to be dubbed the ‘Cheka bags’ (čekas maiši) in an allusion to the KGB’s pre-war predecessor. Moreover, the phrase would become a code word for the entire lustration dilemma in Latvia, that is, whether to ‘open the Cheka bags’ or not.” (Pettai and Pettai, 2015: 128).

⁵⁸ “Tajā avīzē mēs noteikti nevarētu nopublicēt pretrakstu, jo viņi to nenodrukātu. Vēl ir jautājums, cik lielā mērā vēsturniekiem vajadzētu cīnīties ar presi.”

Ojārs Skudra, as having noted that such books would not be read by young Russian speakers, but ‘they are read by older generation Russian speakers, for whom these books are a continuation of Moscow’s television stories and *Vesti Segodnya*,⁵⁹ promoting historical myths and lies’.⁶⁰ The article concluded by reflecting that the production of such books in Russia was not a new development and that ‘for the last seven years Russian publishers have been actively perpetrating the upkeep of a [Russian] national identity’.⁶¹ The implication therefore was that it was a new development for shops in Latvia to be selling books with such contents, even if the books themselves had existed for years. The article failed to provide an analysis of any potential impact the sale of such books might have in Latvia, nor did it address what the alternative would be. Overall, the article outlined the concerns about such books, where any actual impact was left to audiences to apply.

TV3 broadcast a story reported by Jānis Zariņš on 25 October 2014. The story discussed artists who had been banned from Latvia and featured a video of a protest that took place in London before the performance of a singer banned from entering Latvia. A woman in the video was shown opposing the protest, claiming that she ‘is from Latvia and in Latvia [we], the Russians, have been oppressed’. The story then discussed other musicians banned from Latvia for expressing their support of the Kremlin’s policies. The woman and her comments were not discussed further, and no additional analysis or reasoning for her complaint were addressed by Zariņš. Arguably, the lack of any discussion about the comments made by the woman demonstrated a presumption that the audience would be able to accurately assess the claim of Russian-speakers being oppressed in Latvia. Not analysing the root cause of such presumption or the impact such claims may have on the perception of Latvia abroad (as the woman was recorded in London) follow the emergent trend of Latvian-language broadcasting in

⁵⁹ A Russian-language newspaper in Rīga.

⁶⁰ “Tās lasot vecākās paaudzes krievvalodīgie, kuriem šīs grāmatas ir kā turpinājums Maskavas televīziju sižetiem un ‘Vesti segodņa’ izplatītajiem vēsturiskajiem mītiem un nepatiesībām.”

⁶¹ “Jau kādus septiņus gadus Krievijas grāmatniecībā vērojama nacionālās identitātes kopšana.”

this research - portraying issues relating to the Russian speakers tend to be portrayed without contextual grounding.

Another 'miscellaneous' article, by Uldis Ķezberis, was published in *Diena* on 5 November 2014. The article offered a summary of a UN report, which discussed non-citizens globally. The article went on to explain how the UN campaign "I Belong" aimed to eradicate the existence of a non-citizen status worldwide. Ķezberis wrote that, in 2013, there were 280,000 non-citizens in Latvia, but did not discuss the matter further. The lack of discussion of the non-citizen situation in Latvia is notable since, in 2013, Latvia was the 4th in the world in terms of numbers of non-citizens per country. According to the statistics provided in the article, the majority of these non-citizens were Russian speakers. The article did not offer any analysis of the fact or its historical explanations. Furthermore, the article neither discussed the ways in which the "I Belong" campaign had proposed to eradicate the existence of the non-citizen status, nor what approaches, if any, the Latvian government had adopted to solve the issue of people with non-citizen status.

The final story in the theme was a *Latvijas Avīze's* readers' responses to Igors Vatoļins' article (29 October 2014) discussed previously. Published on 19 November 2014, the first response, from Vladimirs Sokolovs, stated that, as a first-language-Russian speaker, he supported Latvian as the only official language in Latvia, but also noted that having Russian as the second official language in some regions in Latvia would be helpful. He noted that the current status of Russian as a foreign language in Latvia did not seem reflective of Latvia's historical past.

The second opinion was offered by a reader called Ādolfs Ločmelis, who wrote that 'the Latvian language is also a treasure, just most of the Russian[-speakers] still don't want to accept this'.⁶² He further claimed that this had been evident during the 2012 Language Referendum, in light of the thousands of people who voted for Russian to become the second

⁶² "Arī latviešu valoda ir bagātība, tikai to joprojām negrib atzīt, manuprāt, vairākums krievu."

official language in Latvia. He urged Vatoļins to acknowledge the values and hardships of small nation states, emphasising that the ethnic-Latvian population was statistically smaller than required for a healthy nation state.

The third and final opinion was offered by a reader called Andrejs Lucāns, who made a similar argument to Ločmelis' regarding the referendum as having been reflective of many Russian speakers' opinions of the Latvian language. He argued that the Russian language could and should only exist in an official capacity in Russia, rather than any states with a Russian minority.

4.7.8.1. Summary

As in the other themes discussed in this chapter, the stories categorised as 'miscellaneous' failed to provide an analytical engagement with their respective topics. In many instances, the stories addressed issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority as enduring and understood. However, there was no contextual explanation or, more importantly, any proposal for a change. The majority of the issues were static and entrenched, as in the story of Russian-published books dealing with the historical and current situation in Ukraine (Vikmanis, 24 October 2014), which failed to address legality and impact of any books with a pro-Russian content. Assumptions about shared audience-knowledge were clear across the sample as a whole, in terms of both individual news stories and various outlets.

4.8. Reflective overview of the six sources

As illustrated by the overview of the stories relating to the Russian-speaking minority across the six sources, the coverage varied by topics. There were no stories broadcast on LTV1 that were specifically linked to the Russian-speaking minority in the period analysed for this research, as all the stories side-lined the Russian-speaking minority as only a small element

within the wider coverage, rather than as stories in their own right. Furthermore, the four stories by LTV1 that touched upon issues relating to the Russian speakers and their representation did not provide substantial analysis that could be considered reflective of their individual contexts. Nor did the stories analyse the overall issues relating to the socio-political relations regarding the Russian-speaking minority in a national context. The pattern established in LTV1's broadcasting fits more with open-ended stories that provide the viewers with only factual information, rather than an analysis of the meaning of the information being conveyed.

LNT was considerably more positive in its coverage of the Russian-speaking minority, despite only having one more news item on the subject than LTV1. The news broadcasts attempted to develop a more thorough analysis of the issues regarding education. However, LNT also failed to establish a contextual argument for some stories. The way that the stories were covered tended to lack explanations and indicated a reliance of viewers' already existing knowledge on the matter.

Whilst more stories making a mention of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia appeared in TV3's news broadcasts, the channel did not diverge in any significant ways from the coverage offered by the other two news broadcasters considered in this research. Much like LTV1 and LNT, there was a lack of discussion about the root of the claims and statements issued in the news.

The *Diena* articles mentioning the Russian-speaking population offered its readers a partial outline of the issues, but failed to locate them contextually or address these issues from a political perspective. This, therefore, placed *Diena* in a similar position to the three television channels, in that it failed to offer interactive stance. Furthermore, *Diena* only published five stories overall that mentioned Russian-speaking minority issues in Latvia. Such low numbers illustrated the lack of engagement with the representation of minority and related stories.

Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze also offered a minimal and somewhat biased point-of-view in its coverage of the Russian-speaking minority and issues related to the topic. The majority of the

newspaper's contributions to the topic placed the readers in the position of Latvian speakers, rather than portraying the issue from a more neutral standpoint. A notable exception to this appeared in the interviews conducted by *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, as the majority of the interviewees expressed a need for solidarity and integration.

Finally, multiple points arose from the way in which *Latvijas Avīze* portrayed the Russian-speaking minority. Firstly, they positioned the reader as exclusively Latvian and as a first-language Latvian speaker, never implying or indicating that the reader might be Russian-speaking. Secondly, the newspaper presumed that a sense of belonging existed between its readers, which was simultaneously defined as a sense of belonging to Latvia. Such a presumption complicates the potential of those defining their identity as 'belonging differently'. The newspaper also presumptively presented a so-called 'appropriate' way to be, as a citizen and/or a Latvian. This linked to the presumption that the reader would agree with the definition of 'us' being the same as 'Latvians'. *Latvijas Avīze's* use of readers' opinion letters was also more prominent than either of the other two newspapers in the sample, especially due to the strongly right-wing points expressed in their pieces. Whilst the majority of *Latvijas Avīze's* articles could be classified as politically right-wing, it was the readers' opinion pieces that the newspaper chose to publish that were the most extreme in their views. Perhaps, the right-wing political position also accounted for why there were significantly more stories considering the Russian-speaking minority in *Latvijas Avīze*, when compared to the other five sources. Many of the pieces published in *Latvijas Avīze* dealt with social issues rather than reports of news events.

4.9. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter all of the stories regarding the Russian-speaking minority, which were identified across the six sources during the six-week sample period, have been discussed.

As the individual category summaries demonstrate, numerous patterns emerged in terms of how the topic was covered in the source. All of the sources shared the same complexities and problems in the way that they covered issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority, independent of the theme in which they were categorised. Whilst some categories illustrated particular difficulties, the majority had stylistic and thematic problems in common. Predominantly, all of the categories and all of the sources demonstrated an inability to provide a contextual analysis of the topics that were discussed. This created a basis for the stories that presumed an already existing knowledge on the part of the readers, no matter how complex the topic was.

As explained in the introduction to this chapter, there were not many stories across the six sources during the sample period that covered or made a mention of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. Those stories that did offer a discussion on the topic illustrated a strong lack of analysis within their coverage. This was particularly evident in stories that addressed problems of particular policies, such as integration or the language-based issues in minority schooling, as the stories did not explain the policies. Instead, they highlighted the social aspects and opinions regarding the perception of the role that the policies played.

The question of audiences also played a large part in the coverage within other patterns that emerged throughout the analysis. One of these patterns was the way in which all six of the sources presumed who their audiences were. This was particularly prominent in the news stories published in the three newspapers, with *Latvijas Avīze* being the strongest example of a publication that concentrated exclusively on a Latvian-speaking audience. Furthermore, the audience was not only considered to be Latvian-speaking, but was also presumed to be 'Latvian', as illustrated by *Latvijas Avīze*'s constant use of 'us' when discussing the Latvian speakers' position in issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority, for example. Without statistics relating to how many of the sources were read or watched by audiences from either the Latvian- or Russian-speaking side, it would not be appropriate to claim that the majority

would be Latvian-speaking. However, due to the way that the stories engaged the audiences as Latvian-speaking, it may be safe to presume that Russian speakers who chose to read *Latvijas Avīze* may not have felt directly addressed.

Whilst the research does not aim to claim that the binary between 'us' as Latvian-speakers and 'them' as Russian-speakers is created by the media, from the news content that was analysed such a binary is certainly perpetuated by the Latvian-language media. Despite the existence of stories that address the failings of integration programmes in Latvia, none of the sources attempted to expand on, engage with or provide debate about why such failings may occur. Furthermore, the media used and emphasised the cleavage between the two communities. The journalistic practices of both Latvian-language newspapers and Latvian-language televised news should certainly be questioned. The issue of productive and progressive integration is evidently an important element in the relationship between the Latvian-speaking majority community and the Russian-speaking minority community in Latvia. However, the media's coverage of these issues, irrespective of whether they were noted as existing or not, ignored the media's own ability to create a bridge between the two communities. The majority of the stories addressed a governmental failing rather than a cultural and/or social one.

First and foremost, this shortfall is demonstrated by the lack of engagement that was evident in the sample. As noted throughout the research, the overall coverage that the six sources provided of any issues relating to the Russian speakers was minimal. The coverage that did exist appeared either biased towards Latvian speakers or completely ignorant of any issues experienced by the Russian-speaking community. Overall, the news stories were covered from the perspective of a 'Latvian' as identified by the sources. None of the sources provided a clear or even unclear explanation of what 'being Latvian' meant. The majority of stories that engaged in any way with the concept placed value on the Latvian culture and language. Nonetheless, the portrayal of Russian culture and language was not equal, and both

tended to be portrayed as 'threatening' to the Latvian national identity, independence, culture and history.

The perpetuation of an 'us' versus 'them' binary was also highlighted by the selection of interviewees, as well as the journalists covering the stories. Not all were Latvian-speaking, but the majority (as indicated by their names) clearly were. Whilst this might not be surprising - in terms of journalists - for Latvian-language based news, the choice in interviewees was curious. This research does not intend to claim that the selection of mainly and almost exclusively Latvian-speaking interviewees, both for articles and vox populi, was a conscious and intentional choice. However, it is impossible to exclude such a possibility as, statistically, it is highly improbable that all people approached for quotes for a story would be Latvian-speaking. This, therefore, indicates a selective coverage which favours and addresses Latvian-speakers. More than an inability to bridge the gap between the two communities, the Latvian-language media demonstratively engages with that gap and amplifies it by generating biased coverage.

As outlined in the Literature Review section, Gellner (2000: 101) argues that an 'ideological system of society does not merely contribute to the stability of the system' but contributes to a type of coercion of an ideological system. It is thus possible to argue that the articles here, and the way they perpetuate an 'us' versus 'them' binary, contribute to the stability of the system. However, this issue becomes far more complex when questioning the proposed 'stability' and its expression through the status quo, as the system fails to effectively demonstrate its strengths. Nonetheless, it is through the nature of these articles and the lack of coverage of issues relating to Russian speakers in Latvia that a *perceived* stability is clearly established, even if this includes a cleavage between the two communities discussed.

Elke Winter (2011: 60) explains that 'a commonality must be recognized subjectively as a shared situation, and this symbolic dimension - the constitution of identity - is necessarily relational: We know who we are only by reference to who we are not.' The idea of defining oneself, of being able to explain one's identity, only *in relation* to something one is not offers

some grounds for arguing that the articles discussed in this chapter hold a strong view of not only who they are addressing but also *how* they do so. The allowances for an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ binary, wherein the Latvians are *a/ways* ‘us’ and Russians are *a/ways* ‘them’, validates Gellner’s ideas of sustaining a sense of stability within a complex ideological system. However, the following two chapters will demonstrate that it is not *a/ways* possible to categorise the Russian-speaking minority as ‘them’, because these relative concepts splinter within and across both the media coverage and the views expressed by Latvian speakers.

As illustrated here, the overall coverage given by Latvian-language news media to stories relating to the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia was not statistically very great during a period when no major events relating to the Russian-speaking community took place. As a contrast to this, the following chapter will consider the period surrounding the Language Referendum in 2012, which asked the Latvian population to vote on whether to introduce Russian as a second official language. This case study will allow for a more focused discussion of representation and explore the degree to which a specific event changed the way Latvian-language news media covered issues relating to Russian speakers in the country. An analysis of the type of stories covered during this period will allow for a comparison in content and representation.

5. Chapter Five: The Russian-speaking minority in the Latvian-language press - Language Referendum

5.1. Introduction

Ivars Ījabs (2015: 289) explains how Latvia experienced an increase of militant policies during the years 2011-2014. According to him, the policies included such elements as constitutional amendments, a party ban, changes in the referendum legislation, restrictions on free speech, and naturalisation (ibid.). Ījabs states that the culmination of these policy changes was the adoption of a new Introduction (or Preamble) to the Latvian Constitution in June 2014, which emphasised the prominent role of the Latvian ethnic identity in the Latvian state. Ījabs argues that such an 'increase of militancy was to a great extent a reaction to the 18 February 2012 referendum on the introduction of Russian as the second state language' in Latvia (ibid.).

While this chapter does not intend to assess the way in which Latvian laws and regulations have changed after the referendum, it sets out to provide a comprehensive analysis of the coverage given to the referendum within the Latvian-language newspapers. Through such analysis, the chapter will highlight the reasons that might have led to Ījabs' proposed increase of militant policies, predominantly the way in which the referendum's narrative was constructed for the readers of the three newspapers - *Latvijas Avīze*, *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. Furthermore, this chapter engages with issues relating to creating and responding to a constructed perception, and assesses whether and how such construction took place within main, national, Latvian-language newspapers. In conclusion, this chapter will demonstrate an awareness of the way the Russian-speaking minority has been represented within Latvian-language newspapers and provide an understanding of the impact this might have on Russo-Latvian socio-political relations in Latvia.

The chapter starts with an overview of the regulations relating to the referendum. The

main body of analysis is split between an overview of the quantitative data and the ensuing qualitative analysis. The quantitative section is divided into a breakdown of each newspaper's coverage across the sample period and thereafter offers a more focused discussion on the themes that emerged from the articles. This is divided into seven subsections: (1) Us vs Them: Russian speakers; (2) Us vs Them: Saskaņas Centrs; (3) Us vs Them: The Latvian Government; (4) Pride; (5) Fight; (6) Myth and Historical Narrative; finally drawing together in (7) Conclusion.

5.2. The Latvian 2012 Referendum

The Oxford Dictionary defines a referendum as 'a general vote by the electorate on a single political question which has been referred to them for a direct decision' (Oxford Dictionaries | English, 2017). Latvian legislation outlines seven reasons for a national referendum: (1) the *Saeima* has amended Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 or 77 of the Constitution; (2) the President has initiated the dissolution of the *Saeima*; (3) the President has suspended the publication of a law for a period of two months and during this time a request of at least one tenth of voters has been received to pass the suspended law for a national referendum; (4) the *Saeima* has not adopted without amendments the content of a draft law or draft amendments to the Constitution lodged by at least one tenth of voters; (5) the issue of Latvia's participation in the European Union is on the agenda; (6) the issue on material changes in the conditions of Latvia's participation in the European Union is on the agenda and it is requested by at least half of the members of the *Saeima*; (7) at least one tenth of voters has initiated the revocation of the *Saeima* (Saeima, 1994). In the particular case of the 2012 Language Referendum, it is the 4th clause which was applicable to the arrangement for a referendum.

In order to launch a constitutional referendum in Latvia, the law firstly required the collection of 10,000 signatures from citizens entitled to vote (Saeima, 1994), which then led to the Central Election Commission (CEC) launching the collection of sufficient signatures to

trigger a referendum. The CEC process required a month-long collection that would allow any voting-eligible citizen to sign in support of a referendum. For a referendum to be initiated, at least one tenth of all eligible voters (153,232) had to sign the request within the set thirty days. Thereafter, if the proposal is rejected by the parliament, the proposition would require a referendum. The parliament would set a date for the referendum and all eligible voters could cast their vote for or against the amendments suggested by the referendum.⁶³ Table 8 illustrates how this functioned in relation to the 2012 referendum on language.

Timetable			
Requirement	Date	Result	Action
Collect 10,000 signatures (done by organisation Mother Tongue)	April 2011	Requirement achieved	Signatures handed in to CEC
Collect signatures in support of triggering the referendum from at least 1/10 th of the voting-eligible population (done by CEC)	1/11/11-30/11/11	Requirement achieved (187,378 signatures collected)	Government to trigger a referendum
Referendum	18/2/12	Proposal fails	

⁶³ On 1 January 2015 a change to this law was introduced, which required the initiators themselves to collect the required signatures from one tenth of eligible voters before a referendum could be triggered. Arguably, this was a direct consequence of the Language Referendum of 2012.

Table 8

In 2011, the political party “All for Latvia!” - “For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK” initiated a signature collection aimed at making Latvian the only language of instruction in public schools (Šūpule, 2012: 123). The signature collection, which occurred between 11 May and 9 June 2011, proved unsuccessful, collecting 120,443 of the 153,232 signatures required to initiate a referendum. However, Šūpule (2012) and Rozenvalds (2012) both argue that the following language referendum was a direct response to the failed school reform referendum. Although the original proposal fell short of the required signatures, the number collected still indicated at least a partial desire for such a law change. The fact that more than 100,000 people signed for the initiation of such a referendum signals that there was a strong enough will to institute a change from a bilingual to monolingual education. The issue of language in education has been prominent for years in Latvia and thus, the demand for such a referendum reflected on already existing political discourses.

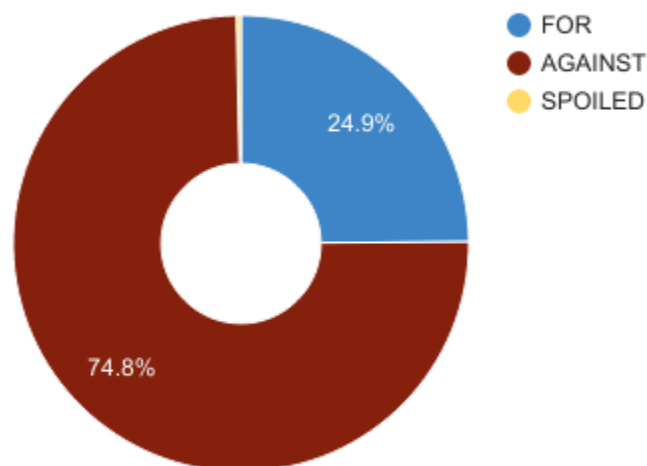
The non-governmental organisation Mother Tongue⁶⁴ and its leaders Vladimir Linderman and Yevgeny Osipov initiated a signature collection that aimed at giving Russian official status as a second language in Latvia. 10,000 signatures were collected in support of the amendments in April 2011 (Šūpule, 2012: 124), which were submitted to the CEC who, in turn, organised a signature collection between 1 and 30 November 2011. Unlike the signature collection to initiate a referendum about making Latvian the only language of instruction in public schools, the signature collection to trigger a referendum regarding Russian as an official language in Latvia was successful. A total of 187,378 signatures were collected (against the required target of 153,232), accounting for 12.14% of eligible voters at the time (CEC, 2011). The proposition to introduce Russian as a second official language in Latvia did not even pass the first reading in the *Saeima* (Urdze, 2016: 424) and the draft was unanimously rejected. Since popular initiatives

⁶⁴ Dzimtā valoda.

rejected by the parliament have to be submitted to the citizens (ibid.), a national referendum was called. This referendum took place on 18 February 2012.

The referendum posed a single question to the voting-eligible population of Latvia: “Do you support the proposed Draft Law titled ‘Amendment to the Latvian Constitution’ that would recognise Russian language as the second official language?”⁶⁵, and saw an unprecedented turnout of 71.13% of eligible voters: of those, 74.8% voted against the amendment, with 24.88% voting for the introduction of the amendment. These percentages account for 53.19% of all eligible voters voting against and 17.69% voting for the amendment (CEC, 2012).

Results of the February 18, 2012 referendum



Graph 3

5.3. The Research

This chapter will explore the coverage of the referendum in the three main national Latvian-language newspapers. For this chapter only newspapers were analysed. This choice

⁶⁵ “Vai jūs esat par likumprojekta „Grozījumi Latvijas Republikas Satversmē” pieņemšanu, kas paredz krievu valodai noteikt otras valsts valodas statusu?”

was made for three main reasons: (1) manageability of the sources. Due to the period of time analysed here, choosing one type of source was assumed to allow for a more thorough analysis. (2) Content of the sources. As illustrated in Chapter Four, the types of stories and the representation within them did not vary greatly between newspaper and televised news coverage. Thus, for this chapter, the research concentrated on newspapers specifically. (3) Access to data. Archival access to the newspapers required for this study was found to be easier and more manageable. The researcher contacted the three news channels analysed alongside the newspapers in the previous chapter, however, access to sources was denied. For these reasons, newspapers presented the best choice of the two types of sources for the analysis.

The chapter will also provide a quantitative overview of the articles mentioning the referendum, starting from 1 November 2011 and covering the four following months, concluding on 29 February 2012 – eleven days after the referendum. This particular timetable was chosen to recognise the contemporary nature of news, as well as to limit the data collection to a manageable size. By generating a quantitative view of the articles and by adopting a content analysis approach, the chapter will explore how such coverage reveals the ways in which the Russian-speaking minority was represented in the Latvian press. The represented socio-political relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers will also be explored in terms of how the dynamic was reported in the chosen sample Latvian-language newspapers. Furthermore, the study of the articles regarding the referendum will also allow for a baseline to be established, mapping political allegiances and the ways in which representations of the Russian minority in Latvia was articulated by the sample newspapers.

5.3.1. Quantitative analysis of sample newspapers

All articles mentioning the referendum between 1 November 2011 and 29 February 2012 were collected from the three newspapers – *Latvijas Avīze*, *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*.

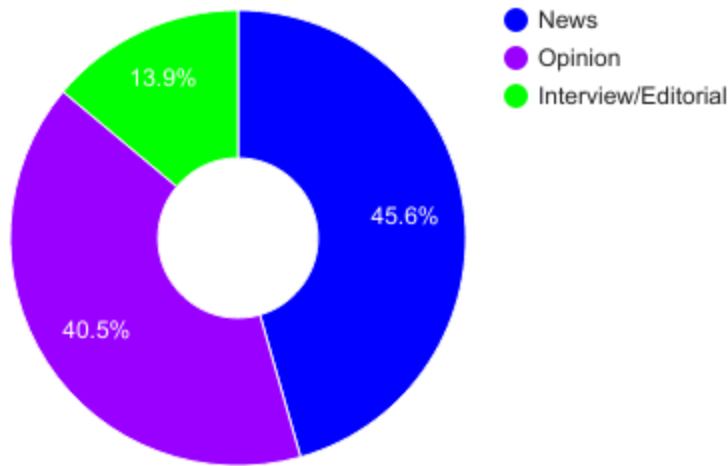
These three newspapers were also used for the analysis of Latvian-language news relating to the Russian-speaking minority in the previous chapter. By mirroring the material used, this chapter will be able to further the analysis already presented. Firstly, each newspaper was analysed individually to provide an overview of the articles published. This was followed by a comparative study of the coverage seen across the three newspapers in order to compare and contrast the way in which they chose to report on the event. Through this process, different voices and perspectives were identified to provide a clear snap-shot of the newspapers, their political leaning, and emergent patterns in relation to how they reported on and represented Russian speakers in Latvia.

5.3.1.1. *Latvijas Avīze*

In the 16 weeks covered by the study, 159 separate articles mentioning the referendum appeared in *Latvijas Avīze*. However, it is important to note that out of these 159 articles, 64 were opinion pieces, with a further 22 accounting for interviews and editorials. This meant that only 72 were news articles.⁶⁶ On 21 occasions, articles relating to the referendum made the front page.

⁶⁶ One article was republished in *Latvijas Avīze* from *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* under the title 'Others write'.

Articles in Latvijas Avize (1/11/11-29/2/12)



Graph 4

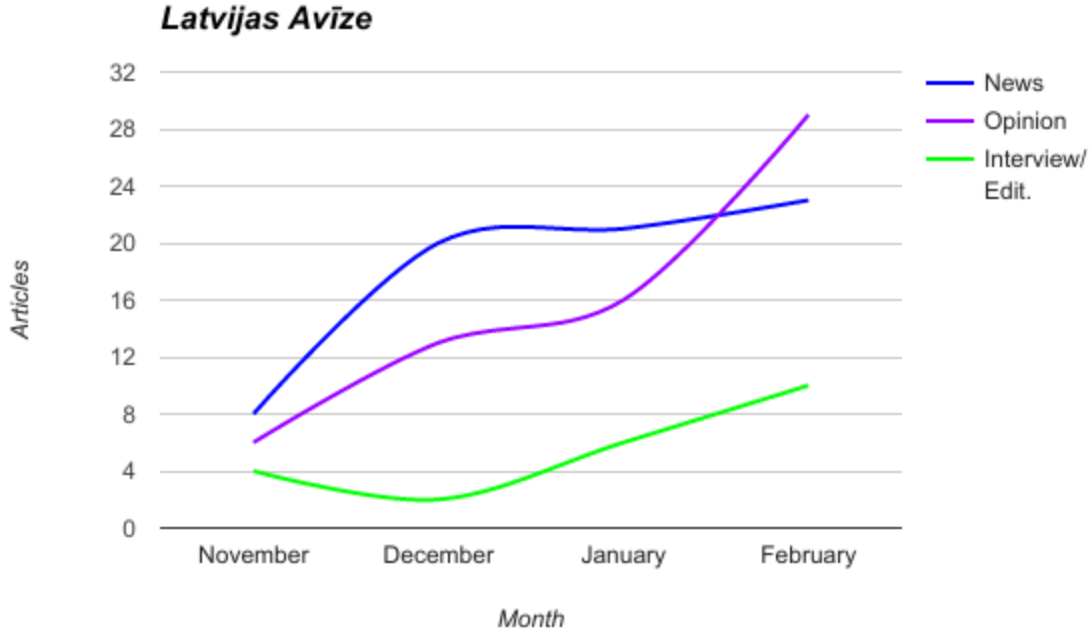
In the following section, the articles published in *Latvijas Avīze* will be broken down to demonstrate the number published each month, in the sections of 'news', 'opinion' and 'interviews/editorials' respectively. Providing a quantitative presentation of the items across the sample period allowed for the information to be comprehensively integrated within a qualitative analysis. This was repeated with the data gathered from both *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*.

Altogether, 18 articles mentioning the referendum were published in *Latvijas Avīze* during November 2011, of which six were opinion pieces and four of which were interviews and/or editorials. This meant that of the 18, only eight were news articles. Articles relating to the referendum made the front page of *Latvijas Avīze* twice in November 2011. In comparison, December 2011, saw 35 articles mentioning the referendum appear in *Latvijas Avīze*. Out of these, 13 were opinion pieces, with a further two accounting for interviews and/or editorials. 20

out of the 35 articles mentioning the referendum were news items, with five making the front page.

In January 2012, *Latvijas Avīze* published 43 articles that mentioned the referendum. Out of these, 16 were opinion pieces, with a further six accounting for interviews and/or editorials. This meant that 21 of the articles were news pieces with seven stories making the front page.

February 2012 was the month of the referendum and *Latvijas Avīze* published 62 separate articles mentioning the event. It was the month featuring the highest proportion of opinion pieces, accounting for 29 individual articles, with a further ten being interviews and/or editorials. 23 of the 62 articles were news items, with seven making the front page. The month was notable for the number of articles appearing in the newspaper on the topic of the referendum but such a spike can be explained by taking into account that the referendum occurred on 18 February 2012. However, notably, the week following the referendum saw a higher spike: many of the stories published covered the referendum, its results and made social commentary. Between 21 and 29 February 2012, 22 stories relating to the referendum were published in *Latvijas Avīze*, thus accounting for more than a third of *all* stories published within the newspaper in February. Graph 5 illustrates a month by month breakdown of the published stories.

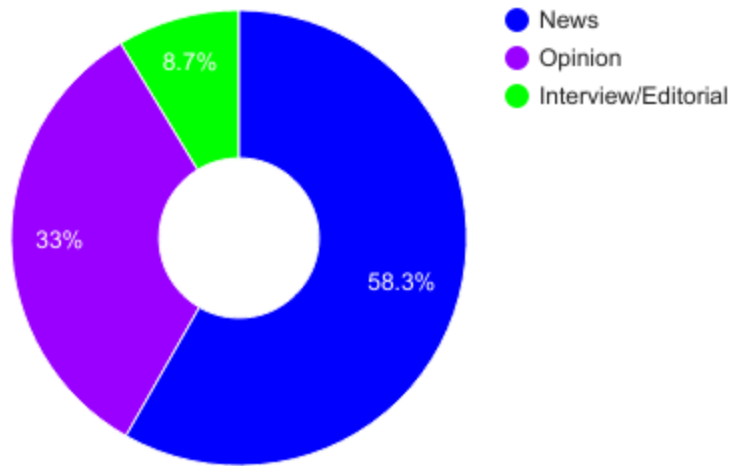


Graph 5

5.3.1.2. Diena

In the 16 weeks covered by the study, there were 115 separate articles published in *Diena* that made a mention of the referendum. Out of these, 38 were opinion pieces, with a further 10 accounting for either interviews or editorials. 67 articles were news articles, with 12 having made the front page of *Diena*.

Articles in Diena (1/11/11-29/2/2)

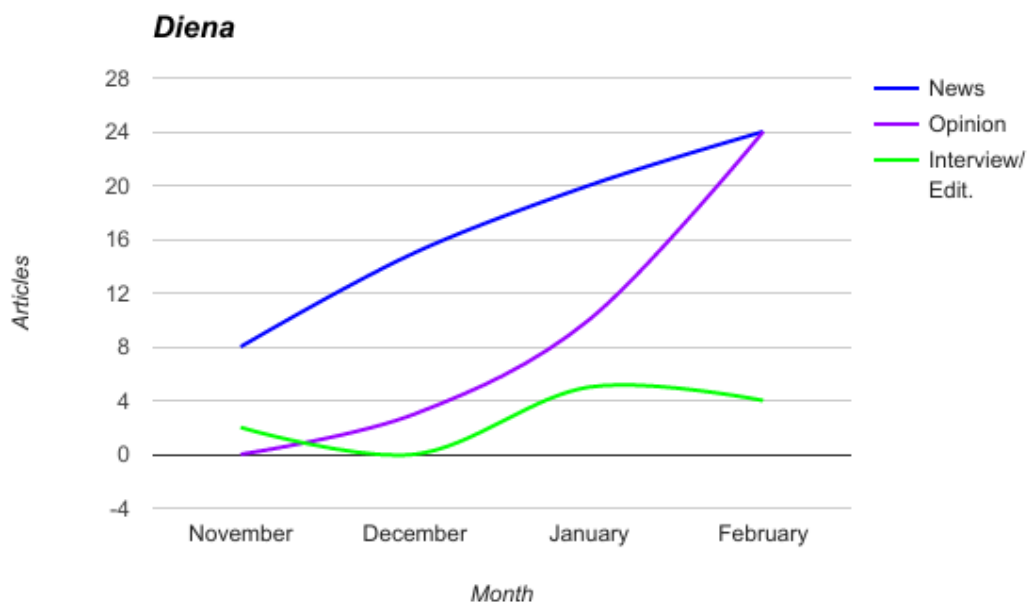


Graph 6

November 2011 saw 10 separate articles mentioning the referendum published in *Diena*. Out of these none were opinion pieces, with two articles accounting for editorials. The remaining eight articles on the referendum in November's issues of *Diena* were all news pieces. In November 2011, four stories regarding the referendum made the front page of *Diena*. In December 2011, *Diena* published 18 articles that mentioned the referendum. Out of those, three were opinion pieces. No interviews or editorials were published in the paper during the month of December, which meant that 15 of the articles were news pieces. Two front pages made a mention of the referendum in December's issues of *Diena*. The newspaper published almost double the number of articles mentioning the referendum in January 2012 as it did in December 2011, standing at 35 separate articles. Of these, ten were opinion pieces and five articles accounted for interviews and editorials. The majority, however, were news pieces, accounting for 20 out of the 25 articles in *Diena* in January 2012. Even though there were more articles

published in January 2012 than in November and December 2011 combined, the referendum only made the front page of *Diena* on one occasion during that month. In February 2012, the month of the referendum, *Diena* published 52 articles mentioning the event. Out of these, 24 were opinion pieces, with a further four accounting for interviews and editorials. 24 articles were news pieces, with the referendum making the front page of *Diena* six times in February 2012.

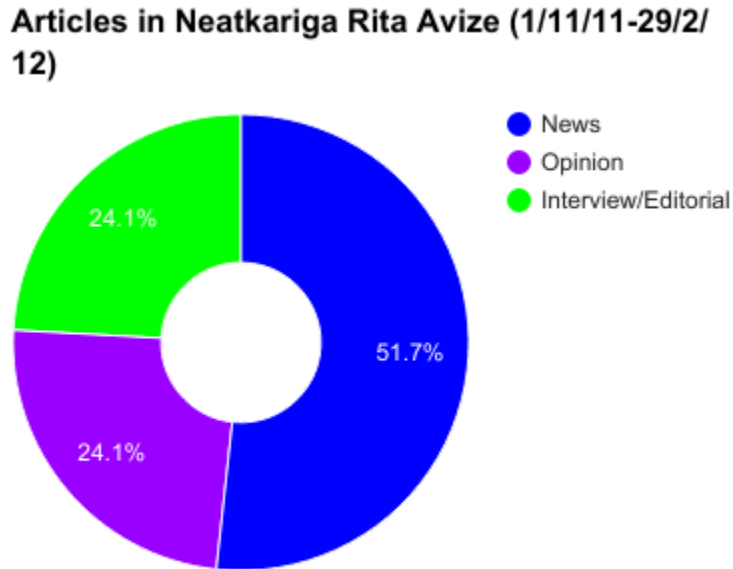
Unlike *Latvijas Avīze*, *Diena* did not see a spike in articles published on 17 February, the day before the referendum, with only three articles mentioning the upcoming event that day. However, far more articles appeared in the 20 February issue, with nine separate pieces dedicated to the referendum. The week following the referendum accounted for 20 individual articles related to the event, thus containing more than one third of all the articles published in *Diena* during the month of February. Graph 7 illustrates a month by month breakdown of the published stories.



Graph 7

5.3.1.3. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze

In the 16 weeks covered by the study, 116 separate articles mentioning the referendum appeared in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. From these, 28 were opinion pieces, with 28 accounting for either interviews or editorials. 60 of the articles were news pieces, totalling 17 front pages of the overall paper across the period analysed.

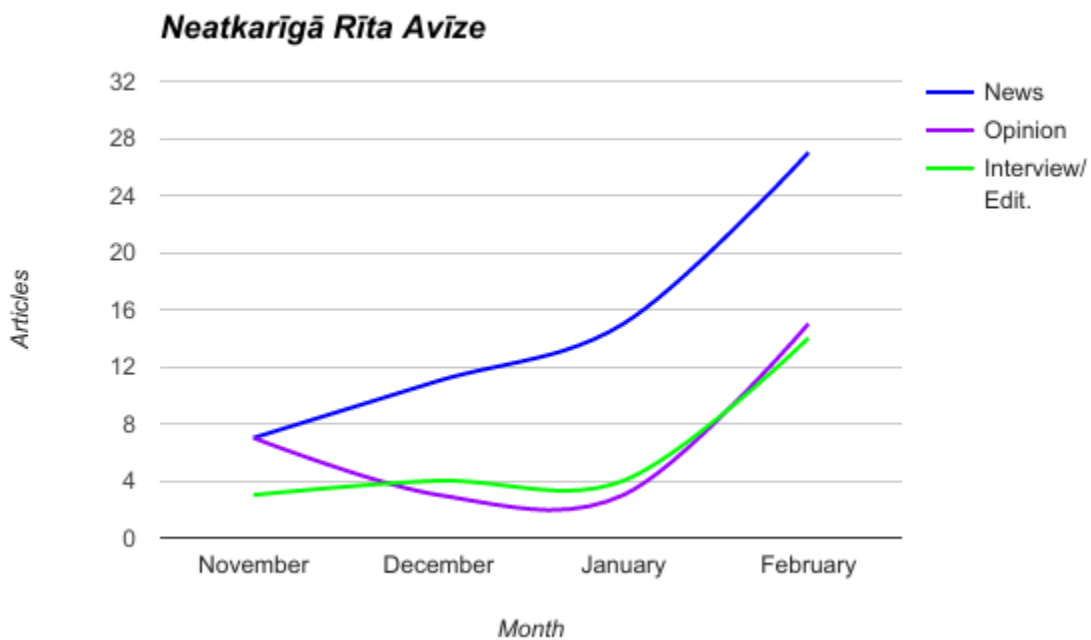


Graph 8

Altogether, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* published 17 articles mentioning the referendum in November 2011. Out of these, seven were opinion pieces, with a further three interviews. This meant that, out of the 17 articles mentioning the referendum, only seven were news pieces. Only once did the referendum make the front page of *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* in November 2011. In December 2011, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* published 18 articles that mentioned the referendum. Out of these, three were opinion pieces, with four accounting for interviews and editorials. This meant that in December 2011, eleven news pieces mentioning the referendum were published

in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. On four occasions during December 2011 the referendum made the front page of the paper. *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* published 22 articles that mentioned the referendum in January 2012. Out of these, three were opinion pieces with a further four being interviews and editorials. 15 of the 22 articles were news pieces, with three making the front page in January 2012. In the month of the referendum (February 2012) *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* published 56 articles mentioning the event. February had the most opinion pieces and interviews/editorials, more than any of the earlier months, accounting for 15 and 14 respectively. Furthermore, it also had the most news pieces, with 27 separate articles dedicated to news items. The referendum made the front page of *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* nine times in February 2012.

Similarly to *Latvijas Avīze*, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* saw a surge in articles regarding the referendum on the two days surrounding the event. 17 February and 20 February had five articles and nine articles respectively dedicated to the referendum. Graph 9 illustrates a month by month breakdown of the published stories.



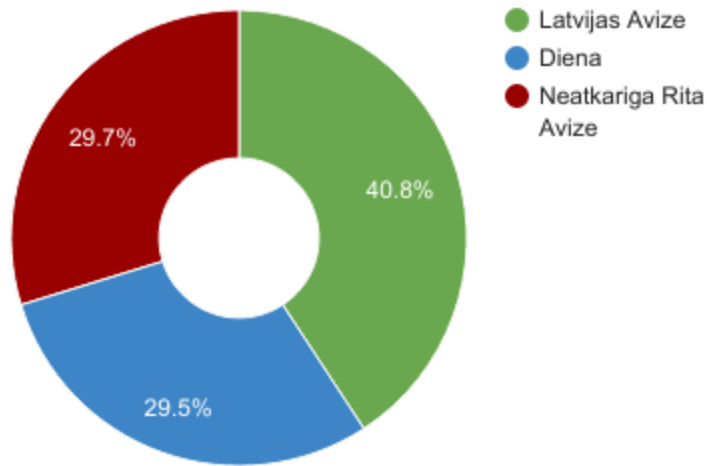
Graph 9

5.3.1.4. All three newspapers

The quantitative content analyses of the individual newspapers illustrate that, whilst both *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* had a similar number of articles published in the 16 weeks sampled, *Latvijas Avīze* had notably more. As acknowledged earlier, *Latvijas Avīze* published 158 articles mentioning the referendum, whilst *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* had 116, closely followed by *Diena's* 115.

In order to comment on the reasons why *Latvijas Avīze* published the most articles relating to the referendum, it is important to consider how many of the paper's articles during the sample period were news pieces, and how many were opinions or interviews, when compared to the other two newspapers. As illustrated earlier, 86 of the articles in *Latvijas Avīze* in the time period were not news pieces. This stands in sharp contrast to *Diena*, which had 48 opinion/interview/editorial pieces, with *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* having 56 articles that were not news pieces.

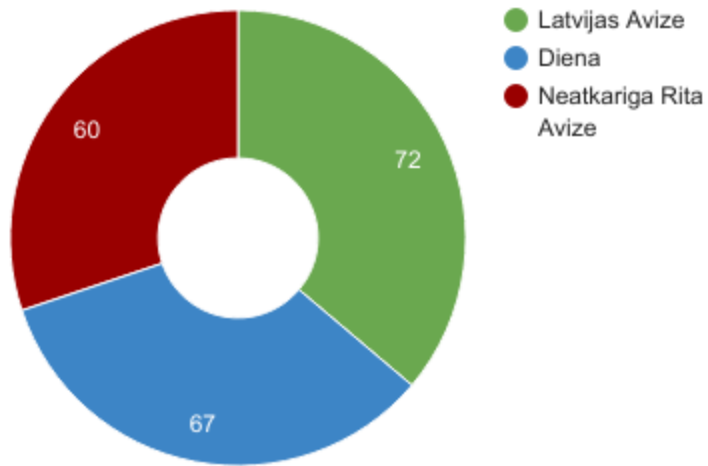
**Articles appearing in the three newspapers
between 1/11/11 to 29/2/12**



Graph 10

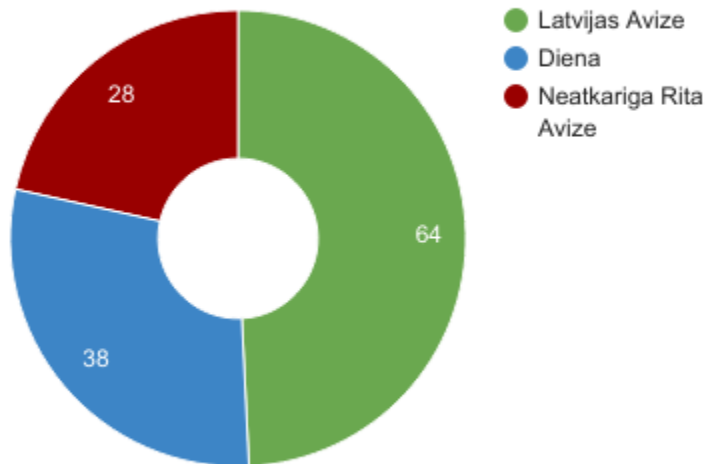
Whilst Graph 10, illustrating the different articles in the three papers, shows that *Latvijas Avīze* had more articles published in the time period analysed, the paper did publish almost 72 news articles. However, the difference between the papers is more visible when considering the opinion pieces and interviews/editorials in the graphs that follow. Graph 11, 12 and 13 shows how many individual stories were published in each type (news; opinion; editorial/interview), to allow for a clear highlight of how the papers differed from each other.

News articles in the three newspapers (1/11/11 - 29/2/12)



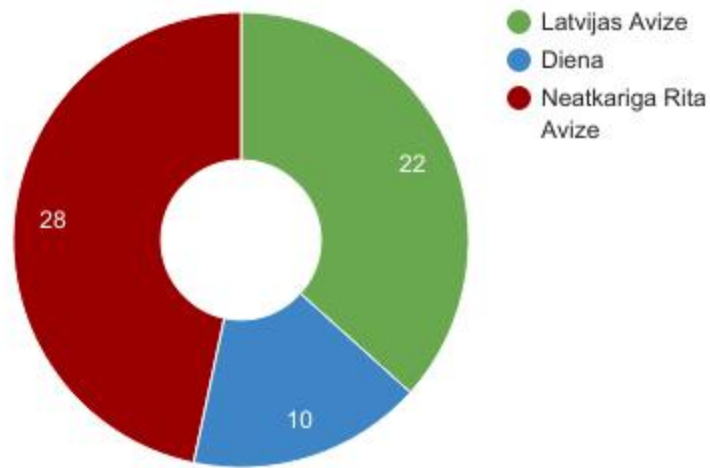
Graph 11

Opinion articles in the three newspapers (1/11/11 - 29/2/12)



Graph 12

Interviews and editorials in the three newspapers (1/11/11 - 29/2/12)



Graph 13

These graphs (Graph 11, Graph 12, Graph 13) illustrate that *Latvijas Avīze* took the lead in opinion pieces related to the referendum, with both *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* having a similar number of opinion pieces mentioning the topic. In order to explore the reasons behind such differences, it is important to address the type of opinion pieces appearing across the three newspapers.

The following section will consider the opinion pieces separately, for ease of analysis, and then proceed to contrast the particular articles with each other. The opinion pieces have been organised in chronological order so as to reflect on the changing nature of the information provided. Opinion pieces was selected as a category because, as Joshua Greenberg (2000: 519) points out, 'the function of opinion discourse within the larger context of newspaper coverage is to offer newsreaders a distinctive and authoritative "voice" that will speak to them directly about matters of public importance'. Thus it was reasonable to presume that the

newspapers not only strove to express their own views but also to represent the paper's ideology by directly addressing the readers, or presumed readers, through opinion pieces. By analysing opinion pieces, this chapter will be able to reveal strong ideological patterns related to not only the newspapers discussed but also to the construction of a presumed societal attitude as reflected within the choices made by individual papers in articles published and language used.

5.3.2. *Qualitative Analysis: Opinion Pieces*

As illustrated by the quantitative analysis of the data presented earlier in this chapter, overall there was a very large number of articles relating to the referendum across the three sources analysed for the research. Therefore, any qualitative analysis undertaken had to consider time constraints regarding the amount of data available. As there was a very large number of opinion pieces in all three of the Latvian-language newspapers assessed, the following section will concentrate on discussing these articles in particular. This part of the chapter seeks to assess the ways in which opinion pieces published in *Latvijas Avīze*, *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* covered the referendum, and aims to reveal the differences and similarities in the newspapers' approaches to representing the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. Furthermore, the following section will highlight elements appearing throughout the newspapers that might require further analysis and discussion, such as the use of the 'us' versus 'them' binary, concepts of pride, and the employment of myth in constructing a narrative.

In discussing the inability to arrive at an 'objective definition' when attempting to identify nationalism, Zygmunt Bauman (1992: 677) notes that such a search 'obliquely legitimizes the nationalistic claims' and that it is the 'sharing of certain attributes' that 'make a nation'. Rather than, he argues, allowing for an acknowledgement that all such activity constructs an artificial 'boundary-drawing' wherein national identity is always 'contentious and contested, glossing over some (potentially disruptive) differentiations and representing some other (objectively minor)

differences as powerful and decisive separating factors. It is thus an argument regarding the establishment and, more significantly, the maintenance of a national identity. Umut Özkırmılı (2005: 24) in his discussion of such a perpetuation and the ability to sustain an identity of a nation explains that 'since all nations lay claim to a unique place in history and to certain boundaries, all national identities are exclusionary', thus highlighting the necessity of any definition relating to 'nation' and 'nationality' to be defined *against* something.

In reference to the language used during the referendum on the status of Russian language in Latvia, Deniss Hanovs (2014: 3) notes how in this situation 'a linguistic issue became an issue of clashes for interpretation of the past - on the one hand a symbolic revenge of the "suppressed" minorities [...], on the other hand the "final" contest for the dominance of the Latvian language and culture in Latvia'. The following analysis will highlight the specifics of Hanovs' claim, and provide an example of how language was used in the data collected, especially in relation to creating a particular perception of both the 'us' and 'them' referenced during the period under review here.

Three themes became apparent during the collection and quantitative analysis of the data, which the following section will explore in order to reveal a pattern of the ways in which national identity is constructed in the Latvian-language media. The three themes that emerged from the content in *Latvijas Avīze*, *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* are: 'us' versus 'them'; pride; and mythicization. All three themes played a strong role in the way that the stories in the newspapers were developed, presented and constructed. In particular this was in relation to creating the binary oppositions between 'us' versus 'them', which developed to have a shifting meaning to the ascribed 'them' (Russian speakers; the initiators of the referendum; the Russian-speaking political parties; the government), but notably mostly a consistent 'us' (Latvian speakers). The themes will facilitate drawing of concise and meticulous conclusions about the multitude of ways in which the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia is represented in the Latvian-language media. Furthermore, this approach will create pathways for recognising,

understanding and analysing the ways in which a Latvian national identity has been established and perpetuated.

5.3.2.1. *Us vs Them: Russian speakers*

The data analysed for this research revealed a particular construction of both the ‘us’ and the ‘them’ used in the context of the Latvian-language newspapers in their coverage of the 2012 Language Referendum. In the earliest articles considered (starting 1 November 2011), a visible distinction was made between who the newspapers identified as ‘us’; the word ‘us’ (*mēs, mums, mūsu*) was used in reference to the readers of the newspapers, and by the nature of the newspapers (Latvian language) positioned the ‘us’ as already Latvian-speaking. One of the first articles relating to the referendum published in *Latvijas Avīze* remarked that the attempt to ‘raise Russian to an official language’ was ‘the first attempt at russifying Latvia’⁶⁷ (Krustiņš, 8 November, 2011: 3), highlighting the idea that ‘russification’ was an existing concern. The concept of ‘russification’ was something that appeared throughout the newspapers in the period analysed (see Veidemane, 15 November 2011, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*; Dzintars, 8 December 2011, *Latvijas Avīze*; Hirša, 3 January 2012, *Latvijas Avīze*; Pavasaris, 6 January 2012, *Diena*; Zālīte, 27 January 2012, *Diena*; Vaidere, 31 January 2012, *Diena*; Eglājs, 27 February 2012, *Latvijas Avīze*). It is, therefore, the first division created in conceptualising ‘us’ in contrast to ‘them’, wherein ‘them’ is categorised as those who may perpetuate and attempt the so-called ‘russification’. The establishment of who those might be, became somewhat more splintered and thus unclear in the articles.

In her discussion of the ‘russification’ experienced in the Baltic States during the Soviet period, Dovile Budryte (2005) outlines the policies implemented by the Soviet state in order to further the so-called russification of its citizens. In terms of historical significance, this has

⁶⁷ “Krievu valodas pacelšana par valsts valodu nozīmē pirmo atklāto Latvijas pārkrieviskošanas mēģinājumu.”

already been discussed in the Literature Review of the thesis (see 2.2. in Literature Review). The point most applicable to the discussion relating to the Latvian nation and identity, as well as the representation of both in the media, is Budryte's remarks on the effect the policy of russification had on the Baltic States. Budryte notes that 'increasingly the nation was seen as a suffering hero whose existence had been endangered by immigration, russification, and the experience of what was called genocide - deportations and repressions' (ibid.: 56). It is the notion of those in a nation having experienced a multitude of difficulties in order to establish their position as a member of that particular society, in this case Latvian (in Budryte's example also Lithuanian and Estonian), that then demonstrates and, to a degree, furthers the arguments relating to the themes explored in the newspapers analysed here.

The idea of 'russification' is a recurring theme, and whilst not all articles employed the specific reference to 'russification', the creation of a pattern wherein 'us' represented Latvian speakers exclusively and 'them' represented the Russian-speaking minority established a binary wherein 'us' and 'them' placed 'russification' as an established part of history, an impactful historical threat that was still to be overcome. 'Russification' becomes the continuum along which 'us' and 'them' are located. If, as noted earlier, it is presumed that 'us' refers to Latvian speakers (*latvieši*), then 'them' in this particular construction becomes anyone who opposes and threatens the 'us'. It is then that such references as calling the initiated referendum an 'attack on Latvia as a Latvian, independent, democratic country'⁶⁸ (Dzintars, 8 December 2011: 3) and calling those supporting the referendum 'deniers of Latvian independence'⁶⁹ (Kristovskis, 14 February 2012: 3) become easier to position in the binary of 'us' and 'them'. The identification of a threat can be linked to Eva-Clarita Onken's suggestion that the sense of threat had developed alongside a tendency which led to the division of historical memory along ethnic lines in the

⁶⁸ "Šī akcija pašos pamatos vērsta pret Latvijas kā latviskas, neatkarīgas, demokrātiskas valsts pastāvēšanas jēgu un būtību."

⁶⁹ "Jo ik vienam Latvijas valsts patriotam ir mests nopietns izaicinājums - Latvijas valsts noliedzēju uzspiests referendums."

Baltic States. She identifies that 'our past' was used in reference to a pre-Soviet (Latvian, Lithuanian, or Estonian) time period and 'your past' (i.e., the past of the Russian-speaking minority) became the Soviet or Russian past (Budryte, 2005: 204). This also resonates with the notions of a perceived russification, that had to be opposed in order to protect a Latvian identity. One of the strongest, policy-based examples was the introduction of citizenship laws, as discussed in the Literature Review (see sections 2.2. and 2.4.1. specifically).

By considering the way 'us' and 'them' were positioned in the three newspapers in the time period analysed, this appeared as a plausible way to view the theme of the binary opposition created between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, as represented in the papers. The language ascribed to 'them' was also at times borderline aggressive and accusative. This was most often the case in *Latvijas Avīze*, wherein the Latvian 'us' (*mēs, mūs, mūsu*) was almost exclusively identified with words referring to 'us' and 'ours'. In *Latvijas Avīze*, the Russian-speaking 'them' varied from 'pseudo-citizens'⁷⁰ (Liepiņš, 9 November 2011: 3) to 'new-citizens'⁷¹ (Hirša, 3 January 2011: 7). *Latvijas Avīze* made repeated allusions to links between the Russian-speaking minority and the concept of 'russification', specifically in reference to the initiation of the language referendum (see Dzintars, 8 December 2011, *Latvijas Avīze*; Hirša, 3 January 2012, *Latvijas Avīze*; Eglājs, 27 February 2012, *Latvijas Avīze*). By referring to the Russian speakers as somehow lesser citizens, the paper highlighted the notion of 'Latvian Latvia', the importance of which will be addressed in the section exploring the theme of both pride and mythicization.

Eric Hobsbawm (2000: 263) notes that 'in some sense it is the idea of 'us' as a body of people united by an uncountable number of things 'we' have in *common* - a 'way of life' in the widest sense, a *common* territory of existence in which we live, whose landscape is familiar and

⁷⁰ "Šajos pseidopilsonos ir iedzināts naidis pret Latvijas valsti, ģimenēs uzturētas neremdināmas ilgas pēc sabrukušās Padomju Savienības."

⁷¹ "Līdz ar lielo Latvijai nelojālo cilvēku skaitu, mūsu politisko glēvulību un Krievijas 'humanitārās intervences' politiku, tā novedusi mūsu, uzdrošinot tomēr teikt, jaupilsoņus pie prasības pēc otras valsts jeb oficiālās valodas."

recognizable. It is the existence of *this* which the influx from outside threatens'. However, this notion of an outside threat is vastly complicated when considering the Latvian- and Russian-speaking populations' relationship in Latvia. An 'outside' threat is much harder to identify but efforts to do so may lead to an explanation for the way 'us' is expressed and 'them' is positioned in the newspapers analysed here. Therefore, a wider threat, one that can be assigned to an 'outside' force, may have to be found by the newspapers, in order to accurately and confidently identify the 'us'. Whilst the binary between the Latvian-speaking 'us' and the Russian-speaking 'them' was a prominent, recurrent theme, this was not the only reference to 'us' versus 'them' that the papers employed.

5.3.2.2. *Us vs Them: Saskaņas Centrs*

Throughout the period analysed, articles across the three newspapers made claims regarding the political party Saskaņas Centrs and the organisers of the language referendum. An opinion piece in *Latvijas Avīze* published on 3 January 2012 informed its readers that the referendum was created by the Russian-speaking political elites in order to cause unrest and hinder the efforts of integration (Krustiņš, 3 January 2012: 3). The author of the piece, Voldemārs Krustiņš, insistently called the referendum a 'purposefully planned and organised attempt to russify Latvia', thus ascribing a particularly strong sense of blame over the referendum to Saskaņas Centrs. The majority of the accusations that Saskaņas Centrs had had a direct involvement in the initiation of the referendum came from *Latvijas Avīze*, but they were not exclusive to that paper. An article appearing in the 23 January 2012 issue of *Diena* stated that the referendum results would 'show Nils Ušakovs [the leader of Saskaņas Centrs], Jānis Ubranovičs [a member of Saskaņas Centrs], Vladimir Linderman [one of the initiators of the language referendum] and those thinking similarly, how marginal and unwanted by the society

their dreams [of Russian as an official language in Latvia] are'⁷² (Āboliņš, 23 January 2012: 2), thus grouping together Saskaņas Centrs and the intentions of those behind the initiation of the referendum.

An opinion piece written by Elita Veidemane and published in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* on 15 November 2011 made a similar claim. Veidemane discussed the initiators of the referendum, whom she referred to as 'driving a cart full of dung'⁷³, linking them to Saskaņas Centrs, who, according to her, had been 'sly' in their approach to russify Latvia. To Veidemane, the so-called 'sly russification'⁷⁴ (ibid.: 3) performed by Saskaņas Centrs was done through their proposal to allow town councils to accept forms filled out in Russian. Overall, her article recognised and identified 'the good' Russian speakers in Latvia, whilst attacking 'the others'. These were identified by Veidemane as those set to 'russify Latvia', who do not accept Latvian values and the Latvian language, all of which Veidemane described as actions of both the initiators of the referendum and Saskaņas Centrs. Voldemār Hermanis, also writing for *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, argued that in actuality Saskaņas Centrs was 'paving the way to a confrontation in the society and an unstable country'⁷⁵ (Hermanis, 25 November 2011: 2), thus implying a particular benefit that Saskaņas Centrs may gain from the referendum, whether it succeeded or failed.

Another article, this time in *Diena*, noted that everyone should vote in the referendum, as not voting would 'play right into the hands of politicians who would not hesitate to use the situation to their advantage'⁷⁶ (Panteļējevs, 14 February 2012: 2). Whilst the article did not directly refer to Saskaņas Centrs, the remarks about the referendum in previous articles

⁷² "Jau pēc nedaudz mazāk nekā mēneša absolūtais mūsu valsts pilsoņu vairākums ar vienu vienīgu balsojumu Nilam Ušakovam, Jānim Urbanovičam, Vladimiram Lindermanam un domubiedriem būs demokrātiski parādījis, cik margināli un sabiedrībā nepieprasīti ir viņu karstie sapņi, un jeb kādi turpmāki jautājumi par krievu valodas statusu Latvijā uz ilgiem laikiem būs noņemti no darba kārtības."

⁷³ "Viņu ilgotais referendums par krievu valodu ir kā apskretuši mēslu rati, kurus šie *pašcieņas bruņinieki* stumj virsū latviešu valodai." (emphasis in the original)

⁷⁴ "Tāda lienošā rusifikācija."

⁷⁵ "Protī, bruģē ceļu uz konfrontāciju sabiedrībā un nestabilitāti valstī."

⁷⁶ "Un ticiet man, politiķi nevilcināties un nemaz nekaunēties izmantot šādu zīmju skaitu sev vēlamām interpretācijām."

contextualised this statement as a potential reference to the political party, rather than nonspecific parties.

Such synonymous use of referendum initiators and *Saskaņas Centrs* was also questionable, when *Saskaņas Centrs* was referred to as a 'Russian-speaking party' (ibid.). Whilst most of the articles did draw a distinction between the party and *some* Russian speakers, they did not attempt to clearly define 'them' as either the political party *or* the Russian-speaking minority. This was then made more complex by the introduction of a third 'them' in opposition to the Latvian-speaking 'us' - the Latvian-speaking political parties.

5.3.2.3. *Us vs Them: The Latvian Government*

The positioning of the government and the Latvian-speaking politicians as 'them' versus the Latvian-speaking 'us' came predominantly late in the period analysed, closer to the referendum. This position then also shifted the way 'us' was identified by some papers. When first announced, the collection of signatures to initiate the referendum, and thereafter the announcement that the referendum would take place, saw little to no initial response from the Latvian-speaking politicians, as reported and discussed by the newspapers. This became a crucial issue in many of the opinion pieces, which accused the government of 'allowing' the referendum to take place without an attempt to discourage it.

Sandris Točs, writing for *Diena* on 3 January 2012, noted that there could not 'be a campaign in which Latvians only speak to Latvians' with the call to 'win against "them"'⁷⁷ (ibid.: 2). This reflected both a criticism of the government, but also highlighted an existing argument for the need to deconstruct and reassess the use of 'them'. An article in *Latvijas Avīze*, published on 6 January 2012, was much stronger in its criticism of the lack of action on the part

⁷⁷ "Tā noteikti nedrīkstētu reducēties uz kampaņu, kur latvieši uzrunā tikai latviešus... ar aicinājumu, ka jāuzvar 'viņi'."

of the Latvian parliament, calling the Latvian politicians ‘weak’⁷⁸ (Līcītis, 6 January 2012: 3). This was one of many in a series of accusations that the Latvian-speaking politicians were underperforming in their roles, lacking a strongly expressed view regarding the referendum. A few days earlier, on 2 January 2012 Dagmāra Beitnere stated in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, that a stronger and ‘more professional’⁷⁹ government was needed so that such referendums as the language one would not become commonplace in Latvia. Her notions were supported by Arnis Lapiņš, in the same article, who argued that ‘there was a lack of intellect in the Latvian political environment’⁸⁰ (ibid.: 2). Ivars Āboliņš, writing for *Diena*, added that there was a great part of the society that felt alienated from the government, and that the government's unwillingness to engage earlier with the referendum had contributed to this feeling (Āboliņš, 20 January 2012: 2).

Others were less cautious in their wording, Egīls Līcītis mockingly wrote in *Latvijas Avīze* that the Latvian-speaking politicians should not ‘bother to spend their hard earned money to promote the referendum’⁸¹ (Līcītis, 26 January 2012: 3), pointing towards the fact that they were already failing to spend any on promoting an ‘against’ vote. Similarly, Juris Bojārs questioned the authorities’ response to the referendum and asked why they had taken no action when the referendum had first been initiated (Bojārs, 31 January 2012: 7). Viktors Avotiņš, in turn, continued to express views in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, which accused the government of *creating* divisions in society rather than attempting to solve them. On 11 January 2012, he wrote that it was the political forces themselves that were creating an ethnic division and conflict where there originally had been none. Addressing the way in which the notion that ‘the Russians are coming’⁸² had circulated throughout the Latvian population for decades, Avotiņš concluded the

⁷⁸ “Par mīkstčaulību no lieka nav ko uztraukties, paši zinām, kas jādara.”

⁷⁹ “Nācijas virsuzdevums ir radīt profesionālus politiķus, kuri mācētu aizstāvēt Latvijas un latviešu intereses.”

⁸⁰ “Notikušais apliecina, ka nobriedusi kāda liela problēma - Latvijas politiskajā vidē iestājies intelektuālais deficīts.”

⁸¹ “Mīļie biedri Zatler un Dombrovski, ‘latviskās’ partijas un nacionālie jaunieši - netērējiet no lieka sūri grūti pelnīto valsts naudiņu, partiju vai privātā maka latus.”

⁸² “Tiek skaitītas visas padesmit gadus dzirdētās krievu nākšanas mantras...”

article by stating that at the time the ‘politicians provoked aggression much more than either of the two invented societies wanted’,⁸³ thus effectively attributing both the conflict and the division of Latvian and Russian speakers to the politicians, more than to any actual split in Latvian society.

These articles show that not all of the coverage relating to the referendum and Russian speakers was negative. In fact, some articles called for a reassessment of the assigned grouping of ‘them’ as exclusively Russian-speaking. This raised the question of who in these positions would be then seen as ‘them’, often aligning the (Latvian-speaking) government with ‘them’. This particular perception allows, at times, for Russian speakers to be located alongside, rather than in opposition to, Latvian speakers. Importantly, however, the purpose of this ‘alternative’ narrative was to challenge the government and its policies, rather than to promote a sense of commonality between the two groups in relation to national identity and values. The division of ‘them’ as not specifically being *against* Latvia will be further reflected in the interviews data. As Hobsbawm (2000: 265) notes, the acceptance into a community highly depends on the idea of ‘belonging’: those who do, do so ‘because they can define the others who do not belong’ and importantly ‘who never can belong’. Thus, whilst othering the government can serve the purpose of bringing the two communities closer, it does not *create* a space where such allowances are fully made.

Following the referendum, the articles criticising the government in relation to the referendum did not decrease, but they challenged the government more on its integration policies. Questions relating to perceived failure in integration policy were, however, expressed prior to the referendum, too. Viktors Avotiņš, writing in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* on 28 November 2011, claimed that there was no actual issue of ethnic integration between the Latvian and Russian speakers but, rather, that it was a fabrication of those political parties and politicians

⁸³ “Šobrīd politiķi provocē agresiju daudz nepārprotamāk, nekā to vēlas šīs politikas radītās divas kopienas.”

representing a particular ideology (ibid.: 3). The comment aided in highlighting the way the politicians and their governing was both problematised and criticised in the papers. 'Do the political forces really not understand [what their job is]?'⁸⁴ asked an article published on 21 February 2012 in *Latvijas Avīze* (Krustiņš, ibid.: 3). Similarly, an article in *Diena* proclaimed that the 'easiest' worldview for politicians was in strict binaries, as 'it is easier to rule a black and white world'⁸⁵ (Pantelējevs, 24 February 2012: 2). Juris Paiders claimed that 'now the right-wing politicians want to reduce the referendum results to banal, ethnic provocation levels'⁸⁶ (ibid., 27 February 2012: 3). However, some articles went even further in their claims of the Latvian-speaking politicians inefficiency, referring to the politicians as 'political mouthpieces' who 'didn't want to notice or discuss' the existence of people with 'hostile intentions'⁸⁷ in Latvia (Krustiņš, 28 February 2012: 3) and accusing them of 'pretending not to notice - or worse! - genuinely not noticing'⁸⁸ the hostility in Latvia's society highlighted by the referendum (Zīle, 28 February 2012: 3). Avotiņš described this hostility as having appeared *because* of the government rather than being helped by it, writing that issues with ethnic division had only been sharpened by the referendum and that the government had demonstrated its inability to encourage a united front that would include both Latvian and Russian speakers (ibid., 20 February 2012: 2). Furthermore, Avotiņš also accused the government of a detachment from overall society, and pointed out that this was one of the reasons for the number of so-called protest votes in the referendum (ibid., 22 February 2012: 2).

This sense of detachment between politicians and voters became a thematic undertone throughout the articles published in the three newspapers, especially in January and February

⁸⁴ "Vai tiešām politiskie spēki to nenojauš?"

⁸⁵ "Visērtāk tas ir politiķiem, jo melnbaltu pasaulīti ir vieglāk pārvaldīt."

⁸⁶ "Tāpat arī tagad labējie politiķi vēlas referenduma rezultātus noreducēt līdz banālas, etniskas provokācijas līmenim."

⁸⁷ "Arī autoratīvi cilvēki no valodšās koalīcijas norāda uz pavisam citādu, pat naidīgu mērķu un nodomu klātbūtni notikušajā pasākumā. Protams, to klātbūtni un apkarojamību politiskie muldoņas nevēlas ne pamanīt, ne apspriest."

⁸⁸ "Valodu referenduma uzjundīto kaislību gaismā atklājas vairākas būtiskas lietas, kuras mūsu politiķi izliekas neredzam vai arī - kas būtu vēl sliktāk! - patiešām nesaskata."

2012, leading up to and following the referendum. This detached way of viewing the ruling powers, whether they be Latvian- or Russian-speaking, then allowed for another theme to emerge in the opinion pieces: that of pride. The notion that the referendum represented a 'fight' wherein both the Latvian language and the Latvian state had to be 'defended' was a recurring theme across the three papers. Writing in *Diena* on 3 January 2012, Sandris Točs noted that it was 'easy to agree on the country's budget, easy to push economy-related questions, if all those are less interesting in this anxious time, when language needs to be defended'⁸⁹ (Točs, *ibid.*: 2), thus combining the criticism of the government and the notion of a need for 'defence'. The language used in discussing the referendum as being something that required Latvians to defend themselves, their national identity and their language, was far more recurrent than its criticisms. Bens Latkovskis wrote in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* on 12 December 2011 that 'all the defenders of Latvian language have to go to the referendum and show the local Russians, and the rest of the world - the Latvian language is and will be the only official language in Latvia'⁹⁰ (*ibid.*: 3). Overall, Latkovskis' article mostly addressed the need to vote and expressed a support of the Latvian language, rather than engaging with any issues that the Russian speakers might propose. Dagmāra Beitnere further agreed by claiming that 'the most important problem will be the threat to our national identity'⁹¹ (*ibid.*, 2 January 2012: 2).

5.3.2.4. *Pride*

The necessity to 'defend' the Latvian language was expressed across all three newspapers and strongly linked to the sense of pride, as some urged voters to 'show their

⁸⁹ "Toties valdošajai koalīcijai un pat opozīcijas partijām referendum par otru valsts valodu ir Īsta dāvana Īstajā laikā. Viegli ir pieņemt valsts budžetu, viegli bīdīt ekonomiskus jautājumus, ja tie ir mazāk interesanti jautājumi satraukuma pilnajā laikā, kad valoda jāaizstāv."

⁹⁰ "Lai atņemtu lindermaniem un ždanokām šos argumentus, visie latviešu valodas aizstāvjiem jāiet uz referendumu un jādod skaidrs singāls gan vietējiem krieviem, gan visai pasaulei - latviešu valoda ir un būs vienīgā valsts valoda."

⁹¹ "Galvenā problēma būs valstiskās identitātes apdraudējums."

pride'⁹² by voting (Hermanis, 8 February 2012: 2). Otto Bauer (2000: 62-63) writes that a 'national consciousness' for him 'is not knowledge of something outside' himself 'but rather the knowledge of' his own 'nationality', his 'own kind'. Thus, he argues that the idea of a nation is 'bound up with the idea' of one's ego. If someone 'slights the nation' he states the 'slight' is personal. In turn, he also notes that 'if the nation is praised, I have my share in this praise. For the nation is nowhere but in me and my kind' (ibid.). This idea of one's positioning in a nation and a society extends further in Michael Ignatieff's (1999: 97) claim that, whilst it is 'good to have a collective identity, to take pride and to find belonging in something larger than your career, your family, yourself', there is a systemic problem with 'overvaluation of self that goes with narcissism, and the mythic distortions of others that go with it'.

Such reliance on 'pride in one's nationality' was evident in the opinion pieces discussing the language referendum, wherein the pride was not ascribed as much as *presumed*. An undercurrent of presumed pride in being Latvian was expressed widely across the newspapers in their urgings to 'defend' the Latvian language in the referendum. Such encouragement was, at times, positioned as a fight Latvians were forced into fighting via their democratic right to vote. With no sense of irony, Egils Līcītis wrote in *Latvijas Avīze* on 2 December 2011 that those fighting for the rights of the Russian language in Latvia would try to 'protect their darling Russian pride',⁹³ going as far as to claim that Nils 'Ušakovs stands in the Russian pride guard with a stick'⁹⁴ (ibid.: 3). The concept of 'pride' here was clearly used derogatively; such language ceased to be employed when the question of pride was transferred to Latvians rather than Russian speakers. For example, the title of an article published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 18 January 2012 referred to the referendum as 'a chance for Latvians to show their pride' (Apinis, ibid.: 3) and then proceeded to argue for Latvians' ability to 'unite', implying that 'pride' here was

⁹² "Latviešiem un visiem šai valstij ar sirdi un saknēm piederīgiem jāpārdzīvo ar pašcieņu un pašapziņu, bez histērijas."

⁹³ "[...] nosargās dārgo krievu pašcieņas lietu..."

⁹⁴ "[Ušakovs] ar štiku stājas krievu pašcieņas sardzē."

something to strive for. In contrast, Nils Ušakovs himself, in an article published in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* in November 2011, stated that ‘Russian-speaking Latvians love their country just as much as Latvians do’⁹⁵ (ibid., 8 November 2011: 3). Ušakovs also claimed that most Russian speakers in Latvia considered themselves Latvian and felt no affiliation with the Russian state. For Ušakovs, the main reason for which the referendum had been proposed was to highlight the lack of unity between the two main ethnic groups in Latvia, and he stated that the referendum should work as a push towards addressing these issues. Nonetheless, Ušakovs concluded his article by stating that he did not believe the referendum would succeed (ibid., 14 November 2011: 4). These remarks do not position Ušakovs as representing Russia or Russian pride, as Apinis claimed, but rather his stance regarding the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia and their political representation. The referendum as a force for unification was highlighted by others, too, in their claims that Latvians had to ‘defend’ Latvia. Māris Zanders wrote that ‘Latvians should not be shy in defending their rights’ but added that such a need to defend, and the defence itself, would not ‘be understood by all’⁹⁶ (ibid., 14 February 2012: 2). Zanders further encouraged the readers of *Diena* not only to stand unified before the referendum, but also after it.

An opinion piece in *Latvijas Avīze* on 8 December 2011 proclaimed that the referendum was not ‘about two official languages’ and rather ‘a question of whether to give or not to give strength to the idea of russification in Latvia, which essentially means the idea of Latvia’s destruction’⁹⁷ (Dzintars, ibid.: 3). Such a representation of the referendum as a force of ruination for Latvia was not exclusive to this article and rather characteristic of the wider coverage of the referendum in the period analysed. Another article in *Latvijas Avīze* went as far as urging the government, amongst other things, to ensure that the partially publicly-funded Latvian television

⁹⁵ “Tāpēc, ka krievvalodīgie latvījieši mīl savu valsti tāpat kā latvieši.”

⁹⁶ “Latviešiem nav jākautrējas aizstāvēt savas tiesības, bet necerēsim, ka tas būs saprotami visiem šajā valstī dzīvojošajiem.”

⁹⁷ “Jautājums nav par divām valstis valodām. Jautājums ir par to, vai dot spēku un enerģiju Latvijas pārkrievošanas idejai, kas pēc būtības nozīmē Latvijas iznīcināšanas ideju.”

channel LTV1 and radio LR should 'do everything possible' to 'defend the Latvian Republic as a national ideology'⁹⁸ (unauthored, 9 December 2011: 3); no explanation of what such a 'national ideology' might mean was offered, but the apparent 'power' of the media in maintaining some sense of 'nation' was hinted at.

This tendency not to explore what references to 'national identity' and 'national ideology' meant was common across the papers analysed. The reference to an ideology was made elsewhere, too, as Ilmārs Znotiņš wrote in *Diena* that those who 'have never wanted to learn Latvian, those having inherited the pride of the USSR, those fulfilling the Russian chauvinist criteria and those lacking the vision of contemporary Latvian ideology'⁹⁹ (ibid., 15 February 2012: 2) were in large parts responsible for the referendum. Here, not only was the notion of a particular, yet undefined, national (Latvian) identity employed, but also another reference to a pride appeared. The 'inherited pride of the USSR' (ibid.) was clearly positioned as negative, following a reference to those who had not learned Latvian and preceding a claim regarding an alliance with Russian ideas. Articles such as Znotiņš made it clear that the concept of 'pride' could be viewed as a positive, if applied to Latvians, and negative, if applied to anyone else.

An article by Pēteris Apinis, published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 18 January 2012, highlighted the notion of 'Latvian pride' in its title, furthering Paegle's point by proclaiming 'Referendum - a chance for Latvians to show their pride'¹⁰⁰ (ibid.: 3). In the article, Apinis described the Latvian nation as small but united, stating that the Latvians would 'sing united, so our ill-wishers know how large and resounding the Latvian choir is'¹⁰¹ (ibid.: 3). The overall article drew strongly on Latvian symbols, encouraging people to decorate their houses and cars with Latvian flags. Furthermore, Apinis stated that Latvia was a nation which spoke many languages but by 'voting

⁹⁸ "[...] aktīvi aizstāvētu LR kā latviešu valsts nacionālo ideoloģiju."

⁹⁹ "Varbūt tas ir protests pret latviešu valodu, kuru gadu gaitā nav bijusi vēlēšanās apgūt? Vai tomēr tas ir padomijas atstātais lepnuma mantojums, kuru papildina lielkrievu šovinisma iezīmes un mūsdienu Latvijas ideoloģiskā redzējuma trūkums?"

¹⁰⁰ "Referendums - latviešu iespēja parādīt savu pašcieņu."

¹⁰¹ "Dziedāsim visi kopā iepriekšējā vakarā - lai mūsu nelabvēļi uzzina, cik liels un skanīgs ir latviešu koris."

for the Latvian language, we vote for a small nation's linguistic abilities, education, knowledge, pride' (ibid.: 3). The piece used the idea of pride as an important tool in its encouragement of Latvians, rather than Latvian speakers, to support the Latvian national identity. The use of 'pride', both here and in other articles that employed the terminology, was both presumed and implied rather than explored and analysed.

5.3.2.5. *Battle*

However, many of the articles went even further in highlighting how the upcoming referendum was a 'fight' which Latvians were expected to engage with in order to 'defend' their language, and by proxy: their identity. One article argued that the point of the referendum was to remind 'ourselves and others, that in Latvia not only the name is Latvian, but also the substance'¹⁰² (Krustiņš, 20 December 2011: 3). Whilst the article did not explain exactly what it understood by a country's 'substance', the implication became clear in its conclusion, wherein Krustiņš argued that those who agreed and supported his sentiments needed to go to the referendum and vote for a 'Latvian Latvia'¹⁰³ (Krustiņš, 20 December 2011: 3). This was not the only use of the phrase 'Latvian Latvia', with the first occurring months before Krustiņš's article in *Latvijas Avīze*. On 25 November 2011, Voldemārs Hermanis wrote in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* that the phrase 'Latvia for Latvians!'¹⁰⁴ (ibid.: 2) was rarely used by the Latvian nationalists, a statement which in the context of the overall article suggested that the choice not to use the phrase should be reconsidered. Nonetheless, thereafter, only the articles appearing in *Latvijas Avīze* used the phrase 'Latvian Latvia' with one exception - an article by Viktors Avotiņš in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*. In it, Avotiņš urged the government to identify the legal stance of 'Latvian

¹⁰² "Gaidāmā referenduma jēga nav viss ar balsu pārākumu pierādīt mūsu tiesības uz valsts valodu. Tādas nav jāpierāda. Referendums gan ir tā vieta un reize atgādināt sev un citiem, ka Latvijas valstij ne vien vārds ir latvisks, bet arī saturs."

¹⁰³ "Kas ir par to, kam jāiet uz referendumu un jābalso: par latvisku Latviju."

¹⁰⁴ "Savuties bieži piesauktais pārkonkrustiešu sauklis 'Latviju - latviešiem!', šķiet, šodien nav neviena nacionālā politiskā spēka arsenālā."

Latvia' rather than presume it existed at all (ibid., 8 February 2012: 2). *Latvijas Avīze* did not have similar issues with the concept, and rather treated it as a 'given'.

The use of the phrase 'Latvian Latvia' illustrated a particular dissociation with the Russian-speaking minority, whilst directly interacting with any nationalistically inclined readers. 'Latvian Latvia' is a phrase that was originally employed by the radical right organisation Pērkoņkrusts. In discussing the organisation, V. Stanley Vardys (1978: 75) explains that in 1933, in the depth of the Depression, a party emerged that was known as Ugunskrusts. Immediately banned by the government due to its militant organisation, which stood in opposition to the Latvian constitution, it returned under the name of Pērkoņkrusts. This group represented Latvian right-wing extremism. Its members wore grey shirts and black berets, used a Nazi-style salute, and rallied to the slogan 'Latvia for Latvians'.

For any newspaper to employ the same phrase implied either an alignment with the ideas represented by Pērkoņkrusts or a lack of understanding of those ideas and, furthermore, the history connected to them. In turn, the use of the phrase also aided in shaping a general understanding and in perpetuating a dominant ideology. Nevertheless, the use of the phrase demonstrated a discouragement to self-identify as anyone whom the authors of the articles did not place in the category of 'Latvian Latvia'. The phrase was used in eight separate opinion pieces published in *Latvijas Avīze* in the period analysed, with a strong link to the concept of 'defending' Latvia. Egils Līcītis wrote that Latvians would 'manage on their own and the politicians needed not to bother with promotion of the referendum'¹⁰⁵, further implying that Latvians knew to vote for 'a Latvian Latvia' without being told to do so. Such a proclamation, one that distanced the Latvian-speaking population from the government, once again served to emphasise the ability and need to 'unite' and 'defend' Latvia (ibid., 26 January 2012: 3). Here, the phrase 'Latvian Latvia' served to not only exclude any Russian speakers not included in the

¹⁰⁵ "Nemieties savā ritentiņā, kā esat ņēmušies - netraucēti. Latvieši tiks galā paši - ar pilnu atbildības un mēra sajūtu."

concept, but also the government, which, not exclusively by Līcītis, was considered 'inefficient' and unable to perform the role of a 'defender' that these articles were calling for. Another item by Līcītis, published in *Latvijas Avīze* on 7 February 2012, painted a poetic picture of Latvians uniting to defend Latvia. Līcītis wrote that 'we will hold hands [to fight against] Russian as a second language, for Latvian Latvia!'¹⁰⁶ and stated that Latvians would go and vote against the proposal (ibid.: 3). At times the piece reads more poetically than expected from a newspaper article, as it referred to the Latvian fight against 'Ruslatvia'. Overall, Līcītis wrote that 'we' would be able to hold the Latvian land 'so it stays unoccupied and we - free and national'¹⁰⁷ (ibid.: 3), thus once more emphasising the link between 'Latvian Latvia' and national identity. The terms appeared to work synonymously rather than, as Avotiņš had asked (Avotiņš, 8 February 2012: 2), as any sort of defined term.

Whilst the other two newspapers did not employ the phrase 'Latvian Latvia' as much or, in the case of *Diena*, at all, they did follow the narrative of the referendum being a 'fight' in some ways. An article in *Diena* stated that the referendum was giving voters the opportunity to 'say 'no' to Russian as a second official language' and proceeded to argue that this meant that Latvian citizens would show that the Latvian language could and would 'win in a fair fight'¹⁰⁸ (Āboliņš, 23 January 2012: 2), which would undermine any protests arising in support of the Russian language. Similarly, Māra Zālīte explained that the 'fight' between the Latvian and Russian languages was not an equal one, as there were far more Russian speakers than there were Latvian speakers in the world. She further asked where the 'sense of fairness, generosity and responsibility'¹⁰⁹ in the 'Latvia's Russians' was (ibid., 27 January 2012: 4). The reference to

¹⁰⁶ "Mēs sadodamies rokās - jūti krampi? Mūsu ir leģions, mūsu ir miljons, esam kā uguns, kā viļņojoša Daugava - pret krievu valodu kā otru valsts valodu, par latvisku Latviju!"

¹⁰⁷ "Mēs noturēsim ikvienu pēdu latvju zemes, tilti paliks neieņemti, bet paši - brīvi un nacionāli."

¹⁰⁸ "Jo ir tomēr atšķirība - bokseris zaudē godīgā divcīņā, vai arī viņu dažas minūtes pirms tās sākuma ieslēdz ģērbtuvē, neizlaiž ringā un pasludina par zaudētāju."

¹⁰⁹ ""Man ir izmisīgs jautājums Latvijas krieviem - kur viņu taisnīguma izjūta, kur augstsirdība, kur atbildības sajūta? Vai tiešām sava lingvistiskā komforta dēļ Latvijas krievi nevairītos pakļaut iznīcībai latviešu valodu?"

'Latvia's Russians' here was telling, in that the Russian-speaking Latvians were referred to as only 'Russians' living in Latvia. Māris Zanders thereafter highlighted the point by arguing that speaking Latvian did not mean a loyalty to the Latvian state and the 'interests of the titular nation'¹¹⁰ (ibid., 7 February 2012: 2). Zanders then referred to the need for a better integration policy and ascribed the failing of the present policy to the government. However, the reference to the 'interests' held by the 'titular nation' was a curious one, as it created a prismatic view of *whose* interests those might be. No explanation or analysis of the meaning behind the concept of a 'titular nation' was provided, nor was a discussion of such interests not always being the same to the individuals classified under the concept. Guntis Bojārs added to this, by writing on the day before the referendum that 'there is only one language in Latvia - Latvian. And that is how it will stay',¹¹¹ before noting that this was not disrespectful to the Russian speakers, as it was simply 'the right way' (ibid., 17 February 2012: 2).

In describing the effects a change can have, Graham Smith, Vivien Law, Andrew Wilson, Annette Bohr and Edward Allworth (1998: 99) note that the challenge posed by any type of change is to 'not only the self-preservation of [...] national cultures but also to the security that an ethnic democracy provides for those who benefit from status positions associated with preserving the near-monopoly that members of the core nation have now secured over the country's political, cultural and administrative professions'. The concept of the 'core nation' could here be applied to the references made to a 'titular nation', which would thereafter explain such concepts as acting (and voting) 'the right way' in order to 'defend' the Latvian language. Partially, the recognition, but lack of analysis whether a 'right way' exists in these debates, can be related to Will Kymlicka's (1998: 64) point that 'the language and culture doesn't really need much explaining' as it 'reflects a pervasive and commonsensical attachment to one's language and culture that is also found among national majorities'. The concept of the 'core nation' is thus

¹¹⁰ "Atklātāki runātāji arī atzīst, ka latviešu valodas prasme vien nenozīmē lojalitāti valstij vai pamatnācijas interesēm."

¹¹¹ "Latvijā ir viena valsts valoda - latviešu valoda. Tā tas bija, ir un paliks."

a *presumed* understanding, existing only for the particular writers of the opinion pieces in the Latvian language newspapers, which is thereafter applied widely upon their readers. Whether such an understanding *actually* exists appeared to be irrelevant for as long as it was *presented* as existing.

Even after the referendum, the usage of 'Latvian Latvia' did not cease. On 21 February 2012, Voldemārs Krustiņš in *Latvijas Avīze* proclaimed that the referendum 'which we didn't want, which we didn't invite' was finally over and 'we have done everything we could to keep a Latvian Latvia'¹¹² (ibid.: 3). Whilst the usage of the phrase 'Latvian Latvia' was the most obvious example of the way a sense of pride in one's nation, nationality and national identity was used in portrayal of the 'defending' that was expected from Latvians during this referendum, it was not the only one.

One article proclaimed that 'we are a small tribe - we will only be as big as our will allows'¹¹³ (Hirša, 3 January 2012: 7), whilst another added that 'we know what to do'¹¹⁴ (Līcītis, 6 January 2012: 3). Such representation of the Latvian-speaking readers as inherently knowing that their vote should be cast against the proposition to introduce Russian as an official language in Latvia was prominent across all of the papers. The usage of words such as 'defence' and 'fight' was strongly emphasised by the addition of 'we' (*mēs*) and 'our' (*mūsu*), which were used almost exclusively to refer to Latvian speakers, with no reference to 'us' as the general population and at times specifically *excluding* Russian speakers.

This idea of the referendum being somehow a fight that was to be fought against an enemy was explained somewhat differently by Vaira Paegle, whose article in *Latvijas Avīze* stated that the referendum was a direct consequence of the Latvian consciousness, which had not effectively removed the memories of the USSR from national identity. By claiming that

¹¹² "Ne mūsu gribētais, ne mūsu aicinātais referendums nu ir prom, varam apzināties, ka esam darījuši visu iespējamo, lai saglabātu latvisku Latviju."

¹¹³ "Mēs maza cilts, - Mēs būsim lieli tik, cik mūsu griba..."

¹¹⁴ "Par mīkstčaulību no lieka nav ko uztraukties, paši zinām, kas jādara."

'national identity begins and ends with the language',¹¹⁵ Paegle concluded in the article that the referendum was a 'once in a lifetime chance to ban the evil spirit of communism and begin to live the true life, which is based in Latvian values'¹¹⁶ (ibid., 11 January 2012: 3). This link between national identity and language was an important one, especially when contextualised with Paegle's claim that the vote in the referendum would somehow solidify this notion of a 'Latvian' identity, expelling any leftover beliefs of the USSR. This is a claim that seemed odd in the overall context and essentially went unexplored.

There was a strong sense of the articles using the concept of a very particular pride felt by Latvians, and evidently exclusive to Latvians - as the article by Līcītis (2 December 2011: 3), explored earlier, this concept did not apply to the *Russian* pride. This sense of pride was assumed to be seen, experienced and enacted in the exact way these articles referred to it, without any allowance for a different interpretation. It became a tool in the constructed idea of a 'fight' that Latvians had to win against the 'ill-wishers who want to antagonise the residents of Latvia'¹¹⁷ (Apinis, 18 January 2012: 3). An article by Kārlis Šadurskis further demonstrated this idea of approaching the referendum as a 'fight', one that was inherently crucial to the Latvian state. He wrote that allowing the referendum to happen went against the four cornerstones of defining the Latvian country: (1) a democratic country (2) with citizens, (3) the Latvian territory, and (4) the Latvian language. Šadurskis claimed that 'if even one of these cornerstones is deformed, we lose our country'¹¹⁸ (ibid., 19 January 2012: 3). Similarly, another article stressed the link between voting against the proposition in the referendum and protecting the sovereign right of Latvia (Kristovskis, 14 February 2012: 3). The references to Latvia's sovereignty

¹¹⁵ "Nacionālā identitāte sākas un beidzas ar valodu."

¹¹⁶ "Tā ir arī vienreizēja iespēja izdzīt komunisma ļauno garu un sākt dzīvot patiesu dzīvi, kas balstās uz latviskām vērtībām."

¹¹⁷ "Tie, kas raisīja šo referendumu, bija tikai un vienīgi ļaunprāši, kas gribēja sanaidot Latvijas iedzīvotājus."

¹¹⁸ "Kaut vienu no šiem valsts stūrakmeņiem deformējot, mēs zaudējam savu valsti."

became more common as the date of the referendum neared, with one article referring to the way Latvians needed to cast their votes in order to show that Latvia was and deserved to be independent (Krustiņš, 14 February 2012: 3), and another praising some of the Russian speakers living in Latvia who were ‘true Latvian patriots’ and saw ‘their future here’, recognising ‘that they live in a sovereign state’¹¹⁹ (Liepiņš, 17 February 2012: 3). Here, the recognition of the Latvian sovereignty was not only crucial in highlighting the need for Latvian speakers to ‘defend’ it but also the need for Russian speakers to explicitly *recognise* it in order to be considered even close to the same position as a Latvian speaker.

Not all opinion pieces in *Diena* fully agreed with these concepts, however. Sandris Točs noted that proclaiming it a duty of a Latvian citizen to vote against the proposal, risked the implication that those choosing to vote otherwise, or not vote at all, would therefore be seen as lesser citizens. He emphasised that the Latvian constitution did not, in fact, state that all citizens had a duty to vote a particular way and such comments created more of a cleavage between the citizens of Latvia (ibid., 16 December 2011: 2). This was not an overarching view expressed by the pieces in *Diena*, as the newspaper published more arguments relating to ‘our duty to go and show our uncompromising wish for an independent Latvia’¹²⁰ (Ugaine and Šmits (eds), 11 January 2012: 7).

The day after the referendum, 20 February 2012, Ināra Mūrniece stated that the result had shown that there was a large support for a ‘Latvian Latvia’ in which the ‘titular nation’ was Latvian (ibid.: 3). Iveta Grigule noted in the same article that ‘we can all shape our attitude towards Latvia and Latvians. If we are proud and united, then others will want to be with us’¹²¹ (ibid.: 3); a claim that went on to imply that tolerance would lead to better integration policy. Grigule did not, however, explain *how* she envisioned such an attitude being shaped, with the

¹¹⁹ “Latvijā dzīvojošo krievu aizstāvībai jāsaka, ka starp viņiem ir arī daudz patiesu Latvijas patriotu. Daļa krievu šeit ir iedzīvojušies, ar šo zemi saista savu nākotni un apzinās, ka dzīvo suverēnā valstī.”

¹²⁰ “Šis ir mūsu pienākums iet un apliecināt mūsu nelokāmo vēlmi par neatkarīgu Latvijas valsti.”

¹²¹ “Bet mēs ikviens varam veidot savu attieksmi pret Latviju un latviešiem. Ja būsīm lepmi un vienoti, tad citi gribēs būt ar mums kopā.”

exception of being 'proud and united'. Another article, also published the following day, claimed that the referendum should be considered as a mandate for Latvians 'to continue to defend Latvian values, rather than pretend that everything is fine'¹²² (Antonēvičs, 20 February 2012: 3). Both articles arguably furthered the notion of the referendum having been a battle that Latvians 'won', whilst at the same time outright claiming that Latvian 'values' had been defended. In a referendum which asked whether Russian should be introduced in Latvia as an official language, the issue of 'values' become questionable. The 'defence' that the article urged, here became almost predictive, implying that the 'threat' was not yet overcome.

On the following day, in *Latvijas Avīze*, Voldemārs Krustiņš proclaimed that the 'Latvian people got up, went and stood for their language'¹²³ (ibid., 21 February 2012: 3), positioning the Latvian speakers as heroes who had successfully defended their country. Līcītis furthered this point by writing that 'OUR nation's citizens' [emphasis in the original] experienced a negative feeling going to the referendum, the emotions over the result were thus even more 'positive, loud and proud'¹²⁴ (ibid., 22 February 2012: 3). This once again placed the Latvian speakers as somehow having defended their right to 'their' country, as the emphasis demonstrates, 'our' (*mūsu*) was a crucial part of Līcītis argument. Finally, articles published almost a week after the referendum, and the last in the period analysed, referred to the referendum as having 'solidified the Latvian self-awareness'¹²⁵ (Eglājs, 27 February 2012: 3) and to the people 'having done their job'¹²⁶ in voting against the proposal (Krustiņš, 28 February 2012: 3). The idea of 'Latvian pride' here was highlighted as a significant element in why the referendum failed. Emphasis was placed on the way Latvians had 'defended' their sovereign, independent Latvia, with only few Russian speakers also 'recognising' the Latvian state as sovereign.

¹²² "Tas ir mandāts turpmāk aizstāvēt latviskās vērtības, nevis laipot un līkumot."

¹²³ "Ne jau tāpēc latviešu tauta cēlās, gāja un iestājās par savu valodu."

¹²⁴ "Lai gan, uz referendumu ejot, daudziem MŪSU valsts pilsoņiem bija šķērma un smaga sajūta, tomēr par iznākumu emocijas ir pozitīvākas, skaļākas un lepnākas."

¹²⁵ "[Referendums] toties izraisīja kopš atmodas laikiem nebijušu latviešu pašapziņas nostiprināšanos."

¹²⁶ "Tauta savu darbu padarīja."

The referendum results as indicative of the Latvians having 'won' and having demonstrated their ability to come together as a nation were also highlighted in other articles after the referendum, with remarks regarding 'the nation's ability to rally together'¹²⁷ (Reiniks, 20 February 2012: 3) and to 'unite'¹²⁸ (Račs, 20 February 2012: 3). Another article reflected on the referendum results as having seen Latvians 'pull themselves together and vote', which, in turn, meant that 'the show of the oppressed minorities failed before even having started'¹²⁹ (Jundze, 24 February 2012: 15). Such a claim once again emphasised the binary of 'us' versus 'them', wherein the 'them' - the minorities - were not oppressed but rather had failed to demonstrate the opposite.

5.3.2.6. *Myth and Historical Narrative*

The concepts of pride linked with national identity were explored in Johann Georg von Zimmermann's (1797: 79-80) work, where he reflected that 'the pride founded upon imaginary valour, appears in an excessive estimation of our own courage, and an unjust contempt for our enemies', explaining that 'a nation thinks itself brave, when it does not possess any bravery', which in turn looks down 'on its foes' with conceited vanity. This notion of imagined bravery can be linked to the way many of the opinion pieces analysed here used references to Latvia's history, to the point of mythicization. Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998: 96) noted that 'in the Baltic States, the demarcation, cultivation and transmission of symbols and myths of homeland have emerged as an important means to defining competing representations of national identity'. Such a need to cultivate a myth in order to justify imaginary bravery, and further defend its right to a *just* contempt for imagined enemies, was prominent in the articles analysed.

¹²⁷ "[...] tauta spēj mobilizēties un paust nostāju."

¹²⁸ "Visvairāk mani priecē tas, ka tik daudz cilvēku nobalsoja pret, un tas parāda, ka nav vienalga."

¹²⁹ "Latvieši saņēmās un nobalsoja tik kuplā skaitā, ka iecerētais apspiesto minoritāšu šovs izčākstēja, tā īsti nesācies."

The main example used in this mythicization of Latvian history was the recurrent theme of Latvia's time under Soviet rule. By drawing on the 'us' versus 'them' binary, Kārlis Krūzs claimed that the referendum echoed the roles the Latvian and Russian languages had played during Soviet occupation, when 'Latvian was forced out [...] and became the language only spoken at home and in kitchens'¹³⁰ (ibid., 12 Nov 2011: 3). This reflection on the Soviet times and the way Latvian had been treated, links to Budryte's (2005: 129) argument that in Latvia 'historical memory about Soviet population policies, especially russification [...] played an important role during the process of community building'. She further notes that historical memory 'became part of the debates on citizenship and language policies'. So, the way such historical memories are employed by Krūzs in his article is representative of an established narrative of Latvian community building. 'The use of historical memory in political discourse,' Budryte concludes, 'perpetuated lingering ethnic fear about the extinction of the Latvian nation, which was nearly "killed" during the Soviet period' (ibid.: 29). The use of such memories became notable in the articles analysed for this research, especially as the referendum neared. The use of historical memory appeared to function in a similar fashion - that of solidifying and unifying Latvians for a joint cause, which was portrayed as a 'defence' of the country. This was vastly emphasised by remarks about how the official status of Latvian language had been gained through hardship (see Rozentāls, 3 November 2011: 8).

Another historical event, which was brought in as a comparison to the referendum, appeared in *Latvijas Avīze* on 27 December 2011. Vilis Vītols wrote that the referendum would be a test to a unified Latvia and stressed the importance of a show of solidarity. In his discussion, a comparison to the successful fight against the West Russian Volunteer Army led by General Pavel Bermond-Avalov in 1919 was made. Jukka Rislakki (2014: 91) explains the battle by noting that Bermond-Avalov's army was driven out of Latvia with the aid of British and

¹³⁰ "Gados, kad latviešu valoda pakāpeniski tika izspiesta no sabiedriskajiem procesiem, tautsaimniecības un kļuva par mājas, par virtuves valodu."

French warships. Importantly, though, Rislakki also refers to the battle as a time when 'the Latvians were gripped by a spirit of national unity not seen before nor to be seen again for generations' (ibid.). It is this sense of a national unity, which made Vītols draw upon the battle as significant for the Latvian identity, and thereafter exploit it to propose an argument that the referendum mimicked a similar need to 'defend' Latvia.

In addition to the Bermond-Avalov battle, Vītols also drew on the Singing Revolution of 1991, which Vytis Čiubrinskas (2009: 115) describes as 'an idea that crystallised out of the ancient tradition of utilising songs as an expression of passive resistance to oppression and repression'. He argues that this was 'another Baltic pattern, well known since the end of the nineteenth century' due to 'the singing of the masses during the National Folk Song Festival' (ibid.). Thus, the reference to the Singing Revolution, and by implication the National Folk Song Festival, once again allowed Vītols to concentrate on notions of Latvian national identity as a historically and culturally recognised element in Latvian society. As will be illustrated in the following chapter, the National Folk Song Festival was one of the main references made by interviewees when asked to identify elements of Latvian national identity.

Alongside the references to historical events and the National Folk Song Festival, many articles referred back to the Soviet times and the Russian people, whether in Latvia or in Russia was often left unspecified. Agris Liepiņš wrote that the 'Russians love the myths about Russian language always having been in our land'¹³¹ (ibid., 6 January 2012: 3), arguing that this was neither the case nor should it be recognised as such. Instead of a historical argument, Liepiņš stated that Russian had always existed as the language of 'forced administration and thus should not be compared to [an official language in Latvia]'¹³². A similar point appeared in another opinion piece, which criticised the Prime Minister's reaction to the referendum and suggested that the author would have 'set fire to the headquarters of those promoting the lies of

¹³¹ "Dzīvi ir krieviem tik mīļie mīti par krievu valodas mūžseno un dabisko klātbūtni mūsu zemē."

¹³² "Latvijā krievu valoda vienmēr ir bijusi kaklakungu pārvaldes valoda! Cara ierēdņu un padomju okupantu pārvaldes valoda, tāpēc nav nekāda pamata to pielīdzināt valsts valodai!"

the 1940s occupation'¹³³ (Līcītis, 6 January 2012: 3), implying that the organisers of the referendum were incorrectly representing Latvian history. The implication further emphasises the link between those supporting the referendum and those disagreeing or opposing Latvian sovereignty. An opinion piece by Franks Gordons also supported this point by stating that, despite his personal belief that the referendum would fail, 'the evil has already been done, anti-Latvian feelings have been brought forward'¹³⁴ (ibid., 10 January 2012: 3). Such a statement suggests that the referendum did not *create* 'anti-Latvian' feelings but rather made them more visible. This reflected a statement by Vaira Paegle discussed earlier, in which Paegle referred to 'the evil spirit of communism' and the referendum as a chance to 'begin to live the true life' (ibid., 11 January 2012: 3).

Another article questioned whether Latvians recognised the need to vote in the referendum as a way to 'defend' Latvia, proposing that 'if Latvians do not want to live in a Latvian-speaking country, we should consider re-joining Russia', which would mean that 'there would be no need for a referendum, it would be similar to 1940, when Latvia ceased to exist as a national language'¹³⁵ (Hirša, 25 January 2012: 19). This once again drew upon the memories and socially accepted historical narrative of the Soviet era. Māra Zālīte also made a reference to 'the cruel russification by the Russian empire and the USSR'¹³⁶ (ibid., 27 January 2012: 4), when arguing for the right and need for the Latvian language. The concept of russification was echoed by Inese Vaidere who referred to Latvians as the 'titular nation' that suffered 'russification' under Soviet rule (ibid., 31 January 2012: 4). A similar point was raised by Ritvars Eglājs who claimed that Saskaņas Centrs was 'closer than ever before to return to power after a

¹³³ "Ja es būtu Dombrovskis, rauj viņus jods, liktu tās štābu mītnes un melus par 1940. gada okupāciju, nodedzināt līdz pašiem pamatiem!"

¹³⁴ "Bet jaunums ir padarīts, ķīlis iedzīts, antilatviskums uzjundīts."

¹³⁵ "Ja jau Latvijā viņu [krievu] tik daudz, ka latvieši tikai ar savu latviešu valodu Latvijā vairs nevar vai negrib dzīvot un latviešu valoda kā valsts valoda viņus neapmierina, tad būtu jādomā par atkalapvienošanu ar Krieviju. Nebūtu vajadzīgs pat referendums, būtu apmēram tā, kā tas notika 1940. gadā, - latviešu valoda kā valsts valoda vienkārši pārstāja eksistēt."

¹³⁶ "Nevienlīdzīgais cīkstiņš notiek zemē, kur pēc nežēlīgas rusifikācijas Krievijas impērijā un padomju okupācijā 'vietējā' valoda līdz šim brīdim nav pilnībā atguvusies no brūcēm, kas tai cirstas."

20 year break¹³⁷ (ibid., 27 February 2012: 3), thus outright implying that the political party represented ideas held by the USSR. Furthermore, Eglājs claimed that the referendum had ‘solidified the Latvian self-awareness’ to a point not ‘witnessed since the fight for Latvian independence in late-1980s’¹³⁸ (ibid.). The perspective of history as an important point in boosting notions of a Latvian national identity was repeated in other articles, with Juris Bojārs remarking that ‘for more than 4000 years, our ancestors proved that only Latvians and Livonians have a right to [Latvia]’¹³⁹ (ibid., 31 January 2012: 7). Such a blatant perpetuation of the ‘Latvian myth’ was similar to the usage of concepts relating to Latvian pride employed in other articles, especially those published in *Latvijas Avīze*.

An open letter from Catholic leaders in Latvia, published in *Latvijas Avīze*, further urged people to vote against the proposition to introduce Russian as an official language in Latvia. The letter reminded readers that religious leaders had played an important role in the unification of Latvia and the Latgale region in 1917, noting that now, too, it was their duty to express their opinion. The letter called the referendum ‘a question of existence’¹⁴⁰ (Pujats, et al., 10 February 2012: 3), not specifying whether it was referring to the existence of Latvia as a sovereign state, as the case would have been in the struggles of 1917, or whether ‘existence’ was a remark about Latvian national identity, as had been the case in other articles. For example, Guntis Bojārs concluded an article by claiming that unless the political forces in Latvia came to an agreement on how to approach both the referendum and integration policy as a whole, ‘Latvia could be lost’¹⁴¹ (ibid., 17 February 2012: 2) - a statement that was both dramatic and emotive. Similarly, Elita Veidemane added that a lack of action from the Latvian-speaking populace in the

¹³⁷ “Pērnruđen *Saskaņas Centrs* Saeimas vēlēšanās ieguva jau 31 vietu un bija tuvāk nekā jebkad, lai atgrieztos pie varas pēc divdesmit gadu pārtraukuma.”

¹³⁸ “[Referendums] toties izraisīja kopš atmodas laikiem nebijušu latviešu pašapziņas nostiprināšanos.”

¹³⁹ “Vairāk nekā 4000 gadus veci mūsu senkapi apliecina, ka tikai latvieši un līvi var Latvijas zemi vēsturiski uzskatīt par savu.”

¹⁴⁰ “Neaizmirsīsim faktus no latviešu tautas vēstures, jo skaitliski mazai tautai savā zemē valoda ir eksistences jautājums.”

¹⁴¹ “Latvija var tikt pazaudēta.”

referendum could and would produce a country lacking an identity, which in turn could 'be taken by any political thief'¹⁴² (ibid., 23 November 2011: 2). This link to historical struggles for independence was also referred to by others, as Ģirts Valdis Kristovskis, in an article titled 'Everyone back to the barricades',¹⁴³ accusing all those who would not participate in the referendum of betraying their Latvian ancestors (ibid., 14 February 2012: 3).

In explaining the way a core nation may defend and exploit the right to cultural protection to the detriment of the liberties of others, Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998) noted the argument that those who are not part of 'the historic homeland', but who reside in the polity, need to be consulted over political decisions. However, the authors pointed out that such an argument was 'rejected on familiar nationalist grounds that the political homeland is the only territory where core nation has a historical homeland' and that this was then placed in contrast to Russians 'who have their own homeland elsewhere' (ibid.: 106-7). Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth's points appeared to echo across the opinion pieces analysed, as many drew upon the ideas of a 'political homeland' in combination with a 'historical homeland', especially in articles such as Kristovskis, which made direct references to 'the Latvian ancestors'.

The issue with such concepts as Russians having 'their own homeland elsewhere' was noted by Nils Ušakovs in an article for *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, where he reflected that Russian speakers fought on the Latvian side in two World Wars and defended Latvia's right to a national sovereignty. Ušakovs stated that 'hundreds of thousands of Russian-speaking Latvians' felt that 'to speak of respect currently' was 'irrelevant'. The main reason for such a feeling between the Russian speakers was that 'the [Latvian] government consists of parties which think of [Russian speakers] as illegal colonists and divide Latvian citizens in categories only [the politicians] can

¹⁴² "Pasūtījums ir skaļi neizteikts, bet absolūti reāls. Tāds, lai Latvija neatgriezeniski kļūtu nelatviska. Tāda, kas nebūtu vajadzīga pašiem latviešiem. Tāda, kas būtu redzama vien etnogrāfiskajā muzejā. Tāda, kas paliktu par bezidentitātes platību, kuru kā lupatdeķi varētu pievākt ikviens politiskais zaglis."

¹⁴³ "Visi atkal uz barikādēm!"

understand - Latvians, Russians and those Latvians who vote for the wrong political parties'¹⁴⁴ (ibid., 8 November 2011: 3). The linking of the referendum as a perceived positive for Russian speakers could be seen as aiding the perpetuation of a concept such as a 'Latvian Latvia' in the narrative presented by the government. Furthermore, the link emphasised by many of the opinion pieces is relevant in analysing the way the representation of Russian speakers is constructed in the Latvian-language media.

In the way Latvian history was portrayed through a historical narrative that praised and reminded readers of Latvia's struggles for independence, more poetic references were also made to Latvian culture's relationship with nature, which Latvians, as Katrina Z. S. Schwartz (2006: 9) notes, 'to this day [...] claim a special closeness to [...] as a key defining element of national identity'. Schwartz's point was partially reflected in the interviews conducted, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In the opinion pieces, the importance of nature was highlighted by Egils Līcītis, as he wrote 'Latvian Latvia is our language, our culture, white birches and blue lakes'¹⁴⁵ (ibid., 22 February 2012: 3), thus grouping language together with elements of nature, assigning to both a similar importance for Latvian identity.

Some articles acknowledged the way the narrative surrounding the referendum and Latvian national identity had become bestrewn with references to a particular perception of Latvian identity. Māris Zanders explained how the main concern for him was that the confusion and creation of false ideologies, noting the importance not to 'create myths and conflicts for the future'¹⁴⁶ (ibid., 9 February 2012: 2). Viktors Avotiņš added that claims such as Latvia being 'the

¹⁴⁴ "Bet simtiem tūkstošu krievvalodīgo latijiešu uzskata, ka pašlaik runāt par cieņu pret viņiem būtu neveselīgs optimisms. Kaut vai tāpēc, ka valdībā ietilpst partija, kuras pārstāvji uzskata viņus par nelikumīgiem kolonistiem un kuri dala Latvijas pilsoņus tikai viņiem vien saprotamās kategorijās - latvieši, krievi un latvieši, kuri balso par nepareizām partijām."

¹⁴⁵ "Latviska Latvija ir mūsu valoda, mūsu kultūra, baltie bērzi un zilie ezeri."

¹⁴⁶ "Neiekodēsim mītus un konfliktus nākotnē."

only place in the world where it is possible to cultivate the Latvian culture and language'¹⁴⁷ (ibid., 8 February 2012: 2) were meaningless unless linked to a clear, legal precedent in the Constitution. In fact, Avotiņš went as far as to mock the local town councils who had expressed a concern relating to the referendum on the grounds of an unpredictable result. Avotiņš wrote that 'all [the councils] needed to do, was to declare a state of emergency' as 'no referendum could' then take place (ibid., 9 February 2012: 2).¹⁴⁸ Avotiņš's use of a comparison to dictatorship-like conditions highlighted the pathetic nature of any governing organisation fearing that their electorate disagreed with their rule, rather than addressing the issue of *why* such disagreement might exist.

5.4. Conclusion

Despite the few instances of articles which criticised the predominant narrative expressed across the newspapers during the referendum campaign and its aftermath, the majority maintained the themes of 'us versus them', 'pride' and 'myth'. These themes were interlinked and articles often featured more than one of them, with the overarching definition of 'us' - Latvian speakers - and 'them' - Russian speakers. However, as noted in this analysis, 'them' became prismatic as more articles were dedicated to both the Russian-speaking political parties and the Latvian-speaking government as a whole. Such a shift correlated with the emphasis placed on the Latvian pride, and furthermore, the use of myth in constructing the narrative around Latvian identity. This drew heavily on Latvian history, especially in relation to previous struggles for independence.

The use of the concept of pride was also prominent in discussions of the need to vote, and furthermore, the need to vote *against* the introduction of Russian as an official language in

¹⁴⁷ "Bet manā uztverē proklamāciju, kuras galvenā tēze ('latviešu valoda [*sic*] ir vienīgā vieta pasaulē, kur iespējama latviešu kultūras un valodas pastāvēšana un attīstība') arī bez šā Saeimas vēstījuma ir pašsaprotama katram latvietim un, kā liecina mana pieredze, arī vairākumam vietējo krievu."

¹⁴⁸ "Taču pašvaldībām ir viegli izvairīties no referendumiem. Vajag tik vien kā izsludināt nepārtrauktu ārkārtas stāvokli. Jo kara un ārkārtas situācijās referendumus nerīko."

Latvia. All three of the Latvian-language newspapers analysed proposed that the vote in the referendum was not only necessary, but it was also presented as a way for Latvian speakers to express their national identity and to fight for the freedom of the Latvian state once more. The comparisons to struggles experienced under the Soviet regime, especially those regarding language and russification, were positioned as a 'fight', which Latvian speakers not only had to partake in but also, crucially, were expected to engage in, thus making the vote in the referendum representative of one's 'national duty' rather than just a democratic choice.

The introduction of a historical narrative further emphasised the position of the referendum as a 'fight', and importantly, as a way for Latvian speakers to defend their country the way their ancestors had. The presentation of exercising a democratic right as equal to the battles fought for independence was expressed with no irony, linking the two as equal. This allowed for the historical narrative to be recognised in the research as highly representative of the way Latvian national identity was being constructed by the newspaper articles. Furthermore, the historical narrative itself was being constructed by the newspapers to create a strong sense of unity not only with the current Latvian speakers, but also those who had gone before them. The historical fights for independence were heavily highlighted as impacting on the way that Latvian speakers were expected to *act out* their national identity.

According to Anderson, part of what structures and allows for a re-enactment of such elements of identity is the interaction with the media. In discussing people's relationship with newspapers, Anderson (2006: 35-6) notes that 'each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion'. Furthermore, Anderson suggests that at the same time the newspaper reader observes 'exact replicas of his own paper being consumed' in public spaces and thus is 'reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life'. This allows for a unity in recognising that a paper is read widely, and that the same information is accessible, shared, and, presumably,

accepted by many. This sustains a sense of readership *community*, with its own recognisable identity- and value-systems. However, such a sense of shared commonality does not allow for the understanding of *how* the information is thereafter distilled by the consumers.

This chapter has illustrated that there was a presumed communality ascribed to the readers. The opinion pieces addressed a Latvian-speaking audience, the majority ascribing to the reader an identity of someone who fell within the category of 'us', defined as the 'Latvian-speaking us', but more importantly, the 'Latvian-speaking us' in contrast to the 'Russian-speaking them'. This once again emphasises Gellner's comments on how 'nationalism invents nations, rather than the other way around' (in O'Leary, 1998: 54). In the articles analysed throughout this chapter, the sense of nationalism, as defined by only recognising the Latvian-speaking community as 'us', allows the shaping of the 'nation' to be exclusively Latvian and as such, to see itself as threatened by 'the influx from outside' (Hobsbawm, 2000: 263). However, this definition of 'us' shifted during the referendum campaign allowing for a more splintered view of both national identity (as identified thus far) and also a more prismic view of issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

This shift in expressing the 'us' versus 'them' binary illustrated the way the newspapers changed their approach in campaigning for an against vote. The recognition of 'us' as Latvian speakers was overarching and featured in all of the articles. However, whilst 'them' was originally, and predominantly, placed upon the Russian speakers, the reference became more prismatic as the discussion neared the day of the referendum. The ascription of the 'them' label to Saskaņas Centrs was blurred with the initiators of the referendum, and many of the articles referred to the two synonymously. This blurring could be ascribed to the fact that during the initial signature collection, Nils Ušakovs openly admitted to having signed for the proposed referendum. However, such references were arguably also heavily linked with the recognition of Saskaņas Centrs as 'a Russian-speaking' political party that has historically campaigned for the rights of Russian speakers in Latvia. Despite the two articles by Ušakovs published in

Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze (8 November 2011 and 14 November 2011), in which Ušakovs explained that he did not believe the referendum would succeed, but rather that it was simply indicative of the detachment felt by the Russian speakers in Latvia towards the governing powers, all three newspapers, including *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, continued to portray Saskaņas Centrs as attempting to challenge the Latvian sovereignty.

Despite the shift in the category of 'them', when considering Saskaņas Centrs and the organisers of the referendum, a less explicit reference to the category was still applied to the Russian-speaking minority. The implication that Russian speakers had voted for Saskaņas Centrs and supported the referendum, positioned them if not necessarily in that particular definition of 'them' then certainly as encouraging of it. A difference, however, was noticeable when the label of 'them' splintered once again, this time to be applied when discussing the Latvian-speaking politicians and the government as a whole. Many of the articles, in all three of the newspapers analysed in this research criticised the government's approach to the referendum campaign as well as Latvia's integration policy in general. Here a minor diversion occurred, from 'us' being only Latvian speakers to some articles positioning the Russian speakers against 'them - the government'. The category of 'us' still predominantly concentrated on the Latvian speakers, but explicitly excluded the government. In turn, this allowed some articles to tentatively include the 'normal Russians'¹⁴⁹ (see Krustiņš, 8 November 2011: 3), who 'know what the country they live in is called'¹⁵⁰ (Veidemane, 15 November 2011: 3) in the category of 'us'. This particular splintering of the identification in the binaries of 'us' and 'them' complicated the overarching binary, wherein 'us' was recognised as Latvian speakers and 'them' as Russian speakers, but did not dilute the concepts enough in order to not still serve as the baseline and the originally recognised binary itself. It did, however, highlight the way 'them' had to be identified in order to position 'us'.

¹⁴⁹ "Tomēr nedomāju, ka Latvijā trūkst gan krievu, gan krievvalodīgu cilvēku ar normālu cilvēku domu gaitu."

¹⁵⁰ "Tie krievi, kuri zina, kā sauc valsti, kurā viņi dzīvo."

The identified 'them' became even more complex as a third division was introduced - that of the predominantly Latvian-speaking government and politicians. The way 'them' shifted towards the inclusion of the government did not occur instantly. *Saskaņas Centrs* featured in the articles almost from the very beginning of the coverage, especially in articles that synonymously used the party when discussing the initiation of the referendum and the threat it posed to Latvian sovereignty. The discussion of the overall government, not just *Saskaņas Centrs*, differed in that the government was not accused of *initiating* the referendum, but rather *helping* it through lack of action. As discussed, many articles accused the government of lacking action and criticised its inability to stop and impact upon the referendum. This, in turn, aided the articles which proclaimed that the referendum was a 'fight' in which Latvians had to 'defend' the Latvian language and Latvia's sovereign right. Notably, this 'defence' had to occur in spite of the government, which was deemed 'weak', 'unprofessional', 'unwilling to engage' and 'political mouthpieces' (see Beitnere, 2 January 2012: 2; Āboliņš, 20 January 2012: 2; Krustiņš, 28 February 2012: 3). This detachment felt by the population from the governing powers became more visible in the way the newspapers called upon Latvians to vote in the referendum.

A minimal number of positive references were made in the articles analysed both here and in Chapter Four. Whilst the majority of the articles addressing the Russian-speaking minority and/or the referendum demonstrated a problematic and often negative or at least neutral portrayal of Russian speakers, it is important to acknowledge that there were also positive representations. However, this should not be taken as indicative of the overall representation as many of the articles that could have been deemed positive were produced by the same few journalists (specifically see Viktors Avotiņš's articles for *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*). Articles such as those by Avotiņš span across both Chapter Four and Chapter Five, demonstrating that some allowances were offered for journalists to present a positive, and at times critical view of the mainstream narrative portrayal of Russian speakers (see Avotiņš, 20

February 2012: 2; Avotiņš, 19 November 2014: 6-7). Nonetheless, the limited number of such articles suggests that less positive perspectives were far more common.

All of the papers campaigned for a vote against the proposition to introduce Russian as a second official language in Latvia. This is evident in the articles analysed in this research. However, what this chapter is most concerned with is *how* this campaign was narrated and positioned. As already noted, the role of Latvian national identity as expressed through feelings of pride and historical understandings featured heavily in the way the articles expressed the need to vote. More importantly, it was part of expressing *how* to vote. The reliance on the readers' presumed understanding of a Latvian national identity featured heavily. As a concept it was neither explored nor analysed, but rather just existed. This, in turn, led to claims such as the readers 'knowing' what 'needed to be done' (see Latkovskis, 12 December 2011: 3; Krustiņš, 20 December 2011: 3; Točs, 3 January 2012: 2; Līcītis, 6 January 2012: 3).

Of the three newspapers, *Latvijas Avīze*, having published the most articles in relation to the referendum, most strongly emphasised the need to vote against the proposal. However, it is important to note that the day before the referendum, the front pages of all three newspapers contained pictures that showed a referendum slip with a vote in the 'against' section and urged to vote 'against' in their headlines (see Appendix Three). It is thus reasonable to argue that all three newspapers strongly opposed the notion that Russian might become the second official language in Latvia. The presumed understanding by readers regarding the vote and the meaning of 'being Latvian', and therefore supporting a 'Latvian Latvia', was cultivated by the employment of a particular historical narrative.

The analysis of the three newspapers illustrated that reliance upon a national myth was used in references to Latvia's struggle under the Soviet rule. Both by referring to earlier fights for independence and the policy of russification, the three newspapers drew heavily on the idea that the referendum was a chance to defend Latvia in a similar fashion to those who had previously fought for Latvia's sovereignty. Bauer (2000: 63) notes that 'in the telling of history,

the idea of nation is linked with the idea of its destiny, with the memory of heroic struggles' and 'with triumphs and defeats'. It is this idea of Latvia's destiny that the newspapers appeared to strongly rely on. Bauer further explains how the memories relating to the 'struggling people of the past' are the ones that transform 'into love for the bearer of this motley fate, the nation' (ibid.). The way in which the newspapers employed a historical memory in order to emphasise a sense of belonging and identity - one which was unique to the Latvian speakers, as explored through the many struggles they had historically endured - was strongly linked to the recognised struggle of 'people of the past' and furthermore the way that knowledge was then transformed in expressing one's love for the nation. This presumed and accepted understanding impacted on how the referendum was represented by the three newspapers in the period analysed. Notably, it was exactly the presumption of a particular background knowledge, an accepted knowledge of what a 'Latvian identity' stood for that drove the points expressed within the newspapers.

This resonates with the way that the articles were presented in the six week sample analysed in the previous chapter. Whilst during the coverage of the 2012 Language Referendum there were more articles, the coverage was similar in its discussion and representation of Russian-speaking minority to that in *Latvijas Avīze, Diena* and *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, alongside LTV1, LNT and TV3 analysed in the first content chapter (Chapter Four). Once again, many of the claims relied heavily on the audience agreeing with the points made and understanding the background relating to the coverage. The way in which articles presented 'Latvian identity' as a more than inherit property, further complicated analysis, because it assumed that audiences agree on this binary of 'us' versus 'them' that always represents them as 'us'.

There is a significant discrepancy between the samples explored in this thesis. Whilst the materials explored in Chapter Four reflected a distinct lack of stories relating to Russian speakers during a time when no specific events relating to the Russian-speaking minority were happening, the case study on the referendum (in Chapter Five) reflected the change in news

coverage during the coverage of a politically and socially charged event. The lack of coverage relating to Russian speakers during the first sample period is arguably telling in its own right.

In discussing race and minority representation in the media, Stephanie Greco Larson (2006: 14) explains that 'the media do not create [...] representations out of thin air', but such representations are 'a part of cultural discourse that reinforces a racial hierarchy found in society'. Whilst Larson specifically discusses race here, these notions are reflected a more generalised discussion of minority representation in the media. She adds that 'dominant discourses reflect the values of the culture in which they are produced' (ibid.), which, in the case of Latvian-language media, could be seen to represent a Latvian-centric culture. By noting the distinctive lack of any significant representation given to the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news, I would argue that such a 'reflection' of values is more accurately a 'construction' of values, or a 'perpetuation' of values that have already been presented as existing. Larson furthers her argument by adding that such stories, or lack thereof, 'normalise behaviour by habitually showing certain ways that people relate to each other' (ibid.: 15). In the case of the Latvian-language news media, this 'relation' might be seen as either non-existent or, at best, highly complicated. However, it is important to recognise, as Chapter Six will illustrate, that such constructions do not automatically imply an accurate representation of habitual behaviour.

Building on these arguments, the following chapter will consider the construction of Latvian national identity and its understanding as expressed by the presumed media audiences. Furthermore, the chapter will establish the way in which Latvian speakers view of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. This will provide a way to analyse the media representation and the construction of a particular narrative regarding the relationship and whether such an understanding exists outside the scope of mediated stories.

6. Chapter Six: The perception of Latvian identity and the Russian-speaking minority by Latvian speakers

6.1. Introduction

The chapter sets out to investigate a number of concepts relating to national identity as illustrated in the interviews conducted for this research. Furthermore, the chapter will connect these with the findings of the first two content chapters, which have considered the media representation of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media, demonstrating an overall link between national identity and the Russo-Latvian socio-political relations in Latvia. The chapter will also address the social role that the Latvian-language media play in the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. As semi-structured interviews were the main data source for this chapter, a section on methodology outlines how the interviews were constructed, accounting for how the findings from interview-pilot study resulted in adjustments to the main set of questions. The questions, as will be explained in greater detail in the section exploring their construction, were designed to account not only for the interviewees' perceptions of the Latvian-language media but also for their understanding of issues of belonging and self-identification. This tailored approach, in turn, allowed for a closer analysis of notions of Latvian national identity, which was an overarching theme across the thesis as a whole.

Following the methodology section, the discussion of the interview data accounted for many of the claims being made regarding the functionality of Latvian national identity (see 2.3.2. in Literature Review). As outlined briefly in the Literature Review chapter, the composition of Latvian identity, and the way it is re-enacted within society, can be questioned and addressed through different lenses (such as culture, language, and history). The chapter, based on a qualitative analysis of the interview material that was collected, will demonstrate how some of

the concepts introduced and explored in the previous two content chapters interacted with those expressed by Latvian speakers during the interviews. Providing such analysis will also allow for a stronger link to be established with such ideas than arguably currently exists in published research, as well as a more systematic analysis of the ways in which the Latvian-language media design coverage regarding the Russian-speaking minority.

6.2. Interview Methodology

In order to develop a meaningful set of data that could be analysed and assessed alongside the other two case studies, semi-structured interviews were employed to explore the opinions and ideas held by the Latvian-speaking population of Latvia regarding their own identities, as well as the relationship between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking population. A semi-structured approach to the interviews was selected for reasons of flexibility. Sharan B. Merriam (2009) notes that less structured formats assume that individual respondents define the world in unique ways. She explains that, even though usually specific information is desired from all the respondents, the format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand. Furthermore, she adds that a semi-structured approach would allow for easier access to the emerging worldview of the respondent/s and create scope for new ideas to be expressed (ibid.: 90). A similar argument is presented by Galletta (2013) who states that the flexible ways in which semi-structured interview techniques operate can allow for an easier access to the complexity of one's research. She explains that semi-structured interviews can be carried out in one sitting, or several, and allow for considerable reciprocity between the participant and the research (ibid.: 24), which would ensure a more conversation-like interview style and greater agency for the interviewee, with allowances for sub-questions at a later date if necessary.

The interview-specific research aimed to establish some of the ways in which the Latvian-speaking community understood the concept of Latvian national identity and to gauge its relative significance. Furthermore, the research also intended to assess the ways in which

the Latvian-speaking population saw and understood its relationship with the Russian-speaking minority of Latvia. In order to accomplish these aims, the semi-structured interview style concentrated on questions relating to national identity and ways in which it is understood, as well as its role, both politically and socially, in Latvia. Maxwell (1996) states that interviewing someone can only reveal what that individual thinks or feels, and address only their personal values and perceptions of reality. He argues that interview data can never reveal what is actually real now or was actually real in the past (ibid.: 65). The consequences of this perspective were considered in the context of this research, through acknowledging potential personal biases and instances of factual inaccuracy as a result of individual reflections, and by guarding against reifying emergent patterns. However, despite these obstacles, it is important to note that an interview can offer insights into the degree to which certain values and feelings are shared within a sample cohort of interviewees. By applying a qualitative analysis to the received responses, the interviews can also help to account for the most-often held opinions and shared attitudes.

6.3. Conducting interviews

The project aimed to capture a snap-shot of the views held by a varied sample of the Latvian-speaking population, an approach explained in more detail earlier in the overall Methodology section. In order to achieve this, the interviews were collected from various regions across Latvia. Similarly, the interviews were conducted with people of different genders, varied educational backgrounds, and multiple occupations and age groups. Semi-structured questions were used for all participants to ensure clear points of comparison. However, occasionally, the questions were expanded, depending on the answers given. To establish a feasible way to cover as much of Latvia's territory as possible, an approximately similar number of interviews was collected from the four cultural districts of Latvia - Latgale, Kurzeme, Zemgale and Vidzeme. In addition to the four districts, a similar number of interviews as per each district was

collected in the capital city, Rīga, in order to account for almost half of Latvia's population living there. The interviewees were selected through a process of first exploring personal networks and thereafter requesting the interviewees to be selected through such networks. In the majority of the cases, the respondents were completely unknown to the researcher and selected by others, based on their name, gender and location.



Image 4

By offering a wide geographical coverage (as illustrated in Image 4), the responses to the questions allowed for a mapping of particular perceptions and their contextual implications depending on the parts of Latvia where specific answers were generated. An ethnographic consideration of the geographic distribution of answers offered the research a wider view of the perceptions held by the Latvian-speaking population, both with regards to their identity and the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. It is important to note, here, that the geographical locations did not appear to significantly impact upon the answers given, and in the

majority of cases, similar views were offered independently of the interviewee's geographical location.

6.3.1. Information for participants and consent forms

An information sheet in Latvian was created for the research, informing the participants of the context of the research, noting that the main aim for the study was to explore Latvian-language news media and the perceptions it portrayed. The information sheets were given to the interviewees prior to the interviews and sufficient time was allocated to ensure that the participants were able to read the information and ask any additional questions they might have. Throughout all the interviews collected, no participants expressed difficulty or confusion regarding the information sheets. (See Appendix Four for an example of the information sheet.)

The interviewees were also asked to sign a consent form in line with good practice and ethical research requirements. The form was linked with the information sheet and asked the respondents to confirm that they had understood the information provided prior to the interview process. No issues were raised by any of the participants in regards to these forms. (See Appendix Five for an example of the complete consent form.)

Approval from the Aberystwyth University Ethics Committee was sought and received for this project.

6.4. Quantitative questions

All the respondents, for both the interview pilot and the main round of interviews, were asked to complete a sheet with quantitative questions. These aimed to collect demographic data on respondents' age, gender, geographical location, educational level, profession, language skills, preferred media sources, and preferred newspaper. Such data were collected in order to test whether the opinions expressed by the respondents were dependant on particular variables. The quantitative data questionnaire also asked the interviewees to rate their trust in

the media using a Likert-style scale numbered from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least trust expressed and 10 being the most. The last question drew on work by Ilze Šulmane, whose research into Latvian media (2010) noted that 80% of Latvians expressed that they trusted the Latvian-language media. This part of the thesis sought to test and reflect on this claim in order to establish whether a change in perception had occurred. The quantitative question sheets were also used to collect contact information for the participants, for any further communication that might be required.

6.5. Constructing the qualitative questions

The questions for the semi-structured interviews were set out to cover multiple points that, thereafter, were designed to link together in a clear narrative. Firstly, overall research aims and objectives were outlined in order to be transformed into questions appropriate to a non-academic context. This was done to achieve the most productive results since, as Tom Wengraf (2001: 61-2) stresses, 'research questions need to be clearly distinguished from any interview-questions/prompts that [one] might design or use'. This is necessary in order to create a visible distinction for 'the problematic indicator-concept relationship', which is 'filled by instrumentation theory and assumption' (ibid.). In other words, research questions can not be productively implemented in interviews and require a simplified application. However, the interviewee questions still need to be able to fulfil their role in interacting with the established research aims.

Based on the premise that research questions cannot work as appropriate interview questions, converting the aims and objectives of the research into interview questions was a priority at this stage in the overall project design.

The research aims and objectives were outlined as the following:

A consideration of the ways in which contemporary Latvian-language media represent the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

An outline and analysis of the socio-political issues concerning the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia through the content of Latvian-language media.
Identification of the notions and definitions relating to the term ‘Latvian national identity’.
An assessment of the Latvian speakers’ perception of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.
Identification of the social relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, as understood by Latvian-first-language speakers.
An assessment of the existence of any links between particular perceptions held by Latvian speakers and Latvian-language media’s portrayal of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

Table 9

Pertaining to the outlined research aims and objectives, four main Question Sets containing semi-structured questions were developed. Each of the four main sets were then given between two and four sub-questions, with an allowance for extra questions to be asked depending on the responses received within the interviews as they were conducted.

Understanding and/or defining ‘Latvian national identity’, reflecting the first research aim, was the intended outcome of Question Set One. Therefore, the opening question was a request for the interviewees to ‘describe, in as much detail as possible, what [they] understood by the term “Latvian national identity”’. After two of the pilot interviews, this question was adjusted for the subsequent interviews due to the struggles some interviewees appeared to experience in answering it. This will be discussed in more detail in the section introducing the findings of the interview-pilot study. The sub-questions for this set were constructed in order to elaborate on

any responses received from the opening question. The first of the three was ‘Do you feel that your personal sense of identity fits the criteria you have outlined?’, which aimed to explore the interviewees’ individual position on their sense of national identity. The second question was ‘What, in your opinion, could be done to improve/emphasise the Latvian national identity?’. This question was aimed to assess the type of traditions, conditions and ideas associated with one’s national identity. The third and final sub-question in this set was ‘How, if at all, do you think the Russian-speaking minority impacts on the Latvian national identity?’. The question served two purposes for the research: firstly, it was designed to note any personal views that the interviewees held in relation to their understanding of Latvian national identity, and the role that the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia might hold to further undermine or affect such identity. Secondly, this question was also designed to connect Question Set One with the following set, which concerned itself in greater detail with the perception of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia.

The next establishing question for Question Set Two, was ‘Could you explain what you understand by the “Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia?”’. This question, like the first in Question Set One, was adjusted and changed during the pilot. The language used in this question did not significantly differ from the original research question written in English. Linguistically, the question became more appropriate as an interview question once translated into Latvian, as the concept of ‘Russo-Latvian relationship’ is more common and easier to engage with in Latvian. The question aimed to allow the interviewees to provide their explanations and understandings of the relationship between the two communities in Latvia and to introduce a pathway towards exploring further issues or concepts noted by the interviewees.

There were two sub-questions within Question Set Two. The first was ‘Do you associate the phrase ‘Russian-speaking minority’ with the Russian speakers you know personally?’ This was composed to establish how the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers differed as either abstract concepts or in daily practice. This question proved to be indicative of notions

of 'othering' as a concept that both established and grounded a sense of identity, by allowing the respondents to position themselves and the people they regularly engaged with as differing from those Russian speakers that they referred to (see LVF35R; NWM18R; JHF51Z; JMF43K; BOM23V). There were two versions of another sub-question created for Question Set Two, dependent on the interviewees' ages. The questions were set to reveal whether a generational shift in the way people perceived and understood the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers existed, and if so, what it might be and how it was accounted for. The phrasing of the question was adjusted for two age groups - aged thirty-five and over, and aged thirty-five and under - with the aim of addressing the change in the relationship since the fall of the USSR. Those aged thirty-five and under would have been no older than eleven at the time Latvia's independence was regained from the USSR (4 May 1990). For the purposes of this research, it was presumed that those aged thirty-five and over would be more likely to possess stronger memories of the relationship between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities at the time as a result of living through such systematic change as adults. Those aged thirty-five and over were asked: 'How has the relationship changed between the two communities in the last 25 years (post-USSR)?', whilst those interviewees who were younger than thirty-five years were asked: 'Is there a particular way [that you] recall [your] parents referring to the Russian speakers when [they] were growing up?'. The question for those under thirty-five was slightly adjusted for the main body of interviews following the pilot, but still aimed to reflect on whether the interviewees personally felt that there had been a change during the time that they had grown up, in terms of how the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers was addressed. As will be discussed in the findings, both questions, whilst designed to account for a similar topic, provided differing results in the pre- and post-USSR split.

Question Set Three was created to address the issue of Latvian-language media and the interviewees' perceptions and engagement with it. The main question for Question Set Three was 'In what ways do you think this relationship (between Latvian and Russian speakers) is

represented in the Latvian-language news media?'. The question was supposed to clarify any personal views held by the interviewees, and explored the ways in which they perceived the representation of such issues. This question was also the most direct link between the interviews and the previous two chapters of this project (which have discussed the representation of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media). As the majority of statistical material had already been collected and analysed in advance of the interviews, the research was informed by the statistical representation of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media. The opening question for Question Set Three did not introduce the interviewees to these statistics, and instead aimed to outline the ways in which the interviewees *perceived* the representation of such issues by the Latvian-language news media. This point was crucial to the development of the questions in Question Set Three, as both the establishing question and its sub-questions were concerned with *conceptual*, not factual, understanding of the media and the interviewees' engagement with it.

There were four sub-questions in Question Set Three, as this set was intended to provide an overview of the analysis explored in the research so far (specifically, the analysis of the ways in which Latvian-language news media represented the Russian-speaking minority). The first of the four sub-questions was 'Where do you hear the two communities mentioned the most?', which was set to explore the type of media sources the interviewees used and engaged with. This question, which will be further explored in the discussion of the interview-pilot study, was at times removed from some of the interviews, as the respondents had already provided the answer elsewhere in the interview. The second sub-question was 'Do you think the information provided is mostly positive or negative?'. Importantly, however, neither 'positive' nor 'negative' was defined to the interviewees, leaving it up to each individual to decide what they understood by these terms. As will be demonstrated in the discussion of the answers, the interviewees rarely struggled to identify the representation as positive or negative, but they did fail to give examples of such perceptions. The third sub-question under this set was 'In what

way do you think the information should be provided?', which was designed to allow for further investigation into what constituted an individual's personal view of a 'positive' or a 'negative' representation. The fourth and last sub-question for Question Set Three was 'Do you feel that media play an important part in constructing a truth about Russo-Latvian relations?'. The sub-question was created to establish any presumed influence that the media might hold over the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. This sub-question was adjusted and changed for the main study, as a result of the pilot, to capture the interviewees' thoughts about the so-called influence of the media more generally, rather than being just specifically linked to the Russo-Latvian relations as embedded in the original question.

The last Question Set was composed in order to function as a reflection on the previous three question-sets, as well as demonstrate a more conceptual understanding of both Latvian identity and Latvian statehood. After the pilot and throughout the main interviews, Question Set Four came to function as a further investigation into Latvian national identity, where at times Question Set One may arguably have failed to achieve the necessary level of complexity in the responses given. The establishing question for Question Set Four was 'What do you think the future of Latvia will be?', with the sub-questions designed to allow for an exploration of both the overall question, and generate potential for a more open-ended response. The first of the three sub-questions asked the interviewees how they thought 'the Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia will develop?'. The question aimed to note whether the respondents expected a positive shift in the social relationship, and to assess why a particular response was given. The second sub-question was more closely linked to the first section of the interview and asked 'what role will the Latvian national identity play in the future?'; following the pilot, the language of this question was adjusted, whilst retaining the original meaning. The sub-question proved fruitful in discussing broader concepts of what the respondents felt it meant to be Latvian. The last sub-question in Question Set Four, and the interview as a whole, was 'What changes to the status quo do you see as necessary in order to realise this future?' Once again, the sub-question was changed

and adjusted following the pilot to allow for a more simplistic language, excluding the phrase 'status quo'; this will also be discussed in more detail below.

6.5.1. Interview-pilot study

For the interview-pilot study, three test interviews were conducted. The main purpose of these interviews was to establish any potential failings in the questions originally developed for the research. Whilst the primary goal of the interview-pilot study was to highlight any potential issues before conducting the main body of interviews, some of the responses that were gathered will be included in the main analysis of interview data. This has been possible because only minor changes in questions were required and the overall responses were still reflective and informative for the larger analysis of data.

The three interviews for the pilot were conducted with two females and one male of varying ages, educational backgrounds and geographical locations. These respondents were chosen to represent - in a contained way - the demographic variations that were sought for the data-gathering proper. The respondents were made aware that their interviews would be used for the pilot category of the study and, following their interviews, were asked to offer feedback on the suitability and wording of the questions. No one thought that there was anything missing or lacking from the interviews, but there were some suggestions about specific phrasings. The three respondents were asked to complete a short, quantitative questionnaire, which was also used in the main data-gathering phase. These questionnaires aimed to collect data relating to age, gender, educational background and location, and asked the respondents for their profession and language skills. The questionnaires asked the respondents to note their preferred media source, as well as a preferred newspaper, with a request that they indicate their level of trust in the media on a ten-point attitudinal scale, with 1 standing for 'least trust in media' and 10 for 'most trust in media'.

The quantitative information showed that one female interviewee (aged 72) and the male interviewee (aged 23) both had ‘secondary education’ as their educational level, with the other female respondent (aged 55) listing ‘higher education’ as her educational level. The male respondent was the only one of the three not living in Rīga. In terms of profession, the male respondent listed ‘builder’ as his job role, with the 72-year-old female respondent being a retired shopkeeper. The 55-year-old female interviewee with a higher degree listed her profession as ‘construction engineer’. Two of the three interviewees listed ‘internet’ as their preferred media source, with the third also listing television and radio. The age was not necessarily an important variable here, as all three respondents did note the internet as one of the regularly used news sources in their everyday life. All three respondents listed *Diena* as their preferred newspaper, with the 72-year-old female respondent also listing *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* and *Latvijas Avīze* as preferred newspapers. The level of trust expressed in the media varied across the three respondents, with both of the female respondents listing their trust in media as between 4 and 6, and the male respondent listing his trust in media at -1, a number that was not offered on the scale.

	Interviewee One	Interviewee Two	Interviewee Three
Gender	female	female	male
Age	72	55	23
Location	Rīga	Rīga	Vidzeme
Education level	secondary education	higher education	secondary education
Occupation	retired shopkeeper	construction engineer	builder
Preferred media	internet	TV, radio, internet	internet
Preferred newspaper	<i>Diena, NRA, LA</i>	<i>Diena</i>	<i>Diena</i>
Trust in media (1-10)	6	4	-1

Table 10

In terms of the questions and their adjustment for the main body of interviews, it became clear within the first two interviews (conducted with the female participants) that the first question in Question Set One (Please describe, in as much detail as possible, what you understand by the term 'Latvian national identity'.) did not present itself well as an opening question and caused confusion over how it could be answered. The first respondent, the 72-year-old-woman, explained that she did not understand the question and a clarification was offered. This prompted her to link the concept to politics rather than anything she may have personally experienced or felt. Similarly, the second interviewee, the 55-year-old female, stated that she had not considered the concept and then proceeded to say that she assumed it meant 'language, culture, traditions'. The response again failed to address a more personal engagement with the concept of Latvian national identity and thus the question was changed for the third pilot interview, and thereafter for the main body of interviews. In keeping the designed intention, the question was changed from 'describe, in as much detail as possible, what [they] understood by the term "Latvian national identity"' to ask interviewees what they felt 'being Latvian' meant instead. The establishing question for Question Set One, which served as the opening question for the interviews as a whole was thus 'What does it mean to you to be Latvian?', with the first sub-question in Question Set One changing to 'Are there any particular elements that are Latvian?'. The third and last pilot interview, with the 23-year-old male interviewee, showed that the adjusted questions were more straightforward and comprehensible. Nonetheless, this became more apparent in the main body of interviews, as the male interviewee for the interview-pilot study struggled to identify 'Latvian' as a concept at all, and required several prompts.¹⁵¹ However, what made the question, in its reworked form, an

¹⁵¹ "Question: Could you please explain what it means to you to be Latvian? Answer: (no response) Q: What is the first thing that comes to mind, tell me what you understand by 'Latvian'? A: Nothing. Q: Nothing? A: What can I understand? Q: What would you say are the reasons you are a Latvian? What traits make you Latvian? A: Me? I was simply born in Latvia, that's why I'm Latvian."

appropriate version for the main set of interviews was its connection to Question Set Four that reflected back to the notions of Latvian national identity. The male interviewee for the interview-pilot study was quicker to identify elements of Latvian identity in the concluding sections of the interview.¹⁵² In terms of a reflective practice, the questions appeared to function well.

Whilst the introductory question proved to be the most challenging and required most adjustment, the majority of the other questions also went through a process of rewriting. Even if difficult, the first question in Question Set One was selected to allow for open-ended responses and the potential for bespoke sub-questions, in order to establish the ways in which the interviewees viewed Latvia and the importance (to them) of being Latvian and offer a degree of agenda-setting agency. The first question in Question Set Two, which asked the interviewees to explain what they understood by 'Russo-Latvian relations in Latvia' was changed slightly to ask what they thought the relationship between the two communities in Latvia was like. It thus kept the original premise but became clearer in its wording. One of the three sub-questions in Question Set Two was also adjusted to better convey its meaning. The sub-question to the interviewees aged thirty-five and under was changed from 'Is there a particular way you recall your parents referring to the Russian speakers when you were growing up?' to 'Has the way your parents speak about the Russian speakers in Latvia changed since you were a child?'. This was done to allow for an easier understanding of the sub-question, but also provided a way to reflect upon a longer time period and account for age discrepancies between older and younger interviewees, both of whom qualified to be asked this age-dependant question. The sub-question also facilitated the tracking of any possible shifts in socio-political attitudes over time. The change made to the sub-question for the main body of interviews also allowed for an easier link to any extra sub-questions that were required depending on the specific interview.

¹⁵² "Q: And how do you think being a Latvian will change [in the future]? A: How being Latvian will change? I don't know, it won't change. Everything will stay the same. What does it mean to be a Latvian? There's, you know, being born and dying in Latvia. There, you are a Latvian."

The question 'Where do you hear the most mention of the two communities [Latvian and Russian speakers]?' was discarded altogether from almost the whole of the main body of interviews as it became apparent during the process of interviewing that the majority of the respondents covered the issue within other questions. A frequent example of this practice was the establishing question in Question Set Three, related to the media, which asked respondents how the relationship was portrayed. Another follow-up sub-question for Question Set Three was also adjusted. The sub-question, which asked the interviewees whether they felt that the media played an important part in constructing a truth about the Russo-Latvian relations in Latvia, proved unnecessary during the pilot in yielding an actual answer to the question, as illustrated by one of the female respondents.¹⁵³ The question was slightly adjusted for the second female interviewee and proved to be easier for her to answer.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, during the pilot interviews, the question at times felt unnatural within the flow of a conversation and thus required further change to better fit with the overall context of the study. For the third pilot interview, and the following interviews, the sub-question asked whether the interviewees felt that the media influenced people more generally, but due to its position and context in the interviews still allowed for a discussion of the Latvian- and Russian-speaking populations' relationships with and representation in the media.

The final question of the interview ('What changes to the status quo do you see necessary in order to realise this future?') proved, throughout the interview-pilot study, to be heavily reliant on the presumption that a fruitful and potentially positive answer would have been given to one of the earlier questions which asked the interviewees for their predictions on Latvia's future. The question was not functional in a scenario where a positive answer was not

¹⁵³ "Q: And do you think the media have an important role in constructing truth about the Latvian and Russian speakers? A: No, of course, we need both Latvian and Russian media and even more so, they should show about us and our journalists should talk about us." (BHF72R:A3.5)

¹⁵⁴ "Q: Do you think that the way it [the relationship] is shown impacts on how people think about it? A: To one section, definitely. Q: Which section? A: [...] Some people have their own opinion, about everything, and then there's a large section who don't have an opinion, and they don't want it." (JCF55R:A4.3-5)

given and thus had to be adjusted to feasibly fit within the interviews, independently of the answers already provided by the respondents. Like the first and opening question of the interviews, the question ‘What role will the Latvian national identity play in this future?’ was changed to better fit with the updated version of the opening question. Thus, the majority of the interviews concluded with the question ‘What do you think it will mean in future to be a Latvian?’, with further potential to introduce additional questions, depending on the answer given.

Following the pilot, the final sets of questions, which were thereafter used for the main body of interviews, were as follows:

Questions before the interview-pilot study	Questions after the interview-pilot study
Describe, in as much detail as possible, what [they] understood by the term ‘Latvian national identity’.	What does it mean to be a Latvian?
Do you feel that your personal sense of identity fits the criteria you have outlined?	What are particular elements of being a Latvian?
What, in your opinion, could be done to improve/emphasise the Latvian national identity?	Unchanged/omitted. ¹⁵⁵
How, if at all, do you think the Russian-speaking minority impacts on the Latvian national identity?	How, if at all, does the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia influence what it means to be a Latvian?
Could you explain what you understand by the ‘Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia?’	What is the relationship like between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia?
Do you associate the phrase ‘Russian-speaking minority’ with the Russian speakers you know personally?	Do you associate the phrase ‘Russian-speaking minority’ with the Russian speakers that you know personally?
How has the relationship changed between the two communities in the last 25 years (post-USSR)?	Has the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers changed since the Soviet times, in the last 25 years? [asked to those aged 35 and over]
Is there a particular way [that you] recall	Has the way your parents speak about the

¹⁵⁵ Questions listed as ‘unchanged/omitted’ were asked in some interviews if the answer was not already provided in other sections of the interview.

[your] parents referring to the Russian speakers when [they] were growing up?	Russian speakers in Latvia changed since you were a child? [asked to those aged 35 and under]
In what ways do you think this relationship (between Latvian and Russian speakers) is represented in the Latvian-language news media?	How does the Latvian-language news media show the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia?
Where do you hear the two communities mentioned the most?	Unchanged.
Do you think the information provided is mostly positive or negative?	Does the Latvian-language news media show this relationship more positively or negatively? (A sub-question, asking to explain further what is and is not a positive or a negative representation.)
In what way do you think the information should be provided?	Unchanged.
Do you feel that media play an important part in constructing a truth about Russo-Latvian relations?	Does media influence people?
What do you think the future of Latvia will be?	What do you think will be the future of Latvia?
How do you think the Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia will develop?	How do you think the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers will develop in the future in Latvia?
What role will the Latvian national identity play in the future?	What will it mean to be a Latvian in the future?
What changes to the status quo do you see as necessary in order to realise this future?	Unchanged/omitted.

Table 11

Whilst the list of the final questions was shorter than the questions that were originally proposed, due to the nature of the interviews being semi-structured, more specific sub-questions were introduced throughout, depending on the responses received. The interview-pilot study proved to be useful both in terms of highlighting any necessary changes to the original interviews, as well as offering insight into what type of sub-questions may be required

and used in the main data-gathering process. For all three of the interview-pilot study interviews, clarifying questions were introduced, depending on the interviewee and their requirements and responses. The duration of the pilot interviews also varied substantially (between 15 and 40+ minutes), and provided some indication of the expected duration for the remaining interviews, which enabled the researcher to offer an approximate indication of likely contribution-time when introducing the study to the main sample of participants.

6.6. *The interviews*

The main body of research for this chapter contains 23 interviews, plus the three interviews conducted during the interview-pilot study. Out of the 26, twelve interviews were conducted with male respondents and fourteen with female respondents, ensuring a reasonable gender balance across the sample as a whole. The interviewees varied in age, with the youngest being 18 years old and the oldest 84 years old. As previously noted, the interviews were collected from various geographical locations across Latvia, with six from Vidzeme, five from Zemgale, four from Kurzeme, four from Latgale and four from Rīga. With the inclusion of the pilot interviews, six interviews were conducted in Rīga and seven in Vidzeme.¹⁵⁶ The quantitative information regarding the interviewees also illustrated a wide split between the education levels of the respondents. This information is provided in the following tables for ease of access (Table 12, Table 13, Table 14).

¹⁵⁶ See map (Image 2).

Interviews per location.	
Vidzeme	7
Zemgale	5
Kurzeme	4
Latgale	4
Rīga	6

Table 12

Interviewees' education level.	
Secondary education	4
High school education	7
Professional education	3
Higher education	10
Postgraduate qualification	2

Table 13

Interviews per age.	
18-20	2
21-25	5
26-30	2
31-35	2
36-40	1
41-45	2
46-50	2
51-55	5
56-60	0
61-65	1
66-70	0
71-75	2
76-80	1
81-85	1

Table 14

6.6.1. Coding reference

In the following section codes signifying the interviewees will be used. Each code is individual and corresponds to a particular interviewee. The first two letters of the code represent the anonymised initials of the interviewee, followed by their gender (F - female, M - male), age and geographical location (V - Vidzeme, Z - Zemgale, K - Kurzeme, L - Latgale, R - Rīga). This is then followed by the location of the quote in the particular interview (A - answer, Q - question). Each main question was allocated a number (i.e. 'A1' or 'Q1'); where these numbers are followed by a dot and another number, the second number refers to any answers or questions provided or asked as a continuation of the original question (i.e. 'A1.1' or 'Q1.1'). An example of this would be: NWM18R:A10.1, where 'NW' are anonymised initials of the interviewee; 'M' indicates that the respondent is male; '18' signifies the interviewee's age; 'R' refers to the geographical location of the interviewee being Rīga; 'A10.1' denotes that the quote is from answer 10.1 of the particular interview.

6.6.2. *Content of the interviews*

The majority of this section will engage with the responses given by the interviewees. Academic research relating to national identity and the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia will be considered in order to expand, explore and highlight the content of the responses. Theories and other research will be applied to the responses, as such an approach was selected in order to allow the respondents an agency within which their opinions are primary, followed by the introduction of theory and exploration of arguments. The analysis will be based on patterns of responses received.

The section will be divided according to such patterns. The analysis will consider: (1) sense of belonging as a crucial element in establishing a Latvian national identity, through the consideration of patriotism, pride, tradition and family; (2) Latvian identity, and any perceived impact on it, as created by the Russian-speaking minority; (3) Russian-speaking community and their national belonging, as perceived by Latvian speakers; (4) the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers; (5) the notions of memory and implications of shared history when considering the relationship between the two communities; (6) the perceived role of media; and (7) view of the future, which will encompass general perspective of what Latvia's future might be as expressed by the interviewees; the future of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia; and comments relating to immigration and emigration issues. All of the sections will then be drawn together and reflected upon in the conclusion of the chapter.

6.6.2.1. *Belonging*

When asked what it meant to be Latvian, a twenty-five year old male interviewee (SBM25V:A1) quickly replied: 'Everything. It means a lot',¹⁵⁷ but he could not then elaborate on this answer, which indicated that perhaps outlining exactly what 'being Latvian' meant was a challenging task. Another female interviewee (JMF43K:A1) explained that, to her, being Latvian

¹⁵⁷ "Visu. Daudz tas nozīmē."

meant her 'identity', that it was 'her country and her *belonging* to a country'¹⁵⁸ (my emphasis). This notion of belonging recurred throughout the interviews, with the most prominent comments stating that being born in Latvia played a big part in the respondents' abilities to identify with the country. 'What is a Latvian?' a male interviewee (LBM47V:A2-A2.1) repeated, 'someone who is born in Latvia, has grown up in Latvia, and all the living [practices] and all'.¹⁵⁹ Graham Day and Andrew Thompson (2004: 45) state that 'members of the society occupy well-defined social positions and "know their place"', and their values and beliefs correspond closely with their social location. This is a claim which may support, and perhaps account for, the idea that one can consider one's self as subscribing to a particular national identity, in this case Latvian, if one was born in the country with which they associate their identity. The position of a birth-right to a national identity, however, becomes far more complex when considering the extent to which having been born in Latvia is a qualification in its own right.

6.6.2.1.1. Patriotism

A further association with the sense of being Latvian emerged during the interview process; this, had not been directly addressed in any of the questions included in the semi-structured interviews. The term 'patriot' (*patriots*) was brought up by some of the interviewees as an identification of a stronger and, at times, seemingly more appropriate and accurate description of what being a Latvian was *meant* to mean. Maurizio Viroli (1995) cites Alasdair MacIntyre's essay 'Is Patriotism a Virtue?', that patriotism is a 'loyalty to a particular nation which only those possessing that particular nationality can exhibit' (ibid.: 176). Furthermore, Viroli, discussing for 'love of country' in his writings on patriotism, notes that such love 'can be made up of love of liberty, respect for common rights, benevolence toward humanity, and courage'. In contrast, Viroli also explains that such love 'can [...] turn into a combination of pride,

¹⁵⁸ "Tā ir mana identitāte. Tā ir mana valsts. Un mana piederība valstij."

¹⁵⁹ "Tas ir dzimis Latvijā, audzis Latvijā un [...] visa dzīvošana, viss."

ambition, self-centredness, and partiality' (ibid.: 97). Simon Keller (2007: 67) adds to this argument by explaining that patriotism 'is not just a combination of affection, love, concern and identification'. Instead, he proclaims that patriotism can, but does not have to be accompanied by anything but 'the minimal [identification] in which the patriot categorizes herself as a native of her country'. It is thus clear that being able to identify with a country as a place of belonging is a requirement for defining a patriotic existence. The complications arising from patriotic feelings, alongside Violi's sentiments regarding pride and self-centredness, are further noted by Keller, who writes that 'distinctively patriotic loyalty motivates the agent to maintain a certain characterization of her country, but also to deny that her characterization of her country is affected by such a motive' (ibid.: 69). In fact, Keller strongly argues for the idea of a 'patriotic bias', which he identifies as a particular kind of bias, yielding 'a clear motive for the patriot to avoid admitting that the bias exists, or at least to avoid admitting it in a way that would save him from self-deception' (ibid.: 71). As such, 'patriotism' is identified as possessing both positive qualities, but also negative ones. It is, however, the negative qualities, as Keller argues, which become intentionally disregarded in favour of 'love for one's country'.

In one interview where the term was mentioned, when asked to explain what he understood by the word 'patriot', the male interviewee (NWM18R:A2.1) replied that 'to be a patriot, means that you do everything for your country, that it matters to you what happens in your country and that it's important to you that everything is well in your country for you and for everyone else living there'.¹⁶⁰ In contrast, a female interviewee (BCF27Z:A1.1) replied that 'patriotism is about land, your homeland, your history, what our ancestors fought for, so we could be here. So we could be and continue'.¹⁶¹ This statement, unlike that of LLM26R, does not offer an acknowledgement of anyone without a shared history, that one's 'ancestors fought for',

¹⁶⁰ "Nozīmē būt patriotam ir tas, ka, tā kā, dari tā kā visu par savu valsti, ka tev ir nozīmīgi tas kas notiek tavā valstī un ka tev ir nozīmīgi, lai tavā valstī būtu labi gan tev, gan visiem pārējiem valsts iedzīvotājiem."

¹⁶¹ "Patriotisms ir par zemi, par savu dzimteni, par savu vēsturi, kā mūsu senči ir cīnījušies par to lai mēs šeit varētu atrasties. Lai mēs šeit varētu būt un turpināt."

as belonging in the proclaimed 'homeland'. Another female interviewee (WLF25V:A2.3-A2.4) specifically noted that she did not consider herself to be a patriot and when asked why she did not identify with the term, offered an emotive framing by referring to having 'a big love of your country. Being interested in all of the events in Latvia, getting involved in all cultural events. [...] Well, I have met, I have, for example, a friend who is a patriot, well, we have differences. Also those thoughts regarding other nations differ. Well, let's say, she doesn't really like people of Russian nationality, whilst for me, it's the opposite, I support them'.¹⁶² All three explanations point towards a notion that the physical land itself is a crucial part of defining 'patriotism', associating the inhabitants with the land. Participation in cultural events was outlined as being important but, as in the case of the interviewee who distinctly defined herself as *not* being a patriot, a social element not directly related to cultural gatherings was also significant.

The explanations offered by the respondents reflected on Keller's point relating to a particular sense that patriotism and 'being a patriot' had to be recognised as positive by those who identified with the concept. However, as WLF25V demonstrated, *not* identifying with the term was linked with notions of 'supporting' Russian speakers, and thus as something that could only exist outside the definition of 'patriotism'. Even by not identifying as a patriot, WLF25V demonstrated that the concept possessed a very particular definition, one which none of the interviewees who *did* recognise themselves as patriotic noted, perhaps due to the 'patriotic bias' introduced by Keller.

6.6.2.1.2. *Pride*

A sense of pride was also expressed in the interviews, as multiple interviewees referred to being 'proud' that they were Latvian. Interestingly, though, respondents made a distinction

¹⁶² "Tāda liela mīlestība pret savu valsti. Interesēšanās par visiem notikumiem Latvijas, iesaistīšanās tur kultūras dzīvē. [...] Nu es esmu, jā, satikusi, man pieņemsim ir nu viena no draudzenēm, tāda patriote, nu mums ir atšķirības. Arī tie uzskati par citām tautām arī ir atšķirīgi. Nu pieņemsim, viņa ne īpaši mīl krievu tautības cilvēkus, a es tieši pretēji atbalstu viņus, tā kā, nu tā."

between Latvia and the Latvian state. A female respondent (LVF35R:A1) started by stating that she 'liked [her] homeland' but in the same sentence noted that this was despite 'not [being] happy with the politics that exist in Latvia'.¹⁶³ This tension played a role throughout the interviews and the way in which national identity was established and retained. Alongside the baseline concept of a pathway into a national belonging via one's birth, the interviewees outlined cultural and historical elements as prominent in the definition of the things considered to be 'Latvian'. Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998: 96) highlight this particular point by noting that there exists a tendency to speak of one's 'natural homeland', the place where (in Latvia's case) 'the ancient indigenous nationality in Latvia is the Latvian', and 'where such natural metaphors as roots, soil, motherland and fatherland are employed to emphasise a sense of genealogical rootedness and exclusivity to a place' (ibid.). Such perceptions were strongly illustrated in the responses calling upon 'land' as a significant representative of one's Latvian identity. 'This is where my husband's home is,' a female interviewee (NTF64Z:A2) noted, before adding 'land, countryside, forests' as a definition for 'home'.¹⁶⁴ A male interviewee (BLM83K:A1) also stated that 'To be a Latvian means that I love this land'.¹⁶⁵ Linguistically, it is important to note that he did not indicate his love towards the nation or the state, but rather the land itself, mimicking the sentiments expressed by Egils Līcītis (see Līcītis, 22 February 2012: 3) in previous chapter. Another female interviewee (LVF35R:A1.1), when asked what it meant to be a patriot of Latvia, replied that it meant she 'loved [her] homeland' and 'never wanted to leave it'.¹⁶⁶ The sense of 'homeland' resonates with Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth's notion of the importance that concepts of 'motherland and fatherland' carry. It offers a more solid and physical concept of what creates an attachment to Latvia and defines a sense of belonging, whereby belonging relates to a *physical* land.

¹⁶³ "Man patīk sava dzimtene un tas, ka varbūt mani neapmierina politika, kāda ir mūsu Latvijā, ja?"

¹⁶⁴ "Šeit ir mana vīra mājas, zeme, lauki, meži."

¹⁶⁵ "Latvietim nozīmē būt to, ka es mīlu šo zemi."

¹⁶⁶ "[...] es mīlu savu dzimteni, ka es noteikti nevēlos no viņas arī aizbraukt."

6.6.2.1.3. Tradition

Culture and tradition were also outlined as important in defining the elements of what could be identified within the category of 'being Latvian'. In particular, the notion of singing held a strong position in Latvian traditions. 'I think we are joined in song,'¹⁶⁷ a female respondent (MCF21L:A2) said. Most prominently, perhaps, this was illustrated by the 'Singing Revolution', a term used to describe the organised events that took place in the Baltic States between 1985 and 1991, which led up to the countries' independence. The Latvian Song and Dance Festival, held since 1873, normally every five years, played a significant role in the Singing Revolution, and continues to work as a tool in emphasising Latvian national identity. The festival tends to draw large numbers of choirs, joining them in songs sung *a cappella* in Latvian. 'Latvians have their song festival,'¹⁶⁸ a female respondent (BHF72R:A2) noted, thus pointing towards the importance this held in the list of particulars that were used to explain specifically Latvian elements. The idea of singing as a contributing factor in establishing a Latvian national identity was reflected further in statements made during the interviews that identified the Latvian pagan festival of Līgo and Jāņi (Midsummer) as an important element, with almost all of the people interviewed highlighting that the Midsummer celebration was a part of being Latvian. 'Being Latvian is all around [us], everything that happens, Latvian traditions, Līgo celebrations,'¹⁶⁹ one female respondent (NTF64Z:A2) stated, as another (JWF52V:A2-A2.2) noted that to be Latvian meant to 'celebrate Latvian celebrations, to eat Latvian food, to love the sea, to love forests. [...] Latvian celebrations are Līgo, Jāņi'.¹⁷⁰ These concepts link to a study by Ilzīte Jakoba and Līga Paula (2011), which observed that for the Latvians they interviewed for their study on Latvian[-

¹⁶⁷ "A tā, liekas, ka mūs vieno arī tā dziesma."

¹⁶⁸ "Ja ja kā saka tā patās ir latviešiem savi dziesmu svētki..."

¹⁶⁹ "Latviskas ir vis riņķī apkārt, kas notiek, latviešu parašas, viss, Līgo svētki, visi svētki, kas notiek Latvijā."

¹⁷⁰ "Svinēt latviešu svētkus, ēst latviešu ēdienus, mīlēt jūru, mīlēt mežu. [...] Latviešu svētki ir noteikti Līgo svētki, Jāņi."

speakers'] understanding of Latvian identity, the majority highlighted tradition and celebration as the most formative elements of the development of their national identity and sense of belonging.

6.6.2.1.4. Family

Alongside culture and tradition, some interviewees linked their sense of belonging to their family: one male respondent (KOM23K:A1) stated that to him the notion of 'being Latvian associates with family, [it is] what brings [the sense] of Latvian-ness'.¹⁷¹ Another male interviewee (LLM26R:A1) suggested that 'if you discount a belonging to a certain place, country, culture, then looking deeper, it is my family, all of my relatives, all of my family tree, with particular roots, traditions',¹⁷² thus highlighting the link between family and history, associating one with the other and introducing a sense of historical heritage associated with one's national identity (and hence a sense of 'rootedness', which arguably links to 'belonging'). Connor Walker (2002: 25) quotes Max Weber as having noted that 'the concept of "nationality" (or "nation") shares with that of the "people" (Volk) - in the "ethnic" sense - the vague connotation that whatever is felt to be distinctively common must derive from common descent'. Such a claim seems to support the interviewee's reasoning for the importance of family, which is considered to be both 'immediate' and extended across centuries of generational shared history.

6.6.2.2. Latvian identity and the Russian-speaking minority

The role that Russian speakers played in the construction of Latvian national identity was a question that often reoccurred within the interviews, both when directly asked about it and as a social commentary that underpinned the answers to other questions posed. This then leads into the next section, which aims to consider (1) the role of Russian speakers and the way in

¹⁷¹ "Tieši ar latvieti man saistās ģimene, kas ienes latvisku tieši."

¹⁷² "Ja neskaita būt piederīgam konkrētai vietai, valstij, kultūrai, tad dziļāk skatoties, tā ir mana ģimene, visa, teiksim, visi mani radi, viss mans ciltskoks, ar konkrētām kultūras saiknēm, paražām."

which they are perceived by Latvian speakers; (2) the identification of what it means to be Latvian; (3) how such sentiments are influenced, enhanced and established by acknowledging the large minority living in Latvia. One male interviewee (SBM25V:A2) stated that, after listing traditions and culture as playing a significant role in identifying what is Latvian, ‘Those are the things that I think are Latvian. What else is Latvian? A dislike of Russians!’.¹⁷³ The interview question that followed the one asking respondents to identify things they believed to be ‘Latvian’, was one that inquired whether Russian speakers in Latvia influenced what it meant to be Latvian. ‘They probably do influence something, a little bit,’¹⁷⁴ a male interviewee (BBM75V:A3.1) stated, but he was unable to offer a more specific example or observation of how this effect manifested itself. Other interviewees struggled less in explaining their claims that Russian speakers affected what it meant to be Latvian. ‘The language gets crippled. Russified,’¹⁷⁵ a male respondent (KJM50Z:A3-A3.3) noted. Another interviewee (MCF21L:A4) replied that Russian speakers did influence what it meant to be Latvian ‘because in a conversation with a Russian speaker, I will speak in Latvian and regardless, he will respond in Russian, so without noticing, I will switch to the Russian language, too. [...] It does influence, maybe not the tradition, but certainly the language’.¹⁷⁶ The topic of language, as in the two examples, was a recurring one in many of the responses given to the question posed regarding the Russian-speaking community’s influence on Latvian national identity.

There were, however, those interviewees who strongly disagreed. One female respondent (EAF54Z:A3), for example, queried ‘Can it be influenced at all? [...] I don’t think that it can be influenced by other nationalities’.¹⁷⁷ A similar claim was made by a male interviewee

¹⁷³ “[...] nu tas man liekas latviski arī. Kas vēl ir latviski? Netpatīk krievi!”

¹⁷⁴ “Drošvien, ka ietekmē drusku, kaut ko.”

¹⁷⁵ “Tiek izkropļota valoda. Pārkrieivota.”

¹⁷⁶ “Jo sarunā arī ar krievu, es runāšu latviski un viņš vienalga ar mani nerunās latviski un es kaut kā nemanot automātiski pārslēdzos uz krievu valodu. [...] Tas ietekmē ļoti, varbūt ja ne tradīcijas, tad tieši valodas ziņā, tas tajā.”

¹⁷⁷ “Vai viņu vispār var ietekmēt? Es domāju, ka katrs cilvēks jau pats izvēlās savu to modeli. Ja, es domāju, ka to nevar ietekmēt citas tautas.”

(AQM79R:A4-A4.1), but unlike the female respondent, he proceeded to make a claim about *why* Russian speakers did not influence the meaning of Latvian-ness. 'They don't influence what it means to be Latvian at all. Because they don't want to be in Latvia. Everything that is being said here, that they want to integrate and get citizenship, that's half of those that are here, and only those accept [being in Latvia].'¹⁷⁸ This introduced a new subsection of potential problematisation of the issue of Latvian national identity and the role Russian speakers might play in constructing it - not through their ability to do so, but their *interest* in becoming a significant element in the Latvian identity, which would allow them to affect its meaning. 'Maybe they don't influence it, but they don't support it,'¹⁷⁹ another interviewee (LBM47V:A4) stated. 'They do push it a bit, pull towards theirs, they have their own roots, but despite that they live in Latvia and have maybe even been born in Latvia, they don't accept our [culture].'¹⁸⁰ He concluded by stating that it was 'sad'. This disagreement as to whether Russian speakers could influence what it meant to be Latvian mostly gravitated towards people's personal understanding of the word 'influence' rather than a strong disagreement that the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia had no engagement with the Latvian identity.

The overall consensus of those interviewed linked back to the use of language and the differences it introduced. 'I think that some [people] support our culture, our language, and diligently learn our language, learn our traditions and join in all of that,'¹⁸¹ a female interviewee (JHF51Z:A2) noted. However, she then added that 'some, I think, [influence what it means to be Latvian] negatively. I even know many people who have lived in Latvia most of their lives and

¹⁷⁸ "Latviskumu viņi neietekmē nekādā ziņā. Jo viņi negrib būt Latvijā. Tas ko te stāsta viss, vot ka viņi grib integrēties un taisīt, un ir pilsonība pieņemta, bet tas ir puse no tiem, kas te ir, un tie tikai pieņem."

¹⁷⁹ "Viņi varbūt to neietekmē, bet viņi to neatbalsta."

¹⁸⁰ "Jo viņi tomēr spiež drusku uz, velk uz savu, viņiem ir savas saknes, bet viņi neskatoties uz to, ka dzīvo Latvijā un varbūt pat viena liela daļa ir dzimuši Latvijā, viņi nepieņem to mūsējo."

¹⁸¹ "Es domāju, ka vieni atbalsta gan mūsu kultūru, gan valodu un cītīgi mācās latviešu valodu, un apgūst mūsu tradīcijas un piedalās visā tajā mūsu dzīvē."

don't speak Latvian. Yes, they don't learn a single word in Latvian and only speak Russian,'¹⁸² thus demonstrating the deep implications and associations of the Latvian language itself within broader narratives of what being Latvian means. Across all of the interviews conducted, language, whether Latvian or Russian, played a significant role in the perceived impact on establishing one's sense of Latvian-ness. However, this opinion, of the Russian speakers' use of their mother-tongue being exclusively associated with their influence, was not shared across all interviews. A female respondent (WAF43V:A4) noted, for example, that she believed 'that Russian speakers don't impose [their language], like it was during the Soviet times', hinting at memories of the years when the country was part of the USSR. More notably, however, she added 'Latvians simply have such a mentality that they allow themselves to be treated like this. "Oh, you can't speak Latvian? Okay, okay, don't try, don't try, I can speak with you in Russian!", yeah? Well, that is the Latvian mentality after all,'¹⁸³ she concluded, taking the responsibility away from those who might have lived in independent Latvia for over twenty five-years and not learned the official language.

Beyond the strong sense that language was the most important element of the role played by Russian speakers when considering Latvian national identity, one male interviewee (SBM25V:A3-A3.2) offered a different view of what kind of influence the minority speakers held within the establishment and reinforcement of Latvian-ness: 'I don't know, maybe sometimes they reinforce [being Latvian]. [...] We're all united against it and that rallies us together and makes us more Latvian in some moments'.¹⁸⁴ Such a notion, that the sense of Latvian-ness was *aided* and made stronger by being able to find solidarity against 'another' links to Day and

¹⁸² "Bet nu viena daļa, es domāju, negatīvi, nu teiksim tā, noskaņoti, jo jo es pat zinu ļoti daudzus cilvēkus, kas man arī tādi pazīstami, kas gandrīz visu mūžu dzīvo Latvijā un latviski nerunā. Jā, tā nemācēs nevienu vārdu latviski, principā runā tikai krieviski."

¹⁸³ "Es uzskatu, ka krievvalodīgie nevis uzspiež, teiksim kā padomju laikos bija, nevis uzspiež savu krievu valodu, bet vienkārši latviešiem ir tāda, tāda mentalitāte ka viņi ļauj ar sevi tā rīkoties. 'Ā tu nemāki latviski runāt? Labi, labi, nepūlies, nepūlies, es runāšu ar tevi krieviski!' Ja? Nu tā ir latviešu mentalitāte."

¹⁸⁴ "nezinu, varbūt kaut kādos mirkļos pastiprina [...] visi vienoti esam pret to un tas tad saliedē mūs un padara latviskākus varbūt kaut kādā mirklī, nu tā."

Thompson's (2004: 82) claim that the idea of nation brings to mind not only notions of cultural distinctiveness and the sense of belonging to a community held together by cultural solidarity, but also ideas of shared memories and popular sovereignty. They go on to note that populations do not, however, just develop an awareness of these ideas as individuals. Rather, people need to be encouraged to think of themselves as a nation, with all the cultural and political implications this concept entails (ibid.). By allowing for a sense of solidarity to be established which involves an identification against the Russian speakers in Latvia, the self-defined Latvian identity can grow stronger and its cultural and political connections to national identity are strengthened.

A question arises about why the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, as perceived by those identifying what it means to be Latvian, is so strongly affected by linguistic issues. Where interviewees noted that some level of influence did exist, this became even more obvious when they were asked what the relationship between the two communities in Latvia was like. The answers to this question were divided into a variety of categories ('good', 'partially good', 'bad', 'other'), with the majority of the responses falling under the category of 'good' as a description of the overall relationship. The vast majority of the interviewees noted that they felt that the relationship was not complicated, with one female respondent (BHF72R:A5.1) stating that 'there is no big separation, so to say, 'you're Russian, I'm Latvian', I personally don't see it'.¹⁸⁵ Some of the respondents pointed out that difficulties in the relationship could not be caused by only one side: 'I think that [the relationship] is normal. Because you can have a Latvian be a neighbour to a Latvian and they can be enemies. Whilst a Latvian and a Russian can live together normally. I think it doesn't matter whether you are a

¹⁸⁵ "Es tā personīgi neesmu, man nekad nav bijis kaut kādi, vārdu pat apmaiņa, nu kad tur kāds būtu teicis 'o tu latviete tu tāda vai šitāda' nu nav, nē, nē."

Latvian or a Russian, it depends on what sort of person you are,¹⁸⁶ a female respondent (LSF33L:A5) explained. This opinion - that any potential conflict between the two communities could not be outlined in simple terms - reoccurred throughout the interviews.

Many of the respondents pointed towards a discrepancy between the way that they perceived the relationship and the way that the politicians and the government portrayed it. As noted previously, the interviewees explained that they identified with the country, i.e. land, rather than the legal elements of a state, such as political ideology and governance. When discussing the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, many of the interviewees used the phrase 'common people' (*parastā tauta*) in contrast to the government and political parties. 'At the level of common people, [the relationship] is perfectly fine. [...] Between the common people, there are no [problems],¹⁸⁷ an interviewee (WAF43V:A5) explained. This point was echoed by another female respondent (EAF54Z:A3), who noted that 'the relationship, at the level of the common people, is good, but the politics do everything to make this relationship not so [good]'.¹⁸⁸ It thus became apparent that a gap was identified between the 'common people' and 'politicians', with Latvian politicians highlighted as representing and, according to some interviewees, propagating the cleavage between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities in Latvia. 'I think that it's intentional', a male interviewee (BOM36K:A5.1) explained, 'That there are interested parties, that are trying to make this conflict, that it doesn't come from the people and that if you listen to our educated youth, it doesn't exist. [...] In intelligent public it doesn't happen, I don't think'.¹⁸⁹ Such notions of education having a significant impact on the Russo-Latvian relationship were echoed in other interviews, too.

¹⁸⁶ "Manuprāt, ka tīri normāli, nav nekādu tādu, jo kā var jau būt arī kaimiņš latvietis kaimiņas latvietim būt ienaidnieks. Bet latvietis ar krievu var tīri normāli sadzīvot. Es domāju, ka tas nav no svara, kas tu esi, latvietis vai krievs, ir atkarīgs kāds tu esi cilvēks."

¹⁸⁷ "Parastās tautas līmenī ir pilnīgi normālas. [...] Es domāju, ka parastajai tautai nav problēmas ar to."

¹⁸⁸ "Un attiecības, parastā tautas līmenī ir labas, bet politika izdara visu, lai tās attiecības tādas nebūtu."

¹⁸⁹ "Es domāju, ka tās ir spec-- kaut kādas interešu grupas, kas mēģina to konfliktu izveidot, tas nav, nenāk no tautas un un kad kad arī teiksim ja paklausās arī tos pašus mūsu jauniešus, izglītotos, nu nav tur tā. [...] Bet inteligēntajā publikā man liekas nenotiek nekā tāda."

'Everything depends on the education level and on the ability to speak Russian, or the ability to speak Latvian,'¹⁹⁰ a female respondent (JWF52V:A4) noted. This perspective once again linked to the concerns about language. However, whilst language played a significant role in the explanation of what the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities was like, the question of one's ability to identify as Latvian carried a further, differing element - belonging in its own right.

6.6.2.3. *The Russian-speaking community and its national belonging*

An illustration of this perception that there is a way one can (be allowed to) identify with what it means to be a Latvian can be seen in the following exchange recorded with a male interviewee (KJM50Z:A5.1-A5.6):

[in regards to the 'other type' of Russian speaker that KJ identified earlier in the interview] KJM50Z: The other kind? We have, let's say, in the motor club [that I am a part of], a Russian, he speaks Latvian with a really heavy accent, but he says [here KJ mimics a Russian accent] 'I am for Latvia', and I like that.

RESEARCHER: So would you consider him a Latvian or a Russian?

KJM50Z: [in a Russian accent] 'I am a Latvian', that's what he says.

RESEARCHER: But is he a Latvian to you?

KJM50Z: He's ours. He's not a Latvian, but he is ours.

RESEARCHER: So maybe he's half-Latvian?

KJM50Z: Eh, well...

RESEARCHER: If he believes himself to be Latvian...

KJM50Z: Well, yes, he's... let's say, loyal to the Latvian state, you could say that.

¹⁹⁰ "Viss atkarīgs no izglītības līmeņa un uz krievvalodas prasmes, vai uz latviešu valodas prasmes."

RESEARCHER: But you wouldn't call him a Latvian?

KJM50Z: Well, how could you call him a Latvian?¹⁹¹

This exchange is illustrative of KJM50Z's unwillingness to accept someone as a Latvian if their first language is not Latvian. As his demonstrative use of a Russian accent shows, the statement 'I am a Latvian' is not accepted (by him, at least) as an authentic indication of one's national identity. From the exchange with KJM50Z, it became obvious that it is not enough to self-identify as Latvian. His acceptance that the man in his anecdote can be seen as 'one of ours' is the closest KJM50Z was willing to allow this person into his own identity as a Latvian. According to Day and Thompson (2004: 82) it is imperative that the idea of nation brings to mind not only notions of cultural distinctiveness and a sense of belonging to a community held together by cultural solidarity, but also ideas of shared memories and popular sovereignty. They note that populations do not, however, just develop an awareness of these ideas as individuals. Rather, people need to be encouraged to think of themselves as a nation, with all the cultural and political implications this concept entails (ibid.). KJM50Z's reflection on how to perceive the Russian-speaking, self-proclaimed Latvian as not being a Latvian contradicts this notion, since it works against a sense of cultural solidarity. The situation outlined in KJM50Z's story shows that the two men share a hobby - motoring - and an acceptance of a popular sovereignty which Day and Thompson (2004) also list as crucial. With self-identification as a Latvian and expressed love for Latvia, it is possible to presume that the man referenced accepts the popular sovereignty just as much as KJM50Z does. It leaves, then, the possibility of a lack of shared memories, which also seems unlikely when the cultural links and belief in popular sovereignty are expressly shared.

¹⁹¹ "Q: Un kas ir otra puse, tad? A: Otra puse? Mums teiksim motoklubā, motobraucēju klubā ir viens krievs, viņš runā latviski ar tādu ļoti lielu akcentu, bet viņš saka (in a Russian accent) 'eh par Latviju!', un tas man patīk. Q: Un viņu tad to skaitītu par latvieti, jeb krievu? A: (Russian accent) 'Es esmu latvietis!', viņš tā saka. Q: Bet viņš ir latvietis tavā uzskatā? A: Viņš savējais. Viņš nav latvietis, bet viņš ir savējais. Q: Tad viņš ir varbūt pus-latvietis? A: Eh, nu... Q: Ja pats sevi uzskata par latvieti... A: Nu jā, viņš ir... teiksim lojāls latviešu valstij, tā varētu teikt. Q: Bet par latvieti nesauktu? A: Nu kā viņu var saukt par latvieti?"

So the question arises regarding what exactly identifies KJM50Z to himself as a Latvian and his Russian-speaking friend as only 'loyal to the Latvian state'. Such loyalty to the state may not incorporate a loyalty to the ruling government, as the main party recognised as 'Russian-speaking party' - Saskaņa - is not the ruling party. Furthermore, in his analysis of the Russian-language media in Latvia, Cheskin (2016: 90-1) noted that the 'Russian-speaking discourse in Latvia appeared to be keen to stress Russians' loyalty to the Latvian state and to an independent Latvia'. However, this was in addition to the claim that such emphasis ran 'contrary to the stereotype of Russians, as presented by Latvia's nationalist parties, as a direct threat to the sovereignty and integrity of the state' (ibid.). Thus, the idea of Russian speakers' loyalty to Latvia can be deemed as dependant on both the identification of that state, and the identifier. There is also, once again, a binary of 'us' versus 'them' in play here, even if the definition of 'them' appears conditional.

This perhaps is further addressed in another exchange between the researcher and KJM50Z. KJM50Z lists his profession as a 'soldier', having served with the Latvian military for decades. When asked whether the contingent of the Latvian army was in any way changed by having Russian-speakers enlisted, KJM50Z asked what was meant by 'change'. The following clarification was offered: 'If many Russian-speakers join the Latvian army, is it still the Latvian army? Do they protect Latvia?' (KJM50Z:Q7.8). This question was then met with almost outrage, as KJM50Z proclaimed 'Yes! They are loyal. Non-loyal people are not accepted in the army'.¹⁹² Thus, to KJM50Z, those serving in the Latvian army were loyal to Latvia, even if in this particular exchange he did not identify them all as 'Latvian'. In fact, KJM50Z noted that 'in the army there are many Russian-speakers and they speak perfect Latvian. They have gone through all the tests, if they have been accepted in the army, then they are loyal to the state. And they are Russian speakers. They speak Russian to each other, but with me they speak in

¹⁹² "Q: Nu ja daudz krievi nāk Latvijas armijā dienēt, tad tā ir Latvijas armija? Viņi aizstāv Latviju? A: Jā! Viņi ir lojāli. Nelojālus cilvēkus nepieņem armijā, viņi tiek pārbaudīti, diezgan spēcīgi."

Latvian. They don't even try to [get] any Russian [language] out of me' (KJM50Z:A7.6).¹⁹³ By using such an example, especially when so heavily relying on language as the distinctive quality that separates Latvians and those 'loyal to the state', KJM50Z highlighted the recurring theme that linked a majority of the interviews - the issue of language. Hobsbawm (2000: 265), writing about 'the nation', explains that 'you do not have to do anything to belong to it. You cannot be thrown out. You are born in it and stay in it,' and points out that 'how do men and women know that they belong to this community? Because they can define the others who do not belong, who should not belong, who never can belong'. If accepting this definition of one's, or a whole community's, ability to identify belonging only as a counter-definition of what does *not* belong, language can be used as a measuring device for 'acceptable belonging' as administered and recognised by others. This certainly appeared to be the case in the interviews conducted as part of this research.

Cheskin (2016: 12) cites Brigita Zepa et al., who, as he notes, characterise how the development of Russo-Latvian discourses have resulted in the emergence of popularised ideals of what it means to be a 'Latvian'. This person, whom Zepa et al. (2006: 74; *ibid.*) ironically refer to as 'homo Latviensis', must speak Latvian, maintain 'Latvian' cultural values and traits, and display loyalty to the Latvian state by not questioning the state's official narratives and historical interpretations. This ties in with the traits and notions of what it means to be a Latvian that were offered in the interviews conducted, and highlights some of the issues raised when discussing the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia with the interviewees. However, 'cultural values and traits' are not necessarily compatible with the same category as 'displays of loyalty to the Latvian state' and its historical and official narratives. As the discussion with KJM50Z illustrated, it is possible for a Russian speaker to be acknowledged as 'loyal' but still not earn the right to be called a 'Latvian'. A similar point, to perhaps a slightly lesser extent,

¹⁹³ "Armijā arī ir ļoti daudz krievvalodīgo un viņi runā perfekti latviski. Viņi ir izgājuši visus testus, ja jau viņi ir uzņemti bruņotajos spēkos, tātad viņi ir lojāli valstij. Un viņi ir krievvalodīgie. Viņi savā starpā runā krieviski, ar mani viņi runā latviski. Viņi pat nemēģina no manis izspiest to krievu valodu."

was articulated by another interviewee: when discussing the differences between Russian speakers she knew personally and those in the more general population of Latvia, a respondent (LVF35R:A6) noted that she ‘only knew those who definitely know Latvian [language] very well and who are [in support of] Latvia’, that they were ‘born here, grown up here’, and ‘definitely’ were not ‘against Latvia’ and did not ‘have an aggressive disposition that maybe many others [did] have’.¹⁹⁴ Yet, despite accepting that the Russian speakers with whom LVF35R was personally acquainted supported the Latvian state (its ‘popular sovereignty’), the interviewee still did not identify them as ‘Latvian’. Thus, whilst it is possible to argue that, on an individual and personal level, the interviewee felt no hostility from the Russian-speaking community’s side, she still noted that there may be some, just simply not from the people she knew personally. This, again, became a recurring theme throughout the interviews, with almost all of the interviewees unable to give a single example of a personal, negative experience they had had with a Russian speaker in Latvia, yet making the claim that either a general disagreement between the two communities existed, or that they knew of someone who had experienced such negativity.

6.6.2.4. The relationship between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities

Whilst there were those who noted that the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers was negative for *others*, the interviews also provided a spectrum of differing answers. Some of the respondents noted that the relationship was good, as pointed out earlier, between ‘common people’ but not on a political level. However, there were also responses claiming that the relationship between the two communities was negative. Those listing the relationship as negative all considered language to be the definitive explanation. One interviewee (KJM50Z:A5.6) pondered this issue with an increasing sense of passion: ‘They say

¹⁹⁴ “Principā, personīgi ar to, tos kurus es pazīstu ar tiem problēmu vispār nav, ja? Nu tā. Viņi nav ne noskaņoti, ne naidīgi nekādā gadījumā ne pret latviešiem, neko. Viņi, jā, es principā pazīstu tikai tāds, kas noteikti zin ļoti labi latviešu valodu un kas ir par Latviju. Viņi te ir dzimuši, auguši un arī pat tādi, kas ir iebraucēji, kaut kad maziņi. Viņi noteikti ir ne pret Latviju, viņiem nav tādas agresīvas noskaņas tā kā varbūt daudziem citiem tas ir.”

“I don’t understand anything”. How can you live for 50 years in a country and not understand what they say? It’s disrespectful, an outright disrespect to the country, to the language’.¹⁹⁵ This is a sentiment echoed by others, as a male interviewee (AQM79R:A5.4) explained: ‘They live here and think that they are oppressed. That they have it hard here. They don’t understand the language properly’. Referencing the Language Referendum of 2012, he continued by saying, ‘That’s why we had the referendum, right? So we would have bilingualism. There. That is because, that is so they could feel the same as us. And if they want that, but Latvians do not, the Latvians have different [opinions]’.¹⁹⁶ It was unclear from this statement whether language was the dominant issue here, but it is linguistically curious to see the use of ‘us’ (*mēs*) in the context of discussing the relationship between the two communities. The ‘us’, both contextually and culturally references Latvians and not Russian-speakers, or, as illustrated thus far, those perceived as ‘loyal to the Latvian state’.

The interviews also demonstrated a distinct perception of the fact that, whilst many respondents claimed that the relationship between the two communities in general was strained, they were not problematic on a personal level. A male interviewee (BOM23V:A6.1-A6.3), specified that the people who were hostile ‘are Russian speakers I don’t know. They are overall Russians. [...] I don’t know Russians. [...] I know Latvians. I only know people that speak Russian’.¹⁹⁷ This specification in less direct ways occurred in other interviews as well. Those interviewees who noted that there were difficulties in the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers were asked to give an example of where they had experienced such hostility. The few who could provide an example did so from before the fall of the USSR, more than twenty-five years ago.

¹⁹⁵ “Viņš saka 'es neko nesaprotu'. Kā var nodzīvot 50 gadus valstī un nesaprast ko tur runā, tā ir necieņa, klaja necieņa pret valsti, pret valodu.”

¹⁹⁶ “Viņi te dzīvojoņot uzskata, ka viņi ir apspiesti. Ka viņiem te ir grūti. Viņš nesaprot to valodu riktīgi. Tāpēc jau te bija mums referendumus taisīja, vai ne? Lai būtu divvalodība. Vot. Tas ir kāpēc, tas ir tāpēc lai viņi justos tā pat, kā mēs te. Un ja viņi grib to, a latvieši to negrib, latviešiem ir savādāk pa visam.”

¹⁹⁷ “Es pazīstu latviešus. Es pazīstu tikai cilvēkus, kas runā krievu valodā. Krievus es pašus personīgi nepazīstu. Es pazīstu tikai cilvēkus, kas runā krieviski.”

Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998: 96) argue that there exists a perpetual habit of blurring the differences between the historic and contemporary homeland, while the difference between the core nation and the diaspora is accentuated. The need for and, more importantly, ease of drawing on examples from the Soviet period emphasised this point. Whilst the interviewees did acknowledge a change in their political environment, the Soviet past was still strongly referenced as an identity and relationship-defining influence. Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth continue their argument by stating that 'those who settled in the homeland during the Soviet period are therefore represented as 'the colonising other', a remnant of 'a civil garrison of the empire' and potential 'fifth columnists', who threaten the stability if not territorial integrity of the political homeland' (ibid.).

The following two sections discuss the way the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers were reflected upon drawing on both experiences and memories. Both demonstrate the complexities of the ways in which the relationship was re-told to the researcher.

6.6.2.4.1. The shop example

The example that stood out the most to explain the differences between Latvian and Russian speakers during the Soviet period was that of shops. Three of the older interviewees told anecdotes about experiences that they perceived as being unfair, all involving a better treatment given to Russian speakers. The examples were linked by the fact that all occurred in shops and were rather similar in their nature. A female interviewee (NTF64Z:A5.1-A5.2) firstly noted that, having worked in a shop, she felt that 'there was a problem that if you were a Latvian, they [the Russian-speaking employees] would automatically look at you [badly]'.¹⁹⁸ She emphasised that such a problem used to exist and added that 'she remembered it had happened today', indicating that the memory was very vivid, even on the day of the interview.

¹⁹⁸ "Jo bija tāda problēma, ka latvietim tomēr, nu, ja tu biji latvietis, tad uz tevi jau tā paskatījās."

The interviewee then proceeded to explain how there used to be a 'card system', referring to Soviet rationing. She paused to add 'if you remember',¹⁹⁹ which demonstrated an interesting perception of the claim by Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998) regarding blurring of the lines between the historic and contemporary, as to the sixty-four year old interviewee it seemed perfectly reasonable to presume that the much younger researcher posing the question would recall the context she was describing. It is possible that the memory still felt current, and that the passage of time had done little to change NTF64Z's perspective. However, having been born three years before the fall of the USSR, I was not in a position to share such memories.

The story then told by the interviewee referenced her experience of being in a shop with her children. She explained that whilst standing in a queue behind a Russian speaker she heard them request that a particular product be held back for them. When the interviewee made a similar request to the Russian-speaking shopkeeper, she was told they had no such product. 'But I just heard the earlier conversation,' she explained, before adding, 'And because of this, we started to almost hate each other'.²⁰⁰ The interviewee concluded by saying that there was no longer such a distinction made between people of the two communities. However, it is reflective of a particular historical memory that she used the story as an example. As discussed in the Literature Review, Eva-Clarita Onken suggests that the sense of threat in the Latvian-speaking space had developed in parallel with a tendency which led to the division of 'historical memory' along ethnic lines in the Baltic States. These examples, of people's memories from their encounters in shops, are reflective of what Onken identifies as 'our past' in contrast to 'their past' (see Onken in Budryte, 2005: 204).

Another interviewee (WAF43V:A6-A6.1), in a much more concise fashion, reflected that 'back then no one needed the Latvian language, go in a shop, anywhere, everything was in

¹⁹⁹ "Cik mums sākās tā kartīšu sistēma, ja atceraties."

²⁰⁰ "Nu tas kaut kā tā, un līdz ar to tā liekas, ka mēs jau sākam gandrīz neieredzēt viens otru, līdz ar to."

Russian, and the shopkeeper spoke to you in Russian'.²⁰¹ These examples are both illustrative of similar experiences that aid in establishing and shaping a more contemporary identity. However, the examples also importantly demonstrate the way in which the lines between a historical past in the USSR are blurred with a more contemporary context, and the way in which the relationship has developed since the fall of the Soviet regime.

6.6.2.4.2. *The pulse in Latvia*

A male interviewee (BLM84K:A3.1-A3.5), when asked about the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers, stated that he thought the relationship was 'negative', but hastened to add that in his personal experience 'nothing has happened' with 'neighbours or work colleagues'. However, despite lacking a personal negative experience, he went on to explain that the way he felt the relationship was negative was a reflection of 'the pulse in Latvia', noting that 'the dissonance between the two nationalities is currently very, very strong in Latvia'. He concluded by saying 'Everyone feels it, right? All the time, right?'²⁰² These questions create an interesting juxtaposition. From the comments conducted in the interviews discussed so far, it is reasonable to argue that this interviewee's reflection is not inaccurate.

Many of those interviewed for this research noted, at least in part, a complex, splintered relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. However, most also stated that in their personal lives and their personal experiences, this negativity did not exist and that, as BOM23V noted, the negativity came from the Russian speakers he 'didn't know'. This observation then might reflect on the idea that 'everyone feels it, all the time'. This statement represents an acknowledgement on the part of the research participants that there is a perceived difficulty, but when they were probed and questioned, outlining it became challenging

²⁰¹ "Un tagad arī tā, ka agrāk jau nevajadzēja nevienam to latviešu valodu, ieej veikalā, visur jau tev pa krieviski, nu, pārdevējas runāja pretīm."

²⁰² "Nē, nē, man personīgi nekas tāds nav bijis, vai ne? Ar kamiņiem vai darba kolēģiem. Bet vispārējā situācija, es to jūtu, vai ne? To pulsu, kāds ir Latvijā. [...] No visa. No kā? Nu no ikdienas."

as no clear examples could be given to explain where such ideas originate from and how they perpetuate.

6.6.2.5. Memory and shared history

Drawing on work by Eva-Clarita Onken, Dovile Budryte (2005: 204) suggests that the way the nation's historical narrative in Latvia has developed is strongly linked to a particular way of remembering which may have led to the division of historical memory along ethnic lines. 'Our' past was pre-Soviet (Latvian, Lithuanian, or Estonian, in the interwar period), and 'their' past (i.e. Russian speakers') became the past of Soviet, or Russian (ibid.). Further, she argues that the Baltic societies developed a historical narrative focused on suffering during the times of Stalin. This narrative is strengthened by state-supported museums, commemorations, and official days of remembrance (Budryte, 2005: 205). A further point is made in Ammon Cheskin's analysis of Russian speakers in the post-Soviet Latvia, wherein he reflects on a term often used both in Russian and Latvian: the titular nation (*titul'naia natsiia*). He explains that, as a commonly employed term in the Soviet Union, it was used to refer to the ethnic groups after which the union republics, autonomous republics, autonomous *oblasti*,²⁰³ and autonomous *okruga*²⁰⁴ were named. In Latvian, 'the word *pamattauta* itself can be rendered into Russian as *korennaiia natsiia* (Literally: root nation) and can be seen as analogous²⁰⁵ with the term "titular nation"' (Cheskin, 2016: 47-8). With such historical divisions already in place, it is important to consider whether the perceived 'negativity' in the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia has a direct correlative effect on the developments and, far more crucially, the understanding, acceptance, and preference of historical narratives. Cheskin argues that such a connection exists, writing that 'in the post-Soviet period, with the establishment of a

²⁰³ An *oblast* is a type of administrative division or region in Russia and the former Soviet Union.

²⁰⁴ An *okruga* is an administrative division of some Slavic states.

²⁰⁵ A more accurate description would be to state that 'korennaiia natsiia' and 'titul'naia natsiia' are linked to one another rather than analogous.

'Latvian' hegemony, the term Russian-speaker helps to differentiate a whole section of the population away from the core nation discourse' (ibid.) such as the one discussed here. He notes that the 'categorisation of Russian speakers' is 'highly charged'. In fact, Cheskin continues to argue that the 'mere fact that these people are primarily identified as Russian speakers often serves to exclude them from the ideology of a Latvian state which proclaims the need for one language and one political community' (Cheskin, 2016: 72). Whilst Cheskin's claims directly reflect on the Latvian state, as illustrated by comments recorded during the interviews for this research, the applicability of such exclusion could arguably extend further than the state itself. It thus becomes problematised within society at large, not only from the perspective of political representation and governance. The question of 'loyal to the state' but still not recognised as 'Latvian' becomes more prominent when accepting such a division as 'them' and 'us' where the 'them' is consistently identified as 'Russian' and the 'us' becomes exclusively 'Latvian'.

One way to explore the implication of recent history on the current perceptions of the relationship between the two communities is to consider the responses to the interview question which asked whether the relationship had changed since the Soviet times, in the last 25 years. This question, as outlined in the methodology section, was dependent on the age of the interviewees: those below the age of thirty-five were asked whether they felt that the way their parents discussed the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers had changed since they were younger. This was done due to the age of the respondents at the time when Latvia regained its independence, with some not having been born until years later. Those who stated that the relationship has changed auspiciously often outlined the Russian-speaking community's willingness to learn Latvian as highly influential in their choice of recognising the relationship as progressing in a positive direction. A female respondent (JWF52V:A5-A5.1) stated that 'there are increasingly more intelligent Russians who have learned the Latvian language and with many I can [now] speak in Latvian.' She did, however, go on to claim that

she was able to 'lower' herself 'to their level and speak Russian'²⁰⁶ when necessary, thus still reiterating a particular perception of the value assigned to knowing the language and the role it played in the relationship between the two communities.

Another female interviewee (BCF27Z:A5) explained that, in her opinion, the relationship had improved, 'because the younger generation looks at the history differently', adding that she felt that people who were in their 'forties and fifties, have a deep bitterness in regards to political offences, that have happened here and that are hard to accept'. She then proceeded to compare it to 'her own generation, who has still been taught that they [the Russian speakers] are bad. And that we [the Latvian speakers] are the good ones', but the interviewee also argued that it was easy to recognise that Russian speakers, at least specifically those she knew personally, 'investigate our culture, try to participate in all sorts of festivities, learn it all, accept it, take it to their side, and tell that it is nice and fun and pretty here'.²⁰⁷ What BCF27Z identified as 'their side' was not clear, but the implication that there was another 'side' was curious as it fed back into such concepts as being 'loyal to the Latvian state' but not, in fact, Latvian. Thus, despite the fact that the respondent identified a positive change, her definition of who was able to accept such change and how far the integration of it extended, became complex due to an integral cleavage between the two communities. In contrast to the claims that BCF27Z made regarding the younger generation, but also partially in addition to them, another interviewee (BLM84K:A3.7) stated that he was 'very happy that in the Russian-speaking environment, there are young people, many young people who do understand the situation and that are quite proud

²⁰⁶ "Aizvien vairāk inteligentu krievu ir apguvuši latviešu valodu un ar ļoti daudziem es runāju latviski. Tie kuri nav ar pārāk augstu izglītības līmeni un latviski nevēlas runāt, es varu nolaisties līdz viņu līmenim un runāt krieviski."

²⁰⁷ "Tapēc, ka jaunā paaudze to vēsturi skata savādāk. Cilvēki, kas ir tagad ap gadiem četrdesmit, piecdesmit plus mīnus, viņiem vēl ir tas dziļais rūgtums par tiem politiskajiem pāri darījumiem, kas ir te bijuši un līdz ar to viņiem grūti to sagremot vēl. Manai paaudzei vēl ir tā iemācītāk, ka nu tie ir sliktie, ja? Un mēs esam tie labie. Bet ja tev ir veselais saprāts, tad tu redzi, ka tie cilvēki arī mēdz būt labi un viņi, daudzi man ir pazīstami, kas izpēta mūsu kultūru, cenšās piedalīties visādos pasākumos, iepazīst to visu, akceptē, ved tālāk uz savu, kā saka, savu pusi, lai pastāstītu, ka te arī ir forši un patīkami un skaisti."

to live in Latvia'.²⁰⁸ This interviewee was aged eighty-four, which arguably demonstrated that a generational gap, as claimed by BCF27Z, might be questionable.

Nonetheless, not all of the answers argued for a positive change that had occurred since the regaining of independence. A male interviewee (BBM75V:A5-A5.4) stated that, in his opinion, the Russian speakers had 'become much more shameless' in that they 'intentionally did not speak Latvian'.²⁰⁹ Despite making such claims, BBM75V could also not give a specific example in which he personally would have experienced any negativity against him by a member of the Russian-speaking community. Another interviewee (JHF51Z:A4-A4.1) stated that she thought that 'during the Soviet times, the relationship was better, because there wasn't such hatred', and went on to state that once 'we got independence, that's when it all started'.²¹⁰ Her reasoning for why this perceived negativity existed now was concentrated on the newly established Latvian state and the fact that 'the Russian side maybe thought that they are [forcibly] being made to learn the Latvian language, maybe learn the traditions, adjust to our [way of living], that we have now, not as a part of the USSR, but as an independent country'.²¹¹ This claim prioritised language, once again, as a crucial element, but also drew connections with tradition and propagation of culture. Another female interviewee (WSF51L:A6-A6.1), in explaining why she believed that the relationship had deteriorated since the fall of the USSR, stated 'yes, yes, we were silent during the Soviet Union and everything was okay. As soon as we showed our Latvian identity, then straight away they [the Russian speakers] are against [us].

²⁰⁸ "Man ir ļoti liels prieks, ka krievu sabiedrībā ir ļoti daudz jauniešu, es neteikšu, ka tas ir pārsvarā, nē, bet ļoti daudzi jaunieši ir tādi, kas kas tomēr situāciju saprot un viņiem ir diezgan lepni, ka viņi dzīvo Latvijā."

²⁰⁹ "No krievu puses, es domāju, ka viņi daudz bezkaunīgāki palikuši. [...] Viņi, piemēram, speciāli zini nerunā latviski arī."

²¹⁰ "Man jau liekas, ka padomju laikā bija labākas attiecības, jo kaut kā, nejutās tas naidis kaut kā tā. [...] Tad kad mēs ieguvām neatkarību, man tā liekas, ka no tā sākās."

²¹¹ "Viņiem krieviem varbūt sāka likties, ka latvieši redzi uzspiež viņiem tagad mācīties to latviešu valodu, un vārdu sakot, apgūt varbūt tradīcijas, pielāgoties tam mūsu, mūsu tai dzīvei, kāda mums tagad ir, nevis padomju savienības sastāvā, bet kā neatkarīgai valstij."

[They] don't accept it'.²¹² Any conflicts, whether experienced personally or presumed on a grander scale, were strongly linked to Latvian identity, which, as already illustrated, was mostly defined via tradition and, more importantly, language.

Hobsbawm (2000: 257) argues that 'there are plenty of good reasons why nationalism thirsts for identification with ethnicity, if only because it provides the historical pedigree 'the nation' in the great majority of cases so obviously lacks'. The case of the Latvian state, to a degree, fits within this categorisation where 'the nation' may lack something, mostly due to the nature of Latvian history and the less than hundred-year span since its official establishment. Although Hobsbawm's claim is more closely linked here to noticeable ethnic differences, it is still applicable within the context. He writes that 'in some sense [the connection] is the idea of 'us' as a body of people united by an uncountable number of things 'we' have in *common* - a 'way of life' in the widest sense' (ibid.). This sentiment was certainly expressed throughout the interviews discussed in this research. Hobsbawm continues by stating that 'a *common* territory of existence in which we live, whose landscape is familiar and recognizable' constructs these notions greatly. 'It is the existence of *this* which the influx from outside threatens' (Hobsbawm, 2000: 263). The 'outside' and ways in which to identify it in the context of Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia are concepts, which at times become blurred and extremely difficult when considering whether those Russian speakers living in Latvia can, and far more importantly, *should* be identified as an 'outside threat'. In its own right, the claim of a 'threat' is complicated altogether, but it is nonetheless undeniable that such a belief resonated within many of the interviews conducted.

As demonstrated through the interviews conducted, the negotiation of national identity is very complex, both in terms of exploring interviewees' abilities to identify as Latvian, but also in

²¹² "Jā, jā. Padomju Savienībā mēs klusējām un viss bija labi. Tiklīdz mēs sākām latvieši savu identitāti-- savu latviskumu parādīt, tiklīdz uzreiz, uzreiz viņi pretīm. Nu nepieņem, kaut kā."

terms of identifying someone else as Latvian. The majority of the interviewees positioned the Russian-speaking minority as a separate entity from themselves. Although the majority of the respondents claimed to have no negative personal experiences, they still positioned the Russian speakers as 'different' or 'other'. As explored in the previous section, language was a dominant factor, but Cheskin (2016: 32) notes that 'the logic of equivalence seeks to place people neatly on either side of a discursively created divide that then creates contingent frontiers separating group identities. It is for this reason that it can be very difficult to integrate certain group identities'. He further argues that 'Latvian identity discourses have largely premised on the depiction of Russians and Russian speakers as a real threat to Latvian identity' (ibid.). Whilst a central part in establishing Russian speakers as a threat and perceiving this 'threat', language does not account for an overall difficulty with integration. However, as many of the responses to the questions (which attempted to establish a coherent premise of what builds identity structures in Latvia) have illustrated, language is perhaps the easiest of differences to highlight and is certainly the most 'obvious' one.

Hobsbawm (2000: 257) points out that 'there are plenty of good reasons why nationalism thirsts for identification with ethnicity, if only because it provides the historical pedigree 'the nation' in the great majority of cases so obviously lacks'. Such a claim, in the case of the Latvian state and Latvian national identity, may be particularly appropriate here, considering that the Latvian state was not established until 1918 and was absorbed into the Soviet Union barely two decades later. Arguably, in such a short time period, the Latvian state struggled to establish its identity clearly. The meaning of what 'being Latvian' is, as recorded through the views expressed in the interviews here showed that there existed a consistent reflection of a larger history, which did not necessarily originate with a Latvian state, but rather with people.

6.6.2.6. Media

One of the main research aims for this project was to establish the potential role of Latvian-language media in the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. The first two chapters of the thesis have offered an outline and overview of the type of stories about Russian speakers presented in the Latvian-language media. This section aims to demonstrate the interviewees' perception and understanding of how media represents the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. Furthermore, this section will also link the responses received with the data relating to media. The main interview question which addressed this topic asked the respondents how they felt the Latvian-language media showed the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. The replies varied greatly: some people believed the representation to be objective, some noted it was negative, and others stated that there was no representation at all. Whilst the previous two chapters have provided qualitative and quantitative analysis of the actual patterns of representation, this chapter is primarily concerned with the way Latvian-speaking media consumers interact with and absorb the information provided by Latvian-language news sources. None of the interviewees were aware of the discoveries made in the first two chapters of this research. As such, this section will explore whether or not this perception of ideas regarding national identity and socio-political integration influenced the way that the interviewees perceived the Latvian-language news media.

6.6.2.6.1. *"...it feels like, like they're not informed..."*

'I don't think [the media] emphasise anything special,'²¹³ noted one male interviewee (LBM47V:A8). He continued by stating that he thought 'that now it has gone so far that all that information about the situation between Latvian and Russian speakers, it's been [made less important], no one cares about it anymore, no one talks about it'. Such a claim might have been representative of the reality in the way Latvian-language news media portrayed this relationship

²¹³ "Man liekas, ka īpaši neko neizceļ nemaz, man tā šķiet."

(as illustrated in Chapter Four). However, LBM47V was one of the few to state that the relationship was not represented much. Another male interviewee (KJM50Z:A7-A7.5) agreed that the representation was limited, but his reasoning behind that absence was more specific. 'They try not to promote it. [...] To hush it up, I think. [...] Well, that's what it looks like to me. Listening to the media,'²¹⁴ he explained. From the context of the conversation, it was possible to establish that the 'they' referred to by KJM50Z were the media. For him, the media appeared to be one and the same, whether televised news by any of the three broadcasters analysed in this research or newspapers. Furthermore, KJM50Z added that he felt that 'they', in this case the journalists, did not 'spend time in this environment. That's what it feels like, like they're not informed, or that they are trying to hush it all up, say that everything is really good. It's not really good' (ibid.).²¹⁵ The way KJM50Z identified the media and journalists as something external and detached from society at large was reminiscent of the language used by other interviewees when discussing Latvian politics and politicians versus the Latvian people. Media, at least here, appeared to be placed as 'other', one which was not identified with the people.

A few of the other interviewees echoed this view when discussing the media and their representation of the relationship. One female interviewee (JCF55R:A5.1) explained that she felt the media coverage was 'artificial' and 'maybe something from outside'. She did not specify what the 'outside' was, but added that 'in everyday relationship, person to person' she believed that 'practically [the conflict] exists very minimally'.²¹⁶ Another female interviewee (WAF43V:A7.1) stated that she did not believe journalists to be independent, but rather 'singing the official Latvian version' of the relationship between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities. When prompted about what, in her opinion, the 'official' version was, WAF43V

²¹⁴ "Viņi mēģina to nereklamēt. [...] Notušē to visu, es tā domāju. [...] Nu man tā izskatās. Paklausoties medijus."

²¹⁵ "Var jau būt, ka viņi neapgrozās šajā vidē. Tāda sajūta, vai nu viņi ir neinformēti, vai viņi cenšas to visu notušēt, ka viss ir baigi labi. Nu nav baigi labi."

²¹⁶ "Un tas viss ir mākslīgi, varbūt tas ir kaut kur no ārpuses, nemāku pateikt nu, kaut kur vēl nāk iekšā, ja kaut kas tiek filtrēts mākslīgi vai kaut kādā veidā, tādā veidā, nu bet bet tādās kas ir ikdienas attiecības, cilvēku pret cilvēku, tas, es uzskatu ka tas praktiski nu ļoti minimāli eksistē."

noted that she felt it was negative, but she also linked the news items to the representation of the Russian Federation, rather than separating the Russian-speaking community and the Russian state as unrelated in the media coverage offered (WAF43V:A7.2). As Greg Philo (1995: 170) notes, 'the credibility of television news and the legitimacy which it seeks for itself depends upon its claim to be even-handed and 'fair' in controversial areas'. This, then, may account for the trust of objectivity expressed towards media in the interviews conducted for this research. If the respondents do not view the news media as able to 'fairly' represent controversial areas (such as the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers), then it undermines the legitimacy of the said media and may thus account for the views discussed so far.

6.6.2.6.2. "...as they show in media, in newspapers, that's how it happens..."

The opinion that the media were somehow detached from reality was present in the majority of the interviews, but it was not exclusive. A few of the interviewees stated that they felt the coverage offered by the Latvian-language news media of the issue of the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities' relationship was objective. One male respondent (SBM25V:A6) explained that he felt that what he 'saw in real life and on the TV' did not differ vastly.²¹⁷ Similarly, another male respondent (AQM79R:A8) noted that 'as they show in media, that's how it happens'.²¹⁸ However, such opinions were hardly unanimous, with other interviewees stating that they felt the media acted in the exactly opposite way. 'There are particular political forces that try to set themselves as the Latvian defenders and [portraying the Russian speakers in a biased way] is convenient for them,' one interviewee (JWF52V:A6-A6.4) claimed.²¹⁹ Unlike an ambiguous division of media as separate from the people, this particular claim outlines a belief that the Latvian-language news media have a particular allegiance with the Latvian government.

²¹⁷ "Nu tas ko es redzu pa televīziju, tad, tā ko es, to ko es redzu dzīvē un to ko televīzijā, es baigo atšķirību neredzu."

²¹⁸ "Televīzijā tur var, apskaties, tā pat arī viss notiek."

²¹⁹ "Ir konkrēti politiskie spēki, kuri cenšas sevi nostādīt kā, vai uzrādīt kā latviešu aizstāvjus, un viņiem tas ir vienkārši izdevīgi."

Along a similar line of argument, another female interviewee (NTF64Z:A6) explained that she felt ‘that we’re trying to divide something but can’t. [...] If something is being divided up there, in some kind of towers or buildings, that we cannot understand, who needs it? [...] Then, I guess, it’s the problem of those up there, not [us], on our average or lower [level]’.²²⁰ Such an explanation provided almost no distinction between the government and the media as the ‘other’, but simply established people (or as referred to before ‘the common people’) as unrelated to politicians and media coverage.

6.6.2.6.3. *Media influence*

The interviewees were also asked whether they believed media coverage influenced the way people viewed particular issues. This question was designed to elicit whether the respondents felt that the views they had expressed so far during the interviews, regarding Latvian national identity and the Latvian-speaking majority’s relationship with the Russian-speaking minority, might be influenced by the media portrayal of such issues. The majority of the respondents claimed that media could and did influence people. However, as in the case of not knowing any Russian speakers who held strong feelings against Latvian speakers, the interviewees, with the exception of one, stated that they personally were not influenced by media. An idea that such influence did exist, though, was expressed clearly in the interviews. ‘I think that media influences people quite a bit, well, maybe not the younger generation, but let’s say, personally I [am not influenced], because I have understood, that maybe I need to think a bit, not just blindly repeat, but I think that there are plenty of older people [who are influenced],’ a male respondent (BOM36K:A7-A7.1) explained.²²¹ He was not the only interviewee in this

²²⁰ “Nu reizēm liekas, ka mēs kaut ko dalām un kaut ko nevaram sadalīt. [...] Ja tur no augšās kaut ko dala, kādus tur torņus vai celtnes, kas mums nav saprotams, kam tas reizēm viss ir vajadzīgs, kur tie miljoni aiziet, ta tā laikam ir augšās problēma, nevis mūsu vidējais vai zemais.”

²²¹ “Es domāju, ka, es domāju, ka pietiekoši daudz ietekmējās teiksim tas nu varbūt ne jaunā paaudze, bet varbūt es teiksim pats personīgi nu ne tā, es tomēr varbūt esmu sapratis, ka ir laikam bišku jāfaičo sava galva, ka nevar tā akli vienkāršot, bet es domāju, ka pietiekoši daudzi vecās paaudzes”

research to claim that older generations were more likely to be influenced by what they saw in the media. However, whilst such distinctions as particular sub-groups (predominantly references were made to ‘the older generation’ [*vecāki cilvēki*]) were most often noted as the ones likely to be influenced by media coverage, they were not always exclusive. One female interviewee noted that there ‘definitely’ was an influence experienced by people through the media. ‘The more we hear, listen, speak and see, the more, in our spare time, when we are on our own, we begin to think, have I done this right? Has my neighbour done this right? Have my work colleagues said a harsher word to each other, yeah?’ (NTF64Z:A8).²²² The statement made a link to a social rather than a political issue, but also allowed the interviewee to potentially explain what she believed were the reasons why particular opinions were prominent in her life and the lives of those within her social circle. This, of course, becomes far more complex when considering the data that emerged from the first two chapters of this research - the low levels of representation given to the Russian-speaking minority are not representative of the perception people have of that portrayal in media.

John Fiske (1987: 80-2) claims that all meanings are ‘determined socially’, and explains that they ‘are constructed out of the conjecture of the text with the socially situated reader’. This claim is highlighted by his notion that the ‘reader produces meanings that derive from the intersection of his/her social history with the social forces structured into the text’ (ibid.). This, perhaps, can then account for, and to some degree explain the difference in, perceiving a particular text, or creating such claims as the media portraying the issue ‘too much’ (BBM75V:A6-A6.1). Due to the large Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, most of the respondents would encounter Russian speakers on a regular basis. Similarly, the shared historical knowledge and a strong sense of ‘them’ versus ‘us’ impact on the way that the media coverage has been perceived. Whilst statistically the Latvian-language news media actually has

²²² “Es domāju, jo mēs vairāk dzirdam, klausamies, runājam un redzam, jo mēs savā brīvajā brīdī apguļamies un sākam domāt vai es to esmu pareizi darījis vai mans kaimiņš ir pareizi darījis, vai mani darba kolēģi tur kādreiz ir skarbāku vārdu pateikuši viens otram, jā?”

a very limited amount of coverage dedicated to the Russian-speaking minority and related issues, with the exception of high-impact events (such as the Language Referendum of 2012), the *perceived* coverage is largely based on one's already existing social conceptions of the issue.

6.6.2.7. View of the future

The concluding section in the interviews asked the respondents for their views about Latvia's future. Whilst the section was originally designed to reflect on some of the other questions already discussed throughout the interviews, it yielded some unexpected results when some of the interviewees chose to take it as an opportunity to highlight their worries regarding the European Migrant Crisis.²²³ The comments made in this section and their relation to theorising Latvian national identity will be discussed in more detail towards the end. Firstly, however, the section will reflect on other discussions regarding the interviewees' expectations, worries and perceptions of what the future might hold.

6.6.2.7.1. Hopeful and sad

Many of the respondents, perhaps not surprisingly, began their replies to the question 'What do you think will be the future of Latvia?' with the words 'I hope'. All expressed a hope for a positive future, but none could offer an example of what in the current situation in Latvia (political or social) allowed them to presume improvement in the future. 'I would very much want to think [that it will be good], but I have no special illusions,'²²⁴ one female interviewee (JCF55R:A9) noted, thus perhaps offering the best summary of the views expressed. A certain notion of hope for a good future was implied by most, but equally the reality of such a wish seemed doubtful. Other respondents, however, stated that they believed the future

²²³ All interviews were conducted in the summer of 2015, which meant that the news coverage of refugee arrival in Europe was very prominent at the time.

²²⁴ "Ļoti gribētos domāt, ka kā saka ir jādomā pozitīvi, bet īpašu ilūziju nav."

developments of the country would be negative. 'I think, that [the future will be] sad. [...] Not the near future, but with time the language, the main language [Latvian], will definitely change. [...] Possibly disappear,' one male respondent noted (KJM50Z:A9-A9.2).²²⁵ Furthermore, KJM50Z explained that he believed that 'during the Soviet times there was a massive russification, now you can notice Anglicisation'²²⁶ as he referred to what he perceived as the biggest threat to the Latvian language currently. Whilst language emerged as a strong theme here (as, indeed, throughout the research), the suspected threat shifted to a focus on English rather than Russian. Notions of colonisation versus globalisation shape such claims. However, they also indicate that, to a Latvian speaker, the threat to their language is recognised equally, regardless of whether the threat is historically embedded or newly introduced.

Others, who claimed that the Latvian future was unlikely to be a positive one, mostly referred to the decade-long emigration experienced in Latvia.²²⁷ 'More and more Latvians leave,' one respondent noted (BBM75V:A8-A8.1), but he did also follow it up by noting that 'Russians' were 'becoming more' (ibid.),²²⁸ a view not supported by facts. However, the perception that more Latvians may emigrate was reinforced by the comments from an eighteen-year-old male interviewee (JSM18L:A13-A13.2) who explained that he believed Latvia was becoming 'worse and worse as a country,' a statement which he defended by stating that 'each year' he saw 'fewer opportunities' (ibid.).²²⁹ The respondent was still a student at a local high school, and his negative outlook on potential job opportunities was perhaps representative of a more general view shared by his generation. Notably, however, the interviewee also resided in the poorest of Latvia's regions - Latgale - which may to some degree account for the view held.

²²⁵ "Es domāju, ka bēdīga. [...] Teiksim, ne tuvākajā nākotnē, bet ar laiku valoda, pamatvaloda, noteikti, ka izmainīsies. [...] Iespējams, ka pazudīs."

²²⁶ "Ja padomijas laikā bija pamatīga pārkrievošanās, tad tagad ļoti var manīt pārangļošanos."

²²⁷ The census of 2000 put the Latvian population at 2.38 million, with the one conducted in 2011 listing the population at 2.07 million.

²²⁸ "Ar vien tikai latvieši aizbrauc, krievi paliek ar vien vairāk."

²²⁹ "Latvija paliek ar vien sliktāka un sliktāka kā valsts. [...] Iespēju mazāk paliek. Visu laiku, ar katru gadu."

6.6.2.7.2. Change in the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers

Youth also played a part in other interviewees' views of the future developments in Latvia, especially when asked how the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers would advance. 'I think [the relationship will change] positively. [...] There's a new generation,' one female respondent noted (JCF55R:A10).²³⁰ Her view was supported by another female respondent (WLF25V:A11-A11.1) who added that 'maybe it will change for the better between younger people'.²³¹ However, the interviewee did not believe 'anything could change between adults', stating that they all 'had their own views' (ibid.). A male respondent (LBM47V:A11.1) similarly stated that 'the new generation, also the Russian speakers that are younger' had an 'interest to be citizens of Latvia' and this would lead them to 'learn Latvian because of naturalisation'. However, unlike the female interviewees quoted before, LBM47V claimed that such interest was based on the Russian speakers' wish to 'go elsewhere in Europe' with more ease, rather than any strong affiliations with Latvia.²³² LBM47V's view stood somewhat in contrast to that of a female interviewee (JWF52V:A11), however, who explained, when referring to the Russian speakers in Latvia, that 'those who have stayed, clearly feel good and comfortable here, and maybe they aren't openly loyal to Latvia, but practically and physically they feel fine here and I think they won't do us any harm'.²³³ The presumption that there was no definite loyalty to the Latvian state or, even more importantly, a personal recognition of being a *part* of Latvian society and identity, was clear in JWF52V's view. Her claim that 'they' would do

²³⁰ "Nē, tanī ziņā es domāju, ka principā nu, pozitīvi. Nu es neredzu tādus, nu jo nāk jauna paaudze."

²³¹ "Nu varbūt starp jauniešiem varētu kļūt labākas tās attiecības."

²³² "Es domāju tā, ka tās jaunā paaudze, arī tie krievvalodīgie, kas ir jaunie, kuriem, kuri ir ieinteresēti kaut vai tāpēc, ka viņi ir ieinteresēti būt Latvijas pilsoņi, kaut vai tāpēc, lai viņiem būtu iespēja kaut kur citur doties uz Eiropu, lai viņi nav nepilsoņi, tas tā kā varbūt tos jaunos, nu kāds protams arī iemācās latviešu valodu, jo tomēr tā naturalizācija, lai tiktu atzīti par Latvijas iedzīvotājiem, ka viņiem tur jānaturalizējas, eksāmeni jākārt, varbūt, ka tāpēc paliek labāk."

²³³ "Tie krievi kuri ir palikuši, viņi acīmredzot šeit jūtas labi un komfortabli, un varbūt pat ne ārēji viņi varētu būt lojāli Latvijai, bet tīri praktiski un fiziski viņi šeit jūtās labi un es domāju, ka viņi neko sliktu mums nedarīs."

'us' no harm did little to step back from a 'them' versus 'us' binary, in which the Russian-speaking community was positioned as an 'other', unable to become a part of Latvian identity. JWF52V expressed that the Russian speakers comfortably living in Latvia was a good thing. However, her choice in phrasing demonstrated an established bias and perception of the lack of integration, both currently and in the future.

A few of the interviewees argued that the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers would worsen in the future unless a pro-active (yet non-specific) change took place. Such change, according to the respondents, was dependant predominantly on governmental action and the Russian speakers themselves. 'If the political fighting, as it is now, continues, and the people are regularly turned against each other, [as] happens quite a lot in the political space, then nothing good will come out of it,' one female interviewee (BCF27Z:A9) explained.²³⁴ What exactly she identified as 'political fighting' was not defined. However, it is reasonable to presume that the reference may be directed at the political party split that has socially been divided (as explained elsewhere in the thesis), between the 'Latvian-speaking' and 'Russian-speaking' political parties. The interviewee added that 'if we listen to ourselves, then everything will be fine' (ibid.), thus emphasising the points outlined earlier about a sense of detachment experienced by people in relation to the government.

Another interviewee (LLM26R:A9) stated that he believed that 'the Russian speakers have a problem with integration'. He explained further that 'maybe it seemed worse [to him], because [the Russian speakers] hadn't integrated in Latvia', concluding that such a lack of integration was 'understandable' because 'there are so many of them here. They have no need to integrate' (ibid.).²³⁵ Such a reflection indicated that there was a sense, from at least some people, that the Russian speakers were intentionally, or at least circumstantially, not integrating

²³⁴ "Ja turpināsies šāda politiskā riešanās kāda ir šobrīd, un regulāra tautu kurināšana vienai pret otru, ar ko samērā bieži nodarbojās publiskajā telpā, tad varētu nekas labs neveidoties."

²³⁵ "Man liekās, ka krievvalodīgajiem ir problēma integrēties, varbūt tas ir vienkārši tāds uzpūsts burbulis man galvā, tāpēc, ka Latvijā viņi nav integrējušies, bet tas ir ļoti saprotami kāpēc viņi nav integrējušies - viņu ir pārāk daudz."

into Latvian society. Whilst also drawing on integration as an issue, another interviewee (JMF43K:A9-A9.1) asked ‘How are we better?’ when referring to the Latvian speakers, before questioning ‘By living in our country?’. Crucially, she concluded her questions by asking: ‘But why, then, hasn’t our country managed to integrate them in the last 25 years?’ (ibid.).²³⁶ This question links the response to that of a male interviewee in terms of integration, but also to the more general perception of a detachment between the people and the government in Latvia. Another female interviewee (JHF51Z:A8) noted that she ‘wished that there would be peace between people’ so ‘we could find some sort of compromise with the Russian speakers and live peacefully together’.²³⁷ Such an answer implies at least a degree of awareness accounting for the Latvian speakers who also changed some of their behaviours in order to adapt. However, none of the interviewees suggested that integration may also be the responsibility of Latvian speakers. Rather an emphasis was placed on issues of government policies and the initiatives of the Russian-speaking community.

6.6.2.7.3. *Immigration and emigration*

As noted earlier in this chapter, one of the most unexpected patterns of response related to the European Refugee Crisis. As the interviews were conducted in the summer of 2015, the news was reporting a surge in refugees arriving in Europe, predominantly from Syria, via the so-called Balkan Route. The interviewees were not asked, or even encouraged, to disclose their views on the matter. Nonetheless, a few did so when, in one of the concluding questions, they were asked how they felt the future of Latvia would develop. In their conclusion to the media analysis for *Bad News For Refugees*, Philo, Briant and Donald (2013: 165) note that they discovered a confusion in news accounts about refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants.

²³⁶ “Ar ko mēs labāki? Tas, ka mēs dzīvojam savā valstī? A kāpēc mūsu valsts, 25 gadu laikā nav spējusi viņus integrēt Latvijā?”

²³⁷ “Tā kā varētu mēs arī ar tiem krievu tautības cilvēkiem tomēr kaut kādu kompromisu atrast un dzīvot mierā un saskaņā.”

As illustrated in the following comments by the interviewees in this research, such confusion also seemed to exist in their perception of the situation. This was arguably influenced in part by the media coverage, which echoed findings in *Bad News for Refugees*. ‘Also a big worry is caused by the refugees,’ one female interviewee (EAF54Z:A8) explained, before correcting herself to clarify that she meant ‘the so-called refugees’. She defended the description by noting that she ‘doubted they were war refugees’ because ‘they absolutely don’t look like it’ (ibid.).²³⁸ No description was offered of a desired and accepted ‘look’ for a war refugee. Another interviewee (LBM47V:A10-A10.2) stated that Latvia’s future was going to be ‘bad’ as the country would be ‘involuntarily made to take those migrants from Africa and all’, and argued that it would have a negative impact on Latvia ‘because they won’t integrate in the society at all’.²³⁹ Whilst the comment about ‘involuntary’ acceptance of migrants into Latvia arguably could be linked to the proposed EU agenda²⁴⁰ to place a number of refugees across the European Union states, this was not specified by the interviewee. Furthermore, referring to the migrants as coming ‘from Africa and all’, when at the time the majority of those reported in the news were arriving from the Middle East, casts doubt on the respondent’s knowledge of the issue. LBM47V proceeded to explain that ‘in the news they show it like they are poor families coming here, that they are in danger in their countries because of their religion, or devil knows what other reasons, that they are like refugees’ (ibid.). According to the interviewee, however, ‘experience’ showed that ‘in those countries [where] this has already happened, [the migrants are] only men [and] they don’t seek employment’ (ibid.).²⁴¹ It is questionable where the interviewee would have gained such

²³⁸ “Vēl ļoti lielu satraukumu izraisa arī šie te bēgļu plūdi, tā saukto bēgļu. Jo nu, es ļoti šaubos vai tie ir kara bēgļi, viņi pēc tādiem absolūti neizskatās.”

²³⁹ “Nu tāpēc, ka mums tulīt brīvprātīgi, piespiedu kārtā dos pieņemt tos migrantus no Āfrikas un visur. Un tas būs diezgan traki, jo tas protams ir mans subjektīvs viedoklis, jo viņi sabiedrībā neintegrēsies pilnīgi nemaz.”

²⁴⁰ The European Agenda on Migration was designed to prevent further losses of migrants' lives at sea, concentrating on the safe and legal resettlement of people to Europe.

²⁴¹ “Pieredze rāda un to ko paziņas stāsta pie kuriem tas jau ir, tur nebrauc nekādas ģimenes tur brauc tikai vīriešu dzimuma pārstāvji, pilnīgi nevar paskaidrot kāda iemesla pēc viņi ir atbraukuši, darbu viņi nemeklē.”

'experiences' and beliefs, as he himself referred to the news as portraying the people arriving in Europe as 'poor families' but insisted that the representation was incorrect.

Another male interviewee (BOM36K:A9) also added that he thought 'that if they will allow open immigration and a free wave will come, and we will be visited by all those black *churka*,²⁴² then I don't see a future'.²⁴³ There were multiple issues with this statement, not least in terms of connecting the anti-refugee, anti-migration views to issues of immigration. However, this statement also illustrated a limited knowledge or understanding of the situation. BOM36K did not explain what he believed 'open immigration' and 'a free wave' may be, but his use of the phrase 'black *churka*' was curious. The term is an ethnic slur in Russian, referring to Asians from the former Soviet Union. By the addition of 'black' before the slur, BOM36K demonstrated a particular adaptation of the word; notably, the slur was a Russian rather than a Latvian word. This is especially the case, since BOM36K also commented that as far as he 'was concerned' it was better that 'the Russians are here' and not 'those idiots from Africas (sic) and all those other countries, all sort of Islamists (sic) and all' and finally concluded that he rather 'the Russians sit here [instead]' (BOM36K:A8.3).²⁴⁴ The comment presented an interesting perception of a particular hierarchy that BOM36K seemed to ascribe to immigrants, or presumed immigrants as the case might be with many of the Latvian-born Russian speakers, where they were preferred over an unknown 'other' from elsewhere.

The type of sentiments and descriptions expressed towards potential immigrants (as no actual distinction between migrants and refugees was made) may, to some degree, be explained by the following comments, which were also given in response to the question relating to Latvia's future. In noting what it would mean to be Latvian in the future, many of the

²⁴² Ethnic slur for Asians from the former Soviet Union, it can include people from the Caucasus.

²⁴³ "Es domāju, ka ja atļaus brīvo imigrāciju un sāksies brīvais vilnis, un sāks mūs apmeklet visi tie melnie čurkas, nu tad es neko labu neredzu tālākā nākotnē."

²⁴⁴ "A kas ir labāk, tagad ka te brauc visi melnie čurkas iekšā? Manis pēc labāk lai krievi te sēž, nevis visi tie idioti no no Āfrikām un visām citām valstīm, Islāmisti visādi un visi pārējie, es tikai par to, lai krievi te sēž."

respondents referred to the wave of emigration experienced by Latvia since 2004, when it joined the EU. The interviewee who was quoted as referring to the ‘so-called refugees’ (EAF54Z:A8), went on to note that ‘it’s very worrying that we have let all the young, intellectual people [go], that actually really love their homeland [...] they are all now gone to Ireland and England’ (ibid.).²⁴⁵ The impact of emigration and the importance of sustaining the country was highlighted by other interviewees as well, as one female respondent (JHF51Z:A9) noted that ‘we definitely have to stay and live in our land, we have to support our country’.²⁴⁶ Similarly, such sentiments as needing to ‘live in our country’²⁴⁷ (LVF35R:A13) and ‘not going abroad’²⁴⁸ (SBM25V:A10) were also prominent when discussing the future of Latvia. When asked what it will mean in the future to be Latvian, another female interviewee (JMF43K:A10) laughed and stated that it will mean that she ‘will be able to speak Latvian on Skype and with [her] friends, who live in England and elsewhere in the world’.²⁴⁹ In addition, another respondent (JWF52V:A12) argued that ‘being a Latvian in Latvia’ was ‘easier than being a Latvian abroad’, noting the difficulty of maintaining one’s Latvian identity when away from one’s homeland.²⁵⁰ This once again connected to the overarching argument of Latvian national identity as something that, by implication, required solidarity against the ‘other’ and a protection of ‘ours’. ‘We are becoming fewer and fewer, because many have left and will not return,’ a female respondent (BCF27Z:A10) stated. ‘The Latvian identity is slowly being surrounded by [the ‘other’²⁵¹],’ she

²⁴⁵ “Jaunos, domājošos cilvēkus, kas tik ļoti mīl īstenībā šo dzimteni, ka viņi pat pēc 12 gadiem ir ar mieru griezties atpakaļ uz Latviju, pacelt šeit tās lietas, viņi tagad tur ir atspērušies, Īrijās un Anglijās.”

²⁴⁶ “Es domāju noteikti ar to, ka mums ir jāpaliek dzīvot savā zemē, ka mums ir jāatbalsta sava valsts, jāatbalsta visādā ziņā visu ko mēs varam atbalstīt.”

²⁴⁷ “[...] dzīvot savā valstī.”

²⁴⁸ “[...] nebraukt prom uz ārzemēm.”

²⁴⁹ “Tas ka es pa Skaipu varēšu parunāties ar saviem draugiem, kas dzīvo Anglijā un citur pasaulē, un parunāt latviski.”

²⁵⁰ “Latvijā būt latvietim ir vieglāk, nekā būt latvietim ārzemēs, un ņemot vērā, ka tik daudz latviešu dzīvo ārzemēs, viņiem savu latviskumu saglabāt ir daudz grūtāk, nekā mums Latvijā dzīvojot saglabāt savu latviskumu.”

²⁵¹ The original quotation literally translates as ‘that being of a Latvian is slowly overgrowing with a foreign moss’.

explained, concluding that therefore, in the future, being a Latvian would be seen as ‘a massive extra’ (ibid.).²⁵²

6.7. Conclusion

To conclude, such an apparent worry about Latvian identity being threatened by an ‘other’, whether it be the Russian-speaking other or a potential influx of refugees - the unknown ‘other’ -, became clear throughout the interviews. Moreover, interviewees struggled to identify what being Latvian meant. A sense of ‘belonging’ was juxtaposed with the ability to identify it as contrasting to those who did *not* belong. Furthermore, one’s feelings of national identity, especially about what it means to identify as a Latvian, were linked to land and culture, but detached from government. Language was one of the strongest defining elements for all of the interviewees. The perceived role of the media varied across the interviews, but many of the respondents agreed that media played an influential role in the way the Russo-Latvian relationship in Latvia was constructed, although, not on themselves. Nonetheless, no clear pattern emerged for what that influence may be, as none of the interviewees appeared to highlight the media representation in a comparable way. This is most likely due to the fact that such representation was perceived as being statistically much higher than it was in reality. Drawing on the previous two chapters of this thesis, it is reasonable to argue that the representation of the Russian-speaking minority in the Latvian-language news media is generally limited, barring spikes in coverage when encountering a specific event, such as the 2012 Language Referendum. This was not a perception shared by those interviewed in this research, since they felt that media affected the perception of those engaging with it. Importantly, though, the majority of the interviewees did not consider themselves to be influenced by the media, but did state that *others* were.

²⁵² “Tapēc, ka mēs sarūkam, jo daudzi ir aizbraukuši projām uz neatgriešanos. [...] Tā latvietība pamazām apaug ar svešo sūnu un tad būs tāds īstens, tīrs latvietis iekšienē, tā būs baigā ekstra”

The division between one's own experiences and those of others was also evident when discussing the difficulties experienced with the Russian-speaking community. The majority of the interviewees referred to any negativity in the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia by stating that they were aware of other people's experiences. All interviewees noted that the Russian speakers they knew personally were not part of this category. The opinions held of Russian-speaking personal acquaintances were placed at a distance from what the interviewees believed to be media and government representations of the Russian-speaking community and issues relating to it. In an analysis of responses received by Cheskin (2016: 199) during his focus group research in Rīga, where he interviewed members of the Russian-speaking community in Latvia, he noted that due to the relatively high level of contact between Latvian and Russian speakers 'the respondents were able to acknowledge openly that the intergroup distance between Latvians and Russian speakers was most visible in the media and political spheres, [but that] in everyday life the two communities were far closer' (ibid.). Such conclusions directly correlate with the comments made in the interviews conducted in this research. The notion of a view shared between the 'common people' in their everyday experiences which differs so strongly from how governmental policies are perceived, is complex and difficult to disentangle. This chapter has shown that the ways in which Latvian speakers perceived their own identity, the identity of the 'other', or several 'others', and the relationship between themselves, their community and the 'other' has a multitude of layers. However, the majority of the issues can still be narrowed down to concepts of national identity, which in turn is identified through elements of culture, tradition and, most importantly, language.

Bobbi J. van Gilder and Zach B. Massey (2015: 150) refer to Gordon Allport's hypothesis in relation to intergroup relationships, by explaining that under 'favourable conditions, intergroup contact has the potential to reduce prejudice and ameliorate intergroup conflict'. However, van Gilder and Massey also note that 'when members of different ethnic or religious groups meet, the context of that encounter frames future encounters and plays a crucial role in the formation

of negative affect in both present and future encounters' (ibid.). This was reflected throughout the research conducted, and in particular within this chapter.

The distance placed between the Latvian-speaking 'us' and the Russian-speaking 'them' shifted throughout all of the chapters, but what remained stable was the historical recognition of a homeland, especially in relation to work by Smith, Law, Wilson, Bohr and Allworth (1998: 96) who noted a particular tendency to speak of one's 'natural homeland [where] the ancient indigenous nationality' was Latvian. This was also reflected by Jaeger (see 2.4.1. section of the thesis), who stated that '*everything Russian*' was perceived as a threat through 'a discursive "chain of equivalence"' (cited in Mole, 2013: 83). This proved very significant in the interviewees' discussions of Russian speakers, as there was a sense that 'everything Russian' that they did not know personally was a threat, but, importantly, personal experiences were not. Nonetheless, the personal experiences did not appear to overshadow the established narrative, which Dovile Budryte ascribes to an increase in seeing the nation 'as a suffering hero whose existence had been endangered by immigration, russification, and the experience of what was called genocide – deportations and repressions' (2005: 56). This historical narrative was shown to still sit deeply and, in a sense, *excuse* any negativity expressed towards the Russian-speaking minority. Significantly, however, it was expressively only the *unknown* rather than the *personal* experience with Russian speakers, and thus a generalised version of them rather than specific individuals.

The interviews revealed a perception that the Latvian-language news media had some level of ability to influence their viewers/readers. However, media representations of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia were perceived by some as positive, by others as negative and by a few as non-existent. Thus, it is impossible to claim any sort of media influence if the perception of the coverage given to the Russian-speaking minority and related issues varies so much. However, recognising that the media were seen, at least by some, as perpetuating particular social beliefs, is important. When contrasting the actual media coverage with the

views and opinions expressed by Latvian speakers regarding the relationship with Russian-speaking minority, it becomes apparent that a discrepancy exists in what people believe the media portray and what they actually show.

The following Conclusion to the thesis will be drawing together the analysis of the three main chapters in this research and revisiting the research questions. This will illustrate the patterns, narratives and concepts that have emerged throughout the study, demonstrating the importance of national identity in the relationship between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities in Latvia.

7. Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The shared history between Latvia and Russia is extensive and long. Therefore, the analysis of the complex relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia after independence reflect the continuities and disruptions in this relationship in recent years. This thesis has established the ways in which the Latvian-language news media represent the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, and assessed the ways in which such a representation was understood and enhanced by Latvian speakers. The research was divided into three main sections, each aiming to highlight a specific element of the analysed representation and understanding.

This conclusion summarises the results of each chapter drawing together overarching themes and locating them in the context of the initial research questions, before highlighting limitations within the research and assessing the original contribution to knowledge offered by this thesis.

In Chapter Four, the first of the three main content analysis sections, an overview of three nationally published Latvian-language newspapers and the news coverage in the three main Latvian-language television channels was provided. This section demonstrated how the Russian-speaking minority was represented and how issues relating to the Russian speakers in Latvia were addressed overall. By analysing six weeks of news stories, the section draws together all of the relevant occurrences of representation during the period when news relating to Russian speakers was produced. In picking a time period when no events specifically relating to Russian speakers occurred (unlike, for example, 9th May when Victory Day is celebrated by some), the section provided an analysis of the types of stories that appeared in the media during a 'typical' period. Both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses of the three

newspapers and the three televised news broadcasters demonstrated that stories dedicated to issues about Russian speakers were in the minority during the period sampled.

Nonetheless, some news coverage of issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority did exist during the sample period, even if statistically at a very small percentage. The analyses demonstrated that many of the news items placed these issues based on assumptions of an implicit or inherent understanding of socio-historical precedents in relation to the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. The analysis also demonstrated that such a presumption led to a particular positioning of the news items, one which presented the news as informative at best and as misrepresentative at worst, rather than attempting to explore or investigate the causes behind particular perceptions.

This coverage established a basis for Chapters Five and Six, which set out to explore a more narrow representation (Chapter Five) and understanding (Chapter Six) of the issues relating to both the Latvian-language news media and the perception of Russian-speaking minorities in Latvia. By using Chapter Four and its overarching analysis as a starting point for considering the differences in coverage of a more particular time period, such as the 2012 Language Referendum, the research explored how a narrative about Russian speakers in Latvia was constructed and importantly *presented* to the Latvian speakers.

Chapter Four demonstrated that the coverage of stories about the Russian speakers relied heavily on presumptions perceived to be held by the audiences of the sources analysed. The distinct lack of an analytical engagement with and establishment of historical and social background to many stories, demonstrated that an expectation relating to the audience inherently existed within all six sources discussed. Despite some differences, the type of stories in different sources were rather similar, as all tended to concentrate on ideas of 'belonging', which in turn demonstrated not only a particular perception presented by one source, but rather an assumed perception held more widely. The construction of a type of narrative also emphasised that all sources relied upon a self-enforced perception and then further perpetuated

it to their audiences. Chapter Four thus clearly demonstrated that - independent of the source - the news stories relied heavily on the same type of thematic constructions, based on a shared and *understood* history and social positioning. This paved the way for a further investigation of how both the stories and the themes were constructed in newspapers during a more specific coverage, and of the perceived relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers held by Latvian-language speakers.

Chapter Five analysed how three of the nationwide Latvian-language newspapers covered the 2012 Language Referendum. The analyses concentrated on a period of four months, focusing on the lead-up to the referendum and analysing the coverage of the referendum in opinion pieces. The qualitative analysis revealed a pattern similar to that established in Chapter Four - an under-researched selection of claims that lead to an emphasis on an undefined sense of 'being Latvian', which thereafter leads to the positioning of 'us' against an also undefined 'them'. Many of the articles lacked an in-depth analysis of the points presented. However, as there were more articles to analyse - due to the time period of the analysis and to the content - further patterns emerged from the coverage.

Analysis of the opinion pieces uncovered the way that the referendum led to a particular portrayal and construction of Latvian national identity in the newspapers. An underlying theme of 'us' versus 'them' emerged within the pieces, but whilst it was predominantly a Latvian-speaking 'us' positioned against a Russian-speaking 'them', this binary shifted throughout the analysis. Russian speakers were not *exclusively* positioned as 'them' in reference to the consistent Latvian-speaking 'us' that the newspapers presented. Whilst the concept of 'us' was clearly identified as 'Latvian' and specifically 'Latvian-speaking Latvian', no substantial analysis of the 'us' used was ever provided in any of the articles referring to it. This allowed the thesis to draw parallels with the stories' construction discussed in Chapter Four: a presumed understanding was evident within the portrayal of 'Latvian-ness', most often presented as

inherent. However, as the stories neared the referendum, the shift in emphasis towards 'being Latvian' was notable. The construction of a narrative began to rely heavily on mythicisation and an emphasis on 'fighting' for a cause that was positioned as 'Latvian' and thus, *ipso facto*, correct. Very few stories from the sample period questioned this positioning of Latvian speakers as inherently 'correct' and most importantly, inherently 'us'.

The analysis of the opinion pieces in relation to the referendum illustrated a very specific understanding of the notions relating to 'belonging' to Latvia. The majority of the stories presented the Latvian-speaking 'us' as naturally occurring and representative of the readership. It was this particular definition of 'us' that thereafter drove the stories and explored Latvian speakers' relationship with Russian speakers in relation to the referendum campaign, as well as more broadly. The analysis showed, however, a strong reliance on presenting Latvian speakers as 'proud'. This representation became more complex in the way the articles constructed their argument. 'Belonging' and 'being' Latvian was placed in the context of 'fighting for' Latvia, without necessarily always exploring the meanings or implications of such actions. The positioning of what it meant to be Latvian and the expression of such 'Latvian-ness' was important in terms of how the Russian-speaking minority was located in relation to the concept of an unchangeable 'us'. Throughout the analysis, it became apparent that the position of 'them' was far more fluid than that of 'us'.

The opinion pieces analysed in the period leading up to, and shortly after, the referendum demonstrated that a very particular narrative was being presented. The stories began by expressively positioning the Russian speakers as against Latvian independence and, due to the repetitive way in which the readers were encouraged to 'defend' Latvia in the referendum, against Latvian speakers. This narrative did, however, splinter noticeably within the articles under scrutiny. The position of 'them' was divided between, in the first instance, the initiators of the referendum, which in turn were almost exclusively synonymously placed together with the political party *Saskaņas Centrs*. The placement of Russian speakers in relation

to the initiators of the referendum and the political party was not always clear, but at times was presented as presuming a certain overlap between *all* Russian speakers and Saskaņas Centrs. Once the referendum neared, this became even more splintered, both in terms of such a synonymous representation and the definition of ‘them’.

Another notable ‘them’ emerging from the coverage was that of the government. Whilst the earlier referendum articles presented Saskaņas Centrs almost exclusively in terms of politics, later articles began to distinguish between ‘us’, the Latvian speakers, and ‘them’, the Latvian-speaking government. A sense of detachment between ‘us’ and ‘them’ began to be portrayed as the articles levelled various accusations at the government, ranging from highlighting their apparent lack in action regarding the referendum to calling the government incompetent. This positioning of the Latvian speakers as *not* in the same category (of ‘us’) as the government was further highlighted in the interviews, some of which referred to the ‘common people’ in contrast to the government. It is thus reasonable to assume that this visible splintering in the articles relating to the referendum drew upon the presumptions of the ‘common people’ being somehow different and differentiated from the governing powers and politicians. And that the perceived ‘gap’ between Latvian and Russian speakers was smaller than the perceived ‘gap’ between ‘common people’ and the government. So, in a sense, citizens and non-citizens (and Latvian and Russian speakers) are arguably ‘united’ in something very significant.

Overall, and echoing the broad patterns that emerged in Chapter Four, the qualitative analysis in Chapter Five illustrated that a particular narrative was constructed to establish the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, which positioned the Latvian speakers as ‘belonging’ and the Russian speakers as ‘other’. The construction of such a narrative heavily relied on notions of historical precedents or, more accurately, a specific portrayal of such precedents. The emphasis on the need for Latvian speakers to ‘fight’ and ‘protect’ Latvian independence by voting against the proposal to introduce Russian as an official

language in Latvia was very visible. This 'need' was further presented as an opportunity for Latvians to contribute to the perceived fight against any Russian influences, which were presented as overarching and, perhaps most importantly, *existent*, despite any factual proof of the validity of such claims. Very few articles discussed the reasons for the initiation of the referendum beyond an 'us' versus 'them' binary. Those articles that did offer an alternative reasoning pointed towards a systemic issue rather than just one between the Latvian and Russian speakers themselves.

The notions of an overarching issue were explored further in the articles about governmental policies related to the integration of Russian speakers. Notably, however, no articles actually presented an exploration of the policy in any detail. Instead, the majority of those articles that described integration policies as problematic failed to engage with how and why such problems were present. Most discussions of integration policies appeared across the three newspapers in the days after the referendum. Some called on the need for improvements, whilst others accused the government of failing to fulfil promises related to integration policies. Overall, the issue of integration was linked with the notions of the government as 'them' against the Latvian-speaking 'us'. This was due to the government's failure of providing a strong representation both during the referendum, and, arguably, beforehand in relation to the integration policies, which was heavily criticised by the media.

Chapter Five thus illustrated a strong link with Chapter Four in terms of how stories were presented and constructed. Whilst Chapter Four provided an overall view of the way stories related to the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia were (or in many instances were not) covered within the six sources analysed, Chapter Five offered a more detailed case study, which concentrated on a specific event, and thus demonstrated more thoroughly how stories and narratives were constructed. The analysis of both chapters revealed a significant reliance on existing knowledge ascribed to the audiences. Furthermore, both analyses demonstrated the perpetuation of notions related to Latvian identity and specifically concepts of pride in 'being'

Latvian. The stories discussed in the two chapters showed that 'Latvian' was exclusively identified as 'Latvian speaking'. This was further highlighted in the 26 interviews that were analysed in Chapter Six. The chapter mapped a range of views about Russian speakers in Latvia, as held and expressed by a sample of the Latvian-speaking population.

The interviewees were selected by their geographical location, age and gender, with the aim of providing a clear cross-section of data for analysis. The collection and analysis of such key demographic data, as well as establishing the interviewees' education level and profession, demonstrated that there were no major differences in the opinions held by any of the Latvian speakers interviewed. Instead, many of the opinions expressed were similar in their core understanding of the issues relating to the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the country. The majority of the interviewees noted that they personally did not perceive the relationship as negative. However, upon closer investigation, many appeared to have varying levels of understanding about the relationship between the two communities outside their own immediate circle of acquaintances. Throughout the interviews, a distinction was drawn between the Russian speakers whom they knew and those 'others' whom they did not know. However, despite this discrepancy many of the respondents still referred to the relationship as being portrayed differently in the media and by the government to the way the relationship was experienced socially.

The interview questions were carefully selected and tested in order to address not only perceptions related to the media (both in terms of portrayal of Russian speakers and more generally in the trust expressed towards news media) but also to allow an exploration of opinions held in relation to the social relationship between the two communities in Latvia. The aim of Chapter Six was to establish how Latvian speakers viewed and understood the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia.

The interview questions were divided into four major sections, each of which aimed to address an element of the research questions that were established at the outset. Despite

covering different issues, the sections were designed to be compatible with each other and offer an overarching theme for analysis. Whilst the main aim of conducting interviews was to establish the ways in which Latvian speakers perceived the interrelationship between their community and the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, it was also important to discuss how the interviewees perceived their *own* national identity. This allowed the research to then contextualise the answers connecting the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers and the way Latvian national identity might have influenced the understanding of such a relationship. Similarly, this facilitated a reflection on the media representation of the relationship and the way narratives were built around historical events and social developments.

In terms of the relationship between the two communities as perceived by Latvian speakers, Chapter Six revealed that very few respondents felt that the relationship was negative. Many noted that they had close friends or acquaintances who were Russian-speaking, some insisted that any portrayal of the relationship as difficult was the result of media and government manipulation. Nonetheless, when questioned about the relationship between the Latvian and Russian speakers in the wider context of Latvia, many suggested that Russian speakers held negative views about Latvia. Notably, however, none of the interviewees could offer contemporaneous examples to such claims.

Another notable finding emerged from the interviews: the perception of Latvian national identity. Many of the respondents highlighted Latvian culture and language as crucial to 'being Latvian'. However, in their discussion of Latvian identity, it emerged that a particular understanding of Russian speakers and their national identity was recognised in contrast to that experienced by Latvian speakers. There was a certain level of unwillingness to identify the Russian speakers as Latvian, often grounded in the fact that they were not *inherently* Latvian. This was a notable element in the discussion of Latvian identity during the interviews, as many of the respondents struggled to explain what they felt made them Latvian, but the majority tended to agree that Russian speakers still were not to be considered in the same category.

The interviews and the ensuing content analysis highlighted that the respondents had a complex understanding and relationship with media and the information with which they were provided. There was no clear agreement between the interviewees about whether or not the Latvian-language news media provided an accurate representation of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. However, the majority of the respondents held a strong opinion on matters relating to media representation, usually in relation to claiming that the media covered issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority either too much or too little. Such a spectrum of response towards the media demonstrated that the respondents often seemed to *perceive* information and attribute it to the media, rather than *receive* the information from the media. This was especially evident in the context of both quantitative and qualitative analyses in Chapters Four and Five, which provided an overview of exactly how many times particular stories relating to the Russian-speaking minority appeared across the Latvian-language news media. The interview data indicated that there was a visible discrepancy between the perception of such media stories and the actual reality of the coverage.

Overall, Chapter Six contextualised the information gathered and analysed in Chapters Four and Five in relation to the way that Latvian speakers perceived the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Additionally, however, Chapter Six provided a way to examine the structuring of Latvian national identity, which became a significant consideration within Chapter Four and Chapter Five as the discussion of narrative constructions developed. The ability to contextualise the research conducted within the chapters relating to Latvian-language news media with the ways in which Latvian speakers recognised their own positioning in relation to the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, allowed for Chapter Six to develop a strong view of both the historical and the social significance of the relationship between the communities.

Having investigated the different ways in which the Russian-speaking minority was portrayed in the media, this thesis has explored theoretical concepts of national identity, weaving together both Latvian historical narratives and empirical data in order to establish a way to assess how the media constructs and affects concepts of national thought in Latvia. Ernest Gellner's assertion (see Literature Review) that nationalism 'invents nations, rather than the other way around' (Gellner cited in O'Leary, 1998: 54) appears to play-out in the constructedness of media narratives, and audience readings. This research has attempted to demonstrate that Gellner's claim has some validity in terms of how Latvian national identity accounts for the shaping of particular ideas and thought processes. The ways in which Latvia as a nation has been (or perceived to be) shaped has varied in the context of the different materials explored in this investigation. Nonetheless, notable patterns have emerged from all three of the main content chapters. In the Literature Review, the thesis set out to investigate Gellner's claim that a particular type of 'coercion' existed in a nation (2000: 101), which both ensured that the 'ideological system of a society' continued to be stable and also showed a sense of 'legitimacy'. This has been demonstrated within the thesis: 'coercion' became questionable, not least in terms of the notion that it sustained a 'stable' ideological system.

Such a system proved not only unattainable, but also difficult to define in the first place. Through the differences expressed within the definition of 'them' when positioned against the recognized 'us', the idea of stability proved difficult to sustain. However, more sustainable theories emerged, relating to the definition of 'us'. Özkırımlı's argument that 'since all nations lay claim to a unique place in history' as the leading to 'all national identities' being 'exclusionary' (2005: 24), proved partially accurate in the perception of the right to a nation, and, more importantly, the right to a national identity. This links to Hobsbawm's (2000: 263) argument that 'in some sense it is the idea of "us" as a body of people united by an uncountable number of things "we" have in *common*'. He elaborates by suggesting that a '*common* territory of existence in which we live, whose landscape is familiar and recognizable' leads to the perception that 'the

influx from outside' is threatening (ibid.). These concepts were visible throughout the empirical data analysed in the research, especially in the media coverage which often demonstrated a very particular understanding of 'us' that allowed only for the inclusion of *exclusively* Latvian-speaking population. This sentiment was also evident in the interviews that were conducted, because — despite a recognition of those 'loyal' to Latvia — Russian speakers were denied the label of 'Latvian' and thus inclusion in the specified category of 'us'.

Anderson's concepts of an 'imagined community' as an imagined, undefined but *recognised* (see Anderson, 2006), became apparent especially in the interview data, which demonstrated that the interviewees struggled to offer an actual definition of what the 'us' they identified as Latvian might actually be. Nonetheless, elements of culture played a strong part in any attempted definition, thus once again returning to Gellner and the argument that culture 'does not so much underline structure: rather, it replaces it' (1998: 40). This also echoed van den Berghe's (1987: 6) reflections that culture might not be 'all-important' when placed in the context of 'kinship sentiments' (ibid.: 18). In fact, his proposal that 'ethnicity can only be understood in relation to other social formations' (ibid.: 256) proved significant when attempting to place the ideas of national identity in the context of the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities. Similarly, this reflected Day and Thompson's (2004: 45) arguments which have been drawn-on throughout the thesis: they state that 'members of the society occupy well-defined social positions' and thus 'know their place' (ibid.), linking to Mole's points discussed (Literature Review, 2.3.1.) about how 'nothing serves to unite and mobilize people as effectively as memory of a shared victory, or, in particular, collective suffering' (2013: 19). This allowed for 'kinship sentiments' (Berghe, 1987: 18) to form and promote 'Latvian-ness', whilst simultaneously demoting Russian(ness), which were seen as 'two sides of the same coin, underlining the new cultural hierarchy and highlighting constitutive outside of Russian-ness' (Mole, 2013: 84).

Whilst this thesis would not argue that structures of national identity rely completely on cultural elements, they certainly play a significant role in people's *understanding* of their national identity. Perhaps, and more importantly, they play a significant role in people's ability to *define* such an identity, and thereafter identify those not belonging to it. This thesis has demonstrated that culture (including language) only works as a *tool* in the general understanding of national identity. The role that media play in this appears to be more a perpetual source of repeated and reinforced ideologies than a creator of Gellner's proposed 'ideological system'. An imagined community, joined in a national identity that can only be defined as 'us' when positioned against all varieties of 'them', appeared to exist but also splinter as more different categories of 'them' were introduced. Thus, whilst the research recognises that *elements* of theories relating to national identity can account for the particular views identified in the analysis, it also proposes a careful application and suggests a strong empirical basis for the arguments positioned around such theories.

The main body of the thesis illustrated that the ways in which Latvian national identity was perceived, understood and recognised by both the news media and the Latvian-speaking respondents were very important in assessing the overarching relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities in Latvia. The identification of 'belonging' became a crucial element in the analysis and is evident throughout all three main content chapters. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the positioning of 'us' as Latvian-speaking and 'them' as Russian-speaking was underlying and evident throughout the analysis in all three of the main content chapters. However, this binary was not solidly defined and in no instances appeared to be particularly clear in its positioning. The quantitative analysis of the data, both across the news coverage and within the interviews, illustrated the rather prismatic nature of the notions related to a Latvian national identity. Most of these notions relied heavily on the role language played in establishing such an identity. However, elements related to the recognition of social and political

history also emerged in the discussion about how Latvian national identity was constructed in relation to the Russian speakers in Latvia and how the differences were drawn between the two communities.

The three main content chapters highlighted the complicated history shared between Latvia and Russia, as explored in some detail in the Literature Review. Notably, however, the analysis also presented the way such historical background was extended, used and positioned by both the Latvian-language news media and Latvian speakers themselves. Furthermore, the wider understanding of national identity by Latvian speakers also reflected upon such preconceptions. The recognition of particular positioning was of central importance to this research, both in terms of considering the existence of binary oppositions as a way of categorising and analysing the stories and concepts integrated in the representation of Russian speakers in Latvia, and also in terms of understanding the *construction* of such concepts.

Throughout the analysis of the media coverage and the responses given in the interviews, this research found an over-reliance on presumed knowledge, whether in relation to one's own national identity, someone else's national identity, or the relationship between different communities. Whilst many of the articles and televised news relied on such knowledge in order to present their stories, this was illustrated through the notions of 'us' versus the unknown 'them' during the interviews, with respondents specifying that the Russian speakers they knew were not included in those same binary categories. Nonetheless, there were multiple instances where the interviewees implied that 'being' and 'belonging' to Latvia were an exclusively 'Latvian' thing, and that - by association - the Russian speakers stood separately.

The fact that neither the news stories nor the interviews could provide a clear definition of what 'belonging' to Latvia meant (but all relied heavily on the presumption that such a distinction existed) demonstrated how 'being Latvian' was a narrative that was dependant on construction. More importantly, this narrative also relied on the ability to distinguish between the Latvian 'us' and the 'other', which in many instances was recognised as the Russian-speaking

'them', but did not always exclusively refer to the Russian speakers and the shared history between the two communities. In fact, the distinction between an 'us' as 'Latvians', which in some instances included the Russian speakers, was placed in contrast to the governing 'them'. Chapter Four, which offered an overview of the representation given to Russian speakers in Latvia and stories relating to them, placed the least emphasis on presenting a differentiation between the Latvian population (Latvian- or Russian-speaking) and the government. However, the overview of the coverage across the six-week period was also notable due to the low frequency of such stories in the news media that were analysed.

Chapter Five drew more strongly on binary oppositions and the positioning of 'them' as Russian-speaking. However, a shift can be noted in the coverage as the 2012 Language Referendum neared. The analysis of the coverage given to the referendum in the three Latvian-language newspapers demonstrated that a specific event, which was defined by positioning the Russian language against Latvian, allowed for the newspapers to refer more extensively to the perceived binaries of 'Latvian-ness' and 'other-ness', which in some cases was 'Russian' identified by non-specific categories and often used as an overall term for anyone from a historically and/or socially differing background. At times, the application of such definitions undermined and left unaccounted anyone from a more nuanced and varied background. This allowed, or perhaps, more accurately, *required*, the newspapers to introduce other categories for what was identified as 'them'. This strategy was further evidenced in Chapter Six when many of the respondents expressly positioned themselves as differing from the government. Nonetheless, the existence of 'us' was still prominent, especially when discussing Russian speakers as *not* Latvian. The concept of being 'loyal to Latvia' as different to being 'Latvian' seemed to allow some respondents a degree of acceptance without fully allowing any Russian speakers into the latter category.

Overall, the three main content chapters illustrated that positioning and construction of concepts relating to national identity, specifically a Latvian national identity, were crucial to any

recognition of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Importantly, however, Chapter Six demonstrated that the over-reliance on pre-existing knowledge by Latvian-language news media was not always accurate, although it appeared to be always influenced by the concepts and constructs already recognised by Latvian speakers. Therefore we can argue that the media may not necessarily hold a role which allows for influence of perception *per se*, but has perpetuated and continues to perpetuate particular mythicised notions. Often, as the changing nature of identifying a binary opposition in the case studies related to the news media demonstrated, the need to change a definition of 'them' was required in order to address the audiences in a way that allowed for a negotiation rather than a direct acknowledgement of particular ideas. This then placed the news media in a context that limited objectivity of information, and strongly relied on audiences' own identification and positioning of historical and social issues. Nonetheless, many of the Latvian-language news sources demonstrated an inability to address or acknowledge the existence of a varied audience.

The research originally set out to achieve three main aims: (1) to consider the ways in which contemporary Latvian-language news media represent Russian-speaking minority in Latvia; (2) to outline and analyse the socio-political issues concerning Russian speakers in Latvia by analysing the content of Latvian-language news media; and (3) to explore if and how the Latvian-language news media potentially problematise the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the country. As the research developed, an additional three aims emerged, relating to: (4) an identification of the notions and definitions relating to the term 'Latvian national identity'; (5) an assessment of the Latvian speakers' perception of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia; and (6) a highlight of any existing links between particular perceptions held by Latvian speakers and Latvian-language news media in their understanding/portrayal of the Russian-speaking minority.

The following section will break down how each of the research aims was achieved. The first aim was to consider the ways in which contemporary Latvian-language news media represent Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. This was achieved through the first two main content chapters, which considered the Latvian-language news media and the portrayal of Russian-speaking minority in the stories across a set of primary sources. The first main content chapter established that these sources showed a minimal engagement with issues relating to Russian speakers in Latvia. However, from the few related stories, it emerged that the Latvian-language media perpetuated notions of 'us' as Latvian-speaking, which were positioned against 'them' as Russian-speaking. From the source analysis, it became evident that the majority of the sources addressed a Latvian-speaking audience only. The overall representation of the Russian-speaking minority in the Latvian-language news sources was minimal and, when existent, tended to ignore any cultural or social issues between Latvian and Russian speakers in favour of, addressing a failure in governmental policies. None of the stories offered an analysis of these issues or provided a clear background knowledge; instead, they assumed that the audience or readership would be able to contextualise correctly. This underlying presumption became an important point of comparison when discussing the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the interview stage, and allowed for further investigation of the way in which particular perceptions were perpetuated by the news media.

Similarly, the second main content chapter also addressed the ways in which the Russian-speaking minority had been represented in the Latvian-language news media. The chapter considered the Language Referendum of 2012 as a specific case study, looking at the news coverage dedicated to the referendum. Unlike the data collected and analysed for the first main content chapter, the second main content chapter had a significantly larger number of stories relating to the referendum (and thus the Russian-speaking minority). Despite the higher number of stories, the analysis of the data revealed similar patterns to those established in the first main content chapter. As with the first data set, the articles discussing the referendum also

demonstrated a strong use of the 'us' versus 'them' binary. However, unlike in the data set out in the first main content chapter, 'them' was not used exclusively to represent the Russian-speaking minority. Nonetheless, many of the stories still positioned the Russian speakers as 'other', consistently clustering them together when discussing the initiation of the referendum.

To summarise thus far, the analysis of the data from the first two content chapters demonstrated that the Russian-speaking minority was represented in the Latvian-language news media through a binary opposition. Notably, however, as the first content chapter revealed, during a period that saw no specific events relating to the Russian speakers (in contrast to the reporting of the language referendum), the coverage dedicated to the Russian-speaking minority and related issues was minimal.

The second research aim was to outline and analyse the socio-political issues concerning Russian speakers in Latvia through analysing the content of Latvian-language news media. This strongly linked to the first research aim, as the analysis of the data revealed not only a particular representation of the Russian-speaking minority (that of placing it in a binary opposition to Latvian-speaking majority), but also the way in which political parties and government were recognised alongside the Russian speakers. The patterns emerging from the coverage demonstrated that the sources contributed to the perpetuation of a complicated relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Specifically, the way 'them' was applied to Russian speakers and extended outwards to further include Russian-speaking politicians and parties, as well as the Latvian-speaking ruling government, demonstrated the complex nature of the social and the political issues as covered by the Latvian-language news media. Most importantly, however, the patterns demonstrated a deficit in bridging the cleavage between Latvian speakers and Russian speakers, which the stories presented as existing. The notable lack of analysis and background information for many of the stories implied a type of understanding relating to the issues that *presumed* certain knowledge/understanding rather than offered any evaluation or investigation of the media coverage. This became significant when

placed in the context of the interviews analysed in the third content chapter, as many of the respondents failed to replicate the discourse represented in the media. Furthermore, many interviewees outwardly disagreed with the media representation of the social and political relationship between the two communities.

The third research aim set out to explore if and how the Latvian-language news media potentially problematised the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the country. This, again, was demonstrated throughout the three content chapters, specifically through the mapping of different themes and patterns that emerged from the analyses. As noted already, the main problem was the use of presumed knowledge by the Latvian-language news media. Another significant pattern that emerged was the way Latvian national identity was being constructed by the media. This became particularly evident during the interview stage, as many of the respondents drew strong distinctions between identifying how 'belonging' in and, importantly, *to* Latvia differed for Latvian and Russian speakers. This was where the significance of conducting interviews lay, as asking Latvian speakers about their opinions on the topic revealed the way that the news media were often ineffective in their portrayal of the issues relating to Russian speakers in Latvia. These were sentiments that had been echoed in the newspaper coverage analysed in the first two content chapters. Thus, the thesis, responding to research aim three, found that the Latvian-language news media *did* complicate the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers, providing an analysis of how specifically this problematisation took place through the media's splintered view of the established and evolving relationship between the two communities.

In addition to the three original research aims, three more aims emerged as the thesis developed, beginning with: (4) an identification of the notions and definitions relating to the term 'Latvian national identity'. This research aim became highly significant as the research progressed, as both the media and the interviews referred to, and required an analysis of, what it meant to be Latvian, both in the media and for Latvian speakers, as well as how such

definition was positioned in relation to the Russian-speaking minority in the country. The research discovered that Latvian national identity was strongly linked to language. However, more significantly, the research also discovered that the way 'belonging to/in Latvia' was recognised as a birthright that was only applicable to Latvian speakers. The construction of what it meant to be a Latvian, as illustrated in the analysis of mythicisation of Latvian national history by the media, became an important pattern throughout the analysis. The inability of both the media and the respondents to define what it meant to 'be Latvian' played a significant role in establishing the way in which notions of Latvian national identity thereafter impacted on the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the country. No overarching definition of Latvian identity was found in the literature reviewed, or in the analysis of the news media and the interviews, and the ensuing lack of clarity demonstrated that such definition was complex and varied across both the media and the respondents. The clearest outline provided was that 'being Latvian' *existed* as a concept, but crucially applied only to Latvian speakers. A clear pattern emerged in *not* applying this definition to Russian speakers.

This then led to research aim (5), which set out to present an assessment of Latvian speakers' perception of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. The research aim differed from the others, as it was only linked to the third content chapter and the analysis of interview data. The data revealed that the majority of the interviewees did not believe that the relationship was accurately represented by either the media or politicians. Instead, many of the respondents noted that the relationship was better than presented. However, some more complex patterns also emerged from the analysis of the interviews, predominantly that of how 'being Latvian' was placed in opposition to 'being Russian', the binary of 'us' versus 'them' that had already presented itself throughout the analysis conducted of the Latvian-language news media. Thus the research aim was achieved by establishing the problematic nature of the way Latvian speakers perceived the relationship with Russian speakers, both their own and that of others, which became an important distinction to draw. Many of the respondents referred to Russian

speakers as problematic only in cases where they did not know the people in question. Therefore, the perception of relationship between Latvian speakers and Russian speakers was clearly different from the *knowledge* of the relationship, yet none of the respondents reflected on their own positioning. Similarly, the relationship was also complicated by an inability to identify what 'being Latvian' - 'us' - meant, yet it was always recognisably placed against 'them', which varied between Russian speakers and the government, at times including the media, too. Nonetheless, 'them' almost exclusively *did* include Russian speakers.

The last research aim (6) set out to highlight any existing links between particular perceptions held by Latvian speakers and Latvian-language news media in their understanding/portrayal of the Russian-speaking minority. By combining the conclusions already drawn in relation to the other research aims, this aim was achieved by comparing and contrasting the data generated from analyses of the media and interview content. Through this process, the thesis was able to map and reflect upon Latvian speakers' perceptions of Russian-speaking minority and the links it shared with the media's portrayal of the minority. This revealed similar patterns in how Latvian national identity played a role in positioning Latvians as 'us' versus the Russian-speaking 'them'. However, some notable distinctions also existed, as the Latvian-language news media almost exclusively refrained from considering Russian speakers as part of the addressed 'us'. In the interview stage, many of the respondents felt that the portrayal of the relationship between the two communities was much more negative than the reality they were presented with. However, some respondents felt that the media represented Russian speakers accurately, to a point of arguing that there was *too much* media coverage. As noted in the analysis of Latvian-language news media in Chapter Four, this was not an accurate assessment, because in many instances the media simply did not report on Russian speakers and related issues. This led the research to conclude that whilst the media portrayal was not helpful in bridging any gaps between the two communities, the perception of news relating to the relationship was often based on personal understanding of interviewees.

By adopting a mixed-methods approach, this thesis has illustrated a multitude of issues in the coverage of the Russian-speaking minority in Latvian-language news media and in the perceptions of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in the country. This section intends to acknowledge the limitations that are inherent in any research in order to highlight areas for future investigation, and to contextualise the applicability and original contribution to knowledge that this thesis offers.

Firstly, the question of subjectivity within this research must be addressed. The thesis set out to provide an objective and comprehensive view of the Latvian-language news media, the way it represented the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, and to address views relating to both media-construction of and the socially, politically and historically entrenched relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. Through an extensive use of quantitative data, the research aimed to minimise any subjective elements that may feature in gathering such information. I believe that this research, to its best ability, provides an objective analysis. However, as a researcher, my notions of objectivity and subjectivity were called into question on multiple occasions within the research. Predominantly, this occurred in some of the interviews conducted and is well highlighted in the following exchange:

Researcher: And you, yourself, have such a [negative] experience with Russian speakers?

BLM84K: No, no, in my personal experience nothing like that has happened, right? With neighbours or work colleagues. But altogether the situation, I feel it, right? The pulse in Latvia.

Researcher: Where do you feel it from?

BLM84K: From everywhere. [...] From everyday [life].

Researcher: But what happens in everyday life that makes you feel this pulse?

BLM84K: But you... You, excuse me, you probably don't live in Latvia.

(BLM84K:Q3.1-A3.7)

Here it is notable that BLM84K identified my wish to explore his understanding and recognition of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers an *unawareness* that limited my ability to understand any issues related to such relationship as influenced by not residing in Latvia. It became apparent that, to the interviewee, I could not be objective in my understanding unless I was *subjective* in my knowledge. This example is not used to highlight a bias of the research itself, but rather to recognise that the answers given in the interviews may have been influenced by who I was perceived to be, as a researcher, and, perhaps more importantly, as a Latvian. It is impossible and not conducive to distance this research from my own national identity. As a Latvian emigrant and an academic, this research reflects my own understanding and recognition of who I am. However, by acknowledging and recognising the fact that no research can be objective to its fullest, this thesis has adopted meticulous methodological steps to safeguard objectivity, relying heavily on the fact that a subjective knowledge is neither required for nor beneficial to the conclusions drawn.

Secondly, this research experienced a limit in terms of the scope. As a doctoral thesis, the project had to have boundaries, which is something that the research design arguably achieved well. However, there were elements where a broader dataset could have expanded the research. Applying a longer sample period in Chapter Four (for example, six months rather than six weeks) could have allowed for a stronger presentation of the quantitative elements addressed. What the research did, however, was use this data qualitatively to argue the relevance and importance of points made and conclusions drawn. It is thus important to recognise that, within the scope of research, a robust argument has still been generated. Additional data (such as the inclusion of televised news coverage of the 2012 referendum) may have allowed for

these points to be even more solidified but I do believe that the research captures the essence of the core constructs.

Thirdly, this research was limited in its application of research specifically on Latvia and rather had to apply frameworks that emerged from other studies. The aim of mapping patterns in the Latvian-language news media's coverage of the Russian-speaking minority required an extensive data collection and analysis, which was aided by academic theory, rather than vice versa. Nonetheless, the emergent findings are anchored in the context of existing research. It is important to acknowledge, however, that there is a potential that an application of a different theoretical framework might have offered a differing but not different analysis. Through its quantitative and qualitative approaches, the thesis presented a persuasive, statistically-substantiated assertion about the lack of coverage that Latvian-language news media offered on issues relating to the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. Furthermore, the research also provides insights into the type of coverage that is offered. It is undeniable that other approaches could have been used. However, the selection was made to provide the clearest and most comprehensive understanding of the way Latvian-language news media relates to the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia, within manageable parameters.

Finally, this research considered televised news and newspapers, without an analysis of online media. Whilst the research and the conclusions are based on newspaper and television news coverage, further research might also reveal similar patterns of construction in online sources. Due to the use of interview data, however, this research did present an overview of how representation is constructed and the way such constructions are/not reflected and understood by a demographically diverse sample of the Latvian-speaking population. The method used could certainly be applied to an internet-based media source.

Recognising the limitations of this research is important for two reasons. Firstly, these points illustrate that there is potential future research that can build the research conducted in this thesis. Secondly, the recognition of limitations allows the thesis to be positioned as presenting clear points despite the potential for further research. The aim of this thesis was not to claim that there are no other approaches that could have been used, or wider data sets that could have been considered. Instead, this research aimed to demonstrate that the conclusions drawn were valid and insightful *despite* the limitations presented here.

This research set out to establish the way Latvian-language news media covered issues related to the Russian-speaking minority and how such coverage might impact on the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Such research has not been conducted before, and certainly not to the depth and scale of this thesis. Whilst the research specifically concentrated on case studies that would offer answers to a set of research questions, both the methods used and the conclusions drawn are arguably applicable to a wider context (such as Baltic studies; minority-language research; studies into the post-Soviet states). The analysis of the newspapers demonstrated a strong reliance on historical background as part of shaping and perpetuating particular views and notions relating to both identity and the relationship between majority and minority speakers within a national context.

Whilst a limited amount of research considers Latvian-language media specifically, there has been no extensive study on the coverage in Latvian-language news media in relation to the Russian-speaking minority. Through a systematic application of both quantitative and qualitative methods, this research has allowed for a creation of a baseline for any further research in the area. The research concerned itself with both the ability to statistically illustrate the extent to which Latvian-language news

media discussed issues related to Russian speakers, but also with a qualitative analysis which demonstrated *how* such a representation is portrayed. This, in turn, was contrasted with the collected interview data to show the interaction between media representation and Latvian speakers' understanding of the relationship in Latvia between Latvian and Russian speakers.

As argued throughout the thesis, the relationship between the two communities in Latvia is complex, and has changed and been impacted upon by the transition from Soviet rule. Similarly, however, to media - a field with limited research - Latvian national identity (when positioned in the context of its relationship with the Russian-speaking minority and Latvian identity), is a concept that deserves more discussion. This research provides a basis for further investigation into Latvian-language news media in relation to journalistic practices, as well as the way in which stories relating to Russian speakers are constructed - something that does not currently exist in terms of published research. Furthermore, the research also allows for an investigation into how such constructions reflect ideas of Latvian national identity as recognised by Latvian speakers. A further exploration and assessment will allow future research to position concepts of national identity in post-Soviet countries as related to but not necessarily developed from the Soviet past. It is crucial to recognise that positionality and construction have played a significant role in the way that Latvian national identity has developed and, most importantly, is discussed by both Latvians and the media targeted at the Latvian-speaking population. It is this discussion and recognition that has shaped the relationship Latvian speakers have with Russian speakers in Latvia. The original contribution of this thesis is (1) a quantitative overview of the representation of Russian-speaking minority in Latvia, as constructed by the Latvian-language news media; (2) a qualitative analysis of the way Latvian-language news media construct a particular narrative in relation to historical, social and political events; (3) a qualitative analysis of

interviews conducted with Latvian speakers regarding their opinion of the relationship between Latvian- and Russian-speaking populations in Latvia; (4) a recognition of the way Latvian national identity impacts upon opinions held within Latvia and their perpetuation within the Latvian-language news media.

This thesis has offered a systematic investigation of the ways in which Latvian-language news media represent issues related to Russian speakers in Latvia. The aim of the thesis was to establish not only how such consideration is given by the media but also how media representation contributes to an understanding of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers by the Latvian-speaking majority in Latvia. This research has demonstrated that the link, at times, is questionable. In fact, the analysis of interviews demonstrated that many of the respondents felt a deep detachment from both the governing powers in Latvia and the media. Even those who did not express a lack in trust in the media inaccurately discussed the ways in which the news media represented issues related to the Russian-speaking minority.

The sections on news media and their coverage revealed interesting patterns and indicated a strong reliance on constructing a particular narrative, which inherently depended on an already existing cultural, social, political and historical understanding of the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. Such reliance revealed a complex structuring of political issues which were, at times, simply summarised (by both the media and the respondents) as 'them' versus 'us'. This, however, became even more problematic when the 'us' could not be defined and yet seemingly appeared to encompass a significant and *particular* understanding of what 'being Latvian' meant.

There is more research to be done in relation to both the Latvian-language news media and the Latvian-speaking populations and their understanding of national identity and how this impacts on the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers. As one

interviewee noted, when asked what kind of things constituted as being 'Latvian': 'What else is Latvian? A dislike of Russians!' (SBM25V:A2). Expressed as a joke, this quote is indicative of the way in which the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers is positioned as *inherently* negative. Part of this thesis has addressed *how* such positionality is further emphasised by the media, but whether it is media that pushes such a narrative or the society that simply does not question its existence, remains to be explored further.

APPENDIX 1: Example of coding database

Paper	Date	Issue	Headline	Link	Topic	Page	Page in which contd. (if)	Location	Section	Page Label	Format
(title)	(in full)	(number)	(title in both Latvian and English)	(link)	(what is the story about)	(page on which the article starts)	(page number)	(on the page: top left, bottom left, etc.)	(main news, editorial, sport, etc.)	(domestic news, european news, world news, etc.)	(news report, editorial, etc.) (provide a separate table)
Latvijas Avīze	11/02/2011	213 (4399)	"Sola noturēt valodas pozīcijas" - "Promise to hold language position"	1 FULL	A new committee is created to discuss the language question. A book regarding language will be published in 2012. The laws are currently in Latvian and the constitution is based on speaking Latvian. Andrejs Veisbergs (head of translations in LU) calls the collection of signatures 'absurd' and points out that 'demokrātijā pieļauj jebkādas izpausmes - var sākt vākt parakstus, piemēram, ka Latvijā vispār nav vajadzīga valdība'.	4	n/a	8	1	3	3
Latvijas Avīze	11/03/2011	214 (2400)	"Parakstu vākšana un 'lienošā pieeja'" - "Signature collection and 'sly entry (?)"	1 FULL	29% of citizens ready to vote for Russian as second language, many of them supporters of Saskaņas Centrs, however, SC argues for allowing Russian in places but not legalising it	3	n/a	4	5	7	3
Latvijas Avīze	11/04/2011	215 (2401)	"Kā mazākumtautību pārstāvi vērtē prasību par otro valsts valodu?" - "What do minority nationality representatives think of the request for second national language?"	1	Four different people express their opinion about the language referendum	2	n/a	7	3	7	4

Article size	Word Count	Pictures	Source	Type of Pic	Content of Pic	People in Pic	Non-human Pic	Location Geographically	Domestic Area	Topic	Journals	Interviewees	Interviewees opinion	Article's opinion
(percentage of the page)	(word count)	(the amount accompanying the story)	(name of the photographer/source)	(colour, black/white, etc., cartoon, etc.)	(humans (1? 2?), plants, etc.)	(happy, sad, crying, etc.)	(what's in it?)	(domestic? other country (which?))	(town? region?)	(separate sheet)	(name)	(who? name/position, as provided)	(positive? negative? neutral?)	(positive, negative, neutral)
	777	1	1=Karīna Miezāja	1	2	one worried, one happy	n/a	domestic	1 and all	new language committee (to protect Latvian)	Dace Kokareviča	Andrejs Veisbergs,	negative (believes that the language referendum is a farce)	positive (regarding restarting the language committee), negative (of the referendum - however, that's shown through the
	605	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	domestic	all	Russian speaking parties and the language referendum	Māris Antonevičs	Vaidis Zaiters' reform party (quoted), Romualds Ražuks (quoted from an interview with Diena), Jānis Urbanovičs (quoted from a 'Russian newspaper'), Saskaņas Centrs (quoted from a 'Russian newspaper')	portrayed negative as no actual interview was provided, e.g., quotes gathered	negative (points out party's and politicians' relationship with Russian speakers and their opinions of Russian in Latvia)
	398	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	domestic	3, 10, 1, 2 (Krāslava)	four people express their opinion about the language referendum	Anna Zemblicka	Vanda Krukovska (chairwoman of the Latvian Polish society), Margarita Borodina-Ignatoviča (Russian in Krāslava), Ivans Nalivaiko (member of the Ukrainian culture association), Valentīna Ivanova (Belarussian in Daugavpils)	Vanda: negative of the language referendum, believes it to be 'absurd'; Margarita: positive of the language referendum, thinks that Russian should become official language in Latgale as majority of the population there is Russian, refers to 'not being forced' to learn Latvian; Ivans: positive of the language referendum, believes that a more democratic country speaks more than one official language and people are happier; Valentīna: neutral, personally would prefer Russian as an official language, but thinks that it would endanger Latvian as a language, she points to Belarus as an example	(no opinion as the article only contains interviews)

Original source if any (name of the original source if applicable)	Notes and other comments
n/a	(remarks, quotes, things that don't fit elsewhere) 1
quotes from Diena and 'Russian language newspapers'	1
n/a	1

- 1) Story - rememberi.
 - 2) Broadcast
 - 3) Type of clip.
 - 4) Voice (1)
 - 5) Interviewees.
 - 6) Languages
 - 7) Interview views.
 - 8) Domestic.
 - 9) Topic - ebeurum nobaum. ~)
- 2:00
- pauze dab.
pārdevēja; kaffi ar meistars;
NHPP impertore; VDI pārst.

-
- 1) 82; 94/103; 96
 - 2) 3.
 - 3) 2; → 4; 9; 10; 13; 17; ~~19~~¹⁶; 24; 28; 29;
 - 4) 82; 93; 96; 94/103;
 - 5) 50; 28; 28; 32; 6.
 - 6) 1
 - 7) 50 - 3 | uzskauda, ka darbu ir jāpilda pat karsthenē, nesīd-
jās pārdaibu un xps sīkine par to liecē.)
 - 28 - 1. (ieieca par to, ka pat bēdri tāda karsthenē
uzvilka).
 - 28 - 1 (domā, ka bārdē pasarpā no karsthenē pa ar
leica, ka nemoj nekad to xpsu karsthenē).
 - 32 - 5. (103 - jo leica, ka nemoj hē hēci, nebija cīk
šāshi hēci (jāpauņemē jina). neiti - jo bē, emoci-
jām um. šāstija kādi jāpauņemē šija.)
 - 6 - 3 | jo hēci un vienīgi pastāstīja no VDI darē
tāda karsthenē un šē cīnem jāpauņemē, kasu
atļēssu pret karsthenē neitlēcē.)
 - 8) 1; 107 - piemin.
- 1 -

Grubņeros ef. → Tolsu apredcel's.
direktora direktoras.
dveš 7 a.s. inst.

sviat un ef. sledes.
ar todam ef. jebkam.
bi. par kaut sled. cel.

1) weather aras.

2) 3.

3) 2. — 7;

4) weather

5) 32; 32; 36.

6) 1

7) 6 - / 70 rep. - 10. diži abi deput. re cildēni
nāo, in pūvēt pūvētā lam. pal 30, 30 ar d. cel's
nedy. list auk no kontēnē nedy. tīrai gīlāca
konk.) nedy. - 10 abi konk. faski.)

8) 1. - LV un EU robeža. 7 Talne apred. cel's.

9) Jina raizdīnāre ajetē būdīne par dīdēni
ceļi parstā lamē. ar e strātē - re var dīp
kōpētē.

1) 19. - AS, Paš. vile."

2) 3.

3) 5. - (redže, no intervjā, bet 31.
kasku nedzīdē.) - 2; 5; 15; 30; 8; 2A (re talone rade)

4) 19. - and politicians.

5) 43.

6) 1.

7) — 10 red. lear.

8) 1.

9) par līzūne pagānīnāšanu Pulcam. bdf augstēn.

- 1) 6.
- 2) 3
- 3) 1; 2. — 30; 10; 28;
- 4) 6; 13 - (ierosjēle paldjās stūdi)
- 5) 5; 3. (bet redj. ko rēce)
- 6) 1.
- 7) 1. apbedinōp jo grēbeja r-ko bēleku, bet jdomojā
12 paldjīpē lēnā.
- 8) 1.
- 9) DV partija zēz vel jorcojām renovācē pēryeā
kārdēdētā vohēdē!

ZFS. renovācē
pēryeā rēd.
- lēbā. un.

- 1) 93
- 2) 2
- 3) 5. - pati sējātk šarvot studijā 2A - Dapdas novads
pūks rēdē. un jīg. 14.
- 5) -
- 6) -
- 7) -
- 8) 1; 57
- 9) Par Afrikan cēnē rēcē isplātkē Dapdas nov. pū.

Kiēslavānā
Dapdas nov.

- 1) 5; 25; 29; 26; 24 - Izraele.
- 2) 3. Source - 2.
- 3) 2; — 27; 13; 25; 27 - bēres; 27-upur.
2A - people rādne ilife! 33, 22
17, 32, 27-gēns; 21; 19;
- 4) 25; 29; 44; 39; 45; 46;
- 5) 19; 32

vinpūstā
kārdēdētā rēdē-
kēst apogjēdā
dējē rēdē. jādūn
kōt dēnē jādūn
bēn spēnē rēdē
pēl. kēst. gēpā
kōjā cēvōt.
- "Kamas" unar.
un.
- bēgty dēvōtē

- 6) 8, 7.
- 7) 7 → 2. (10 sruveta inf. par patversnēm, bet bombas darīšana ^{kyivā}.)
- 8 → 2. (uzskata to bez kvalificēta ekspertīza).
- 8) 10; 2 - Nīderlandē.
- 9) ~~Beidzot~~ Par ^{kaucē} notikumu Izraēlā.

- 1) 5. (protesti.)
- 2) 3.
- 3) ~~Beidzot~~ — 33; 24; 26-planāti;
- 4) 18 - Izraēlā; 31.
- 5) —
- 6) —
- 7) —, bet
- 8) 1; Izraēlā.
- 9) Par LV protestu pret kauu Izraēlā.

- 1) 25; 21; 29; 32.
- 2) 3.
- 3) 2. — 19, 32; 33; 26 - parabāji; 28; 26 - crushed civil servant dar 8; 28 - kāpinā ar instrukciju ne parast valsti (pilētā). 26 - gum
- 5) 25 - arnija. 4) 25; 21; 29; 32 - karavīri, cdz sava testa formi, kā flēst.
- 6) 6.
- 7) 8. - 10. abi kica, no loti noguru no kauu un / tagd beidzot "sifēzot" viņi beidzot iz laimīgi.
- 8) 2. - Ukraina; Rūsija. ~~3~~
- 9) Par sifēzētajiem no Ukrainas karavīru ~~3~~

1) 109; 19 - au foliozēm. ; fundlap.

2) 3.

3) 2. — 10; 12; 8; 26 - valdības sēde 26 - štadijoms
33;

4) 109, 19 ; fundlap.

5) 3

6) 1

7) 1, jo ~~10~~ sēde, ra paut. hns arhivalgēt...

8) Kujoni ; 1;

9) Pa \$ pērcimam Kujones sēdes rezest.

NACIONĀLI KONSERVATĪVS DIENAS LAIKRAKSTS

Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka

OBLIGĀTAIS EKSEMPLĀRS

PIEKTDIENA, 17. 02. 2012. NR. 35 (4474) 49 SANTI. www.la.lv

9771407153505 07 5

LATVIJAS AVĪZE

Nenokavē – abonē «Latvijas Avīzi»!

Līdz 20. februārim

«Latvijas Pasta» nodalās, vai pa tālr. 67008001, 27008001

PRET



LASIET

VEDOKĻIS. Aizstāvēt savu valodu. Jūka Pīdaka: «Brīnos par cilvēkiem, kuri nav miera mācīties tās pašas valodu, kurā viņi dzīvo. Kāda sajūta ir dzīvot tādas kultūras, ko pats nīst?» 5. LPP.

UĀ. Referen- s – pārbaudījums iām. Ne visās jās ģimenēs valda ātība, kā rīkoties ruāri. «Man ir ļoti » vīrs neatzist » svētkus. Mēs opā nesvinam tkus.» 7. LPP.

Latvieši jo- ustcelēs. : «Jā, tieši šanas die- ferendums. t drusku eru, ka re- ā dāvana.» 9. LPP.

MURĀ lappuses OPĀ – 11. LPP. ESELĪBA – 15. LPP.

DIENAS nats 278, febru- rija 380, ie 5387, Datī: PMLP

Rīt Latvijā notiek referendums. Tautas nobalsošanas zīmē būs jautājums: "Vai jūs esat par likumprojekta "Grozījumi Latvijas Republikas Satversmē" pieņemšanu, kas paredz krievu valodai noteikt otras valsts valodas statusu?" "Latvijas Avīze" aicina doties uz referendumu un balso. Tas nozīmē, ka tautas nobalsošanas zīmē, kur atbilstu varianti ir "par" un "pret", krustiņš jāievēl pie vārda "pret".

VIEDOKĻUS UN RAKSTU LASIET 3. UN 4.

Vienam – pieci lati, citam – divdesmit

Daudziem pacientiem būs jāgaida rindās vai arī pakalpojumi nebūs pieejami

MĀRA LIBEKA

Nacionālā veselības dienesta (NVD) ambulatoro kvotu sadalījums pa reģioniem liecina, ka valsti liela daļa iedzīvotāju šogad gaidīs garās rindās, lai varētu izmeklēties par valsts budžeta līdzekļiem, un, iespējams, atsevišķi pakalpojumi vispār nebūs pieejami. Ambulatorai ārstniecībai piešķirtās naudas sadalījums uz vienu iedzīvotāju atšķiras četras vai pat gandrīz piecas reizes. Šodien veselības ministre Ingrida Circene tiksies ar NVD pārstāvjiem, lai izanalizētu ambulatorās aprūpes līdzekļu sadalījumu reģioniem.

Kā redzams plānoto kvotu sadalījumā, piemēram, Aizkraukles reģiona iedzīvotājiem, salīdzinot ar Dobeles reģionu (līdzvērtīgs iedzivo- tāju skaits) šie medicīniskie pakalpojumi būs pieejami četrreiz mazākā apmērā.

Deklarācijā par valdības darbību melns uz balta rakstīts, ka tā nodrošinās veselības aprūpes pakalpojumu pieejamību vienmērīgi visā valsts teritorijā. Savukārt Ministru kabineta noteikumos par veselības aprūpes finansēšanas un organizēšanas kārtību valdība apņēmu- sies nesamazināt medicīnas pakalpojumu pieejamību tuvāk pacienta dzīvesvītai. Bet veselības ministri, turpinot veselības aprūpes reformas, solījuši stiprināt tieši ambulatoro palīdzību, jo ārstēšanās stacionāros valstij izmaksā ļoti dārgi. Tomēr dzīve rāda ko pavisam citu – deklarētais ir tikai uz papīra.

Likums noteic arī to, ka pacientam ir tiesības izvēlē- ties ārstniecības iestādi, ambulatoro kvotu līcena, ka mazāk ir kaimiņu reģionā, Ogrē un Talsos, kas izvēles iespēju nekādu. Ja nu vairs, uz Valmieru vai uz vienu iedzīvotāju lielāka naudas s

atrādies amerikāņiem. Ķīnas
 nākamais liders šonedēļ ieradīsies
 iepazīšanās vizītē Vašingtonā 12. lpp.

**OBLIGĀTAIS
 EKSEPLĀRS**

Latvijas Nacionālā
 bibliotēka

Viņš mūs vēl tikai
 iepazīst. Par spēles
 nu pie jaunā valsts-
 vienības trenera stās-
 ta Girts Meija
14. lpp.

PIRMDIENA, 13. FEBRUĀRIS, 2012. NR. 31 (6280) Cena 50 santīmi

Diena

Jāpiedalās, jābalso pret

Tautas nobalsošanas zīme 2012. gada 18. februārī

Vai jūs esat par likumprojekta
“Grozījumi Latvijas Republikas Satversmē”
pieņemšanu,
 kas paredz krievu valodai noteikt
 otras valsts valodas statusu?

Atzīmējiet ar “+” sev vēlamo atbildi – “PAR” vai “PRET”

PAR  PRET 

Zīme, kurā būs atzīmēti gan “PAR”, gan “PRET” vai nebūs atzīmēta neviena
 šīm atbildēm, tiks uzskatīta par nederīgu

tāju aktivitā-
 ferendumā
 tkarīga arī
 dzīvotāju
 āšanas in-
 ātes šone-
 cinātāju
PRET bal-
t arvien
s 6. lpp.

**PROZODZIESMAS
 PĀRSŪTĪTĀJĀS, NE
 PĀRSŪTĪTĀJĀS, BEZ
 PĀRSŪTĪTĀJĀS**

18. februārī
 notiek koncerts "2012. gada
 Latvijas Muzikālā
 šovs" ar Māsu Show Boys
 koncertu. Koncerts tiks
 organizēts dziesmu Music
 Show, kas ir prognozē
 koncertu sēriju.

MŪZIKA ▶ 18. lpp.

**DOKTORADARI:
 SODS PAR
 KILOMETRA
 PĀRSNĒGUMU**

Latvijas šoferi, kas
 pārsniedz sodu par
 ātrumu 1 km/h virs
 ietauta ātruma, var
 saņemt uz zēstastību
 vai kārt vieglo auto
 vai var cerēt uz
 rājumiem likumos.

MĀ ▶ 7. lpp.

**OLISTA
 IROLĪGĀ**

rtizan
 zonu laikā
 erspektīvā
 bolista
 klubs, taču
 ināts,

BALSO PRET

Latvijas Zīmē

Atzīmējiet ar "+" ja NEATBALSTĀ
 likumprojekta pieņemšanu

Val jūs esat par likumprojekta
 "Grozījumi Latvijas Republikas Satversmē"
 pieņemšanu,
 kas paredz krievu valodai noteikt
 otras valsts valodas statusu?

Atzīmējiet ar "+" "sev vēlamu atbildi" - "PAR" vai "PRET"

PAR

PRET

Zīme, kurā būs atzīmēti gan "PAR", gan "PRET" vai nebūs atzīmēta neviena
 no šīm atbildēm, tiks uzskatīta par nedrošīgu

Ilze VEĢE, tālr. 67896639

Visi aptaujātie Sacīmas labējo partiju pārstāvji nešaubīgi apliecina gatavību 18. februārī referendumā balsot pret divvalodības ieceri, jo nobalsošanas rezultāti būšot izšķirīgi Latvijas turpmākajai attīstībai. Tiesa, vairākums deputātu par ne mazāk svarīgu uzskata tālāko stratēģiju, kas veicinās abu kopienu saliedēšanu nākotnē.

Saskaņas centra līderis Andrejs Klementjevs sarunā ar Neatkarīgo atzina: viņš nedošoties pie balsotāšanas urnas, jo nevēlas pozicionēties nedz vienā, nedz otrā flangā. «Mans mērķis ir rast kompromisu starp abu tautību cilvēkiem, tādēļ tā vietā, lai izdarītu izvēli referendumā, es jau šobrīd analizēju to, kas būtu jādarīja, lai saliedētu. Vēlos stāvēt dibas jautājumā, kas ir eskalējis abpusējās tiesības», saka AKTU...

Arī 95. benzīna cena sasniegusi latu

Ilze STEINFELDE, tālr. 67896613

Lietuvā Statoil degvielas uzpildes stacijā benzīna un dīzeļdegvielas cena, salīdzinot ar 7. februāri, pieaugusi vien par 0,2 santīmiem.

Degvielas cenu kāpums ietekmē arī degvielas patēriņu. Pēc Valsts ieņēmumu dienesta Akcīzes pārvaldes apkopotās informācijas, pērn degviela mazumtirdzniecībā iegādāta par četriem procentiem mazāk nekā 2010. gadā. Benzīns pirktis pat par 12 procentiem mazāk nekā pirms gada.

Kopš pagājušā gada degvielas tirgotājiem ir jāmaksā arī valsts degvielas rezerves glabāšanas nodeva. Tā jāpārskaita katru mēnesi 15. datumā par iepriekšējā mēneša pārdoto degvielu. Šo nodevu administrē Ekonomikas ministrija, kura pārķūpuma gadījumā aprēķina nokavējuma naudas apmēru. Ekonomikas ministrijas rīcībā 16. februārī vēl nebija informācijas, cik komersanti ir veikuši nodevas samaksu. EM sabiedrisko attiecību speciāliste Elita Rubesa-Voravko Neatkarīgajai skaidroja, ka MK attiecīgie noteikumi gan nosaka, ka maksājums jāveic līdz katru mēneša piecpadsmitajam datumam, bet maksājuma saņemšanas brīdis tiek skaitīts vēl piecas darba dienas virs šā termiņa. Turklāt tas ir atkarīgs arī no maksājumu apstrādes laika.

EKONOMIKA ▶ 9. lpp.

APPENDIX 4: Information sheet for interview participants.

Participant information sheet

Coverage of the Russian minority in Latvian-language media and its role within Russo-Latvian socio-political relations.

You are being invited to take part in a study that aims to consider a) what can, is and should be considered a Latvian national identity. The research also hopes to b) establish the role Latvian-language media plays in creating particular perceptions. Finally, the research hopes to c) explore the relationship between Latvian and Russian speakers in Latvia. Please take time to read the following information carefully and ask if anything is unclear or you would like more information. Thank you for reading this.

1. What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of the project is to assess the role Latvian-language media plays in the social and political relations between Latvians and the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. Furthermore, the research hopes to consider the notions regarding Latvian national identity and the way Latvian-language media positions it.

2. Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part please say so. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep, alongside a copy of a consent form to sign. You can change your mind at any point during the study and withdraw without providing a reason, up until the publication date, which you will be provided with as soon as it is fixed. Post this date, your data cannot be withdrawn.

3. What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to take part in a one-to-one interview with me that will be audio recorded. The date, time and location of this interview will be arranged directly with me and I will do my best to make this as convenient as possible for you. You may be contacted after the interview for any follow-up questions or clarifications. If required, any such questions would take place over the phone.

4. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study and it is hoped that you enjoy taking part. In the unlikely event that you have cause for complaint, please contact my supervisors, Prof. Birgit Beumers or Dr. Merris Griffiths, at the address below.

5. Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All participants will be anonymised for publication and any other use of the data gathered. All information relating to the project (e.g. recordings and transcripts of the interviews, consent forms) will be kept confidential, only accessible by me.

6. What happens immediately after data collection?

You will have the opportunity to ask further questions regarding the study should you wish to do so.

7. Who has reviewed the project?

This project has been reviewed by the Institute of Literature, Languages & Creative Arts Director of Research, Aberystwyth University, in accordance with the British Psychological Society's Ethical Code.

Contact details for further information:

Madara Veipa (Ph.D. candidate)

Department of Theatre, Film and Television
Parry-Williams Building
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3AJ
Wales

Email: mav9@aber.ac.uk

Supervisors:

Prof. Birgit Beumers

Email: bib2@aber.ac.uk

Telephone:

Dr. Merris Griffiths

Email: img@aber.ac.uk

Telephone:

Informācija pētījuma dalībniekam

Latvijas krievvalodīgo atspoguļojums latviešu mēdijos un tā loma krievu-latviešu sociālpolitiskajās attiecībās.

Jūs tiek aicināta/aicināts piedalīties pētījumā, kura mērķis ir noskaidrot a) kas varētu būt, kāda ir un kādai vajadzētu būt latviešu nacionālajai identitātei. Pētījumā arī vēlos b) atklāt, kāda loma latviešu mēdijiem ir konkrēta viedokļa izveidē. Visbeidzot, pētījumā vēlos c) izpētīt attiecības starp latviski un krieviski runājošajiem Latvijas iedzīvotājiem. Lūdzu, veltiet laiku, šīs informācijas uzmanīgai izlasīšanai un jautājiet, ja kaut kas ir neskaidrs, vai arī ja Jūs vēlaties iegūt vairāk informāciju par pētījuma projektu. Paldies!

1. Kāds ir pētījuma mērķis?

Pētījuma mērķis ir novērtēt kāda loma ir latviešu mēdijiem sociālajās un politiskajās attiecībās starp latviešiem un krievvalodīgajiem Latvijā. Turklāt, pētījumā paredzēts noskaidrot priekšstatus par latviešu nacionālās identitātes jēdzienu un veidu, kā to pasniedz latviešu mediji.

2. Vai man ir jāpiedalās?

Dalība šajā pētījumā ir pilnībā brīvprātīga. Ja Jūs nevēlaties piedalīties, lūdzu informējiet mani. Ja Jūs nolemjat piedalīties pētījumā, Jums tiks atstāta šī informācijas lapa, kā arī piekrišanas veidlapa parakstīšanai. Jūs varat izstāties no pētījuma jebkurā laikā, nenorādot iemeslu, līdz publicēšanas datumam, kurš Jums tiks pazinots tiklīdz tas būs apstiprināts. Pēc šī datuma, Jūsu datus nevarēs izņemt no pētījuma.

3. Kas notiks, ja es piekritīšu piedalīties pētījumā?

Jums tiks lūgts piedalīties viens-pret-vienu intervijā ar mani, kas tiks ierakstīta audio formātā. Datums, laiks un vieta intervijai tiks ar Jums saskaņota pēc iespējas ērtāk Jums. Pēc intervijas, iespējams, būs nepieciešams ar Jums sazināties informācijas precizēšanai ar papildjautājumiem vai skaidrojumiem. Pēc intervijas šī informācijas precizēšana, ja tāda būs nepieciešama, notiks pa tālruni.

4. Kādas ir iespējamās problēmas un riski piedaloties šajā pētījumā?

Piedalīšanās šajā pētījumā nerada nekādas paredzamas problēmas vai riskus. Gadījumā, ja Jums būs iemesls sūdzībām par pētījumu, Jūs varēsiet sazināties ar manām darba vadītājām, Prof. Birgit Beumers un Dr. Merris Griffiths, kuru kontaktinformācija ir norādīta lapas beigās.

5. Vai mana dalība šajā pētījumā būs konfidenciāla?

Visi pētījuma dalībnieki būs publikācijā un jebkurā citā turpmākas datu izmantošanas gadījumā būs anonīmi. Visa informācija, kas attiecas uz pētījumu (piem. interviju ieraksti un stenogrammas, piekrišanu veidlapas, u.c.) tiks glabāta drošā vietā, kas būs pieejama tikai man.

6. Kas notiks uzreiz pēc datu vākšanas?

Jums tiks dota iespēja uzdot papildjautājumus par pētījumu, ja Jūs to vēlēsities.

7. Kas pārrauga pētījumu?

Šo pētījumu pārrauga Literatūras, Valodas un Radošās Mākslas Institūta pētniecības direktors, Aberistvitas universitātē, saskaņā ar Lielbritānijas Psiholoģijas Biedrības ētikas kodeksu.

Kontaktinformācija:

Madara Veipa (doktorantūras kandidāte)

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Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3AJ
Wales

E-pasts: mav9@aber.ac.uk

Darba vadītājas:

Prof. Birgit Beumers

E-pasts: bib2@aber.ac.uk
Telefons: +44 1970 622958

Dr. Merris Griffiths

E-pasts: lmq@aber.ac.uk
Telefons: +44 19070 622829

APPENDIX 5: Consent forms for interview participants.

Principal Investigator: Madara Veipa
Supervisors: Prof. Birgit Beumers; Dr. Merris Griffiths

Title: Coverage of the Russian minority in Latvian-language media and its role within Russo-Latvian socio-political relations.

Informed Consent Form

1 I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the project in which I have been asked to take part and have had the opportunity to ask questions. The researcher has fully explained the purpose of the research and the interview.

2 I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, up until the publication date. I understand that the date of publication will be shared with me as soon as it is fixed.

3 I understand that my responses will be audio recorded and that the data file will be stored under secure conditions. I understand that I may request the recording to be interrupted or stopped at any point during the interview.

4 I understand that my responses will be anonymised and my personal data will be kept confidential.

5 I understand that I may be contacted for follow-up questions and clarifications after the interview and up until the date of publication.

6 I understand that the researcher must adhere to the Ethical Code of Practice set down by the British Psychological Society.

7 I agree to take part in the above research project.

Signed
(Participant)

Date

Contact details of participant for information regarding publication date and any followup questions:

Name

Email

Address

Phone number

Signed
(Researcher)

Date

Vadošā pētniece: Madara Veipa
Darba vadītājas: Prof. Birgit Beumers; Dr. Merris Griffiths

Nosaukums: *Latvijas krievvalodīgo atspoguļojums latviešu mēdijos un tā loma krievu-latviešu sociālpolitiskajās attiecībās.*

Informētas piekrišanas anketa

1 Es apstiprinu, ka esmu izlasījusi/izlasījis un sapratusi/sapratis doto informāciju par pētījumu, kurā man ir lūgts piedalīties, kā arī, to ka man ir bijusi iespēja uzdot jautājumus par pētījumu. Pētniece ir pilnībā paskaidrojusi zinātniskā pētījuma un interviju mērķi.

2 Es apstiprinu, ka mana dalība šajā pētījumā ir pilnībā brīvprātīga un ka es saprotu, ka man ir iespēja izstāties no pētījumu jebkurā laikā, nesniedzot pamatojumu, līdz publikācijas datumam. Es saprotu, ka tikšu informēta/informēts par publikācijas datumu, tiklīdz tas tiks noteikts.

3 Es saprotu, ka manas atbildes tiks ierakstītas audio formātā un, ka datu faili tiks uzglabāti drošos apstākļos. Es saprotu, ka es varu lūgt pārtraukt ierakstu un interviju jebkurā brīdī.

4 Es saprotu, ka manas atbildes būs anonīmas un mani personas dati būs konfidenciāli.

5 Es apstiprinu, ka ar mani var sazināties papildus atbilžu un precizējumu sniegšanai pēc intervijas, līdz publikācijas datumam.

6 Es saprotu, ka pētniecei ir jāievēro Lielbritānijas Psiholoģijas Biedrības Ētikas kodeksa prakses noteikumi.

7 Es piekrītu dalībai šajā pētījumā.

Paraksts
(dalībnieks)

Datums

Dalībnieka informācija papildus saziņai un informācijai par publikācijas datumu:

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