



Explaining the Lower Labour Market Position of Young Russian-speaking People in Estonia: Is Discrimination an Issue?

Heli Sepping

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Abstract

Immigrants' economic performance and intergenerational improvements are of growing interest, both among academics and policy makers, and the overall academic interest in the sociological analysis of interethnic relations has shifted from the first to the second generation immigrants. Empirical results, however, indicate that second generation immigrants fare worse in the labour market than their native peers. The aim of this research is to explore why Russian-speaking young people, albeit educated and raised in Estonia, experience more difficulties in entering the Estonian labour market comparing to their native peers. To investigate this phenomenon, two pilot interviews and four expert group interviews among 14 *Töötukassa's* (job centre) employers were conducted. Structures and connections relevant to this research are brought out by analysing the semi-structured interviews using an 'ad hoc methods for generating meaning'.

The results of this research support the view that the general economic and social situation forms the central situational element on which the employers' utility-based choices in terms of offering or denying of jobs to Russian-speaking young people depend. Russian-speaking young people's competitiveness and therefore acceptance in the labour market is affected by their possession of human and cultural capital. Those Russian-speaking young people who have the necessary inherited and acquired properties to accumulate cultural capital are likely to acquire Estonian language skills and to advance in the labour market, whereas those young people who neither possess the necessary means to acquire cultural capital nor are supported through the domestic transmission of linguistic and cultural competencies, are likely to reinforce ethnic relationships and therefore experience economic stagnation. The main conclusion of this research is that, in Estonia, ethnic differentiation and inequalities are not maintained through discriminatory practises, but these structural outcomes are reinforced through the system, which impedes the labour market access and/or mobility of those Russian-speaking young people who do not possess the inherited and acquired properties to accumulate cultural and social capital of the dominant culture to the same extent as those culturally privileged.

Keywords: ethnic inequalities in the labour market, young ethnic minorities, cultural capital, social capital, structural outcomes of interethnic relations, Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia

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1. Introduction

Interethnic relations have been a subject to extensive studies and thus a substantive body of literature exists within sociology. Immigration countries differ in their historical developments of immigration and therefore various approaches can be found, which explain the copying of immigrants in the host country. The classical sociological explanations of the immigrant experience in America; those of Chicago School (e.g. Park&burgers, Gordon); approach the disappearance of cultural and social differences (assimilation) as a universal result of the multistage process of *contact*, *conflict*, *accommodation* and *assimilation*, concerning the incorporation of immigrants into the host society.

The immigrant experience in the (Western) European countries, followed by the extensive post-war inflow of migrants, has invoked controversies over the validity of the classical approaches in the sociological analysis of the migration processes in the context of Europe. By the same token, the controversy within the American sociology of migration has been on whether classical theory is obsolete for the sociological analysis of the integration of the new second generation (Esser 2004: 1127). In his attempts to overcome these debates, Esser (2004) outlines a comprehensive model following a logic that “migrations and subsequent social processes of integration are (mostly indirect) consequences of situationally reasonable reactions of the involved actors to the respectively given societal conditions” (ibid). In the present research, this logic is applied to analyse the social processes of integration in Estonia stemming from its unique political and economic developments.

In applied research, the overall academic interest in the sociological analysis has shifted from the first to the second generation. Labour market integration is considered to be of great importance, because there is ample evidence that labour market marginality has a tendency to spill over into other areas of social life and thus lead to poverty, social isolation etc. (Fangen&Mohn 2010: 8, Seik 2011:2). Immigrants' economic performance and intergenerational improvements are of growing interest, both among academics and policy makers. Furthermore, given that the children of immigrants have been educated and raised in the host country, their labour market outcomes can be perceived as a “benchmark” for the success of immigration policies (OECD 2010: 9).

Empirical results, however, indicate that second generation immigrants fare worse in the labour market than their native peers. For example, Borjas (2006) compared the social mobility of immigrants between different generations in the United States predicting that the workers among the next second generation may face a sizable wage disadvantage of around 10 percent. Blackaby et al. (2005), Demireva&Kesler (2011) and Cheung&Heath (2007) conclude from their studies that second generation immigrants in Britain face long-term and intergenerational

persistence of disadvantage (including ethnic penalties). Fibbi and colleagues (2006) conducted an experimental study in Switzerland indicating that when controlled for education young people from ethnic backgrounds holding Swiss qualifications face discrimination in access to employment comparing to natives. Fleischmann and Dronkers (2007) who analysed socioeconomic integration of first and second generation immigrants into the labour markets of 13 EU countries concluded that although a certain degree of upward mobility among immigrant population is possible, there is a ceiling effect, which prevents immigrants from attaining the most desirable positions available in the labour market. Lindemann (2009) concluded from her study (linear regression analysis) that although the investments in country-specific capital give some advantages to non-Estonian youth, they are still less successful in entering the Estonian labour market comparing to natives and she considers discrimination by employers as the potential explanation for this phenomenon (ethnic penalty).

Comparing to Western, Northern and Southern European countries, Estonia has a different historical, political and economic situation following the collapse of the Soviet Union. By the same token, the development of the Estonian immigration population is, by and large, different and Estonia stands out from the classical immigration countries with its large composition of immigrant population and a normative categorization of the Soviet era settlers as immigrants by the state - a categorization which they oppose. Starting from the 13th century, ethnic plurality has been apparent in Estonia due to the vast number of wars followed by the arrival of new conquerors - Germans, Danes, Swedes and Russians. After the Great Wars, in the 17th century, the proportion of non-Estonians reached a level of about 15%, however, at the beginning of the World War II majority of the Baltic-Germans and Estonian Swedes fled the country and in 1945 Estonians composed 97,3% of the total population (Rannut 2004: 2). During the Soviet regime Russian workers and collective farmers were sent to Estonia and by the year 1989 the proportion of Estonians in the overall population had fallen to 61,5% (ibid). As of January 1, 2012; the total number of registered population in Estonia is 1 361 917 of which 69,0% are Estonians, 25,4% Russians, 2,0% Ukrainians, 1,1% Belarusians and 0,8% Finns (Statistics Estonia 2012).

The classical integration approach begins with an assumption of a structural imbalance between two regions, which creates motives for people from economically less advanced region to migrate to the region with an unsatisfied demand for labour. In the context of Estonia, the motivation to migrate was orchestrated by the Soviet regime and in order to make conditions acceptable for the newcomers, several functional areas were *Russified* and a Russian-medium environment of plants, offices, institutions and service bureaus was created, parallel to that of Estonian (Rannut 2004: 4). Albeit migrants and later their dependants came to Estonia with aspirations to improve their standard of living, they never had to compete with natives for jobs and accommodation, because jobs were created to them and accommodation

provided. Russian-speaking people converged on larger cities and remained separated from natives with low level of interethnic contact.

After Estonia regained its independence, the phase of *conflict* was reached and with the adoption of the Citizenship Act and the Language Act, the once institutionalised segregation was reinforced at the phase of *accommodation* resulting in an unintended structural consequence - a disproportionately large number of Russian-speaking people converged on underprivileged and linguistically distinctive neighbourhoods, e.g. in Northeast Estonia. The normalisation of the state and transformation to a market economy increased the acceptance of the Soviet era settlers and their offspring and thus, in principle, socioeconomic opportunities for Russian-speaking young people should be on a par with their native peers, however, their aggregated labour market position is lower than that of natives.

A statistical analysis conducted prior this research (see Appendix A) indicates that even though education is an important predictor of non-Estonians'¹ labour market outcomes, highly educated Russian-speaking people face a ceiling effect as they are not able to translate their qualifications into high positions to the same extent as natives. The data drawn from Statistics Estonia indicates a fusion of employment opportunities across ethnicities over time, however, the share of non-Estonians employed in manufacturing is higher comparing to that of Estonians, whereas the opposite can be detected in public administration². By the same token, natives are dominant at the higher end of the income spectrum. In terms of young people, Russian-speaking people have been extremely vulnerable to the recession; the between-group divergence increased from 4,9 percentage points in 2008 to 16,2 percentage points in 2011.

1.1. Research Questions

The focus of the study is on young Russian-speaking people (16-24 years old) who, albeit educated and raised in Estonia, have been less successful in entering the labour market comparing to their native peers. The aim of the present study is to seek *explanans* for the lower labour market position of this group, including the higher unemployment rate, by analysing the decision structures of native employers and Russian-speaking young people. Therefore, the following research question is formed:

Why young Russian-speaking people, albeit educated and raised in Estonia, have been less successful in entering the labour market comparing to their native peers?

In order to answer the research question, firstly, Esser's (1986) model for the individualistic explanation of ethnic segmentation is applied, supplemented by some of the elaborations

¹ The data drawn from Statistics Estonia distinguishes between Estonians and non-Estonians based on one's

² The respective data could be drawn only for the population group aged 15-74 years.

concerning the different structural consequences of interethnic relations from his later work (2004). Esser's (1986) model is chosen for this research as it enables to analyse the decision structure(s) of both native employers and Russian-speaking young people, based on the information gathered from the expert interviews with *Töötukassa* (job centre) consultants. Many of the existing theories within sociology, concerning the subject matter, place great emphasis on migrants' adaptation processes, e.g. Berry (1997), Portes et al. (1993, 2005, 2009), however, natives' choices are not, to that extent, outlined in their respective frameworks. Therefore, Esser's model is of great utility to explain the logic of native employers' choices, in terms of offering or denying of jobs to Russian-speaking young people, in the given situational context.

Individuals' (Russian-speaking young people) choices, however, are intertwined with intersubjective variables and not only utility-based. Esser's (1986) model, however, disregards some of the important aspects of the reproduction of the social world, because Esser (1986) does not relate to the different forms of capital, which in the context of this research are important to consider in order to explain the social mobility of young Russian-speaking people comparing to natives in regards to the structure of the distribution of different types of capital. Therefore, Bourdieu's (1986) theory of cultural and social capital is applied. Furthermore, the concept of institutionalism, with an emphasis on habitual behaviour and informal constraints, is introduced to better understand the "rational" situation-logical choices of employers and Russian-speaking young people; and the reinforcement of the social structures. Integrating these three approaches in the analysis enables to gain further understanding of the subject matter. The following sub-questions are formed to guide the study:

- What is the logic of selection of native employers in terms of offering or denying of jobs to Russian-speaking young people in the given situational context?
- What is the logic of selection of young Russian-speaking people in terms of acquiring assimilative traits or reinforcing intraethnic relationships in the given situational context?
- How do cultural capital and social capital affect the labour market advancement of young Russian-speaking people?
- What are the prevailing structural outcomes (the logic of aggregation) of migrant (Russian-speaking people) adaptation in Estonia?

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

In chapter 2, background information of the institutional environment for integration is given, concerning the development of language and citizenship policies, to better understand the situational context in which native employers and Russian-speaking young people make their

choices. The chapter is supplemented with a statistical analysis concerning the labour market position of young Russian-speaking people (see Appendix A).

In chapter 3, a short review of the theories concerning integration and socioeconomic fortunes of second generation immigrants is provided to account for the different theoretical approaches and prevailing debates within sociology on the subject matter. In this chapter, the choice of the theoretical framework for the present study is more elaborately explained.

In chapter 4, my methodological considerations are outlined, concerning the guiding principles of this research. The choice of qualitative research strategy and respective research design and methods is explained and the main concepts central to this research are defined. Subsequently, the interview process is outlined, followed by the overview of the data analysis process. The chapter is concluded with considerations on reliability and validity of the research.

In chapter 5, the theories of Esser and Bourdieu are provided to operationalize the posed research questions. Firstly, the elements of Esser's (1986) model are outlined considering the different types of actors and their alternative actions. Subsequently, the decision structures of the actors are outlined. Secondly, the impact of different forms of capital on the social mobility of the actors is discussed. Thirdly, the concept of institutionalism is elucidated to better understand how actors make their "rational" choices in the given situational context.

In Chapter 6, the analysis of the gathered data is given. Firstly, the expected utility of employers in terms of offering or denying of jobs to Russian-speaking young people is analysed in the given situational context, followed by the discussion of the aggregated outcome in regards to the respective decision structure. Secondly, the expected utility of Russian-speaking young people in terms of reinforcing intraethnic relationships or acquiring assimilative traits of the dominant culture is analysed taking into account the impact of different forms of capital and habitual behaviour. Subsequently, the respective aggregated structural outcomes of Russian-speaking young people's choices are further discussed and the decision structure(s) provided to illustrate the analysis.

In the last chapters of this research, I reflect upon the findings of this research and further discuss them in the light of the theoretical framework. Finally, the findings of the research are summed up and suggestions for further research made.

2. Institutional Environment for Integration

Similarly to many European countries, employment was the main reason for migration to Estonia and it was a pull factor based on the expected utility (e.g. better standard of living, privileged positions in certain trades); however, it was also closely coupled with the political agenda of the Soviet Union to uphold the regime, because immigrants were expected to be more loyal to the existing rule and thus maintain the system. To make conditions more acceptable for the newcomers, several functional areas were *Russified* and a Russian-medium environment of plants, offices, institutions, service bureaus, was created parallel to that of Estonian (Rannut 2004: 4). In terms of labour market position, the Soviet era settlers did not occupy lower rungs of the occupational hierarchy (Lindemann 2009: 1).

The earlier developments under the Soviet regime facilitated the endogenous formation of immigrant community, separate from that of natives. After Estonia regained its independence, the legal privileged position of the previous Soviet Union citizens changed and, after the enforcement of the Citizenship Act, the Language Act and the Aliens Act; they acquired the status of immigrants (ibid). Suddenly, they were facing obligations connected with language and citizenship, lowering their competitiveness in the labour market, which had not been their conscious choice upon arrival (ibid). In 1993, after the enforcement of the Aliens Act, many non-citizens became *de facto* stateless. This transformation, however, reinforced the segregation of immigrants in terms of spatial distribution, economic sectors, language and culture (ibid). Living in Russian-medium sphere had become a behavioural pattern to Russian-speaking population that could not be changed through political intervention. As a result, in present day, a disproportionately large number of Russian-speaking youth has converged on underprivileged and linguistically distinctive neighbourhoods, e.g. in Northeast Estonia where they outnumber natives.

In the following, I look at the institutional context for the labour market adaptation of Russian-speaking young people, including the development of language and citizenship policies, which form a frame of reference for the employers and Russian-speaking young people's choices. This chapter is supplemented with a statistical analysis of the labour market position of Russian-speaking (young) people (see Appendix A) to better understand the environment in which the individuals make their choices.

2.1. Language and Education

The Estonian language became the official language in the last years of the Soviet rule symbolically explicating the redistribution of power and aiming to normalize the situation after decades of *Russification* (Rannut 2004:427 in Siiner&Vihalemm 2011: 119). Such a normative

approach, perhaps, explains why Estonian language management during the first decade of independence was control-oriented and failed to address the matters of integration and why establishing the Russian language as the second official language has hardly been an option. The Russian language functions *de facto* as the second language in both public and private sphere. In accordance with the Language Act, in local governments in which at least half of the permanent residents belong to an ethnic minority, all persons have a right to receive answers from the local authorities in their mother tongue – the bilingual territorial language regime. In addition to the formal rights, many Russian-speaking minorities use the Russian language in their day-to-day practises and consume the Russian media, both local and non-local. Therefore, the Russian language functions in a Russian-medium sub-space and Estonia is ethno-linguistically divided into two spheres (Vihalemm et al. 2011: 120).

The Language Act was adopted in 1989, however, it served a provisional purpose and no substantial alterations were implemented until a new act was enforced in 1995. The new law was seen as a remedy to a growth of Russian monolingualism, which was perceived as a threat to linguistic autonomy (Rannut 2004: 6) Estonian language policy, in particular, its instrumental view of linguistic integration during the first decade of independence; was largely criticized in terms of causing further segregation between Estonian and Russian-speaking population, leading to a marginalization of the latter group. Estonian language and integration policies were largely monitored by the European institutions, and formal pressures, e.g. the criticism from the first OSCE High Commissioner (Max van der Stoep) yielded in many amendments in the laws and a principle of proportionality³ was added into the Language Act.

In the present, language policy is somewhat “thinner”; however, the acquisition of language is still at the core of both integration policy and public discourse. Language policy initiatives, however, have been guided by a normative and protective view of the national language (Siiner&Vihalemm 2011: 123). For example in accordance with the Language Act, language compliance in the public sphere is monitored by language inspection. The normative perceptions compounded by spatial segregation, by and large, impede the linguistic integration. The majority of school graduates from Russian-speaking schools do not have sufficient language skills to be competitive in the labour market which, in turn, impedes their social mobility (ibid).

In 2007, following a lot of criticism, a language reform in Russian-speaking schools began and step by step Russian-speaking schools were required to implement changes that would eventually, by the academic year 2011/2012, result in a 60 percent Estonian-language

³The requirements concerning the use and proficiency of Estonian language have be proportional with the objectives and protect the fundamental rights (Language Act §2 (2)).

curriculum concerning upper secondary education in 62 schools (this did not apply to primary education in which language immersion programs are voluntary) (EMER 2012). Lauristin et al. (2011: 10) argue that the top-down implementation of the reform has created opposition among some of the Russian-speaking teachers. Personal struggles, however, significantly hinder teachers' role in providing support for young minorities' in their adaptation process (ibid). They elaborate that the inertia of the educational system is relatively strong and structural factors do not necessarily create a favourable environment for language practice (ibid). Therefore, the contradictions between the system and the reform may impede the expected results, including the social mobility of Russian-speaking young people.

2.2. Citizenship

In terms of citizenship, 84,3% of the registered population hold Estonian citizenship, 6.9% are with undefined citizenship and 8,8% are citizens of other countries, mainly Russia (Citizenship 2012). Participation in the mainstream society is restricted to holding Estonian citizenship and in some cases demonstrating fluency in Estonian, for example, the attainment of higher positions in the public service is made conditional upon Estonian language proficiency at level C1. By the same token, not holding Estonian citizenship derails non-citizens from the opportunity to participate in the mainstream society, e.g. to announce their candidacy for Parliament elections, to vote in the Parliament elections and to find employment in the local or state agencies. Non-citizens who are permanent residents of Estonia, however, have a right to vote in and announce candidacy for local government elections in the respective local administration they legally reside in (The Local Government Elections Act §5).

Currently, 93 744 persons still do not hold citizenship (Citizenship 2012). Reducing the number of persons with undefined citizenship has been the central interest of the Government; however, the yearly issuing of citizenship seems to be cooling off. Somewhat alarming, however, is that a fifth (19%) of the young people (aged 15–19) of other ethnicities albeit born, grown up and received education in the Republic of Estonia, have not chosen Estonian citizenship, whereas 12% have preferred Russian citizenship (Lauristin et al. 2011: 16). The recent Integration Monitoring (2011) reveals that ethnic minorities' unwillingness to opt for Estonian citizenship accounts for the country's bad reputation and protest against its policies (ibid). In the following I look at the developments and current debates on citizenship policies.

In 1940, the Republic of Estonia was annexed and Estonian citizenship ceased to *de facto* exist (Järve&Poleshchuk 2009: 1). The debate on citizenship, after Estonia regained its independence, was between liberal and conservatives and the latter camp was more successful in putting through their ideas (ibid). Citizenship policy was developed in alignment with the idea of the legal continuity of the pre-Soviet Estonian state. In 1992, the Citizenship Law of 1938, based on the principle of *jus sanguinis* was re-adopted, politically containing Soviet era settlers

by granting citizenship almost exclusively to those who were citizens prior to Soviet rule, and their descendants (ibid). All other Estonian residents became *de facto* stateless and had to make a choice whether to acquire citizenship through naturalization, opt for citizenship of their country of origin or adopt a wait-and-see attitude (Lindemann 2011: 1). In 1992, almost one third of the Estonian population had not determined their citizenship, which is one's fundamental right. Such a result, however, was not a political aspiration, instead the political elite had an ultimate hope that a third of the non-Estonians would become Estonian citizens, a third would remain in the country with Russian citizenship and a third would leave (Lieven 1993: 377 in Järve&Poleshchuk 2009: 6). The exclusion of the majority of non-Estonians from the state formation process, however, enabled Estonians to entrench themselves in all major posts of the state (Järve&Poleshchuk 2009: 4).

In 2007, after the Estonian Government relocated the Soviet war memorial, just two weeks before Russians traditionally celebrate the victory over Nazi Germany, inter-ethnic relations worsened significantly. Such a decision provoked street riots by mostly Russian-speaking people who felt insulted. The riots were a culmination of years of dissolved interethnic frictions, somewhat based on the different understandings of the history. The 2011 Integration Monitoring reveals that the attitude of Estonians towards the inclusion of other nationalities has become more positive - 64% of the Estonian-speaking respondents (rather) agreed that including Russian-speaking minorities in managing the state and economy is beneficial to Estonia and 66% thought that their opinions should be better heard and taken into consideration (Lauristin et al. 2011: 8). In general the attitudes within the society are favourable to move forward with integration and the wish to obtain Estonian citizenship has grown from 54% in 2008 to 64% in 2011 and the sense of homeland has grown among Estonian citizens of other nationalities to 76% (ibid 6).

It remains, however, unclear if citizenship and language policies have an impact on the labour market mobility of young Russian-speaking people. In other words, do Russian-speaking people have a lower position in the labour market, e.g. the higher unemployment rate, lower return on education etc. (see Appendix A), because of restrictive components of laws and/or ethnic conflicts or is there something else impeding their life chances - an inquiry that this research is concerned with.

3. Literature Overview

As it was outlined in the introduction, this research attempts to find *explanans* to the lower labour market position of young Russian-speaking people in Estonia, in particularly why they have been less successful in entering the labour market. The integration and socioeconomic advances of immigrants and their descendants are scrutinized by many researchers. In the following, I look at the development of integration theory and some of the debates within sociology concerning the subject matter to acquaint the reader with the subject matter and to delineate the theories most suitable for this research.

Integration represents a complex phenomenon and it is ambiguous, because it refers to both the process and the end result (Martikainen 2005: 10). The earlier sociological studies postulated a sequence of steps in the development of interethnic relations following the inflow of migrants; known as a race relations cycle. The best known approach is that of Park, in which he explained the interethnic relations to go through a sequence of inevitable, progressively changing and irreversible steps (Esser 1986: 282). His model consists of four steps, namely, contact, conflict, accommodation and assimilation (Alba&Nee 1997: 828). The phase of *contact* is a direct consequence of immigration encompassing peaceful contacts motivated by friendly inquisitiveness (Esser 1986: 282). As the number of immigrants increases the competition for life chances intensifies which, in turn, gives rise to *conflict* (the second phase) and results in ethnic stratification. In the third phase of *accommodation* mutually agreed relations arise, albeit one group (usually the less powerful) withdraws into particular niches of occupational activities resulting in a division of labour across ethnic lines, spatial segregation and occupational insulation (ibid). Assimilation, as the fourth stage, occurs as a result of increased mixing of the ethnic groups, which leads to disappearance of the ethnic dimension as a criterion in social classification (ibid 282-283). The latter assumption, however, has caused controversy, because in the context of transnational relations the dissolution of ethnic networks is not likely to “inevitably” occur as it was assumed by the classical theory (Esser 2004: 1147)

Later studies, also concerned with assimilation, were supplemented by Gordon's multidimensional dissection of the concept that enabled to distinguish between acculturation (adoption of the host society's cultural patterns) and structural assimilation (participation in host society's primary group relationships) (Alba&Nee 1997: 829). Despite the strength of this conceptual scheme, the theoretical framework has been criticised to be static (ibid). Further theoretical enhancements, in particularly, straight-line assimilation approach added a dynamic dimension to the framework, which enabled to envision developments across generations, i.e. “processes unfolding in a sequence of generational steps” (ibid 831-832).

At the beginning of the 1960s the classical assimilation perspective invoked heated theoretical controversies, because research witnessed many anomalies, e.g. persisting ethnic differences

across generations (Zhou 1997: 978). Therefore, it was widely disputed (and still is) if classical assimilation theory can be employed for the sociological analysis of the integration of the new second generation (Esser 2004: 1127). That eventually led to the development of alternative frameworks: multiculturalism (based on the idea of cultural diversity) and segregationist (based on the idea of separation between ethnic-cultural communities). Assimilation theory, however, became subject to intensive critique and its normative and ideological applications as a political program were denounced (Alba&Nee 1997: 826-827). Some scholars, e.g. Heath&Cheung 2007, Portes 1997, Martikainen 2005, Rodriguez-Garcia 2010, Brubaker 2001, Engelen 2006, Alba&Nee 1997; however, argue that assimilation theory still provides a valuable utility to analyse immigrant experience and it should not be disregarded.

Two main theories dominate the current debate on the socioeconomic fortunes of second generation immigrants; the reformulated straight-line and the segmented assimilation theory. The reformulated straight-line assimilation theory and segmented assimilation theory both originate from America aiming to explain the experience of the new second generation in the American society. The revised assimilation theory predicts the trajectory of upward mobility and gradual fusion of contemporary immigrants, i.e. boundary crossing (e.g. Alba&Nee 1997, Alba 2005). It is grounded in structural changes in the educational sector (greater educational provision at the tertiary level), the labour market (increasing amount of professional and managerial positions), the ageing of population, which leaves many top positions opened to competition by immigrants and favourable socio-politic milieu (government laws regulating equal treatment) (Li 2010: 12). The revised theory does not deny that discriminatory practises and prejudice are still existent in the society and that different ethnic groups may face different disadvantages, however, it is prospective in its manner predicting greater educational and occupational advances as the time progresses (ibid 6).

The segmented assimilation theory developed by Portes&Zhou (1993) criticizes the straightforward and uniform assimilation path embodied in the straight-line assimilation theory that overlooks the sizeable minority group who may not manage to overcome the pitfalls that can derail their educational and occupational advancements (Portes et al. 2009: 1101). They strongly emphasise that the process of assimilation has come to be segmented into several distinct paths and the central question is not whether the second generation will assimilate, but to “what segment of the society it will assimilate” (Portes et al. 2005: 1000, Portes et al. 2009). In contrast, Berry (1997) looks further into cultural transitions of groups and their individual members in plural societies. Berry elaborates that integration can only be “freely” chosen and attained through mutual accommodation and acceptance by both groups of the right of all groups to maintain their culture (ibid 10).

Portes' and his colleagues' segmented assimilation theory, albeit widely used, is somewhat dependent on American structural features and cannot be fully employed to explain the processes in Estonia. Berry's composite framework provides a solid ground for integration studies; however, incorporating all aspects of his framework into a single study seems not plausible in the scope of this research. Both the frameworks provide a valuable utility to study individuals' adaptation process, however, this research is, first and foremost, concerned with the labour market adaptation of Russian-speaking young people and therefore it is necessary to also consider the decision structure of native employers, because they are the ones who either offer or deny jobs to minorities and thus their choices affect the life chances of minorities.

Esser (1986) outlines the utility and cost structures of natives and migrants and applying his theory enables to analyse the choices of both employers and Russian-speaking young people. Esser's (1986) approach is embedded in economic theory and thus built upon the utility-based decision structures. His framework is of great utility to analyse the choices of employers. If one would analyse the decision structures of natives and not restrict the group to natives, the utility-based approach would be, perhaps, obsolete to explain the processes in regards to globalization and interethnic conflicts. In this research, however, in regards to employers' decision structure Esser's (1986) framework is suitable to employ. The logic that he follows in the study is that "migrations and subsequent social processes of integration are (mostly indirect) consequences of situationally reasonable reactions of the involved actors to the respectively given societal conditions" (ibid 1127). The idea is also central to this research, however, to answer the research question, it is considered of importance to go beyond the utility-based way of thinking and look at the different forms of capital explicated by Bourdieu (1986) and the role of informal constraints and habitual behaviour in regards to agents' "rational" utility-based choices.

4. Methodological Considerations

4.1. Philosophy of Science

The aim of this research is to understand why Russian-speaking young people, albeit educated and raised in Estonia, experience more difficulties in entering the labour market by examining the underlying logic and motivations of employers and Russian-speaking young people that, in principle, lead to certain decision structures within the given societal context. Prior choosing methods to conduct a social research, it is important to elucidate how social reality is perceived by a researcher, because methods of social research are linked to the different visions (paradigms) of how a social phenomenon is to be studied (Bryman 2008: 4, Kalof et al. 2008: 20). Williams and May (1996: 130) state that although it is possible to establish objective inquiry of social reality it will be inevitably intertwined with values that one possesses.

Historically, stemming from positivism, the social sciences have been considered as outside of the scientific domain and quantitative rather than qualitative data has been at the centre of producing scientific knowledge (Kvale 1996, Guba&Lincoln 1994, Bryman 2008, Kalof et al. 2008). With the evolution of science, the superiority of quantification has been reconsidered and new paradigms based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions have emerged. A paradigm “represents a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the “world,” the individual’s place in it, and a range of possible relationships to that world [...]” (Guba&Lincoln 1994: 109). The paradigm embraced in this research is constructivism, which designates a move “from ontological realism to ontological relativism” (ibid). Guba&Lincoln (1994: 108) outline three questions; ontological, epistemological and methodological question; the major foci around which to analyse the paradigm. The paradigm chosen for this research, constructivism, is further elucidated in regards to the three questions.

In terms of ontology, which, as denoted by Guba&Lincoln (1994: 109), is concerned with “the form and nature of reality”, I hold a relativist position. I embrace that in terms of their form and content, realities are dependent on the local and specific constructions of individual persons or groups (ibid 110). Therefore, I believe that the labour market position of young Russian-speaking people is produced and revisited through continuous social interaction. In terms of epistemology, which, as explained by Guba&Lincoln (109), is concerned with “the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known”, I hold a subjectivist position. In other words, I embrace that the findings of the research are created in the process of the investigation and that “the investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked” (ibid 111). In regards to methodological question, namely, how can a researcher find out what he or she believes that can be known, I embrace a hermeneutical position (ibid 108). Therefore, I move back and forth through different parts of

this research; literature overview, theoretical framework, interviewing and analysis. This circular consideration of the whole and its parts helps to improve the construction of knowledge (Fiss 1982, Packer&Addison 1989).

4.2. Qualitative Interview

Research Strategy

Research strategy gives a “general orientation to the conduct of social research” (Bryman 2008: 22). This research is concerned with words and interpretations of the social world rather than numbers and quantification in the analysis and collection of the data. As explained by Hennik and his colleagues (2011: 16), the objective of qualitative research is to acquire understanding of underlying reasons, beliefs and motivations of a subject matter. Therefore, qualitative research is a plausible strategy to employ in this research to meet the objectives of the present study.

Research Design

The design chosen for this research is a case study, which is concerned with “the complexity and particular nature of the case in question” (Bryman 2008: 52). The present research is an analysis of a single case, namely, the labour market adaptation of young Russian-speaking people in Estonia. Therefore, the emphasis of the study is on elucidating the unique features of the Estonian society in regards to the studied social phenomena. As it was exemplified in the introduction, Estonia represents a special case in regards to its different historical, political and economic situation following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The criticism of a case study is that findings deriving from it cannot be generalized (ibid 57). The aim of this study is, however, not to create universal knowledge of the second generation immigrants’ socioeconomic adaptation in the host society, but to explore patterns of social processes in the context of Estonia, which makes a case study design plausible for this research.

Interview investigation

In order to elucidate the unique features of the case in question, Estonia, I chose to apply semi-structured expert group interviews. Expert interviews were chosen for this study, because experts “have high insight in aggregated and/or specific knowledge”, e.g. processes, group behaviours, strategies (Van Audenhove 2007: 5). Therefore, interviewing experts enables to get insight into aggregated knowledge of both Russian-speaking young people and natives without carrying out individual studies among both the groups. In the light of this study, expert can be defined as a person who has privileged access to information about groups of persons (employers and young Russian-speaking people who are involved with *Töötukassa*). Expert knowledge, however, is not objective as experts are part of the societal system and thus their

statements are based on their subjective interpretations. The dimension of the expert knowledge gathered in this study was which Van Audenhove (2007) refers to as “explanatory knowledge”, since *Töötukassa*’s employees were asked to make interpretations of motivations and beliefs of the groups studied. The overall criticism of the method follows the same trajectory than that of the qualitative interview research, namely, that the interview statements can be ambiguous and contradictory and that the findings may not be intersubjectively reproducible (Kvale 1996: 62).

The choice for carrying out group interviews was made upon pragmatic reasons. The purpose was to interview several experts from each the selected bureau, therefore, interviewing each of the expert separately would have resulted in the loss of *Töötukassa*’s time. The group interview was chosen over the focus group method, because the purpose of the research was to gather expert knowledge not to focus on the group interaction. Taking into account, that the participants were experts in their field and thus they were likely to have a lot to say on the subject matter, opting for smaller groups seemed reasonable (Morgan 1998 in Bryman 2008: 479). Furthermore, given that I was alone in carrying out the interviews; it seemed plausible to limit the group size. In line with that reasoning, I decided to form groups of three participants.

4.3. Definition of Concepts

Russian-speaking young people - In the light of this research, Russian-speaking young people are 16-24-year-old descendants of the immigrants, both citizens and non-citizens of Estonia, who have used or are using *Töötukassa*’s services. The population group, descendants of immigrants, is composed of young people who were born in Estonia and of those who were not, but arrived to Estonia at an early age and thus obtained their education in Estonia. In order to avoid categorisation into minorities a term ‘young people’ is used. The majority of ethnic groups in Estonia (Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians) use Russian as their mother tongue and therefore it is quite common in social science literature to divide the society into Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking communities, a categorization that is also followed in the present research. The age group (16-24 years) is delimited in accordance with *Töötukassa*’s practise. However, it is important to note that in this research only a certain group of Russian-speaking young people is looked at, namely, those who are using or have used the services of *Töötukassa* and thus generalizations cannot be made to the whole population group.

Young Ethnic Estonians (natives) - In the light of this research young ethnic Estonians are 16-24-year-old Estonian citizens who have acquired their citizenship by descent, *jus sanguine*, and whose parents have also acquired Estonian citizenship by decent. In the context of this research, only the group of ethnic Estonians who have used or are using *Töötukassa*’s services is looked at.

4.4. Interview Investigation

Kvale (1996) highlights seven stages of a qualitative interview; *thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting*. The steps were taken into account in planning the design of this study. Firstly, a pre-knowledge of the subject was obtained by looking into the existing integration literature and developing theoretical understanding of the interethnic relations and different paths of adaption of migrants in the host society. Familiarity with the subject matter in the context of Estonia was achieved by reading different reports, e.g. Integration Monitoring 2011, Estonian Human Development Report, respective legislation, newspaper articles, getting familiar with *Töötukassa's* services, watching a historical movie, talking to people etc.; and conducting a statistical analysis of the key variables (Appendix A). Thematizing of the study helped to clarify the focus of the study. Based on the gathered knowledge, a preliminary research guide was developed, which was tested and further elaborated during the two pilot interviews (Appendix B).

Interview “involves a conversation and negotiation of meaning between the interviewer and his or her subjects” (Kvale 1996: 65). In order to stimulate a flow of conversation, I decided not to completely structure the interview and thus a semi-structured interview was chosen. Such an approach means that the interviewer has a series of questions in form of an interview guide, but the interviewer is able to vary in the sequence of questions and ask further questions in response to the statements of the interviewees (Bryman 2008: 196).

The process of selecting interviewees

In terms of finding interviewees for the research, it was necessary to define out of 20 *Töötukassa's* bureaus in Estonia the bureaus from which the participants would be chosen. The choice was made upon the concentration of Russian-speaking people in different regions. Given that the majority of Russian-speaking population is converged on Tallinn and Ida-Virumaa, it was decided to include experts from those regions. This research is a case study of Estonia and thus it was necessary to include the experts from other regions as well, hence the experts from the bureaus in Pärnumaa and Tartumaa (the other bigger cities) were also included. All together there are nine *Töötukassa's* bureaus in the selected regions, three in Tallinn, four in Ida-Virumaa, one in Tartumaa and one in Pärnumaa, of which five were chosen for this research.

The experts were chosen from the contacts list available at *Töötukassa's* webpage. The selection of interviewees for the research was purposive, i.e. the sampling was made in a strategic way (Bryman 2008: 415). Therefore, two criteria were posed in terms selecting the interviews to form a group; firstly, that at least one of the interviewees would be of Russian ethnicity, and, secondly, that the interviewees would not all be in the same position. Such

criteria were posed to ensure different insights into the subject matter. The information concerning the employee's formal position in *Töötukassa* can be found from the contacts list, however, in terms of determining the employees' ethnicity, their surname was looked at. Such an approach can be widely criticised, because one's surname does not always indicate his or her ethnic background and distinguishing people based on their surname can be considered unethical. However, it was the only way to make preliminary implications of one's ethnic background and to find participants with the Russian background. Despite the criticism that can be made upon choosing such an approach, the method served its purpose and participants with the Russian background were found.

Based on the criteria outlined in the previous paragraph, e-mails were sent to 15 experts (three from each bureau). In the e-mail, along with the request to participate in the interview, the purpose of the research was shortly introduced. Albeit contacting the bureau manager directly would have been more convenient and, perhaps, less time consuming, the purpose was to ensure that the contacted experts would show their free will and interest to participate in the research and are not asked to participate by their supervisor. Out of the 15 contacted experts, seven responded; two of them, however, answered that the topic is not in their expertise and gave further contacts of their colleagues. Subsequently, 10 more e-mails were sent, which resulted in five more responses. The experts, who gave their consent to participate in the research, were then further contacted to agree upon a time and place for a group interview and in some cases their help was asked if the established requirement of the number of participants for a group interview was not fulfilled. The experts, who agreed to participate in the research, were from four different bureaus, out of the five contacted, and thus the following four groups were formed; A, B, C and D.

One could argue that the number of the groups included in this research is insufficient. It takes a long time to arrange group interviews with *Töötukassa's* employees due to their busy schedule, in particular, in the regions chosen and thus within the time frame of this research more group interviews would have been hard to arrange. Furthermore, the aim of this research is not to make statistical generalizations, but to focus on a few subjects, which makes it possible to work out consistent and recurrent patterns and therefore having fewer interviews enabled to spend more time on the data analysis (Kvale 1996: 103).

Prior the group interviews, two individual pilot interviews were conducted with two experts; interviewees A and B. All together (including the pilot interviews) six interviews were conducted and 14 experts: one bureau manager, one senior consultant, one career counsellor, one service consultant, one service consultant (employers' services), three case workers and five job mediating consultants; were interviewed. Out of the 14 interviewees, eight were natives and six with the Russian background. Albeit the aim was to form groups of three experts, in

practice, group B was composed of two experts, as one expert could not participate (no-show), and group D was composed of four experts, as one expert showed up on her own initiative and therefore was also included in the interview. Groups A and C, however, were composed of three experts as planned. A short description of the experts who participated in the research is given in the Appendix C.

Interview Process

Five interviews were conducted in May (2012) and one at the beginning of June. The first two interviews, upon which the research guide was further developed, were rather explorative. After the pilot interviews were carried out, the recordings were listened to and notes taken in order to enhance the research guide. Nonetheless, the interview guide was continuously subject to further adjustments as I moved along with the process of interviewing.

Given that all the interviews took place during the work hours of the experts, the interviews were carried out at *Töötukassa's* facilities; in the meeting rooms or in the rooms designated for a group work. Therefore, the privacy during the interview was guaranteed along with a noise-free environment. In order to facilitate group discussion, the chairs were placed in a circle. Prior the interview, I introduced myself and my study program after which I outlined the objectives of the research along with explaining the concept of 'young Russian-speaking people' and outlining the three categories in which the questions were asked; employers, young Russian-speaking people and socioeconomic adaptation of Russian-speaking people in general. Furthermore, I encouraged the interviewees not to restrict themselves to answering strictly to the questions, but to consider different angles of the subject matter.

The order for answering the questions was not pre-determined with the purpose to create a natural flow of discussion reflecting upon the interviewees' different expertise in the subjects. To stimulate the discussion many additional questions were asked to the interview guide where appropriate. Given that the interviews were carried out during the work hours of the experts, the length of the interviews was restricted to one hour. Therefore, the group interviews lasted between 50 minutes and one hour, whereas the pilot interviews lasted around 45 minutes. All the interviews were conducted in Estonian, because it was the common language of the participants.

Ethical Issues

Prior the interview, an informed consent was established by informing the interviewees about the purpose of the research and how the data would be used. This information was also included in the e-mails sent to the participants in order for them to get an approval from their supervisor to participate in the study. After the introduction to the study, their permission was asked to record the interview. One of the interviewees from group A did not feel comfortable

with the fact that the interview would be recorded and thus notes were taken instead. The other interviews were recorded, since the permission was granted, which enabled to concentrate on the dynamics of the interview. In terms of confidentiality, all the interviewees were guaranteed that their statements would be treated confidentially. Therefore, in the analysis alphabetical letters are used instead of the real names of the interviewees.

4.5. Analysis of the Interviews

Five interviews were recorded with a tape recorder whereas one interview (group A) was recorded by taking notes in a laptop. The latter method had obvious limitations, because not all the statements of the interviewees could be recorded by taking notes, rather than the condensed ideas, and being engaged in taking notes and memorising the statements made it hard to concentrate on the dynamics of the interview. The advantage of this method, however, is that written text was produced immediately and being more concentrated during the interview enabled to comprehend the data better. The five interviews that were taped were transcribed into written texts. I chose to do my own transcribing in order to ensure consistency in style and recall the context of the interviews by listening to the recordings prior analysing the written transcripts or in the words of Kvale (1996:163) “artificial constructions from an oral to a written mode of communication”.

The first step of the analysis started during the interviews and the meanings of what the interviewees said were interpreted. In the interpretations of transcripts Kvale (1996: 190) discerns three parts: structuring the material for analysis, clarification of the material by, for example, eliminating superfluous material; and distinguishing between the essential and non-essential. In line with these steps, firstly, the interviews were grouped based on a region into three different cases; Ida-Virumaa, Tallinn (Harjumaa) and Tartumaa&Pärnumaa (given the similarity between Tartumaa&Pärnumaa in the context of this study, it was decided to merge them into one group). Secondly, the transcribed text was structured into two categories; employers and Russian-speaking young people, by making side notes (during this process, all the digressions and repetitions were eliminated along with the text which was considered irrelevant for this research).

During the analysis phase, I was guided by Esser’s (1986) theoretical framework supplemented with Bourdieu’s (1986) theory on different forms of capital and general understanding of institutionalism with the purpose to create consistency between the theory and the analysed data. Esser’s (1986) model was not a consciously chosen theoretical framework from the beginning of the research. The choice to apply his model was made in the light of new emerged topics during the interviews, which were previously not anticipated, and his model was chosen to support the empirical findings. Bourdieu’s theory was later decided to apply, because Esser’s theory, albeit of being create utility, did not fully help to answer the proposed research

question. Therefore, the approach adopted in this research is neither deductive nor inductive; rather it is based on abductive inference. Abductive inference emerges when something other than was anticipated occurred and in the light of creating plausible explanations to the phenomenon (abduction), a new hypothesis arises, which relates them to some other fact or rule which will account for them (Givon 1980 in Svennevig 2001: 2, Merrell 2006: 5).

The interviews were analysed by employing the method, which Kvale (1996) refers to as 'ad hoc methods for generating meaning'; in other words, the interplay of techniques was used during the analysis. Structures and connections relevant to this research were brought out by using different tactics, such as categorising the meanings, abridgement of the meaning expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations, casting parts of the interview into a narrative, making interpretations of statements. In terms of categorising the meanings, the data concerning employers was, firstly, categorised in accordance with the elements in Esser's (1986) model; social utility, social costs, material utility and material costs. The data concerning the Russian-speaking young people was categorised in the same way. Secondly, further interpretations were made in alignment with Esser's four elements in aggregated level by outlining the decision structures. The decision structures, by no means, serve a purpose to quantify the data, but are used as a way to illustrate the interconnectedness of the elements which, perhaps, if only explicated by words, would be difficult to understand.

The criticism of the qualitative interview as a scientific method has been that different people may interpret the interviews in different ways (Kvale 1996: 210). In the following my positions in interpreting the interviews are outlined so that my interpretations can be tested by other readers. To ease the testing, the lines in the transcribed text were numbered in order to explicate the references made from the transcribed text. Given that the interviewed persons were experts in their field, the context of interpretation used is, mainly, 'self-understanding'. In other words, I attempted to "formulate in a condensed form what the subjects themselves understand to be the meanings of their statements" (ibid 214). Therefore, my aim was to develop, through the experts' descriptions, a broader interpretation concerning the decision structure of employers and Russian-speaking young people. If the age, ethnicity or the formal position of the interviewees seemed to have an effect on their answers; a wider frame of understanding was included in the interpretations and more focus was placed on the age and ethnicity of a person making a statement (the context of interpretation, which Kvale (1996) refers to as 'critical commonsense understanding').

4.6. Reflections on Reliability and Validity

The issues of verification, as Kvale (1996: 235) underlines, are not separated by the research, but should be addressed throughout the research process; therefore, in order to make this

research valid (trustworthy), it is considered of great importance to explicate the choices made throughout the research process. Reliability is concerned with the consistency of the findings; in other words, whether the results of a study are repeatable (Bryman 2008: 31, Kvale 1996: 235). Issues of reliability in regards to interviewing, transcribing and analysing were spelled out in the above paragraphs. The interviews were fully transcribed (except for the one, which was recorded by taking notes); the transcribes can be found in their original language (Estonian) in Appendix D and as it was mentioned earlier the lines in the transcribed text were numbered to explicate the references and quotes made from the transcripts so that the readers could test my interpretations. Because the interviewees were granted autonomy, it is not possible to repeat the study by interviewing the exact same interviewees which, however, as argued by Kvale (1997: 115) makes it impossible to reproduce the findings.

In a broader sense validity is concerned with the degree that a method investigates what it is set out to investigate (Kvale 1996: 238). In other words, validity is concerned with the truthfulness of knowledge concluded from a particular research (Bryman 2008: 32). In terms of valid knowledge, it consists of the constructions, which are considered reliable by those competent to interpret the substance of the construction; in other words, it refers to the mutual agreement of understanding the meaning of the data (Guba&Lincoln 1994: 113). Therefore, it implies that in order the knowledge to be valid, it should be interpreted by more than one interpreter. In the scope of this research, the research was carried out by one person, which limits validating the interpretations made. To validate the findings within the limits of one person, the results were checked for and against the existing empirical evidence (if applicable) and examined on the basis of the theoretical framework. The purpose of this research, however, is not to produce universal knowledge, but to explore a case and perhaps give guidance to further research. Therefore, in this research, albeit validity is considered of great importance, the emphasis is on the transparency and reliability of the research.

5. Theory

This chapter outlines a framework upon which this research is built. Firstly, the elements of Esser's (1986) model of an individualistic explanation of ethnic segmentation are outlined to explain the decision structure(s) of natives and migrants which, in principle, result in particular structural outcomes. Secondly, the phenomenon of institutions is introduced to understand how the choices of actors are affected by the surrounding institutions, in particular, informal constraints. Thirdly, Bourdieu's (1986) theory of different forms of capital is introduced to explain how the different distribution of capital reinforces social structures, including labour market position of young Russian-speaking people.

5.1. A Model for an Individualistic Explanation of Ethnic Segmentation

Esser's (1986: 282) explanation of the different structural outcomes of social processes stems from the race relations cycle according to which a division of labour on ethnic lines, occupational insulation and spatial segregation arise out from the interethnic conflict and are further consolidated in the phase of *accommodation*. In his later work, he elaborates on the concept of assimilation and its two meanings. First, assimilation refers to the process of social integration or the inclusion of individual immigrants into the various subsystems of the society and/or their similarity to natives in aspects such as the placement in the primary labour market, the adoption of certain cultural traits and intermarriage (Esser 2004: 1130). Second, assimilation refers to a certain pattern of the structure of the society; *societal assimilation*. He further distinguishes two aspects of societal assimilation: *social inequality* and *social differentiation*. In regards to social inequality, assimilation refers to increasing similarity in the distribution of certain characteristics between ethnic groups, e.g. the disappearance of ethnic differences in education, occupation and income; whereas in regards to social differentiation, it refers to the decrease of ethnic *institutionalization*, e.g. the dissolution of ethnic communities and the decline of social distance (ibid 1130-1131).

In his earlier work, Esser considered the only alternative to assimilation to be segmentation; however, in his later work he distinguishes two alternative structural outcomes; *ethnic inequality* and *ethnic differentiation*. Ethnic inequality means the persistence of the between-group variances and ethnic differentiation refers to ethnic organization (ibid). Ethnic segmentation, however, designates a horizontal ethnic differentiation, 'parallel societies' or ethnic subcultures within the host society.

5.1.1. Types of Actors and Alternative Actions

Esser (1986) distinguishes three types of actors: natives (in this research the group is delimited to employers), migrants and dependants (those remaining in the country of origin). In terms of

simplicity, he assumes that each actor has two options to choose from. For natives the model includes the alternatives of acceptance (creation of opportunities for interethnic relations including offering of jobs) and distance (rejection of personal interaction and denial of jobs) (ibid 285). For migrants the model includes the alternatives of assimilation (the choice of interethnic relationships) and segmentation (the choice of intraethnic relationships). Dependants, however, have the alternatives of continuing to remain in their country of origin or opting to emigrate. In the scope of this research, the decision structure of dependants and their choice to migrate to the country of settlement and the subsequent increase in the immigrant population is not separately analysed and the group size N is taken as a given parameter. The aggregated consequences of the actors' "rational" situation-logical actions lead to the structural outcomes, namely, societal assimilation, ethnic inequality/ethnic differentiation (2004: 1138).

The idea of Esser's model is based on the expected utility, namely, the actors choose an action that they subjectively consider to be of the most value to them. The actors are considered to choose from two alternatives; to carry out an action or not to carry it out. In his 2004 model he further explains *the logic of situation*, *the logic of selection* and *the logic of aggregation*. The logic of situation connects objective societal structures with subjective parameters forming a frame of reference for the individuals, the logic of selection specifies the selection of certain behaviour and the logic of aggregation represents a certain collective outcome (2004: 1133). In general, cultural goals and institutionalised means constitute the main elements of the objective logic of situation for the actors to fulfil their general everyday needs (physical well-being and social approval) (ibid 1134).

Prior making a choice, the actors evaluate the possible consequences of each action they envision. The consequences can either be positively valued in which case they represent a 'utility' of the action (U) or negatively valued in which case they represent a 'cost' of the action (C) (ibid 285). Esser's (1986) model proceeds as if there were only two classes of 'utilities' and 'costs'. One class consists of *social utility* (social recognition, a desired identity, norm conformity) and *social cost* (social disapproval, identity threats, breaking with the internalized norms), whereas the other class consists of *material utility* (income, being in work, prestige, control of resources) and *material costs* (loss of income, loss of status) (ibid). Social utility is referred to using a symbol U_s , social costs as C_s , material utility as U_r and material costs as C_r . The situational dependency of an action is given by the mediating effect of subjective probabilities of p and q. Therefore actions can be changed by influencing the subjective parameters for certain outcomes (ibid 286). The elements of the expected utility (SEU) can be thus summarized as follows:

$$SEU_h = (p_{hs}U_s + p_{hr}U_r) - (q_{hs}C_s + q_{hr}C_r)$$

The formula in its general form, however, cannot predict which of the options will be selected and thus the parameters have to be connected with the structural conditions of the logic of situation via bridge hypothesis (2004: 1137.) An example of such a hypothesis is that the attractiveness of acquiring assimilative traits to achieve economic goals depends on the economic opportunities within the host society. However, such correlations are frequently neither direct nor linear and change with societal and historical conditions (ibid 1138).

5.1.2. Decision Structures of the Actors

Natives (Employers)

Natives (employers) are assumed to be economically motivated and therefore the only positively valued option for them would be the acceptance of migrants in the labour market (1), given that there is a demand for labour (ibid 286). The calculation of the expected utility may change if to control for the costs of training (2). Esser (1986), however, argues that these costs in general do not have a bearing on the basic structure of the decision.

$$(1) SEU_a = (0 + p_{ar}U_r) - (0 + 0) = p_{ar}U_r$$

$$(2) SEU_h = (0 + 0) - (0 + q_{hr}C_r) = -q_{hr}C_r$$

If the material utility ($p_{ar}U_r$) would change as a result of the business cycle or structural changes in the labour market, the expected economic utility of acceptance would change correspondingly. For example, if a demand for labour drops, p_{ar} is likely to decrease and the expected economic utility of acceptance decreases simultaneously. On the other hand, if natives withdraw from a given part of the labour market, the expected utility of acceptance would rise (ibid 287). An improvement of the qualifications of migrant workers is likely to raise the value of p_{ar} (ibid). In addition, one might assume, that a rising group size N decoupled by a deteriorating economic climate would result in growing ethnocentric motivations and, in turn, the utility of social distance would rise in relation to unaccustomed changes of the social environment (Esser 1986: 297). Thus, the societal factors (general economic and social situation) compounded by the group size N form the central situational elements on which the choice between acceptance and distance depends.

Migrants

In the simplest case, migrants and their offspring can choose between segmentation and (individual) assimilation. At a stage when the group size is fairly small and given that migrants arrived to the country of settlement with economic aspirations which they tend to pursue, the expected utility of assimilation could be equated with the material utility ($p_{sr}U_r$) and therefore the motivation to assimilate would be high. Assimilation in this model refers to the acquisition

of language skills and interaction with natives (investments in host country capital) to the extent perceived necessary to reach economic goals (ibid 287-288). Assimilation, however, can only take place if the achievement of economic goals requires the acquisition of assimilative traits (ibid) In case the ascriptive or internalized characteristics, e.g. skin colour, religion, language, cannot be changed, the values of material utility and thus SEU_s are lower (ibid 288). The economic or social segmentation occurs only if a precondition for a minimum number of persons from the same ethnic background is fulfilled and therefore even if the material utility is small, segmentation would not happen (4), because the absolute utility of assimilation is higher than that of segmentation (5).

$$(3) SEU_s = (0 + p_{sr}U_r) - (0 - 0) = p_{sr}U_r$$

$$(4) SEU_g = 0$$

$$(5) SEU_s > SEU_g$$

In general, immigrants should have an objective interest to invest in the host country capital, because the ethnic group capital displays lower efficiency due to the lack of means that could be utilized in the host society (2004: 1135). However, if the precondition of a sufficient number of persons with the same ethnic background is satisfied, the choice between assimilation and segmentation depends on other variables. It can be assumed that with the increase in the group size and the development of an internal structure, the social costs of assimilative alienation ($q_{ss}C_s$) will increase. Spatial segregations and collective identifications embedded in ethnic networks support this process and contribute to further ethnic organization and social distance (ibid 1142). Because the maintenance of one's mother tongue is less of an effort than attempts to communicate in a foreign language, the social utility expectations ($p_{gs}U_s$) for segmentation are to rise with the increasing group size (1986: 288). As the group size increases, immigrants have more opportunities to move entirely inside their own ethnic group (ibid 293). Albeit interethnic contacts have a high social utility, material reproduction within the same ethnic group is easier (ibid). Therefore, even without any ethnocentrism, migrants begin to segment due to the change in the material opportunity structures in regards to the large ethnic community (ibid 294).

The expected material utility ($p_{sr}U_r$), and accordingly expected utility of assimilation (SEU_s), increase and decrease in line with the economic conditions, as p_{sr} depends on the labour market structure and on the expected material utility of acceptance ($p_{ar}U_r$), as discussed earlier. The expected utility of assimilation is further dependent on the discrimination on behalf of natives in which case the social cost of an assimilation attempt ($q_{ss}C_s$) rises (ibid). By the same token, discrimination in the economic sector, e.g. restrictive components of laws, results in the

decrease of the expected material utility of assimilation. On the other hand, low cultural and social distances keep the costs for acquiring assimilative traits low.

5.2. Institutionalism

To better understand the role of institutions in shaping individuals “rational” choices, the phenomenon of institutions is further tackled. In the context of this research, the emphasis is on informal institutions (e.g. beliefs, traditions, codes of behaviour), which enable to explain how habitual patterns shape the choices of Russian-speaking young people in regards to acquiring assimilative traits or reinforcing intraethnic relationships to achieve economic goals.

DiMaggio and Powell (1991: 1) argue that institutional theory presents a paradox and it is often easier to agree upon what it is *not*, rather, than what it *is*. The concept itself has been fairly causally defined by scholars and variations occur in their emphasis on micro and macro level features and the role they ascribe to cognitive and normative aspects of institutions (ibid). However, they are united by a common conviction that institutions matter and individual behaviour is largely determined by structures and institutional environment (Peters&Pierre 2007:2, DiMaggio&Powell 1991: 3, Meyer&Rowan 1991). The new institutionalism in organization theory and sociology looks further into cognitive and cultural aspects of behaviour and addresses institutions as conventions that either come to be “taken for granted” or form a cognitive point of reference to tackle social phenomena, whereas economists and public choice theorists often address institutions and conventions as synonyms (DiMaggio&Powell 1991: 8-9). In this research, the institutions are addressed from the perspective of sociology.

Institutions are not just mere constraints but they constitute a framework including rules and programs establishing identities and respective activity scripts (Jepperson 1991: 146, Scharpf 1997: 38-39). Laitin and Greif (2004: 635) elaborate that rules are behavioural instructions that help individuals to cognitively choose an appropriate behaviour. North (1990: 4), however, explains institutions as humanly devised constraints, either formal (rules) or informal (customs, traditions, codes of behaviour) that by giving structure to relationships decrease the level of uncertainty in human interaction and thus shape its course. For example, out of necessity humans categorise people, each associated with expected behaviour, which enables to decrease the level of uncertainty when interacting with strangers (Shibutani&Kwan in Alba&Nee 1997: 839). Differences, however, amplify social distance, which may come to be institutionalised as a system of stratification, reproduced on the basis of existing stereotypes, customs and norms (ibid).

Individuals’ behaviours are believed to be determined by the institutional pressures and the need to be regarded as legitimate in the institutional context (Battilana 2006: 167, Selznick 2007: 6). Explanations, justifications and meaningful accounts are more likely to be imported

from the institutional environment, rather than manufactured by the internal actors (Scott 1991: 170). Institutional context, in particular, the interaction between informal constraints and formal rules, shapes the daily living of individuals and creates a sense of stability. Although formal rules account for the normative actions actors take, informal constraints are of greater importance. In terms of Russian-speaking young people's choices, formal rules are, for example, compliance with language requirements; whereas informal rules are, for example, habitual patterns to communicate in the Russian language. Therefore, in regards to situational logic described in the previous chapter, the dominant goal of individuals' social behaviour is systematically structured by the formal and informal constitution of the social system the actors are part of (Esser 2004: 1134)

Formal constraints may change overnight, however, informal constraints as extensions of formal rules are much more difficult to alter as they come from socially transmitted information and are much more resistant to deliberate policies (North 1990: 6, 37-42). For example, albeit the language reform aims to improve the knowledge of the Estonian language among Russian-speaking young people, the functioning of the Russian language as *de facto* second language in everyday life impedes the language acquisition. Karouni (2012: 156) highlights that formal constraints are closely linked to informal constraints and play an important role in shaping the actions of individuals.

People act on the basis of subjective preferences of cause-and-effect relationships they assume operating not in the real world, but in their mental image of the world, i.e. the world they perceive (Scharpf 1997: 19). For example, Esser (2004: 284) explains the formation of ethnic stratification as a result of individuals' wrong assumptions of the success of the career within the minority culture, which the members "voluntarily" and "rationally" choose to realize later that they have run into a mobility trap. Therefore, the degree to which outcomes are consistent with intentions reflects the capability of actors to perceive the "true" institutional environment (ibid). By the same token, minorities may decide to assimilate, (i.e. acquire language skills of the country of settlement and increase contacts with other cultures), because in their estimations the value of assimilation would be higher than that of segmentation, however, the outcome might not be congruent with their expectations due to the institutional environment, e.g. institutionalized boundaries, myths.

Institutions are not permanent and they are bound to change. Change consists of marginal adjustments to the constituents of institutional framework, i.e. rules, norms, enforcement (North 1990: 83). Institutional change occurs when beliefs change in a manner that the associated behaviour is no longer self-enforcing and thus reproduced (Laitin and Greif 2004: 639). For example, if investments in social capital are not perceived to fulfil physical well-being and social approval, the motives to invest in the host country capital may increase and, in

return, it may lead to dissolution of ethnic organizations. As North (1991) emphasis, change is incremental and transformation of institutions is both long-term and path dependent, i.e. the past occurrences affect the present affairs.

In sum, individuals' choices are affected by both formal rules and informal constraints that constitute the surrounding environment and form a frame of reference for their choices. Therefore, institutions can be considered as behavioural instructions that help individuals to cognitively choose an appropriate behaviour. Their choices, however, might not be the most rational as a result of incorrect envisioning of the "true" environment.

5.3. Forms of Capital

Capital, in its materialized form, is accumulated labour, which enables the holders of the capital to appropriate social energy in the form of labour and it is both a force inscribed in structures and the principle highlighting the inherent regularities of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints, which govern its functioning (Bourdieu 1986: 15). Capital, in its objectified or embodied form, takes time to accumulate and it is likely to reproduce itself and persist in its being (ibid). In accordance with the neoclassical labour-supply theory, employers seek to recruit an employee who is the most productive and low-cost and thus in a broader sense, the most obvious factor embedded in immigrants' lower occupational position should be their lack of human capital (Becker 1962, Kogan 2007: 9-10, Lindemann 2009). According to the human capital theory, expenditures on education and training are investments, which raise the productivity of individuals by imparting useful knowledge and skills and therefore increasing personal earnings (Becker 2012). According to the theory, human capital is a means of production and additional investments in human capital yield additional output (Becker 1962).

Bourdieu (1986: 17), however, argues that such an approach dismisses the fact that "the scholastic yield from educational action depends on the cultural capital previously invested by the family." Bourdieu argues that it is impossible to account for the functioning of the social world without reintroducing capital in its different forms and not only the form recognized in the social theory and criticises the (economically) self-interested approach, which has defined the other forms of exchange as non-economic and thus "disinterested" (ibid 16).

In Estonia, the discourse upon the lower labour market position of Russian-speaking people underlines insufficient knowledge of the Estonian language as the main hindrance to the attainment of parity of life chances with the native peers. Therefore, Bourdieu's theory of the forms of capital is suitable for this research, because it enables to understand the reproduction of structures of the social world; the lower labour market position of Russian-speaking young people. On that note, two types of capital; cultural capital and social capital; are further discussed to understand how the structures of the social world are reproduced and what effect

does the different distribution of capital have on the life chances, including labour market opportunities, of young Russian-speaking people.

5.3.1. Cultural Capital

Cultural capital may exist in three forms; in the embodied state (long-lasting disposition of mind and body, including linguistic capital), in the objectified state (cultural goods, e.g. works of art, books, scientific instruments) and in the institutionalized state (a form of objectification which confers properties on the cultural capital, e.g. academic credentials) (Bourdieu 1986: 18). The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state costs time, which must be invested directly by the investor, and the work of acquisition (self-improvement) is an effort that presupposes a personal cost of time and of socially constituted form of *libido sciendi* in regards to privation and renunciation (ibid). The length of acquiring cultural capital cannot be reduced to the length of schooling as an early domestic education creates dispositions by giving either a positive (a gain in value) or a negative (wasted time) value to the acquisition of cultural capital (ibid). Cultural capital may be acquired unconsciously, depending on the period, the society and the social class; however, it cannot be accumulated “beyond the appropriating capacities of an individual agent”, because it is linked to the person in its biological singularity (e.g. memory, biological capacity) and is subject to a hereditary transmission (ibid). Therefore, it combines the inherited properties (*ta patraa*) with the acquired properties (*epiketa*) (ibid). Because the social conditions of its transmission rate are more disguised than those of economic capital it functions as a symbolic capital and it is recognized as a legitimate competence (ibid).

Any given cultural competence has a scarcity value in regards to its position in the distribution of cultural capital and the state of profits which the cultural capital ensures is based on the fact that not all agents have the economic and cultural means of appropriating the objectively available resources (ibid 19). The relationship of appropriation is mediated by the relationship of competition between the agent and the other possessors of capital who are competing for the same goods (ibid). The efficacy of cultural capital is related to its implicit transmission; the process of appropriating cultural capital depends on cultural capital embodied in the whole family and it starts at an early age and thus covers the whole period of socialization. Different pedagogic actions, which are carried out by families from different social classes and those practised at school, affect the transmission of cultural heritage (1973: 57). Differences in the possessed cultural capital imply the differences in the age at which the accumulation of cultural capital begins and in the capacity to satisfy the demands for the prolonged process of acquisition (1986: 19). Pedagogic action can escape the general laws of cultural transmission by providing information and training, which can be acquired, however, only by the subjects “endowed with the system of predispositions”; i.e. linguistic and cultural competence and the familiarity with the dominant culture, which can only be acquired by family upbringing (ibid 58).

In regards to institutionalization, the objectification of cultural capital in the form of academic qualifications is one way of neutralizing the fact that embodied cultural capital has the same limits as its bearer. With the academic qualification, a form of cultural capital is produced which, however, has a relative autonomy vis-à-vis its bearer and the capital at a given moment of time (ibid 21). The same academic qualifications receive divergent values in accordance with the economic and social capital at the disposal of the holders of the qualifications (1973: 66). By the same token, the habitus inculcated by the upper-class families facilitate the acquisition of maximum yield of academic qualifications, if the advancement is based on criteria as “the right presentation”, “general culture” etc. (ibid). The profits, both material and symbolic, which the academic qualification guarantees depend on its scarcity; the investments in time and effort may turn out to be less profitable than anticipated in regards to the change in the conversion rate between academic and economic capital (ibid). In other words, structural changes in the society may devalue the acquired qualifications.

Bourdieu (1973: 56) argues that educational system reproduces the structure of power relationships and symbolic relationships between classes; only the most culturally privileged find their way into higher institutions, which legitimate access to the ruling classes. The more the official transmission of capital is hindered, the more the cultural capital gains its value in the reproduction of the social system (1986: 26).

5.3.2. Social capital

Social capital is the aggregate of the resources that are linked to the possession of network of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance, which can be used to back up the educational qualification (Bourdieu 1986: 21). The yield from academic capital depends on the economic and social capital, because the education is not fully in position of guaranteeing access to the highest positions; rather the access is determined by the availability of social ties and network resources, which facilitate the flow of information in regards to the available positions in the labour market (Luuk 2009: 92, Kogan 2010, Granovetter 1983, Sassen 1995: 110, Faist 1994: 446). The further one goes away from the control of the school system, the more the acquired diploma loses its effectiveness and becomes a right of access that can be given full value only by those who hold a large capital of social relations (Bourdieu 1973: 67).

Networks may exist in material and symbolic changes, but they may also be socially institutionalized and enacted in the form of a family, a tribe, a class etc. (1986: 21). The volume of the person’s social capital depends on the size of the network he can effectively mobilize and on the possessed capital of each of the person in his network; in other words it is never completely independent of the network, because the exchanges presuppose the “re-acknowledgment of a minimum of objective homogeneity” (ibid). The existence of a network of connections is a social formation, i.e. “the product of investment strategies, individual or

collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term and that can secure material or symbolic profits (ibid). These relationships, however, function within the limits of a group in which each member is instituted as a custodian of the limits of the group (ibid 22). Nonetheless, through the introduction of new members into the group, the whole definition in regards to its identity, boundaries etc. would change (ibid).

Granvotter (1983), who analysed social capital and the role of ties, proposed that having enough “weak ties” (acquaintances) instead of “strong ties” (close friends) would form bridges that link people from different social circles and thus facilitate the flow of information. Lin (1999: 483) argues that the inequality of social capital offers fewer opportunities for females and minority members and for them to obtain a better status they need to access resources beyond their usual social circles, e.g. females have to use ties of their mail acquaintances. Therefore, the volume of social capital differs in regards to the resourcefulness of the capitals possessed by the members of the group.

The different appropriating capacities of Russian-speaking young people, therefore, account for their different knowledge of the Estonian language and different levels of academic qualifications, which are likely to have an impact on their labour market mobility. By the same token, the resourcefulness of social networks is likely to create different opportunities for Russian-speaking young people comparing to natives to enter the labour market.

6. Analysis

In the following, the data will be analysed based on the established theoretical framework. Firstly, the logic of employers' choices in terms of offering or denying of jobs to Russian-speaking young people is analysed based on the singularity of the regions⁴ (the main characteristics of the regions relevant to this study are provided in table 1) and subsequently the respective decision structure is outlined to illustrate the aggregated outcome in the context of Estonia. Secondly, the logic of Russian-speaking young people's choices in terms of acquiring assimilative traits or reinforcing intraethnic relations to achieve economic goals is analysed taking into account the regional disparities; and the aggregated decision structures are outlined to illustrate the structural outcomes of interethnic relations in Estonia.

Tabel 1. Short Statistical Overview of the Regions

Region	Estonia	Ida-Virumaa	Tartumaa	Pärnumaa	Tallinn (Harjumaa)
The percentage of natives (%)	69,0	19,6	83,3	87,8	60,2
Unemployment rate (average 2012) (%)	7,1	12,6	4,7	8,1	6,1
The percentage of students graduated from Estonian-speaking secondary schools in 2011(%)	82,4	26,4	94,7	92	76,1

6.1. Expected Economic Utility of Acceptance (Employers)

The economic acceptance of the Soviet era settlers was orchestrated by the Soviet regime. As outlined by Esser (1986), the immigrant population is likely to increase in accordance with the dependents' growing motivations to follow their peers and therefore the demand for migrant workers (*ceteris paribus*) is likely to drop. Accordingly, immigrant population in Estonia increased as a result of dependents' growing motivations to follow their peers; however, their acceptance did not decrease, because the regime facilitated the creation of jobs for them. The phase of *conflict* (competition for jobs) came about in the re-independent Estonia and like in traditional immigration countries employers were to make a choice between *acceptance* and *distance* of migrants in the labour market. The logic of selection of employers is further

⁴ Tartumaa and Pärnumaa are considered as one case, because they bear many similarities

discussed taking into account the four elements of Esser's (1986) model; social utility, social costs, material utility and material costs.

6.1.1. Social Utility and Social Costs

Ida-Virumaa

All the interviewees from group A agree that mutual social recognition is achieved in the region (785-786). Therefore, the social recognition to employ Russian-speaking young people; which according to Esser (1986) gives weight to social utility; is by no means lower than that of the Estonian counterparts. None of the interviewees believes that discriminatory practises exist in Ida-Virumaa (689-690, 701) and they believe that young people, irrespective of their ethnicity, have equal opportunities in both private and public sector (643-644). In accordance with the theory, in terms of the absence of ethnocentric antipathies, the acceptance of Russian speaking people is dependent on the general economic and social situation.

Interviewee E, however, elaborates that in Ida-Virumaa some employers prefer one ethnic group over another based on the established work environment, for example, if the majority of employees is Russian-speaking, they look for a Russian-speaking employee and vice versa (703-705). Interviewees C and D elaborate that this may be related to the group identity; Russians feel more comfortable to be in the same group with Russians due to the same mentality and vice versa (715-717). Esser (2004) argues' that the dominant goal of individuals' social behaviour is structured by the formal and informal constitution of the social system the actors are part of. Therefore, if the work environment is monolingual, employers may opt for the person who speaks the respective language, because the formal and/or informal use of the language at a workplace has become, which Laitin and Greif (2004: 635) refer to as, "behavioural regularity" that is difficult to alter.

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Interviewees from group B confirm that the social distance between Estonians and Russians has decreased tremendously over the years. In accordance with Esser's (1986) model, such a change results in the increase of the expected social utility of acceptance of migrants in the labour market. According to the interviewee G, in terms of labour market opportunities ethnicity is by no means a decisive matter anymore, albeit it may affect the acquisition of high positions in the public sector (981-986). She later elaborates "I believe that, in general, the attitude in the individual level is positive, however, in terms of history and culture there are still some barriers to overcome" (1005-1007).

Interviewee G elaborates that history created a barrier (and thus a social cost) in the past. She shared a story of a young job applicant with the Russian background who was qualified to a job

position and thus chosen by the human resources manager, however, the general manager decided to put her in a test by giving her a call to see how she responds to a phone call (whether in Russian or in Estonian) to determine her mentality (947-952). In accordance with Esser (1986), during the first years of the re-independence, at the phase of *competition*, social distance on the part of natives was high and thus the acceptance of migrants was lower. Interviewees from group B articulate that based on their experience, in general, historical implications have no bearing anymore on the employers' choices, albeit there are all kinds of employers with different "kinks" out there, though not that many (944-945, 992-993).

Interviewee L elaborates that albeit they have no experience on such cases, employers are different and preferences based on ethnicity cannot be ruled out (1583-1585). Interviewee K says that, in her practise she has not witnessed that employers prefer Estonians over Russians and the main hindrances for the labour market entrance of young Russian-speaking people account for their lack of Estonian language skills, their level of education and additional skills (1586-1588). Interviewees from group D are in opinion that history does not create a barrier anymore and if Russian-speaking young people have acquired Estonian language skills at a level to comprehend legislations, they do not face any obstacles in the attainment of high positions in the public sector (1571-1576). Similarity to natives in aspects such as the placement in the primary labour market is, according to Esser (2004), a part of the process of assimilation. Not all Russian-speaking young people, however, have achieved parity of life chances with their native peers. Interviewee K later elaborates that "if a person has acquired language skills, it does not matter where he comes from, but without language skills, it is not possible to attain high positions due to the Language Act and other requirements [...]" (1685-1687).

Albeit ethnocentric antipathies are, in general, absent, the process of assimilation of young people who do not speak Russian is impeded by the institutionalized formal constraints which according to Jepperson (1991) give behavioural instructions to individuals to cognitively choose an appropriate behaviour. Such an obstacle however leads to ethnic inequality and thus the formal language requirements reinforce the between-group variances in the labour market.

Interviewees from group B state that a preference to work in a group where majority of the co-workers are with the same ethnic background may be due to a language barrier. Interviewee F exemplifies that "if an Estonian understands the Russian language, working in the different ethnic group is, perhaps, not a problem, however, many of the young Estonians do not speak Russian and therefore they are afraid of the communication barrier (1008-1010). In accordance with the theory, categorizations based on differences (e.g. on language), which enable to decrease the level of uncertainty, amplify social distance.

Tallinn (Harjumaa)

Interviewees from Tallinn (Harjumaa) (interviewees A, B and group C) believe that it is not of greater social recognition to employ Russians comparing to Estonians and vice versa. Interviewee A believes that in Tallinn (Harjumaa) the social utility to employ Russian-speaking young people is equal to that of Estonians and in her experience Russian-speaking young people have the same labour market opportunities that Estonians, given that they have acquired Estonian language skills (98-100, 109); like in other regions the process of assimilation is impeded by the formal institutions, i.e. language requirements.

Interviewee B, elaborates that more time is needed to overcome the ethnocentric attitudes created in the 1990s (347-348). Interviewee A exemplifies that after the street riots in 2007, one of the employers stated that he does not want to employ a person with the Russian background (222-223). She further explains that some, albeit very few, of the employers, whose ancestors were killed or deported during the Soviet times, have a negative internal disposition towards Russians. (220-253). North (1991) argues that change is incremental and transformation of institutions (including informal beliefs) is both long-term and interrelated with past occurrences. By the same token, interviewee B elaborates: "I think in a present day history still matters and it will take some time for the attitudes to change, the generation who will now obtain an education, they have different attitudes, because they do not remember the historical events" (351-355). In general, ethnocentric antipathies are still present among some, albeit not many, of the employers in Tallinn (Harjumaa) and therefore in accordance with the theory the acceptance of migrants is lower than it would be if ethnocentric antipathies were completely absent.

Given that the interviewees themselves are part of the social system, their interpretations of the subject matter seem to differ, firstly, based on their age and, secondly, on their ethnicity; the younger interviewees, those from group C have no recognition that historical implications may affect employer's decisions (1212-1213). Similarly, interviewees from group A do not have such stories to share, which is plausible given that Ida-Virumaa is a Russian-speaking region. However, interviewee B (the oldest of the interviewees), is more critical and believes that historical memory still has an effect on the attitudes of some employers. The somewhat different beliefs among the interviewees from different age groups, perhaps, exemplify the general change in attitudes over the generations within the society. By the same token, two interviewees' with the Russian background (Interviewees F and G) somewhat imply that Estonians are ethnocentric comparing to other nations, whereas none of the Estonian interviewees perceives such a tendency. Perhaps, it illustrates that the perceptions in the society concerning the ethnocentrism of Estonians vary between the ethnic groups, albeit based on such a small number of interviewees, generalizations cannot be made.

Interviewee B thinks that young people with the Russian background have equal opportunities in the labour market, however, she exemplifies that applicant's ethnicity may in some cases matter if a work environment is utterly Estonian, however, she elaborates that recently the tendency in Tallinn (Harjumaa) has been to employ Russian-speaking young people due to their Russian-language skills (379-387). Therefore, similarly to the other two regions, social recognition of Russian-speaking young people in Tallinn (Harjumaa) is, in general, on a par with natives, which according to the theory gives weight to the social utility of acceptance. Nonetheless, as in Ida-Virumaa, the social utility of distance may have a higher value comparing to acceptance, if employers follow the "behavioural pattern" and wish to maintain either Estonian- or Russian-speaking work environment.

6.1.2. Material Utility and Material Costs

Ida-Virumaa

All the interviewees from group A confirm that employers make material utility-based decisions and are, first and foremost, interested in finding an employee with the best set of skills. Ida-Virumaa is an industrial region and therefore most of the employment opportunities are in economic activities such as mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction and transport. In accordance with Esser's (1986) arguments, expected economic utility of acceptance is expected to rise as a result of changes in segments of the labour market, e.g. if natives withdraw from a given part of the labour market. The interviewees say that due to the lack of qualified workforce in some professions, e.g. welders, employers are willing to employ anybody with respective skills, even if they do not speak a word in Estonian or Russian (689-690).

Esser (1986) also outlines that changes in the expected utility may be caused by structural changes. Accordingly, in Ida-Virumaa, due to the shift from the manufacturing industry to the knowledge-based economy, the share of occupations in the manufacturing industry has been constantly decreasing. Such a trend, however, has lowered the material utility of skilled workers and due to the liquidation of many workplaces during the recession in economic activities, such as manufacturing and construction; those predominant in Ida-Virumaa, the material utility of skilled workers (mainly Russian-speaking workers) has decreased.

In terms of the recession, albeit according to Esser (1986) the expected utility of acceptance should drop if the demand for labour should drop, none of the interviewees thinks that Russian-speaking minorities have been more vulnerable to the recession comparing to natives within the region (693-694). On the other hand, as a result of the restructuring of the economy, the overall unemployment rate is twice as high in the region in comparison to other regions, which increases the unemployment rate for Russian-speaking people. Given that 80% of the population in Ida-Virumaa is Russian-speaking, the ethnic-differences in the national statistics

(the higher unemployment rate for non-Estonians) should decrease when controlling for region. Therefore, the overall high unemployment rate affects the national statistics and creates an illusion (ecological fallacy) that opportunities across regions are worse for non-Estonians.

The interviewees say that the main problems that young people experience in entering the labour market, in Ida-Virumaa, are their insufficient language skills (either Estonian or Russian), low level of education and little or no job experience (638-649); therefore the employers' choices are based on the elements of human capital. In terms of language, they elaborate that albeit not knowing Estonian is a hindrance for Russian-speaking young people to enter the labour market, not knowing Russian among Estonians is as much of the problem and those who speak both languages, irrespective of their ethnicity, have a significant advantage in the labour market. Therefore, given that many young Estonians do not speak the Russian language, bilingual Russian-speaking young people are more competitive in the labour market, because of the transnational business opportunities with Russia and the large Russian community (697-699). In line with Esser's (1986) arguments, the improvement in the qualification of migrant workers, for example from one generation to the next, is likely to raise the value of the economic utility of acceptance.

Another element, which according to interviewees from group A, increases the acceptance of Russian-speaking young people, but which Esser (1986) does not outline in the theory, is their activeness and motivation. Interviewee E elaborates that it is rather the spark in the applicants' eyes and smile on their face, which makes them more successful in finding employment (687); therefore as argued by Bourdieu (1973) the habitus inculcated by the families, "the right presentation" as part of cultural capital facilitates the advancement in the labour market.

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In regards to structural changes in the economy, namely, the recession, interviewees from group B think that Russian-speaking young people have been more vulnerable to the recession due to their lack of language skills and they think that the high unemployment rate for Russian-speaking people is a result of economic changes in Ida-Virumaa (955, 958-59). In contrast, interviewees from group D say that, in Pärnumaa, the unemployment rate for young Russian-speaking people is lower than that of the native peers (1612-1614).

The interviewees from group B confirm that the knowledge of the Estonian language is a decisive element of human capital in the region. They elaborate that there are very few of those young people in Tartumaa who have not acquired Estonian language skills and therefore in their practise they have not had many of those customers who do not speak Estonian (835-844); which refers to assimilation in regards to a social differentiation, i.e. the dissolution of ethnic communities and the decline in social distances. In contrast to Ida-Virumaa, the main

economic activities in the area are related to research and education, given that it is a university town.

Interviewee F elaborates that, in Tartumaa, without the Estonian language proficiency it is extremely difficult for young people to enter the labour market. Furthermore, in those positions where language skills are not that important (e.g. in manufacturing), their age becomes an impediment, given that older people are preferred to fill those positions (852-856). Interviewee G adds that if young people speak Estonian their opportunities to find employment do not differ from natives (862-864); which refers to disappearance of ethnic differences in occupation and income (if the Russian-speaking people have acquired Estonian language skills). Later she elaborates that “if a person has sufficient language skills to perform his job duties, has a suitable personality and skills, then if he can also speak Russian, it is only his advantage” (967-969); therefore, the possession of the “right” cultural capital increases the chance of employment. Interviewee F adds that a human resources management of a large metal company recently stated that Russian-speaking young people who are proficient in Estonian are the most prioritised workers to the company (869).

Similarly to Tartumaa, there are very few Russian companies in Pärnumaa and therefore the knowledge of the Estonian language is an essential criterion for the labour market entrance. Given that Pärnumaa is a resort town, the main economic activity in the area is tourism. Interviewee K elaborates that the main qualifications that employers look for are Estonian language skills, education, previous work experience and if those qualifications are fulfilled then additional skills, e.g. computer and driving skills are of advantage (1541-1543); employers base their decision on applicants’ human capital. All the interviewees say that if Russian-speaking young people have acquired Estonian language skills, their labour market opportunities are on a par with Estonians and the only reason for their lower position in the labour market is their lack of skills (1551-1556). Interviewee K elaborates that “I believe if a person speaks the language, his not in a lower position due to his Russian ethnicity, if he has language skills and meets the requirements of a job position, there is no discrimination” (1551-1553). Interviewees K and L also say that of great weight are the applicants’ personality and attitude (1563-1566). Therefore, quite like in other regions the interviewees place great value to one’s cultural capital; dispositions and *habitus* appropriated through family upbringing. Interviewees M and N add that Russian-language skills give Russian-speaking young people an advantage in the labour market over Estonian peers, for example, in customer service and in companies who do business with Russia or Russians (1567-1569). On that note, quite like in Tartumaa, ethnic differences in occupation and income have declined, which refers to the process of social integration, i.e. assimilation, in the region.

Tallinn (Harjumaa)

Interview B elaborates that the demand in the labour market is for skilled workers (e.g. machine operators) and therefore the acceptance of young people with respective skills or knowledge is extremely high, irrespective of their language skills (399-401). Quite like in Ida-Virumaa, in accordance with the theoretical assumptions, changes in different segments of the labour market have resulted in a rise in the value of the expected utility of acceptance in certain segments. Accordingly, interviewee B exemplifies that “all those machine operators, who graduate from vocational schools, employers queue up to employ them no matter in which language they speak” (402-403); in accordance with the theoretical assumptions, in economic activities with an unsatisfied demand for labour, the utility of acceptance of Russian-speaking people is high.

In regards to the recession which, in principle, should lower the acceptance of migrants, interview A says that Russian-speaking people have been more vulnerable to the recession due to language skills and education which cannot be utilized in the labour market (106-107). Interviewee B elaborates that it is because of their engagement in manufacturing, which has been suffered the most during the recession (360-369).

Similarly to Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, language skills in Tallinn (Harjumaa) are ascribed a lot of importance. Interviewee A elaborates that without Estonian language skills the acceptance of Russian-speaking young people in the labour market is low: “they have obtained an education, for example, they have graduated from some vocational school, and they wish to have a good job, however, without language skills employers do not want to employ them, there are even those who do not speak Estonian in the elementary level [...]” (35-39). Interviewee B and interviewees from group C also consider the lack of Estonian language skills and the low level of academic qualifications to be the main elements which lower the labour market acceptance of young Russian-speaking people (281, 1178-1180). In terms of the material utility of acceptance, the formal institutionalised language requirements decrease the expected material utility of Russian-speaking young people and thus the economic utility of acceptance.

According to interviewee B, the qualities to which employers attribute the most value in regards to the recruitment are applicants’ education, age, job experience and language skills (431-432); the employers’ choices are thus based on the applicants’ human capital. She also elaborates that many of the unemployed young people have obtained only primary education and therefore they face serious difficulties in finding employment (283-284).

The calculation of the expected utility may change if to control for the costs of training. Therefore, employers seek the applicant whose training costs would be the lowest, i.e. the candidate with the best match of skills and qualifications necessary to fulfil the job duties.

Given that in the context of the recession, demand for labour has been lower than the supply, employers have been able to be selective. Interviewee B elaborates that so far employers have had a choice in terms of finding workforce and they have not had the necessity to invest extra in language training and skills development (480-481). Interviewees from group D say that employers quite often do not have enough finances to organize language training (1873-1874). Therefore, the material costs are not even considered by the employers.

6.1.3. Aggregated Decision Structure

In the previous section, employers' motivations (the logic of selection) were outlined in the three observed cases, which form a basis of certain collective outcomes (the logic of aggregation), outlined as follows. In Ida-Virumaa, albeit within the region, ethnic differences in education, occupation and income between the ethnic groups do not exist; in the context of Estonia, the region has stagnated with low labour market opportunities which re-enforce social inequalities and social differentiation. In Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, societal assimilation can be perceived in regards to the disappearance of ethnic differences in the distribution of certain characteristics, e.g. occupations, and the dissolution of ethnic institutionalization. On the other hand, in Tallinn, ethnic inequality (the persistence of between group variances) and ethnic differentiation (ethnic organization) are the prevailing structural outcomes of societal processes and thus social distances are higher in the region. In terms of employers' choices, in general they are economically motivated and base their recruitment choices on applicant's human capital (education, language skills, experience), but also on embodied cultural capital (motivation, dispositions). Nonetheless, some years ago, ethnocentric antipathies decreased the social utility acceptance of Russian-speaking people in the labour market and those attitudes, though not prevailing, can be still encountered in Estonia.

Albeit a certain degree of social distance can be recognized in Estonia by the interviewees, it is thought to have little bearing on the employers' choices. In terms of employers' aggregated decision structure, subjective parameter p_{hs} has no value in terms of acceptance or distance in regards to social utility (social recognition or norm conformity). In terms of social costs, in the individual level social distances have decreased, though not vanished; however, in the societal level some barriers still exist that reinforce the between-group social distance. For example, language policy and spatial segmentation maintain the social distance between Estonians and Russians. Such structures, however, are considered legitimate and living in linguistically distinctive environments of the society has become a behavioural regularity. Employers' decisions may unintentionally reinforce the between-group distance in some cases related to behavioural regularities that have been established at a workplace; e.g. a monolingual work environment may create an uncertainty to employ people who do not speak the respective language. Such a barrier only exists, if Russian-speaking young people have not acquired

Estonian language skills. In general, based on the interviewees' answers, one could imply that even if small social costs exist in certain cases, in aggregated level, social costs do not have a significant effect on employers' utility-based choices.

In terms of the material utility of acceptance ($p_{ar}U_r$), albeit education and experience are of great importance, language skills are considered to be the most decisive element in regards to the expected economic utility of acceptance of Russian-speaking young people in Tartumaa, Pärnumaa and in Tallinn (Harjumaa) (though somewhat less). Therefore, the institutionalised "taken for granted" language requirements have an implicit effect on the acceptance of Russian-speaking young people in the labour market, because in line with DiMaggio&Powell (1991), employers decisions are determined by institutional environment. In Ida-Virumaa, on the contrary, expected utility is not that much related with Estonian language skills and rather, due to the vast ethnic organising in the region, Russian language skills have equal or even more weight. In terms of the decision structure, the material utility of acceptance ($p_{ar}U_r$) is most likely to be a positively valued option and as argued before, training costs do not have a bearing on employers' expected economic utility of acceptance or distance. Taking into account the previous elaborations on the parameters of the decision structure, the overall outline of the decision structure is congruent with the one posed by Esser (1).

$$(1) SEU_a = (0 + p_{ar}U_r) - (0 + 0) = p_{ar}U_r$$

Based on the decision structure, one could imply that employers, first and foremost, are economically motivated and thus the only positively valued option for them is the acceptance of Russian-speaking young people in the labour market. The outlined model, however, does not take into account situational variables, which, as argued by Esser (1986), may change the expected utility decisions. The expectations of economic utility have changed in accordance with structural changes in the labour market and thus an unsatisfied demand for labour in certain segments of the labour market (e.g. plants and machine operators) has resulted in a rise in the value of p_{ar} . On the other hand, due to the shift from the manufacturing industry to the knowledge-based economy, the share of occupations in manufacturing (the industry in which most of the Soviet era settlers found employment) has been constantly decreasing and thus the economic utility of acceptance has dropped within the segment and resulted in the higher unemployment rate for Russian-speaking people. In public sector, where the competition is much higher, the institutionalised language requirements and concealed appropriation of cultural capital in regards to the capacities of young people and domestic transmission of linguistic and cultural competences reevaluate the material utility of acceptance of Russian-speaking young people comparing to Estonians.

On that note, employers' economically motivated choices are not made in a vacuum, but respond to the social environment. In accordance with Esser's (1986) arguments, the general

economic and social situation are the basis of the central situational elements (the logic of situation) on which the employers' economic utility of acceptance depends and which shape the certain collective outcome of acceptance (the logic of aggregation).

6.2. Expected Utility of Segmentation and Individual Assimilation (Russian-speaking Young People)

According to Esser's (1986) theory at an early stage of immigration when the group size is fairly small and migrants arrive to the host country with economic aspirations, the expected utility of acquiring assimilative traits is likely to be high. In the case of Estonia, albeit immigrants had economic aspirations, the costs of reinforcing intraethnic relationships were much lower, because the Soviet regime created separate spheres of life for them, which functioned in their native language. After Estonia regained its independence, the situational and economic background for integration changed. In the following the utility-based choices of migrants are analysed in the context of situational variables and in regards to the possession of different forms of capital.

6.2.1. Social Utility and Social Costs

Ida-Virumaa

Interviewees D and E say that social networks are of importance in terms of gaining access to high positions (681-682). Bourdieu (1986) argues that access to the highest positions is determined by the availability of social ties and network, which back up the educational qualification. Interview D elaborates that many Russian-speaking people find a job through their network and many of them have Estonian acquaintances (676-677); according to Bourdieu (1986), the volume of social capital depends on the richness of social capital and therefore those Russian-speaking young people who have Estonian acquaintances are likely to have more opportunities in finding employment, which is also confirmed by Lin (1999).

Interviewees C and D argue that ethnic community, in particular, schools support the acquisition of the Estonian language and it is a myth that Russian-speaking schools do not provide young people with a sufficient support for the language acquisition, they think that people who come up with such an excuse are just not motivated to learn the language (650-652). In accordance with Bourdieu's (1986) theory, pedagogic action can provide instruments for appropriation of the cultural capital only to those who have the necessary dispositions. The interviewees further elaborate that the acquisition of assimilative traits is, by and large, related to individual motivation and determination and it also depends on prevailing attitudes in the family; those who are planning to reside in the region for a longer period are not motivated to acquire Estonian language skills (737, 791-792). They elaborate that family, pedagogic action

and socioeconomic background affect the young people's choices in regards to the language acquisition (722-723); therefore in line with Bourdieu's (1986) arguments, the process of acquiring assimilative traits is dependent upon the cultural capital or dispositions invested by the family in terms of giving either a positive or a negative value to the acquisition of cultural capital, but also on pedagogic actions practised at school.

None of the interviewees from group C, however, thinks that young Russian-speaking people are discriminated against in the labour market and they believe that both natives and Russian-speaking young people have equal opportunities for the labour market advancement (689-690, 697-688). They consider social distances in the region to be low and rather they emphasise on the differences between young and old people (785-786). Therefore, the costs for acquiring assimilative traits should be low; however, in regards to the large number of Russian-speaking people in the region, as argued by Esser (1986), even though ethnocentric antipathies are absent, segmentation occurs due to the high social utility of interethnic contacts and the opportunities to move inside their own ethnic group.

Tartumaa&Pärnumaa

Interviewees from group B elaborate that those young people who have not acquired Estonian language skills do not have many (if any) opportunities in Tartumaa (870, 880-881). Interviewee F says that many employers prefer to find employees through their own network, because it gives them a security that they find a reliable employee; and because there are not many Russian entrepreneurs in the region, Russian-speaking young people do not have many intraethnic opportunities (930-933, 937-939); therefore, economic segmentation is not possible within the region. According to Esser (1986), if the size of the ethnic group is small, segmentation is not possible, because economic segmentation depends on the existence of a certain minimum number of persons with the same ethnic background. Interviewee G elaborates that, however, they do have transnational opportunities, e.g. plans related to Russia and therefore, quite a lot depends on the community they are embedded in (922-925). In accordance with Bourdieu's (1986) arguments, the volume of social capital depends on the size of the networks that a person can utilize and on the volume of economic, cultural or symbolic capital possessed by each person within these networks.

Similarly to Tartumaa, in Pärnumaa, Russian-speaking people do not have many intraethnic economic opportunities. Interviewee K says that most of the enterprises in the region are Estonian-speaking and there are very few Russian enterprises and even these are bilingual at the management level (1776-1778); therefore, the expected utility of acquiring assimilative traits should be high. Interviewees K and M say that some Russian-speaking people engage themselves in intraethnic activities, e.g. in trading goods. Interviewee M thinks that trading activities account for their ethnic skills, given that they are good in communication and utilising

their network, in particularly, among those who have transnational contacts with people from Russia, other Baltic States and Poland, which create opportunities of trading goods (1664-1665). Such ties, as argued by Bourdieu (1986) can secure material profits; therefore, social capital backs up their human and cultural capital. On the other hand, as argued by Esser (1986), maintenance of one's ethnic identity is less of an effort than reorientation and thus transnational opportunities may increase the costs of acquiring assimilative traits.

Interviewee F says that, in Tartumaa, for those young people who have not been successful in the language acquisition, the opportunities in the labour market are much worse than, for example, in Tallinn or Ida-Virumaa (855-856, 1152). Russian-speaking young people who have insufficient Estonian skills fare worse in the labour market than their native peers and they may become trapped in elementary occupations where language skills are not relevant and communication is not central to performing job tasks, e.g. in manufacturing. Interviewee L says that it is not impossible for them to find employment, for example, in companies where the employer himself is Russian-speaking, however, their opportunities improve tremendously if they obtain some Estonian language skills (1601-1603, 1606-1607); in accordance with the human capital theory, additional investments in human capital yield additional output. Interviewee K confirms that the plausible perspective for those young people would be language learning (1608).

Interviewee M says that, in general, young Russian-speaking young people have acquired elementary language skills; however, the problem is how to motivate them to practise the language (1920-1922). She later gives an example of a girl who has graduated from a Russian-speaking school and has taken language courses; however, she is afraid to communicate in Estonian (1927-1933). She adds that it might be because the girl has a reserved personality; as argued by Bourdieu (1986) cultural capital cannot be accumulated beyond the biological capacity of an individual and therefore not all people are equally capable to acquire Estonian language skills. Interviewee N says that in terms of young people, if one of them speaks in the Estonian language and the other responds in the Russian language they are able to understand each other (1934-1938). Therefore, the functioning of the Russian language as *de facto* the second language forms what Latin & Greif refer to as a behavioural instruction that helps young people to cognitively choose an appropriate behaviour (speaking in Russian).

Interviewee G also exemplifies that it is not possible that a graduate from a Russian-speaking school does not speak a word in Estonian (1110-1111). Interviewee N argues that, her son went to Russian-speaking school and thus she can say that the quality of Estonian language teaching is very high in that school and acquiring Estonian language skills comes down to individual motivation and ability to learn languages (1639-1642); as argued by Bourdieu (1986), pedagogic action provides young people with tools to acquire cultural capital, however, it assumes the

subjects to be endowed in the system of predispositions (competences appropriated by family upbringing) and the possession of inherited properties (biological capacity).

Interviewee G believes that the main factors that affect Russian-speaking young people's motivation to acquire Estonian language skills are their parental background, socioeconomic background and social networks. Interviewees L and M think that family and friends affect the motivation of young Russian-speaking people to acquire Estonian language skills (1908-1909). Interviewee N says that albeit Russian-speaking people acknowledge the material utility of the Estonian language, there is a certain opposition among some people to learn the language and rather they acquire English language skills (1720-1721). Interviewee K elaborates that such attitudes are constructed at home and there are many families who put their children into Estonian-speaking nursery schools, but if the family does not value the acquisition of the language, their children are likely to have adopted the same attitude (1722-1724); as argued by Bourdieu (1986), domestic education and dispositions created through it have a central role in terms of shaping young people's educational advances.

Interviewee G gives an example that "there are two Russian-speaking young people, neither of them has had any language practise, however one of them demonstrates a strong will to learn the language, whereas the other finds the language acquisition to be unnecessary (1117-1119). Similarly, interviewee M elaborates that based on her observations there are two distinct groups of Russians based on their willingness to study, those who want to acquire education and those who do not complete even secondary education (1957-1962). As argued by Bourdieu (1986) the acquisition of cultural capital is an effort that presupposes personal cost and it is linked to the person in its biological singularity and the domestic transmission of cultural capital.

Interviewee G says that albeit community support is important to young people it may also impede the language acquisition and if all the people from one's close kinship (family, friends etc.) are Russian-speaking, there is no need to acquire Estonian language skills (888-889). Similarly, interviewee N says that due to the small ethnic community in Pärnumaa, the members of the community support each other to a great extent. Interviewee M argues that the support, however, may impede the opportunities for young Russian-speaking people, if they are not supported in the language acquisition and their home language is exclusively Russian (1629-1631). Bourdieu (1986) explains that acknowledgement of objective homogeneity (language) is necessary to produce and reproduce a social group, e.g. a family, which is exposed to redefinition in regards to its identity, boundaries etc. through the introduction of new members into the group. Interviewee G somewhat confirms this argument by exemplifying: "while I was working in a school I observed that those Russian-speaking young people who interacted with Estonians, for example, went to sports training classes together,

did not have any problems with Estonian language and they were much more outgoing” (889-892). Interview G agrees that a community support may have both a positive and a negative effect on Russian-speaking young people’s social mobility (893).

Interviewees from group D elaborate that social distances between Estonian and Russian-speaking young people have decreased over the years and albeit they may experience a language barrier, they find a way to communicate, e.g. in English (1911-1912, 1941-1944); which in line with Bourdieu (1986) designates the redefinition and alteration of group boundaries and identity as a result of the acceptance of new members with different linguistic background. In line with institutionalism, change in attitudes and behaviour is incremental and long-term and as outlined by Latin & Greif (2004) occurs when beliefs change in a manner that associated behaviour (distancing oneself from other ethnic groups) is no longer self-reinforcing.

Tallinn (Harjumaa)

Interviewee I thinks that it is easier for Russian-speaking young people to find a job through their network (1202). Esser (1986) argues that in the presence of a sufficient number of persons with the same ethnic background, the social utility expectation of segmentation is high, because maintenance of one’s ethnic identity is less of an effort than reorientation, e.g. acquiring cultural capital. On the other hand, interviewee A thinks that the more Russian-speaking young people interact with natives, the higher the probability for them to find a job (61-66); as argued by Lin (1999) for better opportunities in the labour market, minorities need to access resources beyond their regular social circles.

Interviewee B believes that in terms of social recognition, the attitudes are constructed at home and if Russian-speaking young people follow the Russian media, which quite often show Estonia in a bad light, they are likely to develop a negative attitude towards Estonia and Estonians (579-581). Bourdieu (1986) argues that the process of appropriating cultural capital depends on the cultural capital embodied in the whole family and on dispositions created by a domestic education. Interviewee A also elaborates that “the attitudes of young Russian-speaking people are moving in right direction and they want to find a job, however, due to their parental background or, perhaps, school they have dispositions that they do not need to acquire Estonian language skills which later becomes a handicap” (181-184). Interviewee B also agrees that the “right” support of the family is of great importance (292-294). Similarly, interviewee J believes that parental support is a decisive element of young people’s educational attainment and the acquisition of Estonian language skills, which determine their later labour market opportunities (1230-1234). In line with Bourdieu (1986) and as it occurs from the interviews, the domestic transmission of cultural capital is socially the most determinant educational investment, however, interviewees also emphasise the importance of the community support, including one’s friends and acquaintances (56-58).

Interviewee H from group C believes that “if parents do not accept the Estonian language, young people, similarly, will not make an effort to learn the language” (1185-1186). Interviewee B elaborates that one’s social background is not that decisive, rather what matters is the support the parents provide their children with, “perhaps the child is from a financially well-secured family, but if he is not given enough attention and helped in his studies, the outcome is the same”(295-297, 566-574). Similarly, interviewee B believes that if a family does not support a child in terms of helping to create a routine for him to study and the support from the school is insufficient, it is likely for young people to experience downwards mobility (302-307, 451-453). She also finds the negative attitude (among older Russian-speaking people) towards the acquirement of Estonian language skills to be a of great impediment for linguistic advancements (376); in line with Bourdieu’s arguments, pedagogic action can provide tools to acquire cultural capital only to those who are embedded in necessary predispositions.

Interviewees I and J say that some Russian-speaking young people think that if they have a Russian surname they will not find employment, however the interviewees do not recall such incidents (1208-1209, 1206-1207); discrimination by natives, however, is to be expected to rise the cost of an assimilation attempt. Interviewee B thinks that such a belief is a myth, which is created by young people’s parents, who cannot find a job due to the restructuring of the economy, which has devaluated their qualifications; and therefore they think that they are not able to find employment because of their ethnicity, but in reality what matters are their skills (593-599). In accordance with institutionalism, actors make their choices by reflecting upon the subjective modelling of the world they perceive. Most of the interviews do not completely rule out discriminatory practises by employers, but they do emphasise that in general discrimination based on ethnicity is not a prevailing matter anymore. If young people assume discrimination, as socially transmitted information, to operate in their perception of the world, as argued by Esser (1986); the cost of acquiring assimilative traits goes up.

6.2.2. Material Utility and Material Costs

Ida-Virumaa

Interviewees from group A elaborate that not many people who live in the region are highly educated and due to the limited opportunities for the attainment of higher education in Ida-Virumaa, those young people who do not have financial resources to go somewhere else to continue their education or prefer to study near home, do not have many opportunities to acquire higher education (103-104). On the other hand, as argued by Bourdieu (1973), the limited opportunities to continue education within the region reproduce the stratification, because only those who have necessary economic and cultural means are able to enrol in higher institutions and thus access higher positions in the labour market.

The interviewees further elaborate that some Russian-speaking young people continue their education in areas that do not have a future perspective in the labour market and due to the “wrong” choices many of the young people cannot find a job that matches their education and thus quite often they have to retrain (719-721, 773-775). Many of the young people, therefore, experience occupational stagnation, quite like their parents. As it was explained by Esser (2004), the formation of ethnic stratification is a result of individuals’ wrong perceptions about the success of the career within the minority culture, which they “rationally” choose to realize later that they have become trapped in the lower spheres of the labour market. As argued by Bourdieu (1986), the return on academic qualification, however, depends on its scarcity and changes in the conversion rate between academic and economic capital.

In terms of restrictive components of laws that, in principle, lower the expected utility of acquiring assimilative traits. Interviewee D (with the Russian-background) articulates that liberalizing the naturalization process would broaden the job spectrum for non-citizens in the public service. Interviewee C (with the Russian-background) gives a counterargument stating that citizenship itself would not alleviate non-citizens’ position in the labour market and they also need to have sufficient knowledge of the Estonian language to advance in the labour market (800-803). Interviewee D agrees with her reasoning and concludes that citizenship should be earned.

Given that ethnic group capital displays lower efficiency (the return on the capital is lower), minorities should invest in human capital to increase their productivity. Interviewees from group A, however, say that some Russian-speaking young people seek for alternatives to increase their earnings, e.g. unofficial work. All the interviewees from group A say that it is a major problem in Ida-Virumaa. The interviewees say that the main reasons for unofficial work are their criminal background or unpaid fees, which would be deducted from their salary if they would work officially (664-665). The other reasons to work unofficially are the low wages and thus evading taxes enables them to increase their earnings. By the same token, working unofficially gives them an opportunity to simultaneously apply for social benefits (666-667). As Bourdieu (1986) argues, accumulation of capital (self-improvement) is an effort that presupposes personal investments in time and giving up on many other things, which not all people are equally capable of achieving. Therefore, the chosen alternatives may reflect upon the lower capacity of some Russian-speaking young people to acquire cultural capital.

Tartumaa&Pärnumaa

The material utility of acquiring assimilative traits is high in Tartumaa, because it encompasses better opportunities and due to the small Russian-speaking community, segmentation as such would lead to a downward mobility due to the low intraethnic economic opportunities and thus the material utility of segmentation is low. On the other hand, language requirements affect

Russian-speaking young people more than in other regions, because acquiring assimilative traits is necessary to reach economic goals.

In terms of language requirements, interviewees from group B say that, in general, language requirements can be considered legitimate. Interviewee G (with the Russian background), however, argues that some of the requirements should be more considerate towards personal capabilities. She elaborates that “for example if a teacher works in a Russian school, teaches Russian children, works in a Russian-speaking environment, why he has to be fluent in the Estonian language, I know a lot of teachers, who study just before the language inspection, then forget, then study again, language inspection has become something like a deterring mechanism [...]” (1123-1130). Esser (1986), however, argues that discrimination in the economic sector in regards to restrictive components of laws causes the decrease in the expected material utility of acquiring assimilative traits. Interviewee F (also with the Russian background), albeit agreeing with interviewee G, gives a counterargument that teachers can be considered as positive examples for young Russian-speaking people in terms of their language skills (1127). As it was emphasised by Bourdieu (1986), the acquisition of language skills is an effort that presupposes an investment of time and of socially constructed form of *libido sciendi* in terms of renunciation, sacrifice and privation. On that note, interviewee F elaborates that, perhaps, if a young person has enough inner drive to acquire Estonian language skills, he is likely to have dispositions and motivation to work hard in all aspects of life in order to achieve his goals and thus accomplishes a better position in the labour market (882-886, 976-980). Interviewee M also says that there are many project-based free language courses available in Estonia and if a person himself is interested there are many ways to improve his language skills (1875-1876).

In terms of citizenship requirements, interviewee G from group B (with the Russian background) thinks that policies have no bearing on the prevailing views within the society and instead of citizenship policy further emphasis should be placed on the integration matters (1137-1138). Interviewee M from group D thinks that lowering naturalization requirements would not automatically improve the labour market opportunities for Russian-speaking people, because they still need to learn the language, therefore, she thinks that the requirements may give them a motivation to learn the Estonian language and, in turn, their competitiveness in the labour market would increase (1881-1884).

In terms of possible alternatives for Russian-speaking young people to increase the return on ethnic capital (e.g. unofficial work), the interviewees from group B do not have any experience with such cases. Interviewee F, however, thinks that some young people may work unofficially, mainly, because of their unawareness of the legal process (912-917). Interviewees from group D (Pärnumaa) say that albeit there are no official records regarding the matter, they believe it is

more common among Russian-speaking young people, especially in the summer time (1653-1659).

Concerning the alternative choices, interviewee L elaborates that in some cases Russian-speaking young people are not motivated to find employment and their whole family lives from social benefits (1824-1825). Interviewees L and N say that some young people, both Estonians and Russian-speaking, are not willing to work with a low salary and thus discard some job offers (1826-1829). Interviewee L later elaborates that some people register with *Töötukassa* in order to get health insurance and thus they are not interested in finding employment at all (1854-1861). Interviewee N concludes that quite often Russian-speaking young people create barriers for themselves, which are not related to their language skills (1830-1831). As argued before, some people neither have the necessary inherited nor acquired properties, including dispositions; which as it occurs from this research may lead to alternative actions in order for them to increase their earnings.

Tallinn (Harjumaa)

Esser (1986) argues that the presence of a sufficient number of persons with the same ethnic background (as in Tallinn), allows the formation of the internal economic structure and thus the material utility to acquire assimilative traits depends on many variables other than the utility-based motivations. Interviewee A exemplifies that “if a person has a disposition that he will work in a Russian-speaking environment and thus believes that it is unnecessary for him to acquire Estonian language skills, but then if a company would cease to exist, he would face major problems” (210-211). As argued before, minorities may opt for a career within a minority culture, but later they realize that they have run into a mobility trap, as argued by North (1991), the consistency between intentions and outcomes reflects upon the capability of actors to perceive the “true” institutional environment. Interviewees from group C say that many of their customers, however, have recognized the importance of Estonian language skills in the current economy and thus want to enrol themselves in the language courses through *Töötukassa* (1287-1289). Changes in the course of business cycles, as argued by Esser (1986), can be also expected to increase the expected utility weight of acquiring assimilative traits.

In terms of education which, in principle, should increase the expected utility of acquiring assimilative traits, interviewee A exemplifies that many people study business management; however, without specific knowledge of some business sphere the education cannot be directly translated into the Estonian labour market (85-86, 107). Another element that lowers the expected material utility of young Russian-speaking people is thus their obtained education in economic areas in which there is a low demand for or they have acquired education that cannot be directly utilised in the labour market. Interviewee B and interviewees from group C say that, at the beginning, young people have high expectations in terms of translating their education

into the labour market (1409, 283-284). Interviewees from group C elaborate that later they discover that their education cannot be fully utilized in the labour market to the extent they hoped for (1410- 1414). As argued by Bourdieu (1986) the investments made in the academic qualification may turn out to be less profitable than it was anticipated due to the change in the conversion rate between the academic and economic capital, i.e. the change in the utility of the acquired qualification in the labour market.

Interviewee I thinks that those Russian-speaking people who have graduated from Russian-speaking schools have less opportunities than their ethnic peers who have graduated from Estonian-speaking schools, whereas interviewee H, who has graduated from a Russian-speaking school, thinks that it is not always the case and it depends on a person (1233-1237). In line with Bourdieu's (1986), the profits that the academic qualification guarantees depend on its scarcity and the investments in the qualification may turn out to be less profitable than anticipated, because the same academic qualification receives different values depending on the social and economic capital of its bearer. Albeit the improvement of qualifications should increase Russian-speaking young people's labour market opportunities, their cultural capital impedes their further social mobility.

In terms of investing in human capital, interviewees I and J from group C also elaborate that "some young people expect everything to be handed to them on a plate" and they do not have any initiative to accomplish things on their own (1425-1428). The acquisition of cultural capital, however, costs time, which cannot be invested second hand, i.e. it must be invested by the investor himself. Interviewee B believes that unemployed young people, both Estonian and Russian, are quite often apathetic to study. She gives an example that in cooperation with a vocational institute they put together a two-year-long curriculum to train machine operators and in two months she found only five participants (323-327). She later comes back to her argument saying that in terms of services *Töötukassa* provides them with more opportunities the youth is willing to use and their attitude makes it difficult to get them involved in any extra services (447-449).

In terms of restrictive components of laws, interviewee A thinks that the pursued language policy has some shortcomings, but if a person does not want to acquire Estonian language skills, the reforms have no impact. She elaborates that Russian-speaking young people should be better informed of the utility of the language acquisition, however, if they do not have enough opportunities to practise the language, the recent reforms do not have the expected outcome (208-214), as argued by North (1991), informal institutions are much more persistent to deliberate policies comparing to formal institutions. Interviewees from group C unanimously agree that in certain aspects language requirements are not reasonable, for example, cleaners have no use of Estonian language skills (1442-1452). Interviewee B thinks that language policy

pursued in the re-independent Estonia has been justified, albeit the continuous procrastination of the language reform has reinforced the linguistic segregation and therefore switching over to the Estonian language as the main language of instruction has resulted in vast opposition (516-524); opportunity to study in the Russian language has become a habitual pattern, which in essence is difficult to alter.

In terms of naturalization requirements, interviewee A argues that “Estonians have more opportunities, whereas young people with the Russian-background, if they do not hold citizenship and cannot speak Estonian, it is difficult for them to find employment in Estonia, whereas they do not have any chances in other countries” (171-174). Interviewee B, however, ascribes no importance to citizenship and thinks that what matters in the labour market are the skills, except in the public service (528-530). Interviewees from group C also think that citizenship is not a decisive factor in terms of finding employment in Estonia, unless one would like to work in high positions in the public service (1454-1467). On the other hand, they elaborate that those young people who do not hold citizenship, quite often also have insufficient English language skills and therefore they are “stuck” in Estonia (1505).

Lower returns on ethnic capital have made Russian-speaking young people to look for alternatives to increase their income, i.e. working unofficially. Interviewee A says that many of them find employment through their intraethnic network, e.g. in construction or cleaning (72-74). She says that the reasons for such behaviour are their insufficient Estonian language skills and a wish to increase their earnings (115-116). Interviewees from group C also say that based on their experience working unofficially is more common among Russian-speaking young people, because it is difficult for them to find a job due to their insufficient language skills and lower levels of education (1189, 1191, 1192-1193). They give examples of some *Töötukassa*’s customers who have passed courses in beauty services, such as nail technology and cosmetics, and later provide services to their friends or work unofficially in some Russian-speaking salon (1374-1383). Therefore, opting for economic activities within the minority culture is more plausible for Russian-speaking young people who do not have the capacity or means to acquire the necessary cultural capital to enter the labour market outside their internal economic structure.

6.2.3. Aggregated Decision Structures

The choices of migrants (the logic of selection) cannot be illustrated by a single decision structure (the logic of aggregation), because individuals’ choices are multifaceted, comparing to employers’ mainly profit maximising motivations, and are interrelated with domestic transmission of cultural capital and reflect upon the social structures within the region. Therefore, three different decision-structures are considered based on the peculiarities of the observed regions; Ida-Virumaa, Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, Tallinn (Harjumaa).

In Ida-Virumaa, the precondition for segmentation; a sufficient number of persons with the same ethnic background; is satisfied and thus the social utility of segmentation is high. The sufficient number of persons with the same ethnic background facilitates the formation of the internal economic structure within the ethnic community and increases the costs of acquiring assimilative traits. In accordance with Esser (1986), assimilation can only take place if the achievement of economic goals requires the acquisition of assimilative traits.

Because the maintenance of the Russian language in the region is less of an effort than attempts to communicate in the Estonian language, the social utility expectation of segmentation ($p_{gs}U_s$) is correspondingly high. By the same token, in accordance with the theory, ethnic economic opportunities give a positive value to the material utility of segmentation ($p_{gr}U_r$) (2). The opportunities to acquire a higher education are limited in the region and therefore for greater educational advancement one would have to move to another region, the material costs of acquiring a higher education are high. Similarly, as argued by the interviewees, young people are ill-informed of the labour market options and thus acquire an education which they cannot fully translate into the labour market. Therefore, the investment opportunities in human capital, which according to Becker (1962) would increase the utility expectations attached to acquiring assimilative traits, are limited in the region and thus the descendants of Russian-speaking people (and also natives who live in Ida-Virumaa) face the same economic stagnation as their parents. Opting for segmentation has no major social or material costs, whereas acquiring assimilative traits (language, education and citizenship) would result in material costs ($q_{sr}C_r$), albeit no social costs can be recognized (3).

On the other hand, in line with Bourdieu's (1986) arguments, not all people are equally capable of appropriating cultural capital, including language skills; therefore, the choice for segmentation is not necessarily based on the utility expectations, but also on economic and cultural means to acquire cultural capital and on the established behavioural patterns to communicate in the Russian language (informal constraint). In accordance with Esser (1986), without any ethnocentrism and nationalism migrants begin to segment due to the internal economic structure, which encompasses an opportunity to move entirely inside their own ethnic group. As it was recognised from the interviewees' elaborations, and as Esser (1986) argues, interethnic contacts have a high social utility, but material reproduction within the ethnic group is much easier; therefore, the plausible aggregated outcome in Ida-Virumaa is segmentation (4).

$$(2) SEU_g = (p_{gs}U_s + p_{gr}U_r) - (0+0) = p_{gs}U_s + p_{gr}U_r$$

$$(3) SEU_s = (0+0) - (0 + q_{sr}C_r) = - q_{sr}C_r$$

$$(4) SEU_g > SEU_s$$

Ethnic opportunities in Tartumaa&Pärnumaa are limited and therefore the material costs of segmentation are, in general, high ($q_{gr}C_r$). The achievement of economic goals within the two regions, in general, requires changes in orientations (language) and thus in accordance with Esser (1986), the precondition for acquiring assimilative traits is fulfilled. Limited intraethnic economic opportunities, as argued by Esser (1986), increase the material costs of the expected utility of individual segmentation (5). On the other hand, as recognized by the interviewees, transnational ties create opportunities to the maintenance of one's traditional ethnic identity. Therefore, in the context of globalization, the size of an ethnic group should be expanded by taking into consideration the existence of transnational ties, which Esser (1986) does not consider.

As argued by the interviewees, young Russian-speaking people (if they have sufficient knowledge of the Estonian language) have equal or even better opportunities in the labour market comparing to their native peers. Therefore, the expected material utility of acquiring assimilative traits ($p_{sr}U_r$) is high. Low social distance between the natives and Russian-speaking young people raise the value of the expected social utility of acquiring assimilative traits ($p_{ss}U_s$). In contrast to Ida-Virumaa, in Tartumaa&Pärnumaa young people have better opportunities to acquire higher education, which lowers the costs of acquiring assimilative traits and gives a positive value to the expected utility of acquiring assimilative traits (6). Therefore, the value of the aggregated expected utility of assimilation, in general, is higher than that of segmentation (7). On the other hand, those young people who do not have the necessary economic and cultural means to accumulate either embodied and/or institutionalised cultural capital fare much worse in the labour market in Tartumaa&Pärnumaa than young people in Ida-Virumaa and Tallinn, because they do not that many opportunities in the labour market due to the small number of Russian-speaking people within those regions.

$$(5) SEU_g = (0 + 0) - (0 + q_{gr}C_r) = - q_{gr}C_r$$

$$(6) SEU_s = (p_{ss}U_s + p_{sr}U_r) - (0 + 0) = p_{ss}U_s + p_{sr}U_r$$

$$(7) SEU_s > SEU_g$$

In Tallinn, the aggregated decision structure of young Russian-speaking minorities is more ambiguous and depends on various variables. Because there are opportunities for both ethnic organising and interethnic contacts; the aggregated result may take different forms and, more than in other regions, appropriated cultural capital affects the life chances of young Russian speaking people.

On one hand, in accordance with Esser (1986), due to spatial segregation and ethnic organizing, social utility of segmentation encompassing the social recognition of the community is high. Some Russian-speaking young people perceive that they are being discriminated against in the

labour market (an informal constraint), which results in the increase of the expected social utility of segmentation ($p_{gs}U_s$). By the same token, ethnic economic opportunities give a positive value to the expected material utility of segmentation ($p_{gr}U_r$), because in line with Esser (1986), maintenance of one's ethnic identity is less of an effort than a reorientation and attempts to communicate in the Estonian language. The Russian language functions as *de facto* the second language in Tallinn and therefore communicating in their native language has become a habitual pattern for some Russian-speaking people (informal constraint), which is difficult to alter.

In terms of the sufficient number of Russian-speaking people in Tallinn (Harjumaa), in line with Esser (1986), material reproduction within the minority culture is fairly easy, but ethnic capital displays lower efficiency, because the return on ethnic capital is lower, which increases the material costs of individual segmentation ($q_{gr}C_r$), however, no social costs can be recognized. As it occurs from this research, circumventing the system e.g. tax evasion, in order to increase earnings, has become an alternative choice to accumulating cultural capital. For those young people who neither have the necessary means to appropriate cultural capital (including predispositions and economic capital) nor are supported in the acquisition of the capital by their family and community; the only positively valued choice is segmentation (8).

On the other hand, for those young people who have the necessary inherited and acquired properties to accumulate cultural capital, the expected material utility; in regards to the better economic opportunities; to acquire assimilative traits ($p_{sr}U_r$) is high. Similarly, this group is likely to have a positive disposition towards natives and the social utility of assimilation is likely to take a positive value ($p_{ss}U_s$). The social costs have no significant effect on the decision structure, but in regards to the material costs, in line with Esser (1986), restrictive language and citizenship requirements may also have a depressive effect on the material utility of acquiring assimilative traits ($q_{sr}C_r$). Albeit certain costs exist in terms of acquiring Estonian language skills, the utility of assimilation for this group is positively valued (9).

$$(8) SEU_g = (p_{gs}U_s + p_{gr}U_r) - (0 + q_{gr}C_r) = p_{gs}U_s + p_{gr}U - q_{gr}C_r$$

$$(9) SEU_s = (p_{ss}U_s + p_{sr}U_r) - (0 + q_{sr}C_r) = p_{ss}U_s + p_{sr}U_r - q_{sr}C_r$$

In line with Bourdieu (1986), the academic qualification which, in principle, should increase the expected utility of acquiring assimilative traits, may be devaluated in the context of structural changes in the economy and thus albeit many Russian-speaking young people have acquired an education, they cannot fully translate it into the labour market in the context of the current economy. In line with the elaborations of the interviewees' and as argued by Bourdieu (1986), the academic qualification gives a right to access a specific career, however, it is not fully in position to guarantee high positions in the labour market and rather the access is dependent on

the social ties, which facilitate the flow of information in regards to the available positions in the labour market. The interviewees confirm Lin's (1999) arguments that Russian-speaking young people need to access resources beyond their ethnic community to increase the efficacy of their social capital.

Therefore, even if Russian-speaking young people are motivated to acquire assimilative traits, the overall structural outcomes are not only affected by their "rational" situation-logical choices. In accordance with Bourdieu (1986), not all Russian-speaking people have the economic and cultural means of appropriating the objectively available resources for their labour market advancement and therefore the educational system reproduces the system of power relations, because only the culturally privileged young people (who have the necessary economic means) are able to acquire higher education, which would improve their labour market position.

7. Discussion

Development of interethnic relations in Estonia has been rather different comparing to traditional immigration countries, however, just like Blackaby et al. (2005), Demireva&Kesler (2011), Cheung&Heath (2007), Fleischmann and Dronkers (2007) and Fibbi and colleagues (2006) conclude from their studies, young people from ethnic backgrounds face disadvantages in the labour market. In contrast to Lindemann (2009), who considered discrimination by employers as the potential explanation for non-Estonians ethnic penalty in the labour market, this study reveals, that albeit discriminatory practises are not completely absent from the society; they, in general, have no bearing on the labour market acceptance of Russian-speaking young people.

Interviewees (A, B, G) argue that in the first decade of re-independence, ethnocentric antipathies affected employers' choices in terms of offering jobs to Russian-speaking people; however, they believe that such attitudes have declined over the years. All the interviewees believe that, irrespective of their ethnicity, young people have equal opportunities in the labour market, albeit none of the interviewees completely rules out discriminatory practises. Such positive perceptions, however, contradict with the 2008 Integration Monitoring, which revealed that almost a quarter (24%) of the respondents felt that they have been discriminated against on the bases of language or nationality at a workplace. On the other hand, in 2011 only three complaints were filed to the respective ombudsman in regards to discrimination in the labour market on the bases of ethnicity. It should be taken into account that the survey was conducted not much after the 2007 street riots and thus such perceptions may have been the result of interethnic conflict, because in line with constructivism, realities are dependent on the specific constructions of individual persons or groups and therefore produced and revisited through continuous social interaction.

Esser (1986) argues that social utility and costs, in general, do not have a bearing on employers' choices; however, as it occurred from the interviews, the social utility of acceptance may decrease in regards to the reinforcement of the established monolingual (utterly Estonian) work environment, which reinforces the between-group distance. Maintaining the existing monolingual work environment has become a behavioural regularity; which, as discussed in the theory, helps to decrease the level of uncertainty. Such a tendency is likely to prevail only if Russian-speaking young people have not acquired Estonian language skills.

Although some social costs, which are likely to affect the expected utility of acceptance of young Russian-speaking people, can be recognised; the interviewees emphasise that employers are, first and foremost, economically motivated. Employers make their utility-based decisions upon economic calculations and, as the interviewees argue, Russian-speaking young people's

formal qualifications, experience and skills (including Estonian language skills) form a basis of employers' choices in terms of offering or denying of jobs to them. In terms of the labour market acceptance and advancement of Russian-speaking people, all the interviewees consider Estonian language skills to be of utmost importance. In line with human capital theory, it occurred from the interviews that additional expenditures on education and training increase the acceptance of Russian-speaking young people in the labour market. On the other hand, some interviewees (A, B, E, G, I, K) argue that it is not only their human capital, but also cultural capital (e.g. motivation, dispositions), which has an impact on their success in entering the labour market.

As it occurred from the interviews and in line with Esser's theory (1986), the expected utility decisions respond to the overall economic environment, e.g. changes in the business cycle. In the context of economic downturn, the interviewees from Tallinn (Harjumaa) explain that Russian-speaking young people have been less successful in (re-)entering the labour market mainly due to their insufficient knowledge of the Estonian language, but also insufficient skills that do not correspond to the labour market demands; whereas the interviewees from Ida-Virumaa and Tartuma&Pärnumaa do not think that Russian-speaking young people have been more vulnerable to the recession comparing to their native peers. In terms of the attainment of high positions in the labour market, the interviews believe that if Russian-speaking young people have acquired Estonian language skills they do not face any mobility barriers. Those Russian-speaking young people who have insufficient knowledge of the Estonian language, quite often have other education-related problems as well and their labour market mobility is thus impeded. Albeit relaxation of language requirements would, in principle, lead to increased labour market acceptance of those Russian-speaking young people who have not acquired Estonian language skills; their overall labour market advancement would still be impeded by their low education levels and/or lack of skills.

According to statistics, the between-group gap in the unemployment rates increased from 4,9 percentage points in 2008 to 16,2 percentage points in 2011. Such a phenomenon, as argued by the interviewees, accounts for regional disparities, because Ida-Virumaa as an industrial region suffered the most during the recession, which led to the vast increase in the unemployment rate for the people residing in the region. Therefore, given that 80% of the population residing in Ida-Virumaa are non-Estonians (as defined by Statistics Estonia), the between-group differences should decline when controlling for region. By the same token, the unemployment rate for Russian-speaking young people is higher, because many of them, in particularly those who have insufficient knowledge of the official language, were previously employed in economic activities, such as construction and industry, which were more exposed to the recession comparing to other economic activities.

On the other hand, many of the interviewees (A, B, C, D, E, F, H) argue that Russian-speaking people who have sufficient knowledge of both languages, Estonian and Russian, are the most successful candidates in the labour market; because, firstly, many young Estonians have insufficient knowledge of the Russian language and, secondly, of the increasing business opportunities with Russian-speaking countries. Similarly, in accordance with Esser (1986), it occurs that in segments of the labour market from which natives have withdrawn or in which there is a demand for labour, the expected utility of acceptance is extremely high. Therefore, as it was also outlined in the theory, changes in the business cycle and labour market segments have a direct impact on the labour market acceptance of young Russian-speaking people.

In addition to the general economic and social situation, which forms the central situational element on which the employers' utility-based choices depend; in the light of this research, the individual characteristics of Russian-speaking young people, including the appropriation of cultural capital, affect the competitiveness and thus the acceptance of young Russian-speaking people in the labour market.

In terms of Russian-speaking young people's choices, the sufficient number of persons with the Russian background within a region strongly affects their logic of selection. Albeit interethnic contacts have a high social utility for young Russian-speaking people, material reproduction within the ethnic culture is easier. On the other hand, embeddedness in intraethnic networks lowers the returns on social capital in terms of utilising social ties and networks to access high positions in the labour market. In Ida-Virumaa and in Tallinn, the large ethnic community facilitates internal economic opportunities within the ethnic culture, whereas in Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, ethnic organizing is almost impossible due to the small number of Russian-speaking people.

As it occurred from the interviews, not all Russian-speaking people have opted for an internal career within the ethnic culture. The differences in their choices account for the different capacities, both inherited and acquired, to accumulate cultural capital. In Ida-Virumaa, reinforcing the internal economic structure is much easier than attempts to acquire cultural capital. The education system facilitates ethnic inequalities, because the opportunities to acquire higher education within the region are low and those young people, who do not have sufficient economic means to move to regions where they can acquire higher education, face the same economic stagnation as their parents. On the other hand, as argued in the theory, cultural capital cannot be accumulated beyond the appropriating biological capacities of young people, because not all people are equally successful in learning languages.

In contrast, in Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, appropriation of cultural capital is much easier due to the interethnic relationships, which increase the utility of acquiring assimilative traits. On the other hand, those young people who do not have familiarity with the dominant culture fare much

worse in the labour market than their peers in Ida-Virumaa, because of the limited intraethnic economic opportunities. As it occurred from the interviews, ethnic organizing can be expanded by utilising transnational contacts. Therefore, it is not only the ethnic group size within a particular region, but the availability of networks in general, which facilitates the formation of the internal economic structure within the ethnic culture.

In Tallinn, the number of persons with the same ethnic background is sufficient to facilitate both ethnic organizing and interethnic contact and therefore the social mobility of Russian-speaking young people depends, by and large, on their possession of cultural and social capital. On one hand, the maintenance of one's ethnic identity is less of an effort than a reorientation and attempts to acquire Estonian language skills. On the other hand, the returns on ethnic capital are lower, because the knowledge of the Estonian language, as strongly emphasised by the interviewees, is a precondition for Russian-speaking young people's labour market advancement. Therefore, some Russian-speaking young people seek alternatives, e.g. unofficial work, to increase their earnings without making further efforts to invest in their human capital.

In line with Bourdieu (1986), parents and community create dispositions through domestic education by either supporting or disapproving the appropriation of linguistic and cultural competence, which later determine young people's success in accumulating cultural capital through pedagogic action. As it occurred from the interviews, the dispositions to acquire embodied cultural capital that account for the lower educational achievements of some young Russian-speaking people, are intertwined with behavioural regularities. Functioning of the Russian language *de facto* as the second language compounded by spatial segregation has created a behavioural pattern (informal constraint) for Russian-speaking people to communicate in the Russian language. The habitual patterns of obtaining education in the Russian language and being able to communicate in their native language in almost all spheres of life have become behavioural regularities for some Russian-speaking people, which help to establish "respective activity scripts" for them and thus are difficult to alter by the normative language requirements, in particular, if young people are not supported by their family and community in acquisition of Estonian language skills. The social mobility of Russian-speaking people, however, is dependent on their language skills, because the Language Act stipulates the Estonian language proficiency as a precondition for the attainment of high positions in the public sector. The interviewees, in general, do not think that language requirements affect the labour market mobility of Russian-speaking young people; which is plausible, because they formal position in *Töötukassa* presupposes embeddedness in the system; however, insufficient knowledge of the Estonian language, as it occurs from the interviews, impedes the labour market acceptance of those young people who have not acquired Estonian language skills.

The interviewees who themselves went to Russian-speaking schools argue that it is a myth that schools do not provide young people with the necessary support for the language acquisition. Bourdieu (1986) also argues that pedagogic action provides training, which can be acquired only by those who have the necessary predispositions to accumulate cultural capital. Many of the interviewees emphasise that young people are quite often not willing to make an effort to improve their qualifications; in accordance with the theory, the acquisition of cultural capital, however, is a self-improvement that presupposes investments in time by the Russian-speaking young people themselves.

As it occurred from the interviews and is explained by Bourdieu (1986), education is not fully in position of guaranteeing access to the labour market. Firstly, the yield from education depends on its scarcity and utility in the labour market, but also on the status of the academic institution it is acquired from. Those Russian-speaking young people, who have acquired education from academic institutions that are not valued by employers or have acquired a degree there is a low demand for, are not able to translate their academic qualifications into the labour market without further training or retraining, in particular, in the context of the recession. Secondly, the yield from academic capital for Russian-speaking people depends on the resourcefulness of their social capital; in other words, on the availability of social ties and network, beyond the ethnic community, they can mobilize. The interviewees emphasised that young Russian-speaking people who have acquaintances among natives have better opportunities in finding employment, just as argued by Lin (1999).

Therefore, the logic of selection of young Russian-speaking people in terms of acquiring assimilative traits or reinforcing intraethnic relationships is strongly interrelated with concealed aspects of cultural capital, social capital and behavioural regularities. Albeit in regards to the young people's choices, certain outcomes can be recognized across regions, their motivations are much difficult to map than those of employers, whose logic of selection is, in general, transparent and, first and foremost, related to economic aspirations. The decision structures of Russian-speaking young people should therefore be approached from the micro level. This research, albeit not providing insight into the social processes at the micro level, enables to outline the logic of aggregation in regards to the structural outcomes of social processes.

Ethnic inequality and ethnic differentiation are the prevailing outcomes of migrant adaptation process in Estonia. In terms of Park's race relations cycle, Estonia has reached a phase in which structures, such as spatial segregation and occupational insulation reinforce themselves, albeit without discrimination on behalf of natives. Although ethnocentric antipathies are not completely absent, none of the interviewees believes that they have a significant impact on the life chances of Russian-speaking young people. On the other hand, albeit the attitudes of employers seem to have changed, some Russian-speaking people still strongly feel that they are

being discriminated against in the labour market; such perceptions, however, may foster ethnic organizing, in particular, because of the restrictive language requirements. Nonetheless, further studies should be conducted at the micro level to make such inferences.

As it occurred from this research, ethnic differentiation maintains itself mainly because of the large ethnic community; and partly because of social distances, which have not completely disappeared. The large ethnic community, however, creates opportunities for Russian-speaking young people to move entirely inside the Russian-speaking community. Assimilation in terms of increasing similarity in the distribution of certain characteristics, e.g. disappearance of ethnic differences in education, occupation and income; presupposes the acquisition of Estonian language skills, which not all Russian-speaking people are equally capable and motivated to acquire and for them material reproduction within the ethnic culture is of more utility. The result is that Estonia is divided into two linguistically different societies, which foster ethnic organizing and reinforce ethnic inequalities in the labour market.

The results of this research confirm what Esser (1986, 2004) emphasises, namely, that an important element of migrant adaptation is the ethnic group size, which determines, *ceteris paribus*, the structural outcomes. In Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, where the Russian-speaking community is small, the between-group differences in occupational attainment have, in general, disappeared and ethnic institutionalization has started to dissolve. On the other hand, in Tallinn, where the ethnic community is large, ethnic inequality and ethnic differentiation are the structural outcomes of societal processes. By the same token, social distance in Tallinn (Harjumaa) seems to be much higher than that perceived in other regions. Ida-Virumaa, however, stands out as a deviant case, in which natives are in minority and thus, quite often, they need to acquire Russian language skills to find employment within the region. Similarly to Tartumaa&Pärnumaa, in Ida-Virumaa social distances are perceived to be low and ethnocentric antipathies absent.

In terms of the 'race relations cycle', it is difficult to predict, whether ethnic differences in the labour market will eventually disappear. Albeit social distance and prejudice have ameliorated over the years, the system; which is not sufficient to facilitate the social mobility of those young people who do not possess cultural capital of the dominant culture; reinforces ethnic inequalities in the society.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to explore why Russian-speaking young people, albeit educated and raised in Estonia, experience more difficulties in entering the labour market comparing to their native peers. To investigate this phenomenon, expert group interviews with *Töötukassa's* (job centre) employers were conducted as the method enabled to get insight into aggregated knowledge in regards to choices of both groups.

Firstly, it can be concluded from this research that native employers are, first and foremost, economically motivated and their choices reflect upon the economic situation. Ethnocentric antipathies are not completely absent from the society; however, they seem not to affect the chances of Russian-speaking young people in the labour market. Social distance, in regards to attitudes, between Estonians and Russian-speaking people has decreased over the years and, in general, has no bearing on the labour market acceptance of young Russian-speaking people. On the other hand, the linguistically divided spheres of society compounded by spatial segregation, which are taken for granted structures, shape the daily living of individuals and reinforce the distance between Estonians and Russian-speaking people. As it occurred from this research, the most important element for the labour market acceptance of young Russian-speaking people in Estonia is their knowledge of the Estonian language, but also their possession of human and cultural capital. The institutionalized language requirements therefore form a common frame of reference for the employers' choices.

Secondly, it was revealed that the choices of young Russian-speaking people are not merely utility-based, but reflect upon the appropriation of cultural capital and the established habitual behaviour. Those Russian-speaking young people who have the necessary inherited and acquired properties to accumulate cultural capital, are likely to acquire Estonian language skills and to advance in the labour market, whereas those young people who neither possess the necessary means to acquire cultural capital nor are supported through the domestic transmission of linguistic and cultural competencies, are likely to experience economic stagnation.

Many regression analyses indicate that when controlling for education, the labour market position of second generation immigrants is lower than that of natives and therefore implications of labour market discrimination are made. This research, however, reveals that an academic qualification; which, in principle, should facilitate labour market mobility of Russian-speaking young people, is not fully in position of guaranteeing access to the labour market, because the academic qualification may be devaluated in regards to structural changes in the economy and it has a relative dependence on its bearer and the reputation of the institution it was acquired from. Social networks and ties back up the academic qualification, however, if the Russian-speaking young people's networks are restricted to the Russian-speaking community,

they are likely to reinforce the interethnic relationships and opt for a career within the ethnic culture, which impedes their social mobility.

It can be concluded that regional disparities implicitly shape the choices of Russian-speaking young people. In regions where the ethnic community is small, the utility to acquire assimilative traits is high, which facilitates the labour market mobility of Russian-speaking young people; whereas in regions where the ethnic community is large, albeit interethnic contacts have a high social utility, material reproduction within the Russian-speaking community is less of an effort than attempts to acquire Estonian language skills. As it occurred from the interviews, ethnic networks cannot be restricted to the country of settlement, because transnational networks enlarge the opportunities for ethnic organizing. On the other hand, ethnic capital displays lower efficiency and to increase their earnings some young people have chosen alternative paths, e.g. unofficial work.

Thirdly, the structural outcomes of Russian-speaking people's adaptation in Estonia differ across regions; however, the prevailing structural outcomes are ethnic inequality (the persistence of the between-group differences in education and employment) and ethnic differentiation (the existence of two ethno-linguistically different societies).

The main conclusion of this research is that, in Estonia, ethnic differentiation and inequalities are not maintained through discriminatory practises, but these structural outcomes are reinforced through the system, which impedes the labour market access and/or mobility of those Russian-speaking young people who do not possess the inherited and acquired properties to accumulate cultural and social capital of the dominant culture to the same extent as those culturally privileged. This research was concerned with providing general explanations to understand why Russian-speaking young people have been less successful in entering the labour market; however, further research should be conducted to scrutinize how the system impedes the social mobility of Russian-speaking young people.

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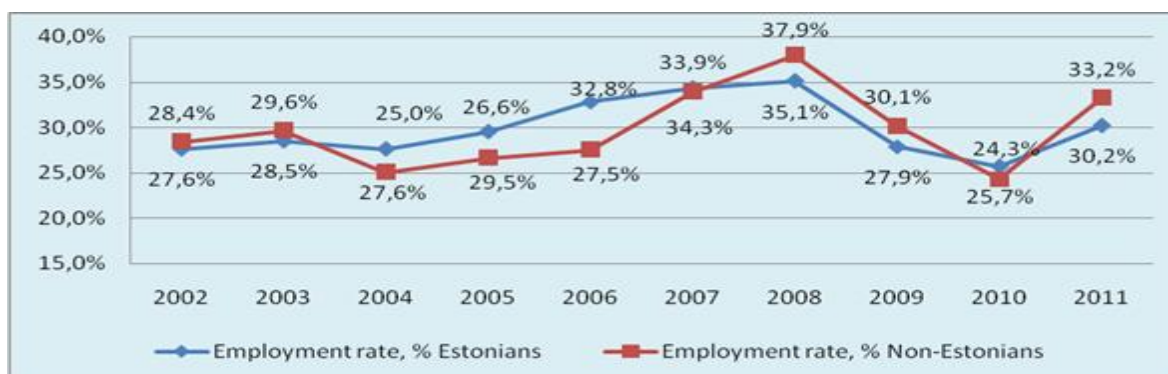
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Appendix A – A Statistical Analysis

The aim of this chapter is to, firstly, determine the labour market participation of 15-24-year-old Estonians and non-Estonians by analysing the ethnic differences in employment and the unemployment rate over the last 10 years. Although participation rate is also quite often included in the labour market analysis, given that persons belonging to the population group under this study are relatively young and many of them are still in education, it is insignificant to analyse participation rate as an indicator to make inferences about non-Estonians' labour market position. Secondly, the aim of this subchapter is to determine the overall socioeconomic position of non-Estonians in the labour market comparing to that of Estonians by analysing employment in industries, educational achievements, the return on education and income quintile. That, in turn, gives a general background of the obstacles young non-Estonians may experience in the labour market.

In this research employment rate stands for the population group composed of 15 to 24-year-old Estonians and non-Estonians who are in employment. Given that many of the persons belonging to this population group are still in education, the low employment rate is quite normal, however, the between-group variance is of greater relevance. Figure 1 illustrates that in the context of excessive economic growth, that in 2004-2007, the employment rate for Estonians was higher, reaching to a difference of 5,3 percentage points (hereinafter pp) in 2006, whereas the employment rate for Russians surpassed that of the Estonians in 2007 and remained higher during the recession. The between-group differences have been modest over the years, however, fluctuations in the employment rate have been more extensive among non-Estonians.

Figure 1: Employment rates among 15-24-year-old ethnic non-Estonians and Estonians, 2001-2010 (ELFS⁵)



⁵ Estonian Labour Force Survey (hereinafter ELFS) has been carried out from 2001 onwards and the distinction between population groups is made upon ethnicity; Estonians and non-Estonians (mainly Russian-speaking people).

Table 1 gives an overview of the industries in which both Estonians and non-Estonians are engaged. Although this research is concerned with young Russian-speaking people, given that many of them are still in education, I aim to look the between-group structural differences in employment among the whole working-age population, as it gives a better background of the possible labour market opportunities for young ethnic minorities. I also aim to look at the development over the sequence of years, namely, if the “immigrant economy” has changed after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

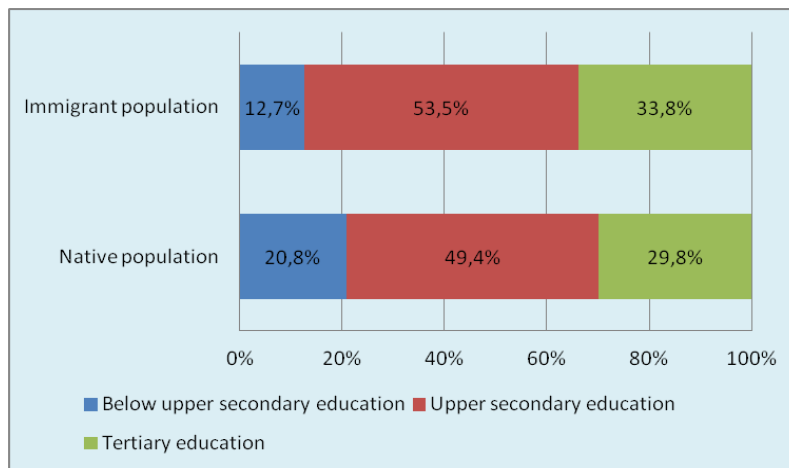
Table 1: 15-74-year-old ethnic non-Estonians and Estonians in employment by industry, 2011 (ELFS)

Industry	1989		2011	
	Non-Estonians	Estonians	Non-Estonians	Estonians
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	7,6%	27,9%	0,9%	6,0%
Mining and quarrying	3,1%	..	2,0%	0,6%
Manufacturing	37,7%	19,1%	25,9%	17,2%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	2,3%	1,2%	2,8%	0,7%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0,6%
Construction	7,4%	8,6%	8,4%	10,3%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	6,1%	8,0%	13,6%	13,3%
Transportation and storage	10,4%	5,7%	10,5%	6,8%
Accommodation and food service activities	2,7%	2,3%	3,6%	3,0%
Information and communication	1,2%	1,4%	1,3%	3,4%
Financial and insurance activities	2,1%	1,5%
Real estate activities	1,2%	0,6%	2,7%	1,2%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	1,6%	2,9%	2,4%	4,5%
Administrative and support service activities	..	0,5%	4,1%	2,2%
Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	4,3%	3,2%	2,4%	8,5%
Education	6,5%	9,1%	6,9%	10,5%
Human health and social work activities	3,5%	4,4%	6,8%	5,4%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1,0%	1,8%	1,5%	2,7%
Other activities	1,5%	2,2%	1,7%	1,7%

The main industry where non-Estonians are employed in has remained the same over the years; that is, manufacturing. In terms of Estonians, structural changes in economy have resulted in the decline of agriculture and similarly to non-Estonians, manufacturing is the leading industry where Estonians are employed in. However, when in 1989 the proportional difference between non-Estonians and Estonians employed in manufacturing was 18,6 pp, the respective difference in 2011 was 8,7 pp, which indicates the fusion of employment opportunities across ethnicities. Employment in public administration, however, is less accessible to ethnic minorities than it was during the Soviet Union when non-Estonians belonged to the politically dominant group - in 2011, non-Estonians employment in public administration was 2,4% comparing to 8,5% of Estonians. That, however, impedes the occupational mobility of ethnic minorities and makes them trapped in the “immigrant sectors”, which in turn may affect the opportunities for young ethnic minorities.

Educational achievements should, by and large, facilitate occupational mobility for ethnic minorities to the mainstream labour market. Figure 2 illustrates that immigrant population is better educated than natives and the proportion of those who have obtained upper secondary and tertiary education is bigger among immigrant population, 4,1 pp and 4,0 pp respectively. The share of those with below upper secondary education, however, is bigger among native population, 8,1 pp.

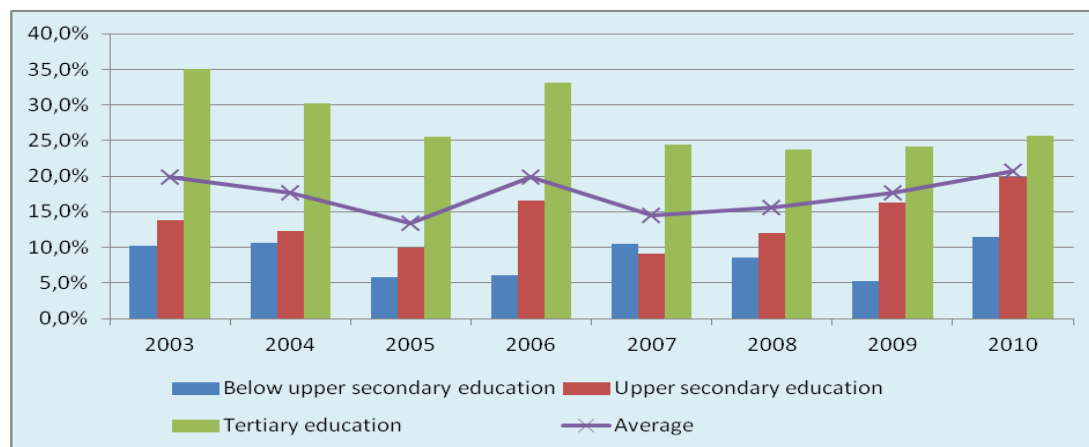
Figure 2: Educational level among 15-74-year-old immigrant and native population, 2011 (IPS⁶)



Although immigrant population is better educated, the return on education in terms of income raises a concern, as those who have obtained tertiary education cannot translate their qualifications into high-status jobs to the same extent as Estonians (figure 3). The recent (2011) integration monitoring reveals that highly educated unemployed Russian-speaking respondents are much more pessimistic in evaluating their opportunities to find employment (Nurmela&Kriger 2011: 95). Therefore, ethnic minorities themselves perceive that their opportunities are lower in comparison with their Estonian peers.

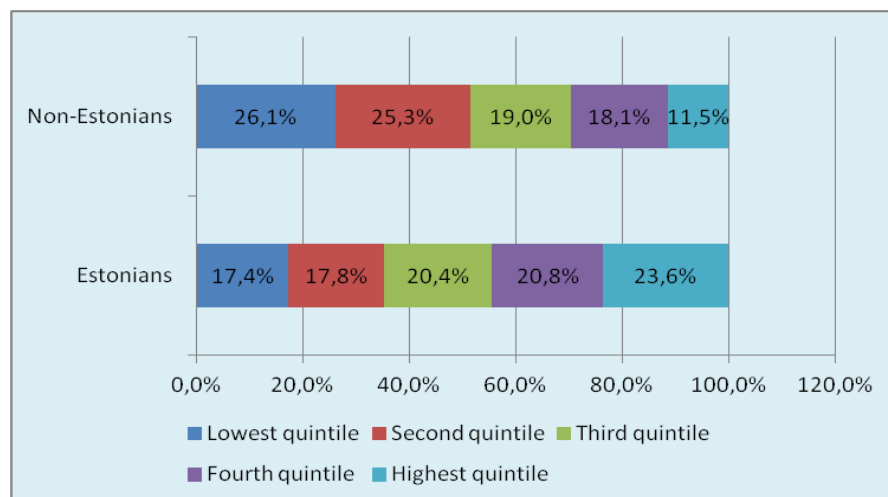
⁶ Immigrant Population Survey (hereinafter IPS) has been carried out from 2008 onwards. Immigrant population is defined as people living in Estonia whose both parents were born abroad.

Figure 3: Difference between Estonians and non-Estonians in equalised yearly disposable income of persons aged 16 and over by educational level, 2003-2010 (ELFS) (own calculations)



Taking into account the previous elaborations, it is not surprising that Estonians are better off socioeconomically. Figure 4 illustrates that Estonians are dominant at the higher end of the income spectrum, namely, the fifth quintile, which stands for the share of those receiving the highest income. Almost half of the Estonian population (44,4%) receive an income above that of average (fourth and fifth quintile) comparing to 29,6% of non-Estonians, whereas half of the non-Estonians (51,4%) receive an income below that of average (first and second quintile) comparing to 35,2% of non-Estonians. That implies the existing ethnic differences within the society.

Figure 4: Income quintile among Estonians and non-Estonians, 2010 (ELFS)



Unemployment rate stands for the proportion of unemployed persons from a particular population group relative to the labour force (the sum of unemployed and employed people). High unemployment among young people has always been a concern, because due to the lack

of skills and education they are less compatible in the labour market. If to look at ethnic differences in unemployment (figure 5), the divergence is striking. The between-group difference was on its peak in 2011 (19,9 pp). The subsequent economic growth somewhat decreased the unemployment gap between Estonians and non-Estonians to 4,9 pp in 2008, however, in the light of the recession the gap increased to 16,2 pp.

Figure 5: Unemployment rates among 15-24-year-old ethnic non-Estonians and Estonians, 2002-2011 (ELFS)

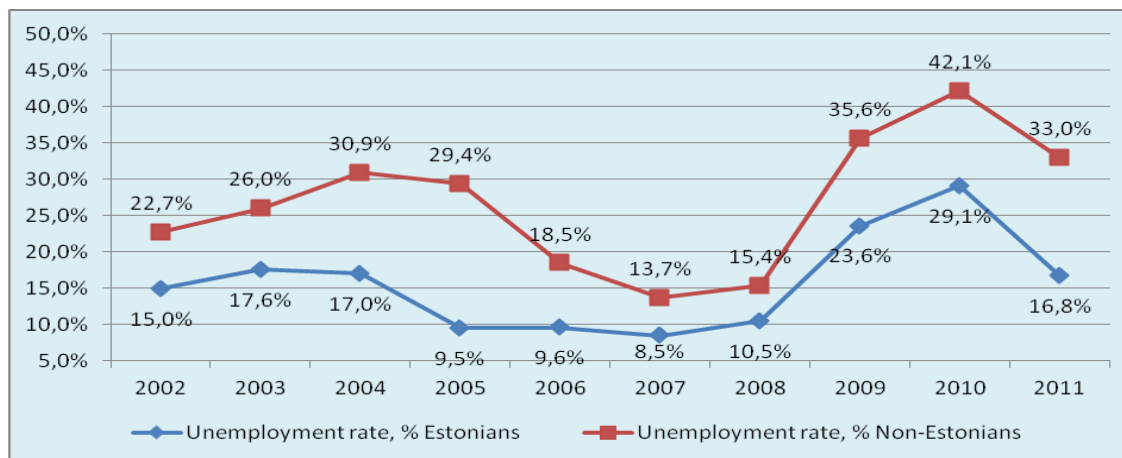
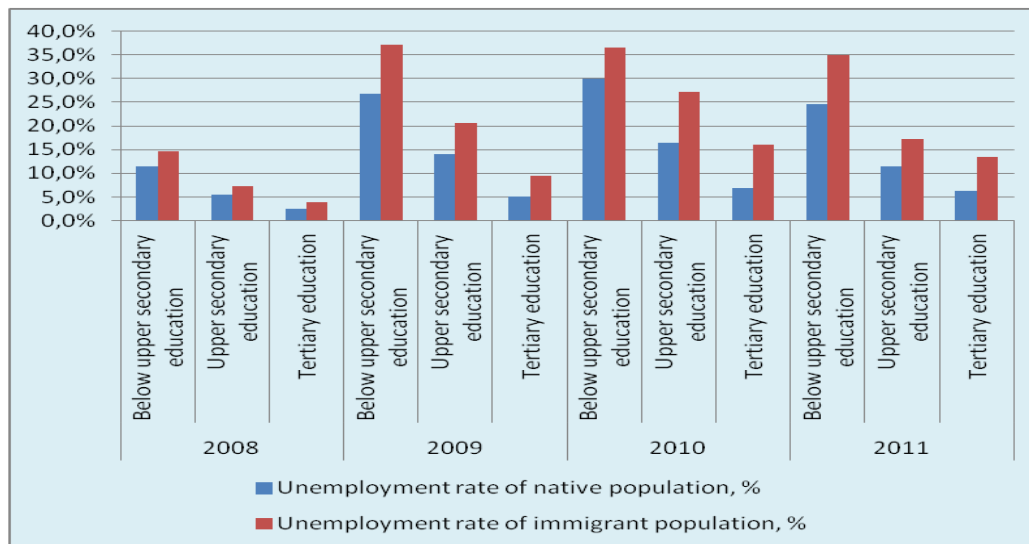


Figure 6 illustrates that albeit ethnic minorities with tertiary education may face a ceiling effect in reaching the most desirable positions in the labour market, they are still less exposed to unemployment. If to analyse ethnic differences, patterns are less unambiguous. In the peak of the recession, in 2010, the unemployment gap between natives and immigrant population was bigger among those holding tertiary educational credentials than among those with below upper secondary education, 9,3 pp and 6,6 pp, respectively. Similarly, in 2010, the between-group difference was the biggest among those with upper secondary education, 10,7 pp. That anomaly can be perceived only in 2010, whereas in the preceding and succeeding year(s), the between-group differences in terms of unemployment are higher among those with below upper secondary education and decline with the attainment of higher education.

Figure 6: Unemployment rates among native and immigrant population by education, 2008-2011 (IPS)



In terms of labour market opportunities, integration monitoring (2008) revealed that almost a quarter (24%) of the respondents felt that they have been discriminated against on the bases of language or nationality at a work place, however, in 2011 only three complaints were filed with regard to discrimination, to the respective ombudsman, in the labour market on the bases of nationality. The first provision of the Equal Treatment Act highlights that no one shall be discriminated against on the grounds of nationality, race, colour, origin, religion, political or other opinion, property or social status, there is no legal rule which says that discrimination based on citizenship is prohibited (Tavits 2009). The principle of equal treatment is adopted in Wage Act §5 and in Employment Contracts Act §10, which forbid any discrimination based on nationality.

The main conclusions that should be drawn from this analysis are that even though education is an important predictor of ethnic minorities' labour market outcomes, highly educated minorities are not able to translate their qualifications into high-status jobs to the same extent as natives. The analysis also demonstrates that ethnic minorities are more vulnerable to exogenous labour market changes, e.g. the recession.

Appendix B – Interview Guide

Background Information

Age

Ethnicity

Position in *Töötukassa*

How long have you been working in *Töötukassa*?

Previous job experience

1. Russian-speaking young people

1. According to Statistics Estonia the unemployment rate was 16,2 pp higher among 15-24 old young non-Estonians relative to Estonian peers? Why do you think the unemployment rate for non-Estonians is higher?
2. Are the labour market opportunities for young Russian-speaking people related to their socioeconomic background? Please elaborate!
3. Are the labour market opportunities for young Russian-speaking people related to the support they receive from their family and ethnic community? Please elaborate!
4. Do Russian-speaking young people prefer to study (work) in their native language? Please elaborate!
5. Are Russian-speaking young people motivated to acquire Estonian language skills? Please elaborate!
6. What do you consider to be the main hindrances for young Russian-speaking people to acquire Estonian language skills?
7. Some Russians-speaking young people have acquired the Estonian language others have not, why do you think that is?
8. Do they recognize that their opportunities in the labour market would improve if they would acquire Estonian language skills? Please elaborate!
9. How common is working unofficially among Russian-speaking young people? Are there any differences comparing to Estonians?
10. Do employers in Estonia tend to use formal or informal channels to fill high positions in the labour market?
11. How does it affect the opportunities for young Russian-speaking people to find employment in primary sector?
12. How much are the labour market opportunities for young Russian-speaking people related to the resourcefulness of their social networks?

13. How well informed Russian-speaking young people are of the labour market (condition) opportunities?

2. Employers

14. What are the main qualifications that employers consider when looking for an employee?
15. Many researches in Estonia reveal that when controlling for education and language skills the position of non-Estonians is lower in the labour market. What do you think are the reasons for that?
16. If Russian-speaking young people have acquired the Estonian language skills, do they have equal opportunities in the labour market? Please elaborate!
17. Do you think employers may have prejudice against Russians because of the history? In other words, does history still matter? Please elaborate
18. Do you think employers have adopted the principle of equal treatment also in recruitment? Please elaborate!
19. In (your region) have the Russian-speaking people been more vulnerable to the recession comparing to their Estonian peers? If yes, then why is that?
20. Do you think Russian-speaking young people have equal opportunities for the attainment of high positions in public service? (2) In private sector?
21. What is the labour market outlook of a young Russian-speaking person who has insufficient knowledge of the Estonian language?

3. Integration

22. Are there any differences between the expectations of young Estonian and Russian-speaking people who are registered in *Töötukassa*?
23. Do Russian speaking young people find placements mainly in Estonian- or Russian-speaking enterprises? Why that is?
24. Do employers show initiative for conducting integrated language courses?
25. Based on your experience, do Russian-speaking young people find a job that matches their education?
26. Do you think something should be changed or improved in the practise of *Töötukassa* to better help Russian speaking young people?
27. Do you think language requirements in Estonia are justified in relation to labour market opportunities for Russian-speaking people? Please elaborate!
28. Do you think naturalization requirements in Estonia are justified in relation to labour market opportunities for Russian-speaking people? Please elaborate!
29. Should something be changed in Estonian integration policy or paid more attention to better help Russian-speaking young people?

Appendix C – A List of the Experts

Group/Region	Interviewee	Ethnicity	Age	Position in <i>Töötukassa</i>	Years in <i>Töötukassa</i>	Previous work experience
Tallinn (Harjumaa)	A	Estonian	35	Senior consultant	2 years	Personnel management
Tallinn (Harjumaa)	B	Estonian	56	Service consultant (employers services)	3 years	Ministry of Agriculture (During the Soviet Union)
A ⁷ Ida-Virumaa	C	Russian	X	Case worker	X	X
	D	Russian	X	Case worker	X	X
	E	Estonian	X	Job mediating consultant	X	X
B Tartumaa	F	Russian	31	Service consultant	3 years	Tourism
	G	Russian	34	Career counsellor	2 months	Career counsellor at Russian-speaking school
C Tallinn (Harjumaa)	H	Russian	26	Case worker	2 years	Job mediating consultant
	I	Estonian	24	Job mediating consultant	1 year	Customer Service
	J	Estonian	23	Job mediating consultant	3 months	Customer Service
D Pärnumaa	K	Estonian	49	Case worker	9 years	Customer Service
	L	Estonian	33	Bureau Manager	10 years	Customer Service
	M	Russian	52	Job mediating consultant	8 years	Accountant
	N	Estonian	56	Case worker	6 years	Accountant

⁷ Interviews from group A did not feel comfortable with giving personal data.

Appendix D – Transcripts of the Interviews

Transcripts have been stored on the attached CD-ROM.