



ABSTRACTS IN ENGLISH

Part 1

1.1 Latvian supplementary schools in the United States of America and Canada

Ilze Garoza, Laura Bužinska

The Latvian supplementary schools that were founded in North America by Latvian displaced persons after World War II have played a pivotal role in preserving the Latvian language and culture in the United States and Canada for more than six decades. They represent an example of the Latvian émigré community's determination and dedication to passing on the Latvian heritage to the next generations in spite of the surrounding forces of assimilation. Even though the number of pupils at the Latvian schools has shrunk significantly over the course of several decades, there are still around 700 descendants of ethnic Latvians in North America who attend these schools on Saturdays and Sundays. The aim of this article is to provide a brief insight in the history of the Latvian supplementary schools in North America and outline some of the challenges faced by these schools today – more than 60 years after their establishment. The publication builds on interdisciplinary research conducted at the Latvian supplementary schools in the U.S. between 2009 and 2011, and follow-up surveys and interviews with school principals, teachers and parents in the U.S. and Canada in 2014 and 2015.

1.2 Latvian diaspora schools in Australia: a comparison of two waves of immigration

Daina Grosa

A qualitative study of the Melbourne Latvian Saturday School in the form of interviews with four parents whose children attend the school, two of whom are recent émigrés from Latvia, the other two – second generation Latvians, whose parents emigrated to Australia in the 1950s. The study aims to compare and contrast the motivation of various waves of Australian-Latvian émigrés for enrolling their children in the Saturday School and to test if the „core value

theory” still applies to the Latvian community. Previous studies of the Australian Latvian community have found that language maintenance has been for various generations the „core value” keeping the community alive and providing the impetus for perpetuating the community from one generation the next. A new wave of emigrants from Latvia in the past 10 years has brought new blood to a school mostly composed of Australian-born second-generation Latvian parents enrolling the third generation at the school. Is there a „clash of cultures” evident and if so, can this be remedied? The interviews bring out the complex nature of parents’ motivation for keeping alive a culture that is their heritage, but in its natural state exists on the other side of the world.

1.3 The education of Latvian children in the United Kingdom, 1950–2015

Inese Auziņa-Smita

In small numbers Latvians have long lived in Great Britain, gathering mainly around the Latvian Legation in London. After World War II their numbers increased to an estimated 12,000, who were recruited through different British government initiatives to replace the post-war depleted labour force. They quickly formed organizations, and the Latvian community was particularly concerned that their children and young people should not forget their native language and the history of their country, so the first Latvian mother-tongue school was already set up in 1948. Coordination of Latvian educational activities was undertaken by the Latvian National Council in Great Britain (LNC – est. 1950). The LNC also organized teachers’ meetings and conferences, children’s summer camps, children’s festival days, language and literature competitions, as well as Latvian language and literature courses and seminars for young people. After Latvia regained its independence in 1991, and particularly after joining the European Union in 2004, increasing numbers of Latvians came to the United Kingdom. In 2015 their number in the UK is estimated at about 100,000. As a result, new Latvian societies and schools were established (now 24); teachers’ conferences, children’s festivals and summer camps have been organized.

1.4 The establishment and development of Latvian diaspora schools in Europe

Elza Ungure

The Latvian diaspora schools in Europe have a long-standing history and traditions. A large number of diaspora schools were established during World War II and in the post-war period in transit locations and final destinations for

refugees. The greatest concentration of diaspora following World War II was in Europe – in Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, therefore these countries also had the largest number of diaspora schools. With the increased freedom of movement after Latvia regained independence and joined the European Union and the Schengen Zone, there was a rapid increase of the number of Latvian diaspora schools in Europe. The total number of Latvian diaspora schools operating in Europe currently is approximately 52, which constitutes about half of the total number of Latvian diaspora schools globally. The staff of the diaspora schools has a positive and enthusiastic outlook and see the work invested in the running of diaspora schools as meaningful. However, to retain this enthusiasm and optimism, as well as the wish to be engaged in schools in the longer term, the school staff require support and appreciation of their work. This would serve as an impetus for further activities and would promote the development and improvement of diaspora schools, making their activities more purposeful and effective, thus increasing the attractiveness of schools in the eyes of teachers and parents, as well as the children and adolescents themselves. Diaspora schools operate as an intermediary between Latvia and the diaspora, creating and maintaining the diaspora's interest in Latvia and giving the possibility for the diaspora to create a uniform community both within the framework of European states and cities they reside in, but also – in general, through the awareness of oneself as part of the Latvian nation.

1.5 Latvian diaspora in Brazil

Arta Mellepe

Latvians arrived in Brazil from the late 19th century onwards. At that time, like the expanses of Siberia, the virgin forests of Brazil attracted people from all over the world, who wanted to work and farm the land. It is estimated that about 20,000 descendants of Latvian origin live in Brazil. In studying materials about Brazil's Latvians, the author has concluded that, as in other countries, Latvians have established their communities and organizations, but that due to the great expanses and geographical conditions, enduring social bodies, which would unite multitudes of Latvians, regardless of their denomination, in even a single city, have not established themselves. However, modern technological capabilities and the speed of information circulation have enabled many third or even fourth generation compatriots to take a more extensive interest in Latvia. This has attracted the interest of many, which explains why there is a Latvian cultural centre in the city of Izui and why a Latvian weekend school operates in the city of Nova Odessa where descendants of Latvians regularly learn the Latvian language.

1.6 The establishment and development of diaspora and schools: Russia

Arta Mellupe

Latvians living in Russia can also be divided according to the period of their arrival there: there are Old Latvians, Latvians who were victims of Soviet repression and their descendants, as well as those who emigrated there of their own free will during the Soviet era. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, in cities (Moscow, Krasnoyarsk, Omsk) and villages (Augšbebri and Kurzemes Ozolaine in Omsk and M. Gorky's village in Bashkortostan), where the descendants of Latvians and Latgalians live compactly or in greater numbers, Latvian organisations have functioned, ensuring that even today Latvian language and culture live on. Latvian activities in Old Latvian villages differ from the activities of societies in cities, because for the former these still embody their everyday lives and lifestyle, whereas urban residents have to maintain Latvian traditions in a multi-cultural environment. Every year, there is a growing interest in Latvian culture among children and adults, but this interest does not extend to Latvian language lessons. This article also looks at importance of the Latvian Education Mission in Russia. The language teacher work can be seen also as an important role in preserving Latvian identity and strengthening the relationship with Latvia.

1.7 Parents, children and schools: a view of former students in diaspora schools

Daina Grosa

This study is based on a survey comprising the worldwide Latvian community, so as to get an insight into the views of former students regarding their time spent at Latvian school every weekend throughout their childhood. 344 former students, who had attended school between 1950 and 1990, responded and shared their thoughts. The majority of responses were positive, commending not only the schools but also extra-curricular activities and summer programs for contributing to instilling in them a deep feeling of Latvian identity, national pride, a sense of belonging to the Latvian community and for helping to learn the language, as well providing knowledge on their heritage.

The responses were former students' candid accounts of their time spent at these educational institutions, run by motivated and highly focused volunteers.

When reflecting on their childhood, many former students admit that the main source of Latvian language input as well as their sense of national pride was formed in the home environment, and schools only supplemented what had been acquired at home and provided a wider community with other children raised with the same language and culture. This sense of community and belonging was often mentioned as the school's (and the activities offered by the wider Latvian community) major achievement.

Part 2

2.1 The theoretical and practical aspects in language acquisition: research based perspective

Ieva Margeviča-Grinberga

A number of theoretical and practical aspects in the acquisition of various languages have been examined from the perspective of different branches of science, as well as the significance of language proficiency in the successful integration into the host country community. The article also provides an insight into the findings of previous and recent studies of the impact of bilingualism upon processes of cognition and language acquisition in early childhood. A special focus is placed on the findings of interdisciplinary studies about the positive impact of acquisition of several languages upon a person's creativity and health status. The article highlights the plurilingual approach to the process of language acquisition that is reflected in the education and language policy of the European Union. The article also describes a case where a plurilingual approach applies.

2.2 Education needs for diaspora children and youth

Ieva Vaickovska, Arta Mellupe

It is beneficial for diaspora children to learn the Latvian language. Currently, regular language lessons are organized by Latvian diaspora weekend schools. The Latvian government liaises with and supports these schools via the Latvian Language Agency in collaboration with diaspora organisations. Children in diaspora should learn not only the Latvian language, but also the history, geography, and culture of Latvia; for this reason summer schools, camps and other cultural events are organized in Latvia and abroad. Since many children cannot attend diaspora weekend schools, there is great need for special distance learning program on the Internet. Virtual studies could give the opportunity to learn Latvian language, history, geography and culture wherever the children may reside. Every child in the diaspora is welcome back in Latvia and therefore return migration should be an easy and smooth process. The recognition of diplomas from elementary and secondary schools all over the world is imperative. Special support should be provided to children who return and start attending school.

2.3 Children and youth camps for diaspora – creating affiliation and Latvian identity

Laura Bužinska

To maintain Latvianness and a Latvian worldview, various camps have been organised throughout the world that have unified the younger generations of Latvians. This article focuses on some of the camps to understand the way in which Latvianness and a Latvian worldview are taught and perceived in these

camps. The camps researched were: the Latvian Scouts and Guides in North America, 2 × 2 youth gatherings, camps supported by the Social Integration Fund (SIF), as well as 3 × 3 gatherings; camps not only for young people, but for Latvians belonging to various age groups. Six interviews were used for data gathering. Five of these were held with people who have been closely linked to the organising of these camps, one – with a SIF representative. The study of the approach taken by each of the camp organisers leads to the conclusion that both 2 × 2 and 3 × 3, as well as camps administrated by SIF did not teach a particular view on what Latvianness is, but allows both the organisers and the participants to freely choose the view of Latvianness that is closer to them.

2.4 The intercultural education of young teachers in Latvia: an assessment of opportunities and practice

Ieva Margeviča-Grinberga

The article examines the challenges to the education system created by increasing migration, focusing, in particular, on teacher education. The article begins with the author providing insight into a study of the experiences of young teachers when working with children who have migrated from another country. The study concludes by providing a theoretical framework and conclusions based on the research outcomes regarding the challenges to the promoting of teachers' intercultural competence in Latvia. The author also offers recommendations regarding the inclusion of teachers' intercultural competence into the studies.

2.5 The teacher factor: pedagogues in dialogue with children and adolescents, who have returned to Latvia

Liesma Ose

The article is devoted to the problems of integrating students who have returned to Latvia in the Latvian school environment and providing solutions for them, foregrounding, in particular, the role of the teacher. In 2013 Latvia started implementing the Re-emigration Support Measures Plan, which allocates a special role to education, stressing both the importance of maintaining the Latvian language in the diaspora as a contributing factor for the maintenance of ethnic identity, as well as the fact that one of the most frequent reasons for the return of émigrés is the fact that their children have just reached school age. However, integration into Latvian schools does not always proceed rapidly and favourably. Recent studies by state (State Education Quality Service) and non-governmental organisations (Education Development Centre, 2014) reveal the need for additional support measures for teachers and parents: methodological and study materials, the financing of teachers' additional work, continuous education of teachers on integration of students into the Latvian education system, information on the Latvian education system that is accessible

to parents worldwide and the necessity of family support to the student. What kind of support do the students need? The students who return to Latvia want to be heard and understood. They expect an individual approach, which they have received in the host countries, as well as support in adapting to life in Latvia – knowledge of youth culture, unwritten laws, and preferable behaviour. Data show that basic knowledge of the Latvian language is a decisive factor that facilitates the student's integration and serves as a good basis for improving language proficiency at resuming education in Latvia. The author of the article concludes by recommending that support to teachers be offered, which would be beneficial also for students: a module of professional continuous education, in which teachers will develop the intercultural competence needed in their profession to work with students with hybrid and changing identities.

Part 3

3.1 Geographical mobility of youth: communication and links to Latvia

Elina Apsīte-Beriņa, Ģirts Burgmanis

Over the past decade migration processes have contributed to the move of a large part of the population from Latvia to other European countries. Children and youth migration as opposed to adult migration is not always a deliberate choice, but rather depends on various conditions. Nevertheless similar to the characteristics of the adult migrant, the profile of the group comprising children and youth is diverse. Parents of children under the age of 18 are more likely to have moved abroad due to lack of stability in Latvia and concerns about financial security in the future. They integrate into the local labour market of the destination country and gain their desired, stable income. However, the youth migrant group that is aged between 16 and 25 more often move abroad as school or university students, having faced difficulties in Latvia in covering monthly payments and lack job opportunities, thus entering the labour market and continuing their education. Albeit further education or entering the labour market pushes youth to integrate in local social activities of the new host country, it has been observed that they maintain a strong emotional link with the homeland. Virtual communication can be characterised as intense. The majority of youth maintain links with Latvia, especially with parents, relatives, friends and acquaintances through various communication channels daily or several times a week. Most frequently they use information communication technologies (ICT) and visit Latvia when possible. Latvian news portals, TV and radio are used regularly by youth who live abroad. But there is a significantly lower active participation and interest among youth in Latvian diaspora events, which could be essential for sustaining links with Latvia.

3.2 Cultural capital, return motivation and experience: Latvian students abroad

Aija Lulle, Laura Bužinska

The aim of this paper is to examine new diaspora formations and student migration, thereby initiating a parallel debate on how student mobility contributes to shaping the diasporic space. We visualise mobile students as belonging to a category that cuts across both the transnational academic and diasporic spaces, and deploy ‘translocal geographies’ as a theoretical lens. We investigate how migrant students perceive and negotiate the inequalities and differences they experience, while accumulating cultural capital, and upon returning to their homeland. The data for this paper comes from a qualitative analysis of 306 responses in a purposeful survey of Latvian students abroad, Latvia being fairly typical of post-socialist societies in Europe. We found that the choice to study abroad is often influenced by economic inequalities experienced at home, but also by the perception of the quality of education that can be had in certain countries and institutions. Furthermore, the willingness of a student to return home is often hampered by the social and economic inequalities in the homeland.

Our contribution to this discussion is twofold. First, we demonstrate how the translocal approach can provide a fruitful mechanism for understanding the linkages between international student migration and the diasporic space. Secondly, we show how the study of students, as members of an evolving diaspora, must recognize and incorporate notions of inequalities and difference into the currently predominant ethno-nationalist conception of an emerging diasporic state.

3.3 Diaspora children attending English schools: a quantitative perspective

Olga Cara

This study focuses on Latvian diaspora children in state run schools in England and uses quantitative data from various English administrative datasets. The main data come from the National Pupil Database. The research investigates three main areas: the number of Latvian pupils, its dynamics and geographical distribution; the characteristics of schools with Latvian children and the academic achievement of Latvian children. As the analysis of the data suggests Latvian children live in quite segregated municipalities with the proportion of individuals with low qualifications and those in low qualified jobs as well as low quality schools above the average rate. All these factors are associated with the academic achievement of Latvian children in England that is below average.

3.4 Transnational ties of the Russian-speaking emigrant families from Latvia

Iveta Jurkāne-Hobeine

Together with their parents, thousands of children emigrate from Latvia every year. Extrapolating from general emigration statistics, half of them are children of Russian-speaking Latvians. This article investigates if and how the Russian-speaking Latvian émigrés transfer their transnational Latvian identity to their children. The transnational identity here is operationalized as knowing Latvian language and raising consciousness of having family roots in Latvia. The study is based on 30 in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking Latvian parents in Sweden and Great Britain. The article argues that the Russian-speaking Latvian parents abroad develop weak transnational ties with the Latvian state. The strongest ties turned out to be the formal ones: majority of children hold Latvian citizenship. Yet, the more symbolic aspect of transnational belonging such as knowledge of the state language, appeared to be very weak as children born in the host countries have never learned Latvian but those born in Latvia do not continue language classes, neither are they exposed to a Latvian language environment. As regards being aware of family roots in Latvia, most parents are not interested in developing an emotional attachment to Latvia in their children. A clear tendency could be observed that parents draw a line between their own national identity (coming from Latvia) and that of their children (being from Sweden or Great Britain).

3.5 The choice of children's given names in diaspora and the possibilities of researching them

Marta Balode

Different cultures have very different understandings of the connection between the name and the person. The article attempts to outline theoretically the very extensive field of research, where a person's name can be used as a tool to better understand and study Latvians living in diaspora. The choice of a child's name is a very complex process vested with responsibility, and it becomes even more complicated in diaspora, where a compromise must be found between various conditions in choosing a name. Even more so, when this issue must be solved in an ethnically-mixed family, where parents wish to reflect in the child's name both the ethnically-mixed origin, kinship and aesthetic beauty, taste and other factors of personal importance, and also that the name should fit in within the host country and should help the child to fulfill future expectations of parents who have chosen the name. The article arrives at the conclusion that the primary and decisive factors in diaspora differ from the ones that dominate when living in the ethnic home country. To gain a better understanding of these processes in

the community of diaspora Latvians, more extensive and comprehensive studies of personal names are needed in various branches of social sciences, as well as interdisciplinary research. In the future, when engaging in empirical studies, the differences in selecting children's names that occur in families, where both parents belong to the same ethnic group, and in families, where parents come from different ethnic groups and cultures, should be taken into consideration.

3.6 Lines and contact: reflections on enriching „edges” in Latvia's diverse society

Anna E. Reynolds

Building on Tim Ingold's concept of lines and Mary Louise Pratt's concept of contact zones, I explore the contemporary experiences of migrants living in Latvia. To this conceptual framework and the discussion about migration and integration I add the idea of the 'edge', borrowed from the field of ecology. Edges are places where different ecological or, by extension, social communities meet. Life at the edges combines features from the surrounding communities and nurtures unique circumstances and their consequences that cannot be found elsewhere. I interviewed nine people for this short study into how long-term immigrants to Latvia, mostly people with Latvian roots whose parents themselves were WW2 refugees, made the decision to „return”, how they envisioned life in Latvia would be, how they understand and present their own identities, and what they want to pass on to their own children, whom they are raising in this country. The idea of productive edges between social groups is not only conceptually interesting, but may prove a practical vehicle for communication, since it provides ways of thinking about contact and enrichment that are not bound to judgments about a particular ethnic or national group, but focus instead on making resources available for the enrichment, reinvigoration, and prospering of all. This approach is clearly work-intensive, because edges must be tended for them to be productive. This begs the question of who such social stewards might be. I offer this article as food for thought for further research into the possible advantages and disadvantages of differing systems and attitudes.

Translated and edited by Ingūna Beķere and Daina Grosa.

LU Akadēmiskais apgāds
Baznīcas iela 5, Rīga, LV-1010
E-pasts: apgads@lu.lv

SIA "Latgales druka"
Rēzekne, Baznīcas 28, LV-4601