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The Lithuanian Balance: National Language Retention and Foreign Language Education in a Global Context

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The Lithuanian Balance: National Language Retention and Foreign Language Education in a Global Context

by

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An honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honors designation in International Affairs

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Preface

In the summer of 2015 I was fortunate enough to be accepted to an internship in the city of Kaunas, Lithuania. In exchange for housing and some food, I and five other interns from around the world ran a summer camp for Lithuanian teenagers that focused alternately on soft skill development—time management, public speaking, interpersonal communication, etc.—and on cultural education. Of the six interns and the five local Lithuanians hosting us, I was the only American—indeed, the only native English speaker. To my great surprise, not only was the camp and all socialization outside it conducted entirely in English, but the vast majority of the people I interacted with spoke my native language nearly fluently. While the Indian, Georgian, Azerbaijani, Italian, and Hong Kongese interns needed to preface their culture lessons with information like what they ate, what currency they used, and even where their countries were located, I could skip nearly all of the “basic” information and go on to answer questions about how accurate American media is in portraying my home culture.

Never before had I been faced with such a stark example of globalization and, in particular, Americanization. While my American friends often had to ask where Lithuania was, my Lithuanian friends and students could easily relay facts that even I hadn’t known about my home. Their accents varied—one student of mine insistently used a crisp British accent she’d picked up from the BBC—but overall most of the camp’s students spoke a quasi-American accent acquired from media streamed online and offered on television. Their enthusiasm for English and American culture clearly derived from years and sometimes even lifetimes of Anglophone exposure.

Even after my departure from Lithuania, questions echoed in my head. Why did my students follow American culture in particular? What did it mean for their idea of themselves as
Lithuanian? Why had they been so dismissive of my questions about the Russian and Polish languages, which I’d expected them to speak after centuries of colonization? And—most relevant to my teaching experience—why had my students each paid a sum of money equivalent to one month of my meals in Lithuania, to speak English at our camp when I knew they studied English at school? Was something missing from their schooling experience, if they were seeking English-speaking opportunities outside the classroom? And what did they plan to do with those language skills once they had them?

This thesis sets about to find out.
Introduction

The question of learning English—its methods, its motives, its effects on the culture as it gains fluency—has arisen in a flash as, through improved communication and transportation methods, ideas and the languages that convey them have become more exportable across borders. The process of globalization has raised new questions about the necessity of learning a language that does not exist within national borders. Sociolinguistic and language policy papers have not yet caught up and instead immerse themselves in the study of linguistic rights relevant to the establishment of the world’s most recent states. Just as questions of fair linguistic representation have been addressed and often answered, new ones about linguistic necessity have come into play.

Given that languages such as English, German, and French are not spoken by any sizeable minority in Lithuania, one might wonder why the question of Lithuanians learning any of these languages is relevant. Indeed, within the professional sphere English lessons are perceived as unnecessary; after all, Lithuania has had only a few decades to promote its language ahead of any oppressor’s tongue, and nationalism remains strong. Through the European Union, Lithuania enjoys some assistance in learning English, including English lessons offered at places of work. John Simmons, an Australian teacher of English based in Vilnius, compares the lessons to having lightbulbs in the office: “If they didn't have them, it would be a problem, but if they do have them, it is absolutely nothing special. Zero motivation [to learn English even with free lessons]” (Freeman and Mullett 2008). This generation of professionals, having been born and raised during Lithuania’s era of Soviet occupation, perceives its multilingualism in Lithuanian and Russian (and sometimes Polish) as sufficient, in stark contrast to the teenaged students I encountered who learned and cared about English before any language other than Lithuanian.
If preserving the national and minority languages is in fact so irrelevant, then why does the EU fund English lessons and why do students pay for summer camps to improve their English skills? Briefly speaking, no country—Lithuania included—can afford not to. The English Proficiency Index, published by Swiss-based Education First, reports that better English skills result in a higher income and higher quality of life, as well as more dynamic business environments, more innovation, and greater ability to communicate and connect across borders and cultures; the executive summary asserts that “no skill since literacy has held such potential to increase the efficiency and earning power of so many” (Education First 2017). For a country only recently declared independent and developing its economy to compete and collaborate with global powers, Lithuania will increasingly find that its citizens’ English skills are vital to national prosperity.

Few countries have enough successful experience to demonstrate to non-English-proficient countries how to improve their English skills while balancing domestic language needs. The pool of examples narrows further when one considers that Lithuania must not only balance its national language of Lithuanian, which has altogether had only a few decades to be developed and promoted above other tongues, but also the two minority languages of Polish and Russian whose speakers have demanded rights from the Lithuanian government. However, through both personal experiences and affirmations from experts in the sociolinguistic realm, I’ve identified one model that Lithuania might learn from in acquiring English while maintaining the progress it has made: Finland, Lithuania’s northern neighbor who shares the Baltic Sea. The Finns, like the Lithuanians, had extensive contact with an unrelated (in this case, Swedish) foreign influence for most of the group’s existence, and represents the rights of the Swedish speakers whose ancestors once owned and controlled Finnish land. However, Finland has
exelled where Lithuania has not: despite that its language is part of the Finno-Ugric family and therefore has nothing in common with English, Finland boasts that some 50 percent of Finns consider themselves fluent in English (Freeman 2008), and the high test results of their students in general are renowned throughout the international community. Whether through its teaching methods, its governance, or its culture, Finland has discovered a successful formula that Lithuania may be able to replicate to advance itself while losing as little progress as possible.

I observe that Lithuania’s linguistic policy is less effective than Finland’s is in promoting English education while maintaining national and minority languages, and I hypothesize that Lithuania can borrow best practices from Finland to improve its own education system. To test this hypothesis, I plan to conduct both a review of Finnish and Lithuanian education policy documents and several interviews with Finns and Lithuanians who underwent primary and secondary schooling in their respective nations. Through both official policy and citizens’ interpretations, I hope to holistically determine the best practices that Finland has adopted, to find the weaknesses in Lithuanian language education, and to make recommendations based on Finland’s strengths and Lithuania’s weaknesses.

While my thesis primarily focuses on the teaching and perception of English in Lithuania and Finland, I will invoke the term “languages of trade” (LOTs) as an overarching term. English is by and large “the language” to learn if one is to succeed in the international sphere, but one cannot neglect the significance of languages like German, French, and Russian which allow access to trade and intergovernmental relations within the region of Europe, if not the rest of the world. As such, I will occasionally use the term “languages of trade” to signify that, while I am still using English as my foremost example, I wish to draw attention to the fact that the policies I
discuss or recommend can be applied to any foreign language deemed necessary or important for international cooperation.

Finland is a prime choice to compare with Lithuania because the two states share very similar language situations. Both countries were under foreign influence more often than they were free, and both maintain at least one minority population descended from the former predominant culture. Their geographic proximity and shared geopolitical influences (e.g. the wave of Christianity, similar fronts during the World Wars, etc.) ensure that few outlying factors will skew any conclusions I make. Finland furthermore displays one unique peculiarity that adds extra interest to its high success in teaching foreign languages like English: unlike Lithuanian, which is a member of the Indo-European language family, Finnish hails from the Finno-Ugric family and has no inherently shared traits with the foreign languages (English, French, Russian, etc.) it teaches. Truly Finland has found a winning formula, to display the success that it does in promoting multilingualism despite that its citizens by and large speak a mother tongue that offers few similarities to apply to new languages.

This thesis will begin with a chapter on the history of Finland as examined through the lens of languages of power. It will then delve into a chapter on the background of language policy which will introduce terms and concepts that I will apply to the Baltic States’ language policy planning in the post-Soviet era and today. (In discussing Estonia and Latvia, the other two Baltic States, I mean to demonstrate the progress Lithuania has made in promoting language rights as a relative success.) From there I will elaborate upon my hypothesis and discuss my data-collecting methods, and in particular the nuances and flaws of my interview sample. A fourth chapter will analyze Lithuania’s education system in terms of the policy delineated by its Ministry of Education and the interviews I have conducted; a fifth chapter will give Finland a
similar treatment. The final chapter before my conclusion will offer my interpretation of the data I’ve collected and several policy recommendations I will propose to Lithuania to improve its language teaching capacity.

As I conduct my research, I will discover that the conditions of my hypothesis are met in that Lithuania can learn from Finland concerning LOT education, but they fail to be met concerning national and minority language education. In foreign language education, Finland appears to derive its success from a holistic education system that values the student’s overall learning environment, and from selecting and providing sufficient resources and compensation for its teaching workforce; Lithuania can learn from Finland by invigorating its teacher programs and practices, as well as applying changes such as interactive, speaking-based, and communicative-focused lessons. My hypothesis, however, fails to consider that Finland possesses two national languages, Finnish and Swedish, as opposed to Lithuania whose eponymous language is the sole national language of the state. Because of this small but important difference, Lithuania and Finland are not directly comparable in their national and minority language planning. Finland, balancing Finnish and Swedish, can take fewer actions than can Lithuania to preserve its long-subjugated national language, as it must also consider and provide for the former majority language, Swedish; in this respect, Lithuania’s experimentation with national language preservation may in fact be of greater help to Finland than would any Finnish experimentation be to Lithuania. Furthermore, owing to its status as a national language, Swedish in Finland cannot be likened to Russian and Polish in Lithuania; the latter two groups are granted negative rights (i.e. the right to exist and to resources to keep their communities alive), but Finland grants Swedish positive rights (i.e. the right to use their language at a national,
not community, level) that highlight Lithuania’s and Finland’s differing approaches to language minorities.

Certain themes will recur as I discuss my thesis. One, as mentioned in Lithuania’s historical background, is the tension between former dominant and former minority culture that echoes to this day. Language planning throughout the Baltics—particularly status planning, the choice of national language(s) for a state—will echo Baltic fears of losing national identity so soon after gaining national sovereignty. Minorities, in turn, fight back with demands for representation and resources, albeit to varying degrees depending on the community.

Another key theme is that of brain drain as a symptom of globalization. By the time Lithuania and its Baltic brothers gained independence from the Soviet Union, global forces had already pushed nations toward opening their borders to foreign trade, media, and ideology; unlike states that formed before it, Lithuania faces not only the struggle of placating minorities while promoting national language priorities, but the struggle of introducing languages of use to a globalizing workforce while ensuring that that workforce does not leave. Higher pay, better working conditions, and a higher standard of living entice citizens to work and live abroad, which renders moot much of the effort that the home nation put into educating its youth for the domestic workforce. Students like the ones in my camp, however, will work for the best opportunities they can find, and they therefore earn skills including those of foreign languages to ensure their future prosperity. Brain drain cannot be resolved by improving foreign language curricula—indeed, in the short term better foreign language skills will encourage more citizens to leave—but in this thesis brain drain will be treated as a symptom of a larger problem: the lack of skills imparted by the national education system, and the need to fix them before global forces like Americanization and brain drain take over.
Literature Review

In conducting this research on linguistic education policy, I have compiled a literature review that sheds light on the gap in discussion of foreign language education policy. This review will be divided by the main disciplines under which I will be working: historical sources, political science sources, and (socio)linguistic sources. Historical sources refer chiefly to the comparison of the Baltic States’ differing influences and state formation, and serves primarily as background to my argument. Political science, in this review, will refer to ideas of nationalism that intertwine with the (socio)linguistics ideas of language planning, but will also lend itself to modern day inter-state relations that affect language planning and policy. Linguistics and sociolinguistics have been mixed under one category because the term “linguistics” is too broad to connote the discussion of language planning, education, and rights, but the term “sociolinguistics” too narrowly refers to the demographic surveys which I cite; the term “(socio)linguistics” allows me to include such topics as language education, an act of language transmission that surpasses the narrow subfield of “sociolinguistics”.

Historical Sources

My historical sources primarily serve to delineate Baltic history and demonstrate the relative recentness of the Baltics’ ability to establish their own language planning. Historical sources also ground the languages—Polish, Russian, German, etc.—that were once in power in the Baltics and are now treated as minorities with more ambiguous rights than they possessed as majority communities.

Gabrielle Hogun-Brun and Meilutė Ramonienė (2003) lead me to believe that Lithuania differs from the other two Baltic States because throughout its history it has needed to balance the needs of multiple language minorities. While Latvia and Estonia contended with the Baltic
Germans and Russians (the former group being expelled by the time of World War II, rendering them largely moot when it came to establishing language policy at statehood), Lithuania’s historic state and elite languages alternated between Polish and Russian, with Yiddish making up remaining scholarship and Lithuanian being restricted as a peasant language.

Anatol Lieven (1993), John Hiden and Patrick Salmon (1994) and Leonas Sabaliunas (1972) each offer details of Lithuania’s transition from statehood to communism and back. Each appears to focus on nationalism as a mechanism for Lithuania’s statehood in the 1920s and 1990s, but I hesitate at their resistance in discussing language policy as a catalyst—rather than a reflection—of nationalism. Sociolinguists like Stephen May (2012) would consider the commoners’ language as a strong factor in creating national identity and not simply reflecting other successful measures of nationalism, e.g. the promises of leaders to throw out foreign oppressors and make the commoner language a state language. I hope to focus my discussion of history on an overview of language demographics over time, and to give greater representation to the establishment of new national languages as a symbol of nationalism—an essential aspect of the state’s creation—rather than a byproduct.

Political Science Sources

My political science sources bridge both halves of my argument: the nationalism half justifies Lithuania’s success in promoting its national language, and the inter-state relations half offers caution as Lithuania adjusts its education policy to adopt minority languages and languages of trade.

Ernst Renan (1882) defines nationalism most appropriately to my purposes: a nation is created with (a) a “rich legacy of memories” forming the past and (b) a willingness to continue investing in common heritage in the present. I will apply his definition to the lens of language
policy and education: by instructing in the national language (i.e. Lithuanian), Lithuania can atone for its language’s past status as a subjugated language and can reinvest in its people’s future through language use.

Renan’s definition, however, does little to explain why, at least in the realm of language education, Lithuania is so tolerant towards language minorities like Polish and Russian which were once the languages of Lithuania’s elite class. Their historically high statuses in fact created an “othering” notion, establishing the “common” Lithuanians from the “cultured” foreign languages and strengthening Lithuanian nationalism against those foreign bodies. Why tolerate or even encourage those languages now?

To explain, I reach the second of my political science concepts: modern inter-state relations. Uldis Ozolines (2003) remarks that language minority treatment is in fact part of a far greater interaction between nations. States like Hungary treat their minority Romanian populations exceedingly well so that they can turn to Romania and make demands on the treatment of minority Hungarians, and in the modern day Russia appears to attempt something similar with the Baltics, albeit with little interest in reciprocating with Baltic minorities. Standards like the Oslo Recommendations (OECD, 1998) press Eastern European states to grant rights to minorities, and inter-state relations further pressure the Baltics to treat minorities well or face the political wrath of their neighbors. Allowing minority resources but not national minority status seems to be the Baltic compromise to asserting its national identity while avoiding further conflict with powerful neighbors.

Now, as Baltic citizens seek to learn languages of trade to earn a better life abroad, the Baltics must learn to balance yet one more influence, this time not from neighbors’ pressure but from the pressure of the globalizing economy. As states’ public and private spheres become
more intertwined and require a lingua franca, the Baltics face the dilemma of teaching languages like English and losing their own citizens, or neglecting such languages and losing their standing in the international economy. While my thesis asserts that the Baltics must add languages of trade to their language education policy, the concept of inter-state relations as a domestic influence reminds me to adjust my policy recommendations to account for stopping brain drain, as more Baltic citizens learn languages and leave their home states for work abroad. My future research will ideally examine how states like Finland create opportunities for their citizens to speak and work in languages of trade without leaving the country.

(Socio)linguistics Sources

My (socio)linguistics sources serve the second part of my research statement: that, while Lithuania has successfully balanced national and minority languages in its education system, it must now integrate a third aspect of languages of trade (those languages which are largely not spoken in the state but are still necessary for inter-state public and private relations).

Central to my argument is the idea of “language planning,” Sue Wright’s (2012) notion of the state officially establishing one or more official languages as it forms or reforms. Language planning may also refer to those languages which are not recognized, whether as minority languages or at all; such is the case in Latvia and Estonia, who have chosen not to grant any minority status to Russian speakers. Language planning reflects the will of the state concerning the lingua franca it wishes to see within its borders, and in my research I will examine how and why Lithuania’s language planning differs from its Baltic neighbors’, and how Lithuania could stand to improve its planning further in the sphere of education.

Another prominent linguistic rights scholar, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (2006, 283-285) establishes mother-tongue education (i.e. education in the first language a student learned as a
child) as a fundamental human right that is not established in such vital documents as the education section of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. States that encourage and celebrate linguistic diversity—i.e. states that think of mother-tongue education as a right rather than a good idea—are said to enforce positive rights. Positive-right countries actively grant rights and resources to minority communities and make efforts to inspire interaction between the majority and minority language cultures. In contrast, states which adhere to the bare minimum required by international agreements—states which allow the existence and basic human rights of minority communities, but no further special status—are said to grant negative rights. This concept of positive and negative rights will become relevant as I interpret my data and find that Finland (a positive-right state) and Lithuania (a negative-right state) are incomparable in their treatment of language minorities.

I have chosen language education—defined as the state’s transmission of one or more national or minority languages to the population—as the primary lens of my research because it reflects national attitudes towards diversity or lack thereof. Lithuania’s language policy and education are considerably kinder than Estonia’s or Latvia’s, and I intend to utilize Wright’s definitions of language planning and education to make broader claims about how Lithuania’s more diverse immigrants make it better equipped to create an education system that allows full fluency in both the national language and the minority language (if applicable).

However, Wright and Henri Boyer (2004) point to the need of a state to adapt its language planning and education to the needs of the people. While it surpasses the Baltics in balancing national and minority languages, with increasing globalization Lithuania needs to increase its language repertoire to include languages of trade like English, French, and German, all of which are not minority languages but are necessary for the sake of internationalizing
business and government. In that sense Lithuania’s practical language education falls short of neighbors like Finland, which has created a fully functional multilingual nation accommodating the two national languages and many languages of trade.

Wright and Boyer indicate the need for including instruction of languages of trade, but I have not yet found sources to indicate how such practices would be implemented in the education system. Herein lies the gap in my sources. To fill it, I plan to compare the practices of Lithuania and Finland, particularly in the ages at which their schools require instruction of certain languages, the required number of years of study of each language, and the practices of multilingual schools in particular to serve as a model or a warning to the state’s general education system. I will utilize primary sources such as publications from the states’ respective Ministries of Education, OECD reports, and the Council of Europe’s Language Education Policy Profiles. I will overlap the data I accumulate from these sources with firsthand interviews from Finns and Lithuanians who have studied in their respective countries and who can affirm and add to the official policy statements. From this survey I hope to make my own policy recommendations for reforming the Lithuanian language education system to better balance the national language of Lithuanian, the unofficial minority languages of Polish and Russian, and the languages of trade that include English, French, and German.
Chapter One: Historical Background

Hiden and Salmon (1994) have observed that “Almost every historical generalisation that can be made about the Latvians and Estonians has to be modified to take account of the Lithuanians” (13). This statement explains that throughout numerous periods in history the three Baltic States have only had in common their location west of Russia, south of Finland, and east of Poland and former Prussia. The differences in the Baltic States begin at their very roots, with the Latvian and Lithuanian languages the orphans of a dead branch on the Indo-European language tree, and with Estonia’s language falling under the Finno-Ugric family. As Christianity reached the Northern lands, Estonia and Latvia adopted Lutheranism while Lithuania kept its Catholic roots introduced by strong Polish influence (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 9-10). Under Russian influence, Latvian and Estonian port cities became centers of industry and trade, whereas Lithuania remained an “agrarian backwater” until its time under the Soviet regime (13).

Lithuania’s current label as a Baltic State fails to consider the deep cultural and historical differences that divide it from its neighbors. As a result, this thesis will chiefly examine Lithuania’s history, language, and demographics. Latvia and Estonia will be discussed for comparative or (more often) for contrastive purposes, but the overarching term “Baltic” will scarcely appear here until discussion of the twentieth century.

Lithuania graduated from its tribal days to become a military power of the medieval era, and was initially more prosperous than its northern neighbors as a result. The Lithuanian state enjoyed impenetrable fortresses, a long string of wise and powerful rulers, and a strong military which warded off the invasions of the Teutonic order (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 12). From the fourteenth to sixteen centuries, Lithuania used its geographic influence—having taken a good portion of Eastern Europe for itself—to add to their linguistic repertoire such languages as
Ruthenian, German, Latin, and Polish, and even to use them as instruments to spread Lithuanian national consciousness (Ochmanski 1986, 304).

One struggle with the Teutonic order in 1410 required Lithuania to ally itself with Poland. Having enjoyed thorough victory, the two states transitioned from a loose alliance to a formal union in 1569, which created the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 12). Here began an age of Polonization to last until the nineteenth century, which would create a permanent settlement of Poles in the Lithuania capital, Vilnius. As Lithuania’s fate became increasingly intertwined with Poland, it began to look to the Polish state and language as a mark of sophistication, prestige, and worldliness. The Lithuanian language, although used extensively by the Lithuanian people, was a peasant language lacking literary and cultural works to its name. When Polish parishes opened in Lithuania in the fifteenth century, the elites of Lithuania saw the chance to engage with a language that possessed the prestige and history that their own language lacked (Ochmanski 1986, 311). Schools, too, began to operate in Latin or Polish (rarely in Lithuanian) and maintained the practice until as late as 1863, and relayed Lithuanian history only in the frame of the overall Polish story (311).

This wave of Polonization was neither intentional nor coercive, but occurred by a combination of denationalization among the upper class (which rejected its own culture in favor of Poland’s) and overall low levels of national consciousness of the masses (312). As a result, even the lower classes of Lithuania felt pressure to adopt Polish as a language of education. By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries feudal manor holders spoke to their peasant servants in Polish (311), and even as nineteenth-century Russian influence swayed the region into Russifying its schools, peasants sent their children to private Polish schools so that their children would speak in the language of lords (313).
The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was partitioned in 1795, and Lithuania fell under Russian control, although not Russian identity (Spires 1999, 489). Although Russian governance turned the Vilnius Higher School into a university, organized state schools on a Polish basis, and appointed a new superintendent over the Vilnius school district—all three measures making way for the rebirth of social and intellectual life in Lithuania—the peasant situation deteriorated under the demands of military conscription, something which Lithuanians had not faced before (Ochmanski 1986, 314-315). Furthermore, Russia took its turn asserting the cultural power of its own language and outlawed signs and books in anything beyond the Cyrillic script. Such a policy led to Prussian smugglers bringing books in the Latin script to pious Lithuanians, who believed Cyrillic to be offensive to their holy word (Spires 1999, 489). Indeed, by instigating the rebirth of the scholarly class and the resentment of the peasantry, Russia set up the downfall of its own power in Lithuania.

At this point it is appropriate to step back from Lithuanian history to discuss the foundation of the nationalist movement which, in the nineteenth century, swept across the entirety of Europe. Renan (1882) proposed the necessity of “having common glories in the past and a will to continue them in the present” (10)—a common history and a desire to share a future—in creating the state, and language quickly became a crucial contributor to both factors. Boyer (2004) discusses the linguistic market, a series of choices that humans make every day in choosing the language that will benefit them most; by his argument, languages like Lithuanian disappear because they are rendered less useful by more widely understood and powerful (e.g. Russian) or more cultured (e.g. Polish) tongues (3). Why, then, did Lithuanian not die by the

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1 Spires does not explain why Lithuanians found Cyrillic offensive to the Catholic faith, but my previous experience in religious studies suggests that, as Cyrillic script is one step further removed from the translation of the Bible from Greek and Aramaic than is Roman script, Lithuanians likely perceived the Cyrillic script as more distant from the holy word as it was first written.
time of the nineteenth century? Boyer offers the solution of linguistic nationalism: an overarching loyalty for one’s own language, the “loyalty of the consumer” in choosing not only the language of most usefulness but the language of one’s identity.

The Lithuanian peasantry chose their language throughout history (although Lithuanian was not always their favorite or first choice), and through that unconscious decision they unwittingly maintained a piece of identity that would help them in their case for becoming an autonomous nation. Although Lithuanians, like their Baltic neighbors, were direct descendants of the first Baltic tribes (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 9), the large number of Jews and Poles who coexisted in Lithuania’s capital meant that Lithuania could claim no ethnic basis for statehood (20). Furthermore, Lithuania’s formal (i.e. non-tribal) history began relatively late, its religion was imported from Poland, its language lacked a writing system until the Protestant Reformation (Spires 1999, 498), and its best-known cultural champions did their work in Polish (486); the Lithuanian nation had few claims to symbols of its own identity.

Enter here the same Prussians and Germans who smuggled Latin-script books to the Lithuanians. Apart from their interest in good business, they intended to study the Lithuanian language. As awareness of linguistic genealogy grew, more and more German scholars found proof that the Lithuanian language was the most closely related living language to Sanskrit (485). At the time, German linguistic scholars operated under the idea that linguistic forms that are the “least diluted” and “most primal” are clearly untainted by foreign ideas, and therefore that an ancient language like Lithuanian is closer to the “pure” ancestral wisdom of the ancient Indo-Europeans (490). Their research even appeared to point in that direction—Lithuanian, after all, had outlasted such regional languages as Prussian (488), and although it never became a state language, it maintained ancient Proto-Indo-European structures that most European languages
had long forgotten (485). Awed by this revelation, first the Prussians and Germans and then the Lithuanians themselves began to champion their language as a cultural advantage, linking them to knowledge and power stemming before even the Romans and Greeks (488). Such a movement reevaluated Lithuania—then still an agrarian backwater under the thumb of Russia—in the eyes of nationalistic Europe.

Because the First World War ended with neither Germany nor Russia gaining full control of the Baltic region, in 1918 all three Baltic States saw the opportunity to petition for independence on the grounds of their respective nationalist movements (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 25). Baltic representatives lobbied the western powers at the Paris peace talks until Estonia and Latvia were granted de jure independence in 1921, and Lithuania in 1922 (59). At the time the Baltic States consisted largely of their own citizens. Russians were the largest minorities in both Latvia and Estonia, followed by Germans; Lithuania’s pattern differed in that Jews formed the largest minority, followed by Poles, Russians, and Germans (46). These demographic divisions led to the argument that, with their newfound independence, the Baltic States could only resort to tribalistic tendencies or else suffer as a nation and a state (46).

Acting upon that mindset, the Baltic States took the opportunity to finally enact their own language policy. Baltic folksongs and folklore, once the mark of peasants, became codified at the state level, and language standardization (which was largely complete for Lithuania and Estonia by 1914 and for Latvia by the 1920s, thanks to the revival of their national scholarship) made way for education and media consumption in the newly-deemed national language (Lieven 1993, 117). President2 Smetona of Lithuania heavily enforced both nationalism and national language in the education system; he claimed that because ancient Lithuania had tolerated all faiths,

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2 Lithuania became an authoritarian government after a coup overthrowing the democratic regime in 1926, but Smetona kept a title that sounds democratic to many (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 51).
religion would be the rule of the classroom but with a nationalist component to accompany it, creating a classroom imbued with the “intimate, living, and Lithuanian reality” (Sabaliunas 1972: 35). The beginning of Smetona’s regime closed forty-eight Polish schools and pressured German families in Klaipeda to send their children to Lithuanian schools, a movement echoed in Latvia’s and Estonia’s German communities (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 56). In larger society, Estonia and Latvia in particular relished in renaming Russified places and procedures, a sign of growing intolerance of all but the “native” people (56).

Despite the realization of a nationalistic dream, statehood was not kind to the Baltic States; they faced struggles in politics and foreign affairs that made them susceptible to the influence of the newly-formed Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The three Baltics’ domestic economies initially suffered from severed ties with Russia. The benefits of guaranteed markets, plentiful raw materials, and a default trade stop between Russia and Western Europe were lost, leaving the Baltics to rely on the limited industrialization progress they had made thus far (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 76). Latvia and Estonia, with their natural ports promising wealth in trade, had enjoyed heavy investment from the Russian empire and therefore had industrialized more than Lithuania before their independence halted their economic growth. Lithuania also stagnated and remained relatively unindustrialized; although it had gained control of its own ports, it lost Vilnius (its geographic link to Russia) to Poland and therefore could not serve as the same liaison between east and west that its Baltic neighbors had once been (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 77).

In the international realm, the new state of Lithuania had two priorities: to ensure its independence by dissuading the notion that Lithuania was inherently a part of Russia; and to reunite its full territory by reclaiming Vilnius from the Poles (who took it while allying with
Lithuania to fight off the Soviets at the end of World War I (Snyder 1998, 8) and Klaipeda (its third largest city, along the Baltic Sea) from the Germans. The new Kaunas-based government gained diplomatic recognition and admission to the League of Nations in 1921 (Sabaliunas 1972: 11), and with that power it petitioned for and regained Klaipeda in 1923 (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 77). However, Western leaders were willing to concede little else to states which they viewed as little more than extensions of “the Russian problem”, and therefore refused Baltic pleas for military assistance to defend from the USSR. Allies like Poland and Finland were quickly rejected, the former because of its capture of Vilnius and the latter because it made clear its leanings towards Scandinavian rather than Baltic priorities; ultimately, only a union between the three weakened Baltic States materialized (62-66).

As the Baltics scrambled to stimulate their economies, set up foreign relations, and protect themselves from external threats, German leader Adolf Hitler eyed the region with desire. The Baltic tradition of German settlement, established in the days of the Teutonic order, and the region’s strategic location made the Baltic States “a prime candidate for annexation” (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 26). Lithuania first became aware of this worrying truth when, on 17 March 1938, it had to accept the demands of Poland to recognize Polish control of Vilnius, or else face a German-backed invasion of southern Lithuania. The year after, Lithuania indicated it would use no force to stop Klaipeda’s seizure by Germany, and hoped that this move would appease Germany enough to leave the country in peace. They knew nothing of the secret German-Soviet non-aggression treaty of 23 August 1939, which marked the northern Lithuanian border as the dividing line between future German and Soviet territory (97-105).  

3 Notably, the pact went on to mention that Vilnius would be recognized by both Germany and the USSR as “of high interest” (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 105) to Lithuania—something that Poland alienated its neighbor and former ally by refusing to do, and something that Germany and the USSR quickly learned to prioritize in Lithuanian relations.
As the Second World War loomed, the Baltic States were surveyed both by the Germans, looking to retake part of their “homeland”, and by the Soviets, looking to use Baltic naval bases to defend Leningrad (101). The Soviets used a notably softer diplomatic approach than Germany, which ultimately sowed the seeds for Baltic incorporation into the USSR. Lithuania was the key to Soviet strategy; “[in] exchange for Soviet recognition of its claim to Vilnius, Lithuania signed a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union in September 1926” (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 70). Vilnius was finally returned to Lithuania on 11 October 1939 (Sabaliunas 1972: 153), in exchange for any favor that the USSR saw fit to demand in the name of their mutual defense. As Lithuania was finally invaded at the onset of World War II, the Soviets invoked that treaty first in demanding a treaty of mutual assistance wherein tens of thousands Soviet troops would enter Lithuanian territory (152), and then in accusing the Kaunas government of inviting German occupation by stalling negotiations (180). By ultimately accepting the USSR’s demands, Lithuania was taken as a Soviet possession, followed swiftly by Latvia and Estonia as the Second World War concluded.

The Soviet regime was a windfall for Lithuania’s industrialization and an (initial) aid to all three Baltics’ economies, but Soviet-style modernization ultimately made the USSR the closest force in all of history to extinguish Baltic culture (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 126). Under Soviet passports, immigrants from Soviet republics came flooding into the Baltic States—particularly Latvia and Estonia—which enjoyed the highest standard of living within the USSR thanks to their strong work ethic and their production of desired goods (Lieven 1993, 98) and which could serve as intermediaries for the USSR and the West (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 128). Lithuania’s lower proportion of immigrants meant that it suffered less than its Baltic neighbors in social and environmental damage; in contrast to Lithuania’s consistently low proportion of
foreigners (less than ten percent of the total population), by the 1980s Latvians nearly became a minority in their own country compared to Russians and other Soviet immigrants (126). Lithuania had, in fact, more of its own population to begin with, as during World War II the government had persuaded German troops not to draft their citizens and much of Lithuania’s Polish and Jewish populations had been evacuated and exterminated (132).

Although Lithuania enjoyed a larger proportion of its own people, it was not exempt from the constant fear of deportation or execution for speaking or acting against the Soviet republic (Sabaliunas 1972: 216). The Soviets carried out a gentler policy that assumed but did not strive for eventual Russification. Education was conducted entirely in the native Baltic languages (excepting the requirement to learn Russian, and excepting Russian schools for immigrant children (Cairov 2016)), but any expressions of nationalist tendencies or disdain for socialism—for example in literature or in visual arts—would face punishment (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 138). The Baltic people had initially welcomed communism, but with many of their communist elites either fled or killed by the time of Baltic occupation, Baltic citizens became increasingly restless over the years (140). Song festivals in all three republics gave cursory nods to the Soviet regime, but had the most applause for patriotic songs (138). Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian languages were spoken at home and Russian in public, and a diglossia quickly emerged. An Estonian woman, Eeva Tarm, recounts:

We no longer even felt that it was our country. Our district was increasingly inhabited by Russian immigrants. Russian was spoken in the trams and shops; the shop windows were decorated in a Russian style which was alien to us and which I utterly detested. In the shops, if I spoke in my native language, the shop assistants yelled at me, and if I sent my son to shop he came back empty-handed because he spoke no Russian (Lieven 1993, 82)

Russian schools taught the national languages to Russian speakers, but the low quality of education combined with a general lack of interest—after all, most popular media was in
Russian, and Russian proficiency allowed better opportunities for work and travel (Cairov 2016)—meant that an unequal bilingualism emerged in the Baltic republics. Baltic culture and language endured underground; Lithuanians translated important work documents from Russian into their native language, and certain broadcasts in the local languages were allowed alongside Russian programs (Cairov 2016). Ultimately, though, another era of extralinguistic dominance had fallen over the Baltics, after their long-fought independence of the twentieth century.

Lithuania’s smaller Russian population and lesser extent of development lent it a nationalistic fervor that the other Baltics lacked for fear of retaliation from larger Russian minority communities; that fervor enabled Lithuania to first challenge the Soviet regime (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 127). It asserted its sovereignty on 18 May 1989, citing its independent past and its illegal incorporation into the Soviet Union. In less explicit shows of nationalism, Latvia issued a more indirect but agreeing statement, and Estonia passed stipulations to stop federal USSR laws if they infringed Estonian sovereignty (151-152). Because Lithuania had most openly challenged the USSR, the Soviets issued a blockade on the republic, in part to retaliate and in part to prove to the West that Baltic secession would be economically disastrous for the region (172-173). The USSR cut off Lithuanian coal and gas supplies to prove its dependency, and furthermore tried to cite them as owing 21 billion roubles in repayment for Soviet investment in Lithuanian development (173). Lithuania countered: it may have been underdeveloped, but compared to which country? The state had had to rebuild itself after the First World War and German occupation, and any price the USSR paid to assist it had been repaid, especially by Lithuania’s high agricultural productivity compared to the rest of the Soviet republics (174). In combatting the USSR’s claims, Lithuania found deepened friendship in Latvia and Estonia, who eased as much as they could the flow of supplies to Lithuania, and who
stood symbolically against Moscow’s threats (165). Finally, after negotiations with the USSR and thanks to internal stability and external pressure from the West, in 1989 the Baltic republics were granted freedom once again.
Chapter Two: Language Policy Background

Language policy became one of the most pressing matters in the Baltics simply for the breadth of its reach. At its most basic, research into and deliberation of national language policy gives insight into the state’s demographics; it helps to define and identity mono- and multicultural statuses across the state. From a sociolinguistic perspective, national language policy helps press the agenda of the nation in promoting its own language while ensuring the vitality of all languages, national and minority, that the state chooses to protect. Language policy heavily affects not only the lessons but the national messages delivered in state-sponsored schools, and, if planned with language minorities in mind, can even ensure economic opportunities for speakers of a language other than the national one (Ramonienė and Extra 2011, 60).

Post-Soviet independence marked the first time since the interwar period, and the second time in modern history, that the Baltic nations could establish their own language policy. The new states’ choice of language—namely the eponymous language chosen by each state to be the sole national language—seems intuitive; after all, with ethnic Baltic languages having been systemically oppressed by Germans, Poles, and Russians over the centuries, one would assume that the Baltic people would take the first chance possible to reinstate their language of identification. However, such a choice required consideration of not only the Baltic people, but of the minority populations of former oppressors who lived scattered in communities across the new Baltic states. German and Yiddish speakers having been evacuated during the second World War (albeit for vastly different reasons) (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 109), the German communities that once infiltrated Estonian and Latvian society and the Jews that made up a near-majority in Vilnius were rendered irrelevant. However, Polish speakers had long settled in
especially southeastern Lithuania, and Russian speakers lived in large (and in the case of Latvia and Estonia, nearly overwhelming) numbers throughout the Baltics; how were they to be classified? As citizens? As foreigners? As national minorities? If Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian became the sole national languages of the Baltics, would such a policy choice successfully integrate non-speakers into the community? If the Baltics set their sights on European Union accession, would they be penalized for neglecting pre-established language minority rights?

This chapter discusses the decisions of the Baltic States and especially of Lithuania on national language policy and the impacts thereof. I will begin with a discussion of basic language policy concepts, and then I will relate them to the Baltics as they passed language laws and reformed their education systems to better reflect those policies. I will spend some time outlining the struggles and compromises with minority languages in Lithuania (with a brief contrastive discussion of Latvia), before adopting a larger scope to examine national and minority language treatment in the present day.

Language Policy Concepts

Fortunately for the Baltics, a long-established precedent for language planning existed for them to follow in determining the status of languages and the extent to which they would be protected. Since the establishment of the nationalist movement starting in the eighteenth century, scholars have studied such trends and determined a linguistic link. In the modern day a consensus exists that nationalism is constructed, particularly by the promotion of a shared identity which is in no small part perpetuated through a common language (Wright 2012, 64).

Certain key terms, to overall be called language planning, are necessary to explore the sorts of decisions a state makes in establishing languages and identity for its territory and
citizens. Status planning is the simplest: it outlines the state’s establishment of the national language(s) (Wright 2012, 65), up to and including defining national minority languages and separating them from unrecognized minority communities living in the state. Corpus planning labels the process of monitoring and refining the national language, e.g. by establishing rules to minimize the incorporation of loanwords, or by mandating the use of grammatical structures to prevent languages from shifting. In an interesting note, the above two examples explain a subset of corpus planning known as top-down; such a measure is possible for French, which is monitored and manipulated by the Academie Française, but not for English, which has multiple centers of native speakers and which can only plan its corpus by cataloguing (rather than mandating) differences in Englishes around the world (Wright 2012, 68-69).

A third relevant term, acquisition planning, labels the act of conveying national attitudes through instruction within state-sponsored schools; it is the most relevant term for the topic of this thesis. Acquisition here refers not only to language (although certainly language instruction makes up a large portion of schools’ work), but to helping students acquire a sense of nationalism by teaching the state-approved national history and culture. Schools are instrumental in smoothing over differences in dialects and in regional perspectives, and in ultimately creating a national consciousness that stems from a learned shared identity. To say that schools’ purpose stops here, however, oversimplifies the matter. In times of stability schools are tasked with teaching traditionalism and reinforcing nationalism, but in times of flux, schools must redirect their attention to teaching skills that reinforce adaptability. Imparting skills as well as the national consciousness thus keeps the nation both established and sustainable, and—if the workforce is well-enough educated—can even propel the nation into more developed economic times (Wright 2012, 70-72).
Language planners undoubtedly have their own agenda reflected in the choices they make. Planners can control internal levels of nationalism through the strategies they choose, and they also attempt to control international levels of communication, e.g. by banning English as a lingua franca and encouraging multilingualism as a more effective means of promoting national identity (Wright 2012, 77). Planners furthermore have the ultimate say in whether minorities thrive or suffer; studies have found that despite complex language loyalties, inclusivity in language and citizenship laws generates positive attitudes to cultural diversity and social integration (Hogan-Brun et al. 2005, 345), and it stands to reason that tolerance of diversity decreases with laws that emphasize the national language and culture over all others.

Two key European states, France and Germany, demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between language and national identity. France exemplifies one interplay, in which national identity is cultivated by language. After its revolution in the late eighteenth century, the new French political class took power and conducted a survey, which uncovered that over half of new French citizens spoke no or very little French. At first all national decrees were translated into local languages and dialects, but soon afterward the new political class abandoned the practice to emphasize assimilation. This choice went not without resistance, as certain language communities held strong resistance to the new regime, but said regime adamantly claimed that France has become a single nation and should possess a single language so as to avoid the national divisions imposed by the previous monarchy. France employed a variety of means, from developing state-sponsored schools to transmit the new national language to standardizing the dictionary to make French a people’s language; even Napoleon, when dividing his armies, refused to arrange soldiers by their home region and dialect as had been done in the past.
Speaking French fluently soon became a sign of loyalty to the nation, at the cost of losing regional diversity to the idea of the “one and indivisible republic” (Wright 2012, 59-61).

Converse to France’s strategy of building nationalism through corpus and acquisition planning, Germany demonstrates how a shared language can cultivate nationalism and in turn sway status and acquisition planning. Thanks to Martin Luther’s translation of the Bible into German, the German language became culturally and linguistically (albeit not yet economically and socially) cohesive, even before France had realized the need to spread a single language. Language, however, was only one factor in determining German identity, as learning German did not make one a German—Germans believed their identity was transmitted partly by language but partly by blood and birthright (Wright 2012, 62). These factors, collectively defined as invisible bonds, answered much of the questions about German national identity that arose as nationalism swept across Europe, but it neglected one question: if a nation prospers only on its homeland (as did the great empires of Europe at the time), where was Germany’s homeland? In contrast to France, which possessed a territory but not a national consciousness, Germany developed its national consciousness before it defined its territory. Its political class struggled between powers like France and Austria-Hungary to determine its borders, and simultaneously its intellectual class in essence “[wrote] the invitations” to the masses who believed they belonged in local communities before they were told they were members of nations (Wright 2012, 63).

Lithuania, like its Baltic neighbors, leans toward the German approach in its language planning approach. While it remains true that Lithuania implements acquisition planning to teach Lithuanian language, history, culture, and identity, it chiefly does so to assimilate national minorities and to perpetuate the Lithuanian identity that existed before the state’s formation.

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4 Such a claim falls in contrast with Renan, who argues that Germans are not pure-blooded and have no reason to base their nationality on race (Renan 1882, 2).
Lithuania, like Germany, lacks historically consistent borders; its partnership with Poland and its later incorporations into Russia and later the USSR left the state only with its miniscule window of interwar independence as a reference to the territory the new state should possess.\(^5\) However, throughout centuries of alliances and foreign dominance, Lithuania and its Baltic brothers counterbalanced the necessity of (often imposed and imbalanced) societal bilingualism with a strong loyalty to the cultural language. Over time, the Baltic languages evolved first into a symbol and then into a marker for Baltic ethnic identity (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienė 2004, 62), which planted the seeds of national language priority that would sprout upon Baltic independence.

**Language Policy Planning Post-USSR**

Upon their independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Baltic States gained policy sovereignty, wherein the former language minorities (the Baltic languages) of the former USSR became the language majorities of their newly-determined territory (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienė 2003, 27). Foreseeing no further obstruction of freedom, the Baltics established the priority of long-term language and integration policies which would ultimately grant them acceptance into the European Union (62). Lithuania largely met these goals and enjoyed relatively fair language policy balance to begin with. All three Baltics faced bilingualism of the individual during Soviet times—i.e. most ethnic Baltics spoke their national language and Russian, whereas other Soviet citizens spoke Russian and perhaps a non-Baltic ethnic language (“Bilingualism in Latvia” 2016, 5)—but after independence Estonia and Latvia faced more complex problems than did Lithuania because both states possessed larger populations of Russian speakers than did their southern neighbor. Furthermore, because of the unique status of

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\(^5\) According to Lithuanian history as discussed in the previous chapter, even the interwar independence borders are inaccurate, as Poland annexed the Vilnius territory that Lithuania considers its own.
Russian populations as a former dominant language group in the Baltic territories (in status if not fully in population), European scholars were unsure of whether established international minority rights applied to the Baltic states (Ozolines 2003, 217); this uncertainty complicated but did not ultimately inhibit European Union accession.

Because Estonia and Latvia faced a more complex minority language situation than did Lithuania, this portion of the thesis will focus on Estonian and Latvian language policymaking and the struggles therein. Exploring the legal and ethical implications of the other Baltics’ policy choices will provide insight into Lithuania’s relatively stable language situation and emphasize the progress that all three Baltic States have already made (albeit at varying paces) in balancing national languages only recently liberated with minority languages only recently demoted.

As the Baltics began their status planning in the years before their independence, they faced heavy opposition from Russia. On 18 January 1989, the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR passed a law making Estonian once again the state language and mandating that within four years, officials and sales personnel should operate in both Estonian and Russian. Latvia passed similar laws the same month, and Lithuania in June (Hiden and Salmon 1994, 151). These laws carried over into Baltic independence, despite that Russia opposed first those laws at the time of passing and then in 1991 when it accused the Baltics of discrimination against Russian speaking minorities (Ozolines 2003, 218).

The Baltic states denied Russian allegations, but found their promises hard to adhere to as they became independent and re-determined citizenship laws. Latvia and Estonia granted citizenship to the descendants of citizens in 1940 at the time of Soviet occupation, “leaving 30% of people in Latvia and 25% of people in Estonia without citizenship” (Ozolines 2003, 219). Latvia in particular issued a harsh ultimatum: Russians in Latvia were given the choice to stay,
learn Latvian to the point of fluency, take the combined citizenship and language test, and become a citizen; return to Russia and apply for citizenship within the Russian Federation; or stay in Latvia as non-citizens and remain unable to participate in Latvian civic life or travel to EU countries (“Bilingualism in Latvia” 2016, 9). Scholars hypothesize that these high standards for citizenship were meant to discourage Russian citizenship, as ethnic Russians made up nearly half the population of Latvia (in 1989, a USSR census revealed 1,387,757 Latvians, 905,515 Russians, and 1,133,298 Russian speakers in Latvia), and Latvia desperately sought to protect its own language and culture from being engulfed by Russians (“Bilingualism in Latvia” 2016, 5).

In 1992 Estonia and Latvia both extended by two years the amount of time for Russians in predominantly Russian speaking towns (e.g. Narva, Daugavpils) to learn and take the national language exams; however, Russia continued to accuse them of attempting to avoid a “dilution” of Baltic language and culture by excluding Russians from public life (Lieven 1993, 192).

Here, Lithuania begins to differ from its northern neighbors. Lithuania possessed a smaller proportion of language minorities (18.1% minority population in 2012, versus Latvia’s 43.7% and Estonia’s 34.2% (Mercator 2012), with similar numbers at the time of Baltic independence) and its minority populations had relatively good command of Lithuanian (Hogan-Brun et al. 2005, 352). Therefore, in contrast to strict citizenship measures set by Latvia and Estonia, it put forth the “zero option” policy: if a person lived in the Lithuanian Republic at the time of independence and passed a language test after a certain period of study, that person could become a Lithuanian citizen (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienè 2003, 36).

Many schools of thought assumed that, having been by and large minorities of their own countries, the Baltic states ultimately did not need to consider minorities (Hiden and Salmon
Antanas Maceina, a Catholic writer, asserted that “Members of the old state were citizens:

The new [nation] state rests its existence not on the citizen but on the national… The state, the embodiment of the nation cannot treat equally both nationals and citizens of foreign nationalities, or the so-called national minorities. Nationals are the true members of the new state, while all the rest are merely the state’s residents. They are entitled to all the rights of nationals, but they cannot have the same privileges as nationals. Their participation in the life of national culture, in science, art, public institutions, economy is undesirable and in some cases even inadmissible (Sabaliunias 1972: 162)

In view of this nationalist attitude that arose with Baltic independence, Russian concerns for its Russian speakers abroad are understandable. In the post-independence years it strove for two demands in particular: the automatic citizenship of all residents in the Baltic States, and the declaration of Russian by the Baltics as a second national language. In pursuing its goals, it utilized the structures of human rights set up by the West to protect language minority rights. Said a Russian foreign ministry spokesman in 1992:

The question of human rights is a very strong weapon. The West is highly sensitive to this issue, in contrast to us. As a result of our diplomatic activities the reputation of the three Baltic countries can be undermined more and more [. . .] (Ozolines 2003, 219)

Moscow argued to Western governments that the lack of citizenship for Baltic Russians creates a “stranded diaspora”, but the Baltics countered that Russia’s complaints stem from a foreign relations dispute and not any Baltic mistreatment of Russian speaking minorities (Ozolines 2003, 219). Other groups besides Russia contested Baltic minority choices: the US-based human rights organization, Helsinki Watch, wrote to the Latvian Supreme Council deploring its requirement of 16 years of residence and a language test as unfair to those who settled in Latvia not expecting to be rendered foreigners (Lieven 1993, 311).

In response to these complaints, the United Nations dispatched at least one mission to Latvia (Lieven 1993, 379) and, since 1991, more than fifteen to Estonia (Ozolines 2003, 219),
and found no significant abuses in human rights in either state. Lieven (1993, 379) puts forth the hypothesis that the UN, which represents nation-states, has often struggled to represent the interests of minorities or to defend them externally, except in desperate cases where the damage to minority communities has already been done.

At this point, the reader may wish to step back to consider how the policy of three small Eastern European states interacted on a larger scale, i.e. with the European Union and with international standards. While the Baltic States were determined to restore and promote their ethnic languages, this paper’s discussion of language policy has so far only considered status planning as independent of other states and organizations. In fact, in an increasingly interconnected region and world, the Baltic States cared very much about the guidelines suggested by international bodies like the European Union—that is, if the Baltics hoped to begin their nationhood with good relationships with those international bodies (Manners 2002).

Foremost, it is necessary to establish that international agreements lack clear legislation concerning language issues. European institutions value positive relations with minority groups, but since—like the United Nations—they are founded by states, they interpret the laws they make in narrow ways so as to infringe upon state sovereignty as little as possible. Furthermore, many European institutions base their recommendations on Western European precepts that often go inapplicable to the East (Ozolines 2003, 220-221). The Baltic States in particular have an opposite situation from linguistic disputes which protect the growth of minority languages: by the time of independence nearly everyone spoke Russian, which legally became the minority language, but monolingual Russians who found work in the Baltics during Soviet times began to fight for their right to remain monolingual and refuse to learn the majority (read: national) language. European bodies have little precedent for this sort of situation; one of the few
commonalities is that language minority disputes tend to represent a larger interstate conflict (Ozolines 2003, 226-227).

Despite their limitations, European institutions have had success in intervening in Baltic policy concerning citizenship and language, use of language in the private sphere, and language requirements in candidature for public office. No international conventions discuss citizenship procedures because such decisions are left to sovereign states; nevertheless, Western Europe has relied on human rights arguments to challenge Estonia (in 1995) and Latvia (in 1998) in making their citizenship laws more accessible. Along with offering critiques, e.g. of the language tests issued, European bodies have provided funding to teach the Estonian and Latvian languages to make the tests fairer to those who choose to take them. States within Europe but operating outside European bodies have also pressured all three Baltics to lift their restrictions enforcing the sole use of the national language in the private sphere; the Baltics countered that they meant to monitor not individual use but collective capability in the national language. Most notably, the European Court of Human Rights opened a case in 2002—commented on by President Bush and Colin Powell, among others—concerning the Baltics’ and particularly Latvia’s laws requiring fluency in the national language as a prerequisite for running for public office. Estonia agreed to change this law in 2001 (having heard complaints but not been brought to court) and Latvia in May 2002, but both states soon after passed laws to make their national languages the language of parliament (Ozolines 2003, 222-224).

Most interesting in these examples is the theme of the Baltic States fighting against Russian demands about language laws\(^6\), but taking into consideration European suggestions.

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\(^6\) Russians were not fully ignored in Baltic policymaking; one reason the Baltics resisted European pressure to change their policies was that they believed their policies were not only effective but accepted by many Russian speakers (Ozolines 2003, 230)
Although they offer counterarguments and sometimes circumvent the intention if not the letter of European requests (see: making the national language the language of parliament), the Baltics began nationhood with the intent of collaborating with and integrating into the rest of Europe, which ultimately leads to their acquiescence to the European Union’s suggestions. The EU, in turn, infringes on Baltic sovereignty as little as possible (as it does for all other nations), and confronts the Baltics with relatively gentle means—no blockades as Russia once did, only political pressure—and only when human rights violations cannot be ignored. The Baltics have learned from their interactions with the League of Nations—which neglected the Baltics at a time when Germany and Russia were plotting their downfall and division—that international cooperation with the right bodies and states will ensure their continued survival and growth.

Today: Minority Populations Within Lithuania

In contrast to the strict and controversial language and citizenship policies of its northern neighbors, Lithuania has developed a gentler approach to its minority populations. Post-independence it focused on corpus planning to strengthen the Lithuanian language (Hogan-Brun et al. 2005, 353), and in 1995 it adopted the Law on State Language to regulate the use of Lithuanian in public life and industry (Hogan-Brun and Ramonië 2004, 67). However, its discussion and treatment of language minorities remained considerably less contentious than were the choices of Estonia and Latvia. The balancing act began in 1988 with a decree that granted the Lithuanian language equal rights with Russian, established that preschool students would not learn Russian until the third grade, and arranged for teachers of Lithuanian the same 15% salary bonus that teachers of Russian received during the Soviet era. The decree ended with an assertion that Lithuanian would be phased into all spheres of life—which stirred the Polish and Russian minorities into protests and assertions of their identity as national minorities of
Lithuania. With brief negotiations, two more provisions were added to the decree: the right of schoolchildren to be educated in their own language in primary and secondary schools, and the right of communities to be provided with “minority language-only outlets”. Lithuania redefined its national language as both a language of identity and a forum language for minority groups (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienė 2004, 65), creating a nationalistic yet equitable language policy that carried into the independence era.

Lithuania is unique among the Baltics not only in its choice of laws but in its proportion of minorities: despite having two roughly equal-sized minority communities of Polish and Russian speakers, as of 2001 Lithuania’s population was 84% ethnically Lithuanian and therefore at a much lower risk for “cultural dilution” than either of its Baltic neighbors (Ramonienė 2007, 423). Despite less pressing obligations to their minority communities than Estonia and Latvia faced, Lithuania solidified its commitment to linguistic diversity by joining the Council of Europe, a body which promotes language education in new member states, in 1993 (Ministry of Education 2003, 38), and has passed legislation and policies since then to preserve the majority and minority languages.

Recent studies indicate that Lithuania’s language policy is stable and promotes roughly equally the rights of Lithuanians (the national ethnic and linguistic majority) and Poles and Russians (the national minorities). A 2011 survey completed by 23,686 children attending school in Lithuania specifies the following:

- Lithuanian students speak a variety of home languages, but overall Lithuanian is the primary home language.7

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7 Thirty-seven total home languages were reported, but only twenty-three home languages were repeated more than three times and only nine were reported at least ninety times (Ramonienė and Extra 2011, 65)
• Frequent code switching occurs, especially between generations: Lithuanian is used to speak to younger family members, indicating a trend of increasing use of Lithuanian over other languages, and ethnic or heritage languages (e.g. Russian, Polish, Belorussian) are used when speaking to older family members.

• Many Polish and Russian families prefer to send their children to Lithuanian schools, but perpetuate the use of Russian or Polish at home.

• The Russian community in particular has increased its levels of bilingualism with Lithuanian, indicating a desire to integrate in the overall population of Lithuania.

• Polish is the third most understood language because the Russification of the Soviet era encouraged high comprehension of Russian in the Lithuanian republic, which undermined centuries of Polish cultural hegemony.

• English became relevant to Lithuanians in 1990 following Lithuania’s independence and eventual membership in the EU and NATO; it has in fact become the language of “urban prestige” among Lithuanian youth (Ramonienë and Extra 2011, 63-66).

• Across all age groups there is a decrease in the use of Polish and Russian (Ramonienë and Extra 2011, 68), although apart from Lithuanian, Polish has the highest vitality in third-generation groups, indicating a strong Polish cultural presence and endurance that Russians in Lithuania do not share (73).

From this analysis, it becomes clear that Lithuania’s acquisition planning is successful: although minority language rights are still represented—albeit in a negative sense, with no ethnic Lithuanians being required to balance Polish or Russian culture with that of Lithuania—Lithuanian is increasingly used by both ethnic Lithuanians and by the minority populations integrating into the nation.
Before going on to discuss Lithuania’s language acquisition procedures, I wish to spend some time discussing the integration of the Polish and Russian communities into Lithuania. Polish-speaking Lithuanians in particular make up a fascinating contrast to Russians, as their population is diminished and yet their cultural ties remain strong and relatively unassimilated. Historically speaking, the pride of Polish-speaking Lithuanians in their language is natural and understandable: as late as after World War I, Poles made up between fifteen and eighteen percent of Lithuania’s population, and even in the era of independence Poles in Lithuania perceived Lithuanians as a grouping of peasants speaking a strange dialect. Despite their attitude, Lithuanian Poles are seen by those of Poland as distinctly different (e.g. Warsaw critiques the spelling and grammar “mistakes” made in Kurier Wilenski, the main Polish-Lithuanian newspaper); in fact, studies have found that the dialect that Lithuanian Poles speak, named Gwara Wilenska, could be a form of Byelorussian or Polish or both or neither (Lieven 1993, 159-160).

Despite their legal classification as Lithuanian, Polish-speaking Lithuanians identify chiefly as Poles. Rural Lithuanian Poles go so far as to call themselves the Tuteisi, the “people from here”, a common answer to the question of nationality before state sovereignty existed. Lithuanian Poles therefore hold a sort of multifaceted identity wherein they are legally classified as Lithuanian, are labeled as Poles, and speak a dialect that belongs to no other group. They perceive themselves as an independent group, and despite Soviet times and generally lower growth lessening their community’s relative size (6.6 percent of the Lithuanian population in 2011 versus 7.0 percent in 1989 (Geben and Ramonienė 2015, 244)), they fight vocally for their own rights, particularly in the southeast where they live in the highest concentration. Their top four demands: higher education being available in Polish, an official status for Polish, an
administrative division that gives Poles a “solid majority”, and reforms to give land in Polish areas back to former Polish owners (in response to post-independence Lithuanianization of land) (Lieven 1993, 168).

Why, then, have the Russian-speaking Lithuanians not made similar demands? Simply speaking, Russians in Lithuania do not feel as threatened as do Lithuanian Poles. The Russian language and identity are well-represented outside of Lithuania, and Russians in general have been observed to show a higher degree of tolerance, especially given that Russian is widely spoken and understood in Lithuania and possesses multiple language and education resources (Ozolines 2003, 229-230). Further study indicates that Russian self-perception, especially in the Baltic States, concedes many positive attributes to the Baltics which appear to humble the Russians who take up residence. Russians have claimed that “the Balts have a superior civic culture, are cleaner, more orderly, and harder-working”, although they qualify those claims, for example, by asserting that Russian life is “more humane”. Scholars interpret these findings as a sign that Russians in Baltic states are both self-assured and self-deprecating, which allows them to positively perceive Lithuanians and therefore assimilate into Lithuanian life (Lieven 1993, 178)—in contrast to Polish-speaking Lithuanians, who value self-deprecation below self-expression and self-protection.
Chapter Three: Hypothesis

Compared to the struggles of Latvia and Estonia to balance their national priorities with minority rights, Lithuania enjoys a relatively balanced language policy. Its national language is well represented in the government and in schools, and its minority communities, be they isolative (Polish) or immersive (Russian), find themselves represented and with the option to learn the national language. Few legal struggles have taken place concerning the rights of inhabitants in Lithuania, and cultural and linguistic diversity have not been lost to the goal of social integration (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienė 2003, 27).

The balance of national and minority languages, however, is not enough for a globalizing world. As Lithuania, along with nearly every European state, opens its borders to foreign trade and culture, it finds the need for its citizens to speak more languages than Lithuanian. To remain competitive, citizens can either learn the language of the state they plan most to do business with (i.e. to learn Russian to trade with Russia, to learn German to interact with Germans) or learn a lingua franca (usually English) to serve as an auxiliary (Wright 2012, 76). The European attitude mandates neither approach; instead it champions the cause of each nation retaining and teaching its national language while promoting linguistic diversity (Ministry of Education 2003, 5).

Lithuania has thus far enjoyed a successful balance of language majorities and minorities, but as it readies its economy for global competition, it must prepare to teach and represent a third category of language: languages of trade, those languages which are not spoken by any sizeable minority within the state but which are necessary to conduct interstate affairs. The term “language of trade” (LOTs) will usually refer to English as the lingua franca chosen by Lithuania and the European Union to be taught, but may also refer to the languages of major trading partners: German, Russian, French (to a lesser extent), etc. “Languages of trade” will be used in
place of English to emphasize that, although this study primarily examines English language education, the practices described here may apply to any foreign language deemed necessary or ideal for citizens to speak to interact in the international system.

Owing to its miniscule native English speaking population, Lithuania has much less precedent for balancing languages of trade than it has for protecting and balancing minority rights. Languages of trade in many ways reflect an invisible power struggle within Lithuania: although there exists no sizeable community of speakers of LOTs, movements to promote LOTs resemble efforts that Lithuania might undertake for a tangible minority group. After years of imbalance in representing the Lithuanian language and appeasing minorities, allocating time and resources to the transmission of LOTs may undermine the efforts of Lithuania to encourage the growth of its national language and the stability of its minority communities. Without careful status and acquisition planning, the landscape of language education in Lithuania may become a battleground pitting global forces (represented by LOTs) against nationalist waves (represented by Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian speakers).

Fortunately, a model exists that may guide Lithuania in its future choices: the example of Finland. Finland, the Baltic States’ northern neighbor, shares the Baltic Sea and a long history of subjugation. While Estonia and Latvia lived under German and then Russian control and as Lithuania endured a tug-of-war between Poland and Russia, Finland alternated between Russian and Swedish possession and achieved independence in roughly the same era as did the Baltics (Zetterberg 2016). In the modern day, Lithuania and Finland demonstrate parallel language situations: a long-subjugated national language (Lithuanian; Finnish) only recently given the right to its own status planning; one or more minority language communities (Russian and Polish; Swedish) descended from former oppressors who have long settled in the nation and
expect linguistic rights; and a need for LOT acquisition (particularly English) to keep the state competitive in the regional and international sphere. In this last aspect, Finland has long triumphed over Lithuania; despite Finnish being unrelated to English and therefore giving Finnish speakers no advantage of cognates or similar grammatical structures, Finland’s rate of fluency in English is one of the highest in Europe—45.25% of Finns in 2015 speak English fluently as a native or learned language, vs. 20.58% of Lithuanians (Van Parys 2012)—and seemingly at no expense of the instruction of Finnish or Swedish. Finland has furthermore developed into one of Europe’s richest and most successful nations and the world’s most competitive economy, and analysts peg their investment in education and training (with LOT education as an assumedly sizeable piece) as the reason for the nation’s success (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 2). Finland has clearly found a language balance that not only meets its domestic language priorities but propels it into global success.

I hypothesize that (a) Lithuania is doing less than Finland is in promoting language education success, and that (b) in learning to balance the teaching of languages of trade with national and minority language education, Lithuania can adopt the best practices and policies developed by Finland. As the main mechanism of transmitting national identity and attitudes, national education systems and especially language education will be analyzed throughout the rest of this thesis. Through government documents and interviews with native Lithuanian and Finnish speakers, I will study the education policy concerning languages of trade in Finland and Lithuania in relation to the national and minority languages already being taught.

Discussion of My Sources

My main argument will be divided into two parts: an outlining of Lithuania’s language education policy, and a comparison with that of Finland. Both parts will begin with a discussion
of how the language education system of each state currently functions. From there, I will delve into an analysis of the nation’s language education policy, based on language planning documents released by the heads of state and on external evaluations from sources like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Finally, I will connect official language policy goals with successes as deemed by interviewees who have attended Lithuanian and Finnish schools.

Interview questions were developed in October 2016 with assistance from Dr. Artemi Romanov and with review and approval by the University of Colorado’s Institutional Review Board. The questions (see Appendix I) focus in part on demographics, in part on national identity as expressed through language, and largely on the interviewee’s perceptions of the necessity, successes, and failures of language education in their nation’s schools. Three interviews were conducted in person, one by Skype, and four by written response to the interview questions posed. Interview data was collected from November 2016 to February 2017. All interviewees meet the criteria of speaking at least proficient English and of having attended primary and/or secondary school in Lithuania or Finland.

A demographic synopsis of the interviewees is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality at Birth/Home Country</th>
<th>Place of Residence</th>
<th>Method of Interview</th>
<th>Level of Schooling Attained/Attaining (in home country unless otherwise specified)</th>
<th>Languages Spoken (In Order of Fluency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairov, Ruta</td>
<td>Lithuanian (as part of USSR)</td>
<td>US (Boulder area); attended school in Vilnius</td>
<td>In person</td>
<td>Bachelor’s (attained)</td>
<td>Lithuanian, English, Russian, Yiddish, German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagyte, Gražina</td>
<td>Lithuanian</td>
<td>US (Boulder area)</td>
<td>In person</td>
<td>Bachelor’s (attained in US)</td>
<td>Lithuanian, English,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several biases appear in this sample size. The foremost concern is that this sample is one of convenience; of the eight interviewees, I knew and befriended five before proposing my thesis topic, and the other three live in the Boulder area where I pursue my studies. While I asked the Boulder interviewees to recommend other Lithuanians and Finns I could speak to, scheduling conflicts and unresponsiveness limited the pool of potential interviewees. As interviews were conducted fully in English, the sample also skews towards proficient to fluent English speakers, which in turn suggests that the interviewees will weigh English more heavily above other languages than would a more general sample.

This data set furthermore biases itself heavily towards females (teens, university students, and two university graduates), towards urbanites (Kaunas being the second largest city in
Lithuania), towards university-educated or -bound citizens, and towards Lithuanians. Some perspective of Vilnius, the multicultural capital of Lithuania, is represented in that three interviewees lived in or near Vilnius and one plans to attend university there, but only two interviewees can speak from a rural Lithuanian experience. This geographic sampling of Lithuania is in some ways beneficial—Kaunas is often described as the most “Lithuanian” (i.e. potentially representative) city, as opposed to Vilnius which faces heavy Polish influence—but in some ways skews language identity in favor of Lithuania ahead of minorities. Owing to the relative homogeneity of the interviewees’ backgrounds, the data will display that attitudes towards Polish and Russian range from neutral to negative; Polish is expressed as largely irrelevant unless one knows a Pole, and Russian is labeled difficult and uninspiring to learn. The sole Finnish interviewee similarly had little contact with Swedish speaking Finns owing to her childhood in the rural center of Finland, and so—in her adolescence, before she married and began using Swedish at home—she possessed a more negative attitude of the Swedish language in Finland than might be expected of someone who grew up in closer proximity to Swedish speakers.

Despite the biases that impact this sample, these interviews add value to my argument in that they provide individual experiences that alternately reinforce, clarify, and contrast the assertions of national language planning documentation. The state bodies of both Finland and Lithuania have conducted thorough self-evaluations of their education systems, and the resulting conclusions of their strengths and weaknesses will be discussed in this thesis. However, the individual insights of these interviewees have the potential to emphasize the greatest triumphs and struggles stemming from lists that the government bodies provide in their reports, and their
evaluations synthesize education with economic and personal incentives in a way that government reports cannot replicate.
Chapter Four: Lithuania’s Language Education Policy

What Policy Says

The Lithuanian education system is overall competitive with most of its European peers. Principals “report having one of the smallest shortage[s] of education staff” among nations and regions participating in the Programme for International Student Assessment, the foremost measure of basic skill attainment across nations. Schools are furthermore reported to be highly autonomous, as measured by the percentage of tasks (91.1%) for which they have “considerable responsibility” (OECD 2015, “Lithuania”).

The European Union encourages all citizens to learn their mother tongue and two other languages (Ministry of Education 2003, 38). For Lithuania the tongue is usually Lithuanian, which is necessary to know to work with the private and public sectors. Knowledge of Lithuanian has been deemed necessary enough to set up adult education centers alongside Lithuanian schools; these institutions establish Lithuanian as a language applicable to “all spheres of life” to create a desire alongside the state-enforced urgency to speak Lithuanian (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienè 2003, 34-35).

Learning Lithuanian begins as young as can be arranged. While minority schools make up nine percent of all schools in Lithuania and while bilingual schools exist as an alternative, parents who speak no Lithuanian largely elect to send their children to Lithuanian-speaking schools, a choice which becomes problematic in regions like southeast Lithuania where up to 70% of students are non-Lithuanian speakers (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienè 2003, 35). Nonetheless, because obtaining a university education in Lithuania requires fluency in the national language, parents press for their children to adopt Lithuanian as early as possible, through bilingual education (exposing children to both home and host languages in equal
amounts throughout the school day) if not immersion (asking children to operate only in Lithuanian at school).

To assist in the measurement of fluency in Lithuanian, Lithuania has adjusted lessons to refocus from structure (i.e. complex grammatical knowledge) to language in use (i.e. basic communication skills). It has furthermore adopted the Council of Europe’s fluency levels of threshold (the minimum requirement of communication), waystage (the earliest level of fluency), and vantage (a threshold of fluency), to measure young and adult students’ progress with a mechanism approved by and comprehensible to the European Union. These levels create a rubric by which state language testing can be conducted and individuals can be certified as Lithuanian speakers as necessary (Hogan-Brun and Ramonienë 2004, 66-67).

The language policy of Lithuania divides itself into four sections: the strategy of teaching Lithuanian, the strategy of teaching minority languages, the strategy of teaching foreign languages (LOTs), and struggles the education system faces.

The Ministry of Education (2003, 18) describes its main goal in teaching Lithuanian as encouraging more inhabitants to study and improve their knowledge Lithuanian, while bearing in mind that many members national minorities speak Lithuanian as a second language at varying levels of proficiency. The state education system presents Lithuanian as the “language of the school community,” except in the case of national minority schools, which present it as a tool that facilitates interaction with and integration into society. To realize this goal, all subjects except foreign languages are taught in Lithuanian, and Lithuanian itself is presented as another study subject as well as the language through which other subjects are understood (6).
According to the laws which Lithuania has put in place, national minorities possess a series of rights including the right to obtain funding from the state for cultural and education needs and the right for minority children to obtain schooling in their native languages. All parents have the option to send their children to a school where the language of instruction is Lithuanian, and parents who wish their children to speak Russian, Polish, or Byelorussian may choose to enroll their children in schools which instruct in such languages. As of 2003, speakers of those languages may also obtain resources for their mother tongues in any school in Lithuania, not only minority schools. Upon special request by at least five students, and depending on the availability of a teacher fluent in the language necessary, children can be given supplemental lessons in their mother tongue but still attend a Lithuanian-speaking school; Russian, Polish, English, German, and French are the easiest languages to find teachers for, as Lithuania’s teachers are usually well-versed and certified in at least one of these languages. Quite often, immigrant children express little interest in learning their language of origin and seek to devote their school resources to learning Lithuanian.

Foreign language education, as it is of particular interest to this argument, will be covered in the most detail. The Ministry of Education (2003) recognizes the need for “human skills” like foreign language in creating a “know-how” society and promoting Lithuanian labor mobility. It also acknowledges that:

When schoolchildren learn foreign languages, they develop their personality and strengthen such values as openness to language and culture of a given country, prepare themselves for living in a multinational, multicultural and multilingual world, develop the qualities and values necessary for successful communication such as tolerance and ability to cooperate, develop the desire to learn languages and continue lifelong learning, develop their moral and aesthetic views as well as the desire to conceive the world as the system of interlinked processes and phenomena, nurture positive traits of character as well as the ability to think, the will, memory, attention, feelings, skills of systematic and

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diligent work, independent thinking skills and ability to select the appropriate cognitive activity (Ministry of Education 2003, 36)

With such high awareness of the benefits that foreign language training brings to the nation as well as its citizens, Lithuania’s Ministry of Education has already enacted a comprehensive foreign language program. The first foreign language learned, beginning in the second grade or at latest the fourth, is a Western European language, usually English but sometimes German or French. The second one taught can be another Western European language, the language of a neighboring country (Polish, Latvian, or Russian), or any other language the student desires as resources are available. A third foreign language, chosen in the ninth grade (Rajeckaitė 2017), is usually reserved only for students who have chosen a humanities-based curriculum; popular languages vary but include the Nordic languages, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese (Ministry of Education 2003 52-54). Students attending national minority schools must study their native language, Lithuanian, and one foreign language (62).

Lithuania underscores its change of foreign language lessons to focus on communicative skills, usually by assigning group work. Communicative skills can be divided into subcompetences—linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, socio-cultural, and social—that encourage intercultural appreciation as well as comprehension. Despite that Lithuanian foreign language education has shifted from systemic to communicative goals, the system of assessment has not changed to match the shift: students are instead encouraged to self-assess their knowledge of foreign languages and to carry on their studies as they see fit (66-70).

To encourage and enhance the learning of foreign languages, Lithuania incorporates the European Union program SOCRATES into its curriculum. SOCRATES and its subdivisions encourage the learning of European languages through exchange periods for secondary and university students and research visits for scholars and professionals. Lithuania’s Ministry of
Education believes that the international mobility that SOCRATES provides is “very relevant to national goals”—not only the goal of more varied and more thorough language instruction, but the goal to encourage innovation and application of knowledge, which are as necessary as language skills in the “know-how” economy Lithuania hopes to build (38-41).

Throughout its self-assessment, the Ministry of Education acknowledges several struggles both in its own administration and in the economic and social conditions Lithuania faces. Internally, language education administration lacks a clear strategy, fails to emphasize the value of Lithuanian in the job market, falls behind in technological advances (and particularly in those that encourage Lithuanian literacy), suffers from low qualification of teachers, and poorly handles the disparity between the top two language maturity exams that offer unequal chances of reaching university-level Lithuanian. Externally, Lithuania finds languages of trade and especially English to be something of a threat; for example, for nearly the majority of all jobs, knowledge of foreign languages is weighed more heavily than knowledge of proper Lithuanian. The time ratio of hours teaching Lithuanian to hours teaching other subjects is decreasing, and imported mass culture slowly sweeps attention away from Lithuania cultural and linguistic movements (7-8).

Two factors which the Ministry of Education has looked into in depth are the teaching of the Lithuanian language and the teaching of teachers. Unclear goals exist for Lithuanian instruction: teachers teach literature assuming that it will assist in communication, but literature is best used as a tool of cultural transmission, whereas language instruction better encourages fluency and practicality. Between the perceived irrelevance of literature instruction and the increasing inappropriateness of old textbooks to meet modern students’ needs (15), the
instruction of Lithuania clearly must change to reinforce the value of Lithuanian in a world that increasingly demands knowledge of languages of trade.

Teachers’ skills will be vital to make these changes, but currently teachers make up part of the problem; “[practicing] teachers often point out the lack of practical skills and the inability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice as the weakest point of professional training of future teachers” (22). Teachers will soon be required to not only possess and convey knowledge, but to organize learning, moderate, advise, and generally encourage a passion for learning beyond the subject being conveyed. However, teachers today sometimes lack even the formal qualifications to teach, let alone training on how to take on these extra roles, and reforms are considered too slow to be of use (82-83). Throughout this analysis, the Ministry of Education in Lithuania concludes that their instruction of foreign languages is sufficient and even overwhelming, and that their highest priorities are to keep Lithuanian relevant through revised lessons and improved teacher training.

What Interviews Say

In contrast to the concerns of the Ministry of Education, my interviewees indicate that their knowledge of the national language and affinity with national culture is far from under threat. Most interviewees are aware and accepting of the diaspora in languages spoken by Lithuanians—of the difference in language proficiency that favors Lithuanian above minority and foreign languages—but appear proud of their nation’s multilingualism despite such differences. One interviewee recognizes the necessity of different languages in different regions:

If you are living in the small town it is not so crucial to know any language at all [except] your own… But in bigger cities like Vilnius or Kaunas it is different. Without English you wouldn’t survive if you want any job[,] even waitresses. It is different in every city, which language are more important because of [history]. For example, in Vilnius there are a lot of [P]olish people so [it is a] priority to know Polish, in Klaipėda more people speaks German or Russian and so on… (Dargevičiutė 2017)
Another interviewee considers the languages that Lithuania offers to be sufficient for the needs of most citizens:

Technically speaking, Lithuanian alone would be sufficient to thrive in Lithuania. Abroad, English and Russian skills are inevitable, the first to deal with the Western world and the second with the Eastern Society. There are, of course, languages such as Mandarin or Italian that I wish I had been taught from a young age, but I feel that the government must work to fix problems that arise when teaching the current four foreign languages before it introduces another one into the language education. (Urbonas 2017)

All interviewees agreed with the statement that “Being able to speak Lithuanian makes up a large part of my identity”. Reasons cited include that Lithuanian is one of the oldest languages of the world, that it sounds “beautiful”, that it is spoken by a small population (Linkevičiutė 2017), that it makes for one of the most notable aspects of national identity (Rajeckaitė 2017), and that it is unique (Dargevičiutė 2017). Clearly Lithuania’s acquisition planning has succeeded in encouraging nationalism through language, although it should be noted that similar sentiments were held by Lithuanians even in times of foreign dominion.⁹

The interviewees’ perceptions of Russian and Polish, the minority languages, were decidedly less favorable. Neither the interviewees nor the Ministry of Education’s report seem to value minority languages beyond a blanket statement that affirms they receive just treatment. However, the interviewees do affirm that they understand the heritage of these languages in Lithuania and the resulting necessity for resources for them; many (Cairov 2016; Rajeckaitė 2017) cite the Soviet era and former Polish control of Vilnius as reasons for the languages’ continued presence in today’s Lithuania. Understanding a language’s history does not necessarily lead to valuing its presence, though, as exemplified by one interviewee:

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⁹ As briefly discussed earlier in this thesis, Cairov (2016) describes safety notices and pamphlets in Soviet-era Lithuanian factories being available only in Russian. A few enterprising Lithuanian locals translated the information into their mother tongue and distributed that information to new workers, not because the workers could not understand Russian but because they wanted to represent their native language alongside the Soviet-imposed one.
As for Russian, I hated that language as [did] a majority of people my age. Somehow Russian was not so popular at the time. Because I knew that I have no plans with the language I was learning what was told to learn but nothing more, so I was barely able to speak, and I did not [understand] a thing. During test[s] we were cheating so my vocabulary was not so good. (Dargevičiutė 2017)

Another interviewee, having attended university in Vilnius only a few years after Lithuanian independence, chose to study languages and only studied Polish because her boyfriend at the time was Polish (Dagyte 2017). The theme of learning Polish only for the sake of friends or family appears to run through the interviews, but only when interviewees recall Polish at all; most interviewees did not study and could not speak the language to any level of proficiency, and no interviewee prioritized Polish as a language to learn in the future.

All interviewees placed high value on learning the English language. Cairov (2016), who attended school during the Soviet regime, was sent to the only English-language education school in Vilnius because her parents (a Lithuanian mother and a Russian father) both spoke some English and foresaw the necessity of the language as the USSR’s regime faltered. Post-independence, Dagyte (2017)’s mother inherited a farm owned by her grandfather and pulled her daughter from school to work on it; Dagyte, not to be deterred, took her English book with her as she herded animals, and returned to school one of the most proficient in her class. Youth in Lithuania today value English as the “cool” language and, in some cases, speak with only a rare trace of a Lithuanian accent because of the Anglophone television and music they consume (Cairov 2016).

When asked to describe Lithuanian schooling, the interviewees largely concurred with the Ministry of Education’s self-assessment but offered several extra details. Dargevičiutė (2017) identified five ethnologically different accents and clarified that students usually used the dialects with friends and in the school setting, except for in the class on Lithuanian language.
Rajeckaitė (2017) recalled, after having attended school in the Vilnius region, that a quarter of her school friends used languages other than Lithuanian at home, a much higher proportion than was reported by those who attended school outside the capital. Rajeckaitė further explained that citizens with rural backgrounds often chose a professional college over higher education, which is “not an aim of life” for such regions; this finding further emphasizes the bias of my data in choosing highly-educated Lithuanians who tend to be urbanites.

A key difference between the Ministry of Education’s report and the information offered by the interviewees lies in the struggles in language education that both groups perceive. The Ministry of Education stresses several times its use of an interactive approach in teaching students, but the majority of the Lithuanian interviewees (Dagyte 2017; Rajeckaitė 2017; Linkevičiutė 2017; Dargevičiutė 2017) bemoan the lack of opportunities to integrate knowledge, apply vocabulary to practical scenarios, or even make use of speaking activities in class. Language learning appears not only to not be taken as seriously as math (Rajeckaitė 2017), but appears to be taught impractically, with too complex rules and too few interactive and high-tech means of learning (Linkevičiutė 2017; Dargevičiutė 2017). As a result, some interviewees were initially “shy” and self-conscious of their errors when they began to speak English (Dagyte 2017), while others took it upon themselves to hire private tutors and/or undertake extra lessons (Rajeckaitė 2017). None of the interviewees were fully satisfied with their instruction in foreign languages at school; some felt they could hold a conversation (Dargevičiutė 2017) while others were confident only of their literacy (Dagyte 2017), but the consensus appears to be that school instruction alone is insufficient.
While some interviewees had positive experiences with teachers, teaching in Lithuania as a whole was perceived negatively. Claims one interviewee, “The teachers taught for the sake of teaching, not to prepare you for work” (Dagyte 2017). Adds another:

Teaching techniques are old and Soviet, how we learn languages in school. You start from a bunch of rules, grammar and add some of vocabulary, no attention paid to spoken language, students are learning not in order to use language but just to study. … in general in Lithuania we are very rarely talking about "why" we do certain things especially in high schools, no one pays attention on reason or purpose, the only aim is to graduate and enter university, then you do everything right. (Rajeckaitė 2017)

The interviewees, along with the Ministry of Education, perceive teacher qualification, along with improved and more applicable lessons, as one of the most effective means of improving language education. One interviewee (Urbonas 2017) suggests improving the conditions that teachers work in, in order to attract more students into the teaching profession. Another (Dargevičiutė 2017) promotes both dismissing older teachers and providing more assistance in the form of aides and technology for new teachers to reinforce lessons. While the Ministry of Education focuses more on the training that current teachers receive, the interviewees appear to take a more holistic approach.

While the Ministry of Education did not approach the topic of brain drain—the departure of Lithuania’s educated class to better pay and working conditions abroad—the interview questions asked the interviewees what might be done to encourage Lithuanians to stay in Lithuania and use their language skills to promote domestic economic growth. Some were quick to defend that many don’t want to leave Lithuania, but do so to pursue higher levels of pay and better living conditions in other countries. One interviewee (Kasperiūnaitė 2017) witnessed her graduating classmates choosing schools in Denmark because “they’re not as good students, and it’s easier to go to a better school in Denmark and it’s free in Denmark” and considering Newcastle University in the United Kingdom for its statistically more successful business
schools. These observations indicate that low barriers to exit and perceived and actual levels of educational quality abroad play into the drain. The interviewees’ answers concluded that only economic and social factors—which remain outside the control of language education policy—could ultimately stop brain drain.
Chapter Five: Finland’s Language Education Policy

What Policy Says

The language policy outline of Finland divides itself into three sections: the strategy of teaching the two national languages, the strategy of teaching English, and struggles the education system faces. Languages of trade will be discussed considerably less concerning Finland because little data has been found that analyzes foreign language study as a whole; most studies explicitly stated their analysis of English education.

Since its establishment as a state, Finland has provided free education for its youth beginning at the age of seven and lasting until at least age sixteen. All students study the same core subjects within primary school, and learning usually occurs in “heterogeneous groups.” The general upper secondary system, lasting three years, typically leads to a five-year university program culminating in a master’s degree. Finland’s education system assesses its progress using the standards of the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, which describes content and good performance therein, and which categorizes content not by the grade level but by transition points within schooling (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 2-3); by the national matriculation exam, which tests students’ knowledge of their mother tongue and three subjects of either the second national language, math, a foreign language, or general studies (7); and by national legislation, which determines curricula in universities and polytechnics (11). Overall, the Finnish government sets educational priorities but leaves execution, organization, funding, and hiring to municipalities who manage schools and day-care facilities (OECD 2013, 4).

The Finnish Ministry of Education considers all aspects of student life in its approach to student achievement. It begins mandatory schooling at age seven as a carryover from history when schools were more distant and parents reluctant to send their children so far; once at
school, students can expect one hot meal per day (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 2-3). Unlike in many European countries, Finland does not undertake the process of streaming or tracking their students, but instead allows for exploration and, if necessary, early intervention to ensure student engagement and success (7). Resulting from such a holistic approach, Finland has achieved not only higher-than-average reading results in PISA 2015—with a score of 526 compared to 493 as the OECD average (OECD 2015, “Finland”)—but a lower impact of socio-economic status on attainment: 8%, versus the OECD’s average of 14% (OECD 2013, 5). In comparison, Lithuanian average reading scores in 2015 were 472 compared to the average 493 (OECD 2015, “Lithuania”), i.e. below average and far below Finland’s accomplishment.

No large-scale international tests compare the English skills of students in non-English-speaking countries, but multiple measures exist to measure how well states’ citizens (including students, but also professionals and the general population) speak English. Therefore, between Finland’s aforementioned high achievement in reading skills (as a general representation of language processing skills), Finland’s higher proportion of nationals who consider themselves fluent in English (50% in Finland (Freeman and Mullett 2008) vs. 30% in Lithuania10 (Žemaitis 2016)), and Finland’s and Lithuania’s equal access to exchange programs and foreign media that shape English skills outside of school, one may assume that the Finnish education system takes credit for Finland’s higher proportion of English speakers.

Unlike Lithuania, Finland has established itself as a bilingual country, with Finnish and Swedish as the two national languages. Still, the proportion and distribution of Swedish speakers throughout Finland echoes that of Lithuania enough that a comparison between treatment of

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10 Žemaitis notes that although 30% of the overall Lithuanian population speaks English, that number spikes to 80% when counting only the youth of Lithuania. As no comparable figures have been found for Finland, I will adhere to the value of 30%, and I rely on my interviews to uncover the disparity in fluency at different ages.
Swedish speakers (in Finland) and Russian and Polish speakers (in Lithuania) remains appropriate. Swedish speakers in Finland made up 5.3% of the Finnish population as of 2014, and Swedish speaking communities live largely in the southern and western coasts of Finland; by way of comparison, Lithuania’s largest language minorities make up 8.2% (Russian speakers) and 6.9% (Polish speakers) of the national population as of 2012, with Poles concentrated in the southeast and Russians in urban areas (Mercator 2012), which renders the proportions of minorities in Finland and Lithuania not incomparable. Furthermore, Finnish and Lithuanian have both endured centuries of subjugation only to recently emerge as masters of their own languages. For example, as in Lithuania—whose administration was historically managed in Polish and then in Russian—Finland’s administrative and judicial structures hearken to the era of Swedish rule and therefore of Swedish vocabulary; Finland has invested national effort into reconstructing the Finnish language to match the systems already in place (Prime Minister’s Office 2012, 10).

Resulting from this deep-seated presence of Swedish throughout history, Finland faces the same balancing act Lithuania does in honoring the identity of former majority language communities while developing and promoting the recently autonomous national language.

The Prime Minister’s office (2012, 10) perceives the acquisition of Finnish as a generally positive trait for reasons relating to Finland’s Nordic identity, Finnish trade ties (Sweden is Finland’s biggest trading partner for exports), and the necessity of Swedish after Finnish and English on the labor market. The office particularly boasts that “One of Finland’s international success factors has been Finns’ good knowledge of languages. Solid skills in the national languages are therefore an advantage for Finland beyond the country’s borders, too” (Prime Minister’s Office 2012, 11). Therefore, the Finnish government highly values the balance of Swedish and Finnish and takes steps to promote its acquisition in national schools. Good
progress has been made: as a most basic right, every Finnish child has the right to education in his or her mother tongue, be it Finnish or Swedish (Heikkinen-Folktinget 2015, 3). However, the Prime Minister’s Office notes that while Finnish speaking Finns are generally assured that their linguistic rights and needs are protected, Swedish speakers have less contact with authorities like the police in their native language and must turn more often to bilingualism to fulfill their civic needs (12-14). Furthermore, Finland’s current language policy encourages bilingualism at the state level: the average Finnish citizen is quite often not bilingual. While it is rare that Swedish speakers have no contact with Finnish speakers, some tens of thousands of Swedish speakers cannot speak Finnish fluently or at all (Prime Minister’s Office 2012, 13). Much more planning and exposure continues to be needed to balance Swedish and Finnish speakers’ rights.

In realizing its vision of “a future Finland with two viable national languages”, the Finnish Prime Minister’s Office has found it necessary to develop a language strategy for languages besides Finnish, which had not been done in Finnish history until 2012 (7). The Swedish speaking population is roughly stable, although an increasing number of intermarriages are beginning to register their children as Swedish speakers. Despite its community’s stagnant growth and small size, Swedish—as an official language of Finland—receives full and equal rights alongside Finnish, emphasized in its acquisition planning. Students receive their education first in their home language (Finnish or Swedish), and then can begin acquisition of the “second domestic language” starting in third, fifth, or seventh form of comprehensive school; studies of both national languages persist throughout secondary school. To encourage early acquisition of both national languages—an advantage for students who might one day work in policymaking or international business—parents seek immersion education in early childcare and primary school. Demand, however, far outweighs supply at the current time (Heikkinen-Folktinget 2015, 2-4).
Swedish is only one of nine languages recognized and promoted to some extent. Finland also affords nearly equivalent protections to three dialects of Sámi (spoken in the north of Finland), and the Roma, Tartar, Russian, Yiddish, and Karelian languages also enjoy certain privileges in Finland thanks to its ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Heikkinen-Folktinget 2015, 4).

Despite Finland’s efforts to assure rights to languages that are spoken by minorities within its borders, the education of languages of trade is perceived as more relevant to the average Finn. The first foreign language taught by Finnish schools (not including Swedish, which counts as a national language) is typically English; English instruction begins as early as grade one or as late as grade three, i.e. most students typically can express themselves to some extent in English before even being exposed to the second of the two national languages (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 4). The Prime Minister’s office (2012, 9) observes that English has “largely replaced” the two national languages as the language of research in mathematics and the natural sciences, which renders more challenging the government’s efforts to develop words in both Finnish and Swedish to compete with loanwords.

What encourages such high achievement in Finland, both in standard academic performance and in language instruction? Foreign and international research points to Finland’s teaching experience. Unlike in many developed countries, including Lithuania, teaching in Finland is perceived not as a “fallback” profession but as one of prestige and benefits. Teachers in Finland are better paid than in other countries studied by the OECD (13% higher than the OECD average), and they enjoy a lighter workload; teachers are in fact paid comparably to other professionals in Finland, and enough are employed that student-teacher ratios are 9:1, well below the OECD average of 14:1 (OECD 2014, 1). Teachers furthermore enjoy a dense network of
counseling professionals, social welfare staff (OECD 2013, 4), and academic administrators who help them detect early signs of poor performance and generate a holistic and personalized plan to bring the student back on track. Along with such strong support, students enjoy the ability to study independently, and they face no stigma for receiving assistance or even being held back a year later. Perhaps most importantly, the Finnish teacher education system chooses the best candidates from the start: their teacher education programs remain among the most selective in their universities, with far more applicants than vacancies (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 5-8). The same holistic approach, prestige of teachers, and independence of students were not remarked upon in studies of the Lithuanian school system.

While Finland largely succeeds in its education system (including in language transmission), it struggles to update its university and vocational programs to match the goals of national language promotion. Occupational and university tracks, once a student chooses one in late secondary school, only rarely cross paths, but this feature of the system will need to change to ensure that Finland’s work force is prepared for changing labor needs. Furthermore, students are spending an average of six years in university and emerging to higher rates of tertiary-educated graduate unemployment; clearly the current education system is creating job candidates who are overqualified for or mismatched to the jobs available (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 13-15).

Within language planning, the Finnish government plans to enhance national bilingualism through the deconstruction of negative perceptions and the promotion of bilingual education. In the recent past many Finns have become antagonistic toward the Swedish language and the concept of bilingualism, largely stemming from misconceptions such as: Finnish speakers think Swedish speakers are a vanishing group (in fact the Swedish speaking population has remained steady since the 1880s), Swedish speakers think Finnish speakers don’t know
Swedish and don’t want to use it (in fact the Prime Minister’s office reports that Finnish speakers hold predominantly positive or neutral attitudes toward Swedish), and Swedish speakers think Finnish speakers refuse to use Swedish when the situation arises (in fact Finnish speakers are in fact often self-conscious of their Swedish skills) (Prime Minister’s Office 2012, 18). These misperceptions may be clarified with improved education, especially at the primary and pre-primary levels through increased resources for immersion programs, and in vocational skills by developing Swedish and Finnish scientific vocabulary and by bolstering education of both national languages in vocational schools (24-25). Review of current government documents has found no initiatives to improve foreign language education beyond a secondary goal to offer more languages (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 12).

**What Interviews Say**

As my research focused primarily on Lithuania in comparison to Finland, my Finnish interview data consists of one case study: Dr. Vilja Hulden, Professor of History at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Dr. Hulden’s observations of her education in Finland complement the general perception that Finland’s language education is of overall high quality, a perception that Finnish government documents nod to before discussing issues of bilingualism and the connection between education and labor.

Hulden was born and raised in the heart of Finland, far from any major population of Swedish speakers. As a result, she and the members of her region held some of the antagonism that many Finnish speakers (as discussed above) hold against Swedish speakers. She acknowledges that Swedish was in previous times the language of education and prestige in Finland, but translates that former glory to a sort of snobbishness that Swedish speaking Finns carry to this day, despite being neither richer nor more prestigious than any Finnish speaking
Finn. Hulden currently speaks Swedish at home—owing to her husband, who speaks both national languages fluently and whose Swedish-speaking family made Hulden put more effort into speaking their home language—but would speak Finnish with any hypothetical children, as she sees the language as an important part of her heritage.

As a child, the question of learning Swedish was of little relevance to Hulden. Instead, she perceived English as a higher priority and, later, as a lingua franca. “There’s no resistance to learning English,” she professes: many children, in fact, start early and are excited to start because of their lifelong exposure to English-speaking media. Unlike in countries like Spain, which dub over the Anglophone broadcasts they import, Finland adds subtitles and maintains the English audio. Such a practice exposes Finnish children to the sounds and expressions\(^{11}\) of English, while making English relevant and appealing (“the cool language”) to children who enjoy the broadcasts. As a result, Hulden describes a “positive feedback loop” experienced by herself and most of her classmates: the child arrives in English class ready to learn, obtains new vocabulary or grammatical structures, watches more English media, recognizes more words, arrives in class excited to learn more, and so on until the child recognizes nearly every word in the media program. When asked if she experienced this positive feedback loop with any other languages, Hulden said she did not. She attempted to learn German for one year in seventh grade, but although German programming was available to her alongside English, Finnish, and Swedish media, she found herself less engaged with German than she did with English.

When discussing Lithuanian brain drain, Hulden was quick to point out that Finland suffers from the same case. She furthermore dissuaded the idea that improving the education of

\(^{11}\) Finns, like many other learners of English, express their affinity with English by peppering their conversations with English words and phrases—even if Americans don’t actually use those terms, e.g. “shit the same” (Hulden 2017).
languages of trade could stymie brain drain; because of the waves of globalization providing such apparently benign influences as English-speaking media, national languages—Finnish included—are in fact under threat by languages of trade. As did the Lithuanian interviewees, Hulden believes that only by fixing economic conditions can nations prevent their best-educated citizens from leaving for jobs abroad. Turning to the subject of improving language education in Finland, Hulden’s only suggestion lay in drilling phrases instead of vocabulary, in order to let grammatical structures sink in (Hulden 2017).
Chapter Six: Interpretation and Recommendations

My hypothesis—asserting that Lithuania is doing less than Finland to promote language education, and that it can adopt Finland’s best practices—was in part confirmed and in part disproved. The superior results of Finland’s education system in teaching languages of trade and particularly English remain undeniable, and my research of their education system suggests that two key factors in that success are the holistic approach to education (reducing stigma for remedial tracks, allowing for academic exploration, identifying early signs of poor performance, etc.) and the prestige and reward of teachers in Finland. In particular, the discussion of teachers in government reports on Finland contrasts starkly with complaints issued by Lithuanians and discrepancies observed by the Lithuanian government: in Finland teachers are chosen for their passion and paid in accordance with other professionals, whereas in Lithuania students complain of teachers’ apathy and ineffectiveness stemming from lengthy appointments with low pay. Teachers in Lithuania, according to this narrow sample of students, treat teaching as a job rather than a professional calling, and spend their tenure with less autonomy, development, or engagement than is witnessed in Finland.

While the abstractness of a holistic education system deserves further study before I recommend it, I feel confident in affirming that, in accordance with my hypothesis, Lithuania can improve its education of languages of trade—and indeed its education in general—by improving its training and treatment of teachers. In the immediate future, Lithuania’s Ministry of Education would do well to witness the training programs that teachers in Finland undergo, bearing in mind that Finland organizes its teacher education programs by municipalities, so a national study must be undertaken or else representative samples must be chosen. Teachers should be supplied with newer and more relevant materials (a measure which has already been
noted by the Lithuanian government as an inhibitor of student engagement (Ministry of Education 2003, 15), and classroom activities should refocus on conversational aptitude. Lithuanians should leave school confident with their ability to carry on a conversation in their foreign languages of study, ideally without resorting to external tutoring although perhaps with the assistance of the EU-sponsored foreign exchange programs in which Lithuania already participates.

In the long term, Lithuania must reinvigorate its teaching force with a younger, more passionate, and more globally savvy cohort. Lithuanian teaching programs have been discussed as no less competitive than any other track of university study; in many ways, Lithuania appears to share the United States’ perception of teaching as a “fallback” career. The Lithuanian government and universities should collaborate to sponsor scholarship programs that attract the brightest foreign language students and encourage them to follow a teaching track. Once those teachers are placed in schools, the government should find a priority in paying teachers in the same range as any other professional. This goal can be reached in steps and with potential assistance from the European Union, as the Ministry of Education is only one of several government agencies vying for funding and priority, but for the sake of Lithuania’s future economic performance and geopolitical position, the government must show the priority of foreign language education with its spending as well as its policy.

To stop at the recommendation of teacher development, however, would be a disservice to both Finland and Lithuania; after all, the context of globalization prevents my hypothesis statement—that Lithuania can adopt all of Finland’s best practices—from being fully realized. My interview with Professor Hulden and my analysis of Finnish policy documents conclude that, while Finland’s economy has remained generally competitive, the nation still suffers from brain
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drain and overall concern of the economic condition and direction. Interviews with both Finns and Lithuanians furthermore emphasize that economic policy is one of the only ways to reduce brain drain, which disproves my hypothesis’s assumption that, by improving the domestic education of languages of trade, citizens would feel no need to leave. Lithuanians and Finns are not leaving to enhance their language skills: they leave to find more competitive salaries, to obtain better living conditions, and—in the case of education—for a cheaper, easier, and often more prestigious university (Kasperiūnaitė 2017). Clearly the struggle of brain drain transcends the relatively simple grasp of language education; in fact, if language education is conducted well enough, brain drain may be exacerbated as more people obtain the skillset that lets them find opportunities abroad.

Despite the apparent impossibility of balancing foreign language skills with domestic labor needs, I reiterate that foreign language education is imperative for the nation’s prosperity. The Lithuanian government agrees, for political reasons as much as economic ones: the Ministry of Education (2003, 9) asserts that “under conditions of globalization” Lithuania finds it necessary to help its citizens experience any education service available in any country, in large part to strengthen cohesion with other European Union states. Reducing foreign language education—or even keeping it stagnant—will not revert Lithuania to the pre-globalization era where language planning could afford to promote the Lithuanian language above all others. Finland, having had some fifty years more of independence (Zetterberg 2016), has learned this lesson early: capitalizing on its already advanced education system and the multilingualism of its people, Finland has propelled its economy into one which depends on information technology for thirty percent of its GDP (Brown Ruzzi 2005, 15). Finland made technology and innovation a national priority (2), with languages as the vehicle with which to share these successes with the
outside world. Lithuania can learn from this national drive towards modernity and integration, and judging by the statements of its Ministry of Education, the government already holds these priorities.

I found in my research another nuance that my hypothesis had not considered: in teaching languages of trade, Lithuania can learn from Finland—but in teaching the national language, Finland and Lithuania can collaborate. I falsely assumed that because it invested so much in the education of LOTs, Finland’s government perceived the Finnish language as stable within its borders. However, accounts from my interviews indicate that both Finns and Lithuanians—in a prime example of the reach and effects of globalization—face a barrage of Western media, e.g. American cartoons and music, that brings about awareness of and affinity for a culture that is neither domestically majority nor minority: the culture of languages of trade, and above all Anglophone culture. While the interviewees all quickly asserted their fidelity to their culture of birth and their pride in their national language, the allure of Western culture as conveyed through media places Finland and Lithuania in an awkward position. Finnish and Lithuanian lessons are mandatory in their respective nations throughout primary and secondary schooling, and are usually (but increasingly not always) necessary to obtain a university education. However, language skills have become as highly valued as technological aptitude, creating job markets that increasingly demand the knowledge of LOTs—a knowledge that has already been cultivated by cultural transmissions, which spark the positive feedback loop that develops fluency in those languages.

Both Finland and Lithuania are cognizant of the ever-growing threat of LOTs in washing away years of investment in national language and culture, and both nations’ language planning documents have taken great pains to delineate the corpus planning they undertake to prevent
loanwords and the acquisition planning that promotes national languages. Lithuania’s Ministry of Education (2003, 10), has asserted that “[the teaching] of foreign languages should be related to Lithuanian language teaching and culture as well as to the formation of national identity”, indicating an attempted integrative approach that frames languages of trade in the context of Lithuanian identity and development. Finland, which invests as much time and money (if not more) in promoting Swedish as well as Finnish, has devoted less time to this or any approach that focuses solely on Finnish; since Finnish is the only of the two national languages to be spoken nowhere else but in Finland, the nation may find the protection of Finnish to be a higher priority in the future. In this respect Lithuania has an advantage of experimentation, as the sole language its schools must promote (as determined by Lithuania’s status planning) is the national one. Finland maintains its advantage in education performance as a whole, but cannot implement policy that promotes such a prioritized national language in the same way that Lithuania can.

My hypothesis, then, is disproven in the sense that, instead of Lithuania learning from Finland in promoting the national language as well as a foreign language curriculum, the two nations can collaborate in making policy that keeps alive their eponymous languages. The two already share an interest in maintaining their languages against the wave of English and other LOTs and minority languages, so as they continue to shape their policy to balance various stakeholders, Lithuania and Finland may share with one another the most successful policy and education practices that promote the national language while sacrificing as little of other priorities as possible. Between Finland’s experience in high-performing education, Lithuania’s freedom to implement acquisition planning practices, and similarities including similar minority language situations and EU sponsorship of exchange programs and cultural promotion, the two nations can easily compare the results of their policy choices and learn from one another.
My research has revealed one more large-scale conclusion that bears sharing: when concerning minority rights and integration, Lithuania and Finland take completely different approaches that makes Finland a suboptimal example for Lithuania’s future language minority policy. When I began conducting research on the treatment of language minorities in Finland and Lithuania, I assumed that Swedish’s status as one of two official languages of Finland was incidental and irrelevant; after all, the Swedish and Polish and Russian communities have in common the same rough proportion of their people compared to the national population, the same status as the former majority language rendered minority after independence, and the same condition of geographic concentration which makes their communities (to varying degrees) more cohesive. However, as I investigated further, I found that Finland treats its Swedish speakers in a way that is incomparable to Lithuania. Namely, Finland grants positive rights to the Swedish language: it actively promotes Swedish beyond its community of “mother tongue” speakers, and develops strategy for Finnish-speaking Finns to use the language in tandem with the one of their birth. This strategy goes unused in Lithuania, which instead grants negative rights to its minority communities: it offers linguistic resources for the minority communities and hears demands for their political representation, but the education system does not require Polish or Russian to be spoken by any Lithuanian more than as another foreign language. Positive and negative right concession scratch the surface of two vastly differing underlying approaches to language integration: while Lithuania takes a “melting pot” approach that encourages the study of Lithuanian while not inhibiting the right to speak other languages, Finland adopts a multicultural stance that in many ways is as progressive as its national perspective on innovation.

This observation is not to say that either approach is inferior to the other. Although it is fascinating that two nations with the same history of linguistic oppression would choose such
different stances on integrating the former dominant language, cultural relativism mandates that each approach be considered as fully valid. Lithuania takes the same approach as its Baltic neighbors, who in turn have gone to extremes in issuing strict language exams and citizenship laws that have faced international criticism. If one assumes that “success” in the planning of linguistic rights is defined as meeting the nationalistic needs of national language promotion while infringing on none of the human rights of other language speakers within the state’s borders—a definition which is expressed by the European Union and United Nations\textsuperscript{12}—then Lithuania has succeeded to an extent that Estonia and Latvia can only recently claim. The observation I make about positive and negative rights in Finland and Lithuania only asserts that another, more minute part of my hypothesis has been disproven: Lithuania cannot borrow Finland’s best practices in promoting the education of minority languages, because the two states take such different approaches to those minorities. While Lithuania recognizes the basic human rights of its Russian and Polish communities, Finland elevates Swedish to co-national status and actively encourages the entire state to speak what, demographically speaking, is a minority language. The example of Finland in language education should ideally extend only as far as foreign language education.

To summarize, I recommend the following practices that Lithuania may take on as it plans its future language education policy:

- Study and model the teacher development programs that teachers in Finland undertake, and model future training on the Finnish approach. Use case studies as necessary.

\textsuperscript{12} It should be reemphasized that the EU and UN use remarkably ambiguous wording concerning linguistic human rights, largely to avoid infringing on the interests of nations (who make up their membership) while still promoting a liberal agenda that asserts global tolerance. That is to say, this definition of success in language planning is in part inferred.
remaining cognizant that Finnish education operates in municipalities and is regionally-based.

- Update textbooks and electronic teaching materials to reflect modern uses of foreign language.
- Using government resources and/or assistance from the European Union, raise teacher salaries to reward their level of education and impact on the nation’s future.
- Continue experimentation in promoting the Lithuanian language throughout education, e.g. by following through on proposals to develop more Lithuanian-language technological resources and to discuss and promote career development in Lithuanian.
- Continue to utilize EU-sponsored exchange programs, to encourage language learning and intercultural competency as key skills for an information-based economy and an effective player in the European region.
- Share results in promoting the Lithuanian language with other nations which face the same concerns of maintaining, rather than protecting\textsuperscript{13}, their national heritage while interacting with globalizing forces.

Lithuania and Finland share similar historical circumstances, but have diverged as globalization swept across Europe. Finland has enjoyed a head start and a fortunate cultural valuing of education and innovation, but Lithuania needs only time and the right direction to reach Finland’s level of achievement. The latter condition can be met by watching Finland’s

\textsuperscript{13} It has become evident throughout this study that, with the increase of global communication and transportation technologies, exposure to global languages and ideas cannot be obstructed without harm to the national economy, which relies on trade liberalization facilitated by economic integration. Lithuania and Finland have no way to “protect” their languages without rejecting the very foundation of liberalism that brought about their choice to integrate and participate in the European region’s activity. Language maintenance more accurately describes the goal of keeping alive the national languages that compose Finnish and Lithuanian identity, without blocking the foreign influences that these two states acquiesced to upon joining the EU.
efforts to invest in their next generation of leaders, and in cultivating the skills necessary for a “know-how” society. Cultivating the growth of passionate and effective teachers, updating materials to better reflect the globalizing and technologically-based world, and investing in education as a priority equal to other professional practices will not stop brain drain. However, until such a time as the economic tide turns and brings Lithuanians back, these practices will invest in citizens’ skills in a way that promotes the national image and development.
Conclusion

This thesis has sought to explain how—in a rapidly globalizing world whose academic community has not yet thoroughly examined the impact of foreign language education—the education of languages of trade can be undertaken without disrupting progress made for national and minority languages. It traced Lithuanian history and applied current research on language policy to Baltic language planning after the Soviet regime, and then it explored how Lithuania could best learn from Finland in improving its education practices. While my hypothesis was supported in that Lithuania can model its LOT education on Finland’s (specifically by investing heavily in teacher education and communicative education practices), my hypothesis faltered in that Lithuania cannot adopt all Finnish policies about national and minority language education and promotion. Minority languages are incomparable in Lithuania and Finland because the former does not recognize Russian and Polish as second and third national languages (i.e. Lithuania sees them only as minorities within the state) whereas the latter recognizes Swedish as of equal status to Finnish. In terms of the national language, Finland and Lithuania should collaborate and learn from one another; indeed, Lithuania may have the advantage, as it has only one national language to promote and can apply new teaching techniques in a way that Finland cannot without disrupting promotion of the Swedish language.

The sociolinguistic academic community has developed pockets of research on the education of foreign languages, albeit chiefly in an abstract sense that analyses the effects of multilingualism on a society. Moving forward, the sociolinguistic field might take a more active interest in examining the effect of LOT education (a subset of foreign language education) on fluency of and identification with national languages. The political science community will furthermore be intrigued by the resulting effect on national identity, as language—a key
stabilizer of cultures—becomes diffusible and citizens of states begin to identify as much with
global peers as with fellow nationalists. Future research should therefore focus on clearer
methods to promote national languages as an anchor in a sea of newly available linguistic and
cultural identities. Such methods will perhaps most effectively be applied to education systems,
but of course the government as a whole may alter its status planning as well as its acquisition
planning to reflect new findings.

As this thesis has discovered, the factors affecting brain drain are complex and far from
fully linguistically based. However, if governments of small nations take one message from this
study, they should understand that LOT education can be improved upon but ought not to be
stopped. Virtually no state can exist in today’s globalizing context without some knowledge of
foreign languages on the part of its citizens, and stopping or failing to improve on foreign
language education will not only maintain levels of brain drain (as citizens continue going
abroad to learn LOTs as well as earn better wages) but will discourage the economic growth that
would encourage people to stay. Although languages such as English threaten the languages of
small states, investing in English alongside the national language brings economic dividends that
linguistic isolation will not; such dividends can assist the state in improving living conditions,
bringing back citizens from abroad, and even reinvesting in cultural programs to promote a better
linguistic balance.

Ultimately, the language policy of each country is its own to choose. The balance in
promoting a state’s national language(s), minority language(s), and languages of trade is not an
easy one, and resources are often not equally available for all three fields. If Lithuania chooses to
advance the Lithuanian language over the foreign language skills of its citizens, then this thesis’s
recommendations will be limited to the improvement of teaching practices and programs. If,
however, Lithuania decides to hear the demands of its citizens—as emphasized by brain drain, as seen in international testing and fluency measures, as witnessed in the Anglophone camp I led in summer 2015—and rejuvenate its foreign language education, then the conclusions of this study will benefit not only the citizens but the nation of Lithuania. These recommendations encourage collaboration, ingenuity, and a broad sharpening of skills. Lithuania has the tools and the precedent to enhance its workforce and become the “know-how” economy it strives to be, by promoting language policy alongside political and economic measures. Now it need only act.
Appendix I: Interview Questions

Introductory Questions
1. What is your name? Where do you come from?
2. Tell me about the process of schooling you underwent in Lithuania. How many years did you study? When did you transition to secondary and tertiary school? Is this usual of Lithuania, or only of your region?
3. What languages did you learn in school, and when did you start and finish studying them?
4. What language(s) were you instructed in? Looking back, do you feel you understood enough of either the course material or the language?

Questions on the Lithuanian Language Situation (Including Education)
1. How do you perceive the language situation in Lithuania? How many languages do most people speak? Which ones?
2. How likely are you to agree with the following: “Being able to speak Lithuanian makes up a large part of my identity”? Do you know others who would agree or disagree with you?
3. Did you use the same language at home as you did at school? Do you know many people whose home and school languages were different? How did your school help you and/or them bridge any gaps in language skills?
4. Do you feel proficient in the language(s) you learned at school? For example, how well do you think you could speak Lithuanian, Russian, and/or Polish at graduation? What would have improved your proficiency?
5. Did you learn any languages beyond school? If so, what made you choose the language(s) you did? How was your learning experience different from that at school?
6. In your opinion, what could be improved about the Lithuanian language education system?

Questions on Non-Lithuanian Language Proficiency and Necessity in Lithuania
1. What do you know of bilingual schools in your region or in Lithuania? What practices did they use—language days, coursework in different languages, etc.? How is the language proficiency of those students relative to that of students who went to a monolingual school?
2. Tell me about how you learned English. Did you choose to undertake those studies yourself, and if so, why? If not, did anyone encourage you?
3. How do you perceive your English skills versus your skills in Lithuanian and other languages you studied? Do you value one over the others? Do you identify with one over the others?
4. Do Lithuanian schools teach the languages you would deem necessary to thrive in Lithuania? What about outside Lithuania? Are there languages you would or would not like to have learned?
5. In your opinion, what could stop Lithuanians from leaving the country for opportunities abroad? Could English-speaking career opportunities be part of the solution?
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