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Narratives on ageing in the neighbouring country -
An oral history study of first-generation Swedish Finns

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Abstract

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This paper intended to combine two strands of study: ageing and migration. The aim of the study was to examine, how do individuals belonging to the first-generation of Swedish Finns experience the changes that have taken place in their lives, after having migrated from Finland to Sweden as labour migrants in the 1960's and 1970's. The study was based on seven oral history interviews conducted with elderly first-generation Swedish Finns, residing in the city of Gothenburg. Informed by the social constructionist approach, the collected interview data was analysed using thematic narrative analysis. The research questions were as follows: How do the narratives portray the changes that have taken place in the lives of the participants during their long stay in Sweden? How do the participants construct their narrated-selves in relation to their migration experience? How do the narratives reflect the social and political contexts of their time?

The subsequent findings indicate that the participants have experienced extensive changes in their everyday lives during their 50-year long stay in Sweden. These changes have affected their feeling of belonging both in Sweden and Finland, as well as impacted their understandings of the notion of 'home'. What is more, the findings highlighted the significant role the existence of an ethnic community had in the lives of the participants and how this surrounding community had influenced their acculturation processes. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that the individual participants constructed their self-descriptions strongly on their ethnicity, aside which they simultaneously created linkages between their ethnic identity and positively charged attributes, such as diligence and determination. All in all, the narratives produced by the participants were strongly grounded on micro-level decision-making, largely leaving out reflections connected to macro-level structures and their influence on the lives of the individual participants.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and problem formulation

Erkki: A friend told me that in Sweden, there are countless of jobs available. So I went to the harbour in Turku to ask how much does a ferry ticket cost to Stockholm. And when I had no money left apart from that amount, I had to buy the ticket and travel to Stockholm. At the ferry I met two men, who were kind of in the same situation, although they were a bit better off than me, they had some money left, I had nothing. I had no money at all. But yeah, these two, one of them said that he can even speak some Swedish, but it turned out that his skills weren't as good as he had described. But they anyway had some money. In Stockholm, at the station, there were some Finns - who weren't so well off. We asked them if they could speak Swedish, and one of them did. He joined us as an interpreter and we went to the employment office in Stockholm. There, when they found out that I can weld, they offered me five different places to choose from, where would I like to work. (1)

The European post-war period from the 1950's until the 1970's was characterised by massive labour migration movements within the continent. The migration waves were "strongly guided by differences in economic development between regions" (Van Mol & de Valk, 2016, p.32), as the income gaps between the countries widened as a result of an economic boom in the Northern and Western European countries. At the same time when the economic opportunities enabled the inhabitants of these countries, such as Germany, France and Sweden, to gain wealth and to obtain higher levels of education, the nations were no longer able to answer to the increasing demand for manual labour force in their industrial sectors. As a result of that, nationals from the pre-industrial agrarian societies, like Yugoslavia, Greece and Finland, migrated to the industrially advanced countries to work in factories, agriculture and in cleaning tasks. The receiving countries regulated the flow of labour migrants with various bilateral agreements, which often favoured the countries in their geographical proximity. (Van Mol & de Valk, 2016)

Such a relationship existed also between two Nordic countries, Sweden and Finland. After the Second World War, the circumstances in the two countries were distinctively different. The post-war decades were favourable to Sweden, and during this period the country was able to establish a strong industrial infrastructure and alongside develop its expanding welfare system (Weckström, 2016). When the labour shortage in the country deepened, the country began recruiting labour force from abroad, Finland being one of the target countries. This initiated an extensive labour movement from Finland to Sweden, which continued actively throughout the following decades. Even though approximately half of these people eventually migrated back to Finland, the tremendous wave of labour migration in the post-war period constructed the grounds for a considerable Finnish minority population being established in Sweden. Nowadays, these individuals and their offspring form approximately 7% of the whole

population of Sweden, and are referred to as ‘Swedish Finns’¹ (Sisuradio, 2018a). One of the individuals belonging to this minority population is Erkki, who in the extract above describes his arrival to Sweden in 1961. Bönisch-Brednich (2016) argues that as a result of migration, multifaceted individual narratives reflecting the surrounding structural society are created. Hence, when migration narratives like the one of Erkki are examined in detail, it becomes obvious that at the same time when such micro narratives take part in weaving together the story of the Swedish Finnish minority and furthermore the story of the nations of Sweden and Finland, they also reveal a lot about the narrator himself.

In micro perspective, migration to a new country influences the individual’s life drastically, hence simultaneously influencing the self-narratives describing the individual’s characteristics. Clary-Lemon (2010, p.8) refers to such descriptions as narrated identities, meaning the “roles that individuals construct and inhabit through narrative in order to form a coherent story of individual and group membership”. Peura (1994) argues that in the case of the first-generation Swedish Finns, the most tremendous change caused by the migration to Sweden was the change from being an ethnic majority into becoming an ethnic minority, as the Finnish migrants arriving to Sweden were suddenly seen solely as representatives of their ethnicity. Prior to this, most of them had not been in a situation where their worth of being a Finn or speaking Finnish would have been questioned. Instead, their personality had been constructed from factors such as class, social relation, gender and age (ibid.). Peura (1994) further argues that the change was enormous also because of the prejudices and negative stereotypes that were related to Finns among the majority Swedish society. What is more, Adreouli (2013) argues that apart from being influenced by the perceptions of the surrounding society, migration narratives are being impacted by the macro-level structures addressing the particular migrant population. Thus, people’s individual biographies are closely linked with the surrounding social, cultural and political conditions. In the case of the Swedish Finns, their official status have changed tremendously during the stay in Sweden. The Finnish migrants who were considered as temporary guest workers upon their arrival in the post-war decades, were in 1999 officially recognised as one of the national minority groups of Sweden.

Nevertheless, although such external definitions of group identity influence the subjective experiences, the first-generation of Swedish Finns can be argued to be everything but homogenous. Thus, examining individual narratives “introduces the opportunity to collect rich data textured by the respondents’ own interpretations of their experiences and the social circumstances in which their story has unfolded, and the ways in which they continue to be active agents” (Sosulski et al., 2010, p.37). By analysing narratives constructed by individuals, more can be understood from the reasoning and values of those people. What is more, examination of the subjective micro narratives serves as a framework to analyse the relation of the macro- and micro-level narratives, and how they relate to each other in the historical, social, political and economic framework. This is especially relevant in the case of ageing migrants, due their two-folded position of being elderly in a transnational environment (Buffel, 2017). Today, the Finnish labour migrants who settled to Sweden as young adults in the 1960’s and 70’s, are in their retirement age. Their migration narratives have gradually evolved into becoming part of the life narratives, and the lived experiences of raising children, completing careers and ageing in the host society construct a major part of their narratives. At the same time, their experiences as migrants, as elderly and as representatives of their ethnicity can provide in-depth, intersectional understanding of negotiations about identity, home and belonging. Thus, this paper aims at addressing those questions in relation to the experiences of

¹ ruotsinsuomalaiset / sverigefinländare

the first-generation Swedish Finns. In the following subchapter, the aim and research questions of this study are described in more detail.

The aim of the study and research questions

Informed by the social constructionist approach, this study aims at examining the experiences of elderly migrants by conducting in-depth oral history interviews with the members of the first-generation of Swedish Finns. The participants of this study migrated to Sweden as adults or as independent minors during the 1960's and 1970's, and have thus resided in Sweden for approximately 50 years. More specifically, the aim of this study is to analyse narratives produced by the participants to examine, how have this long-term experience of being an immigrant in another country modified their perceptions about ethnicity, home and belonging, and what kind of representations of themselves do the participants include within their narratives.

The interviews have been conducted with first-generation Swedish Finns who are residing in the city of Gothenburg. Due to its extensive harbour and car industry, Gothenburg was among the main destinations of the Finnish labour migrants in the 1960's and 1970's. After Sweden officially recognised Swedish Finns as one of the national minority groups of the country, the city of Gothenburg became a so-called Finnish administrative area in 2011. This means that the city has taken a specific commitment in providing services in the Finnish language and in supporting and enhancing the preservation of the Finnish culture and language in Sweden (City of Gothenburg, 2014).

The research questions of this study are therefore the following:

1. How do the narratives portray the changes that have taken place in the lives of the participants during their long stay in Sweden?
2. How do the participants construct their narrated-selves in relation to their migration experience?
3. How do the narratives reflect the social and political contexts of their time?

Limitations of the study

As a part of conducting trustworthy and transparent research, it is necessary to identify the limitations that might bias the study or significantly affect the process of collecting and analysing the data (Bryman, 2012). In the context of this study, it is most important to point out that the extensiveness of the topic related to presentation of self cannot be exclusively explained or analysed in the limited scope of this paper. The narratives examined in this paper are thus analysed with a rather limited focus, leaning mostly towards social science literature and research, and giving less attention to psychological research on the topic.

The aim of this study is to analyse narratives constructed by first-generation Swedish Finns on their migration experiences, closely linked to their everyday lives, feelings and relationships. In order to provide meaningful analysis of the collected data, the narratives ought to be in-depth in nature. Hence, in light of this, the major limitation of this study was the limited time frame within which the study was carried out. For example, when analysing the data, it was noted that a second interview session with each participant would have provided a possibility to go deeper into the topics discussed during the first interview session. What is more, as two of the

interviews were conducted as pair interviews, second interview session would have provided an opportunity to discuss individually with each of those participants. Possibly, different kinds of narratives could have emerged. Since prolonging the time frame of the study was not possible, several steps were taken to improve the rapport in the interview situation (read more in Chapter 5).

It is also noteworthy to mention that the author of this paper has little experience in conducting an academic study. Bryman (2012) notes that instead of only being aware of different research methods, the researcher ought to understand the nature of social research and to acknowledge the assumptions guiding the research process. As the author of this paper, I have done my utmost best to familiarise myself with the research terminology being used, to attend diligently to the chosen methodology and to take a critical stand on analysing the data and drawing conclusions from the findings. It is, however, possible that my inexperience in using the chosen methodology and in analysing the collected data have had its impact on this final paper. In order to minimise this possibility, transparency has been emphasised throughout the paper to describe the process to the readers.

The third limitation of this study is embedded in a dilemma between needing to protect the privacy and anonymity of the participants, and in describing the lives and experiences of the participants in the form of narratives. At the same time when the specificity of the told narratives provides a core for this research, it complicates the protection of confidentiality, especially due to the limited sample size and the specific geographical residing area of the participants. A combination of actions was taken to both ensure a deep enough data analysis and the protection of privacy. First, informed consent was requested from each participant and the participation to the study was kept absolutely voluntarily. Secondly, careful consideration was used in choosing the presented narratives, and when necessary, certain details were altered or hidden. These topics are likewise discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Relevance to social work and human rights

As this study is conducted in the context of the Master Programme in Social Work and Human Rights, it is necessary to prove its relevance in the framework of these fields. International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) defines social work as “practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people” (IFSW, 2018). Furthermore, international human rights, which are mentioned as one of the major principles guiding the social work profession, are based on the statement that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (United Nations, 1948, art. 1) and thus they are entitled to the same rights “without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (ibid., art. 2).

Migrants and ethnic minority populations are often in a significantly vulnerable position due to their less powerful position in societies, and therefore they have often been one of the service user groups of social work. Cox & Ephross (1998) note that even though a great deal of social work practice takes place in administration, research and teaching fields, significant part of the profession happens in direct contact with individual service users. In light of this, understanding human nature, individual reasoning and group dynamics becomes utterly important for social work professionals. In order to avoid prejudices and stereotypical patterns impacting one’s work when having encounters with members of minority populations, social workers ought to recognise the heterogeneity among any ethnic, religious or other minority group. Hence,

conducting narrative research among individuals such as the first-generation Swedish Finns can improve the reflexivity of social work practitioners and “help social workers move beyond a strict problem focus to more generally explore social phenomena” (Fraser, 2004, p.181). As its best, narrative research aims at fulfilling the global definition of social work by teaching the practitioners about self-determination and social justice from the perspective of the service user.

Thus, the relevance of this study to social work practice is two-folded. First, it aims at providing further understanding on migration experiences and describing the impacts of macro-level decision making and structural changes in the lives of individuals. Researching social phenomenon and micro-level experiences from a historical perspective may also help social workers to further understand how do policy changes, struggle for human rights and existing negative stereotypes affect the targeted individuals. At the same time, due to the socially constructed nature of human beings, it is questionable to categorise groups and make conclusions based on a single story. Therefore, this study acts as a relevant reminder to social work professionals that even though the members of different minorities share experiences and memories, they are as heterogeneous a group as any majority population. Furthermore, the position of the Swedish Finns as a national minority of Sweden makes this study topic particularly interesting in the context of human rights. The political recognition of minority groups is fundamentally important in many ways. Tripathy & Padmanabham (2014, p.6) state, for example, that the international recognition of minority rights in the political context changed the minority consciousness of larger audiences towards “a consensus that it can be a label of solidarity and a site of rights and privileges” instead of being associated with “marginalization, ghettoization, or a kind of life lived on the edge” (ibid.). Hence, collecting of experiences from individual members of minority populations contributes to the human rights related discourse on the entitlement of group rights.

CHAPTER TWO

Background

The following chapter provides background information of the Finnish labour migration to Sweden during the 1960's and 1970's, and outlines the living conditions of Finns in Sweden between the 1970's and 1990's. Followed by that, a description on how the minority politics gradually developed and came into existence internationally and in Sweden after the 1990's is provided.

The history of Finnish labour migration to Sweden

Finland and Sweden are neighbouring countries in the northern part of Europe and share a common history as one country up until 1809. Despite the significantly different languages spoken in the two countries, the migration and communication between the nations has always been active. The relationship between the countries tightened even more during the Second World War, during which Sweden received approximately 70,000 Finnish children, the so-called 'war children', as evacuees, as well as accommodated 55,000 war evacuees from the Finnish Lapland (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000). Some of these families and individual children eventually stayed in Sweden even after the end of the war.

In general, migration between countries and continents have been explained with various factors. Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen (2000) state that when excluding asylum seeking, the motives behind waves of mass migration are most often economic, whereas during the times of minor migration the most common reasons are non-economic, and connect to for example relationships and search of adventures. The physical proximity of the country of origin and the country of destination, the mental proximity of the culture and language as well as the similarity of the institutional structure, are other external factors that influence migration flows (ibid.). In the case of the migration from Finland to Sweden, these factors have been favourable and made the migration journey relatively easy. Historically, the labour migration between the countries has been characterised by movement from Finland to Sweden, especially in the turning points when the Swedish labour market has been in need of physical, manual labour force. The most significant labour movement from Finland to Sweden took place during the decades from 1960's to 1970's (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2016) and the migration during those decades was "by far the largest in Finnish history" (Weckström, 2016, p.12). The exact figures vary depending on the source, but Korkiasaari (2001) estimates that between the years 1954-1974, over 500,000 Finnish people emigrated to Sweden. The most intensive migration movement took place in 1969-1971, during which approximately 80,000 individuals migrated from Finland to Sweden (ibid.). The social and cultural background of the Finnish migrants in Sweden varied, depending partly on their area of origin. Most of the migrants originated from areas of low employment and limited opportunities, and whole villages from the Northern and Eastern parts of Finland emigrated to Sweden in search of work and income. However, large numbers of migrants emigrated even from the capital region of Finland, where employment opportunities were more auspicious (Hormia, 1971).

The physical proximity of the countries per se does not alone explain the active migration movement from Finland to Sweden in the post-war period, but instead migration waves are often explained with the concurrency of the so-called pull and push factors in both countries. According to Boyle (2009), the theory of pull and push factors has been one of the essential tools in understanding motives behind migration. Based on the theory, the existing economic, demographic and political, but also the social and environmental conditions in the country of origin, as well as in the country of destination influence the decision to migrate (OECD, 2009). Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen (2000) note, however, that due to the existence of individual factors such as health, age and family situation, the decision to migrate is never based only on objective comparison of the external factors. Some individuals are not able to migrate and others are not welcomed, whereas some do not want to move even though the external conditions would be favourable.

The push factors in Finland

After the Second World War, there were significant differences in the economic structures and conditions between the Nordic countries, and especially the circumstances in Finland were remarkably poor (Björklund, 2012). Even though the industrialisation and the social security politics in Finland started gradually developing during the decades after the war, the pressure in the labour market was high, and the structural changes in the society lead to considerable problems in providing employment for the entire working-age population. Korkiasaari and Tarkiainen (2000) describe the migration from Finland to Sweden after the Second World War as a classic example of a migration event influenced by massive economic, social and political changes in the country of origin. In Finland, the structural changes in the economic life, the political upheaval and the development of the population were all visibly taking place. Five substantial factors that impacted people's decision to migrate can be identified as: the class society and the poor conditions of its lowest classes, the aftermath of the Second World War, the political instability in the country, the structural changes in the agriculture and the so-called baby boomers born in 1945-1950, who entered the labour market in the 1960's and thus caused an oversupply of labour force (ibid.).

Up until the 1940's, half of the Finnish population received their livelihood from agriculture and forestry, but the need to reconstruct the infrastructure after the war lead to a fast industrialisation throughout the whole country. Furthermore, as a result of the Second World War, approximately 10% of the Finnish surface area was to be handed over to the Soviet Union, including several important industrial centres. In addition to that, Finland was to pay a considerable amount of war debts, mainly in the form of industrial products, such as ships and industrial machines (Snellman, 2003). These efforts lowered the GDP and tightened the taxation in the country, thus affecting the everyday life of the inhabitants, which for its part lead to a political instability in the country. The confrontation between the political parties was severe, and during the years 1950-1959 the parliament was re-elected 13 times (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000).

The working-class population and the inhabitants residing in the countryside were those who were most affected by the structural changes taking place in the country. The relocation of approximately 425,000 inhabitants from the areas handed over to the Soviet Union lead to a division of land and increased the number of unprofitable smallholdings in the countryside (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000). At the same time, the industrialisation of the country challenged the traditional livelihood and complicated the way of living in the countryside. Many farmers were lead into searching additional income from seasonal work opportunities. In

the 1960's, the state removed the financial support for unprofitable smallholdings, through which thousands of people were left unemployed (Snellman, 2003). Between 1950-1980, the number of smallholdings decreased from 250,000 to 16,000 (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000), which demonstrates the massive changes that took place in the agricultural Finland. At the same time, the baby boomers entering the working life in the 1960's increased the number of each age group by 20,000 people. As the school system of the time mainly provided education up until the primary school level, the level of education amongst the younger working-age population was rather low. Many of these low-educated young adults were part of the masses who eventually emigrated to Sweden during the 1960's and 1970's (ibid.).

The pull factors in Sweden

The impartiality of Sweden in the Second World War gave the country an excellent opportunity to answer to the demands for the production of industrial commodities needed for the reconstruction of the other European countries affected by the war. Sweden, which had a steady political ideology and social structure since decades before the war, was able to provide the infrastructure needed for the growing demands of industrial products, but simultaneously could not provide enough labour force to run the industry. Already in 1946, it was estimated that during the following decade, Sweden would need foreign labour force in the volume of 100,000-200,000 individuals (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000).

The flagrant shortage of the labour force consequently influenced the development of more liberal migration policies, which allowed the mass recruitment of labour force from abroad. The law came into force in 1954. The labour force was recruited especially from countries where the societal development had come to a halt due to the war, for example from Finland, Greece and Yugoslavia (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000). Around the same time, the Common Nordic Labour Agreement, signed between Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark in 1954, enabled a free movement of labour within the Nordic countries. One year after that, an additional agreement was signed concerning the social security of the Nordic migrants. In the agreement (Agreement Concerning a Common Nordic Labour Market, 1982) it states that the nationals of the Nordic countries have a fundamental right "to be able freely to take up employment and settle in another Nordic country" and that they should be able to do so "under known economically and socially secure conditions" (ibid., preamble).

Thus, the migration from Finland to Sweden was not remarkably affected when the migration policies in Sweden were again tightened in 1967. On the contrary, due to the colossal emigration to Sweden during the following years, the number of inhabitants in Finland decreased during 1969-1970 (Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000). The migrants were often forming chains of migration, as friends and family who had already settled in Sweden encouraged the others to join them. The Finnish migrants were pulled not only by the promise of income, but also by the level of income. The politics of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, the cooperation between the employers and the employee unions, and the role of the state as a conflict negotiator enabled a steady development of the salary policies. This development continued from the 1930's all the way until the 1970's and resulted in the development of the Nordic welfare model named by Esping-Andersen (1990) as the 'social democratic model'.

Finns in Sweden in 1970-1990

The first Finnish labour migrants who arrived in Sweden in the 1950's met a society that was not prepared to receive the massive wave of foreign workers and their families. The possibilities to study Swedish were limited, and even though some of the major employers eventually started providing Swedish classes for the foreign employees, many had no energy to delve into studies on the side of the heavy industrial work. Instead, language barriers were crossed with the help of other Finnish migrants who had learned the Swedish language. (Virtala, 2011; Björklund, 2012; Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen, 2000) Also in their free time, the Finnish migrants often sought the company of other Finns. Common language, cultural background and experiences of migration from a country to another - at times also the migration from countryside to a city - united these people. Additionally, many of the migrants arrived as a result of chain migration and thus had already existing social networks, friends and family members in Sweden (Jaakkola, 1984). Peura (1994) states that aside the lack of language skills, many Finnish migrants had little knowledge of the unwritten social norms and of how the Swedish society functioned. Within the Finnish migrant community, however, the social life was active. The Finnish free-time associations flourished with a focus on sports, Finnish music and dance. Björklund (2012, p.17) describes how the "Finnish associations grew in size in the 1960's, some of them having over thousand members²". Although the associations operated actively, the members had no discernible interest towards the surrounding society or the local politics. At that time, most of the Finnish migrants had resided in Sweden for less than five years (ibid.).

Over time, the language skills and the social skills of the Finnish migrants improved. The introverted behaviour of the Finnish migrant population, however, continued until the 1970's, when the Finnish associations gradually began to show interest in politics and the activities of the trade unions. Peura (1994, p.13) describes the 1970's as an era of "mobilisation and organisation³" for the Swedish Finnish community. During the same time period, the Swedish immigration politics oriented from coercive assimilation towards an ideology of Sweden being a multicultural society, which made the general attitude towards Swedish Finns and other minority populations more favourable. In the spirit of the new political approach to multiculturalism, the government established three goals for the national integration policy: equality, freedom of choice and co-operation (ibid.). The reforms affected the everyday lives of the Swedish Finnish population as well, as migrants having resided in Sweden for at least three years were granted municipal voting rights, whilst the mother tongue teaching⁴ in schools was put into action and the state started financially supporting minority organisations (ibid.). Peura (1994, p.12) argues, however, that these changes were inadequate in providing "actual possibilities to develop, produce and reproduce language and culture in equal bases for the ethnic minorities⁵".

In the aftermaths of the mobilising among the Swedish Finns, the question of schools and teaching of the Finnish migrant children became one of the major questions driven by the Swedish Finnish activists (Peura, 1994). The use of solely Swedish language in schools had had a long history as part of the assimilation politics during the whole of the 20th century, and the Finnish children migrating with their parents to Sweden often encountered a school setting where bilingualism was not favoured. Even though the situation varied in different parts in

² free translation

³ free translation

⁴ free translation from 'hemspråkundervisning' (Peura 1994, p.12)

⁵ free translation

Sweden, the strong perception of bilingualism being harmful to children lead to migrant parents being advised to speak Swedish with their children (read more in Hansegård, 1968), which further complicated the debate on language rights. The heated debate about the right to mother tongue teaching in minority languages has continued up until today, and is currently one of the major topics discussed in the framework of the minority language rights (Lainio, 2014).

Development of the Swedish minority politics

The echo of the concepts ‘group rights’ and ‘minorities’ in the context of rights discourse have varied over the 20th century. The cautiously positive approach towards the rights of the minorities by the League of Nations was swept under the carpet in the aftermaths of the Second World War, and the human rights discourse established by the United Nations was strongly based on the rights of the individuals, rather than groups (see United Nations, 1948). The minority rights discourse has, however, re-emerged during the post-Cold War decades and “under pressure an even proliferating range of supra-national institutions to accommodate the ‘others’ in the midst, be they migrants, minorities or indigenous populations, nation-states have been increasingly challenged to encourage, rather than to repress or even merely tolerate, diversity within their boundaries” (Cowan et al., 2001, p.9).

The Swedish government decided on the establishment of minority policy in the country in 1999 in the Government Bill named ‘National Minorities in Sweden’, which came into force in 2000 (Regeringskansliet, 2001). At the same time, Sweden recognised and named five national minorities and their languages, which should be protected and supported by the local and national agencies to preserve their language and culture. These five minorities were the Jews, the Sami, the Roma, the Swedish Finns and the Tornedalers. The identified minority languages were Yiddish, Sami, Romany Chib, Finnish and Meänkieli (Regeringskansliet, 2007). The Sami had been additionally recognised as the indigenous people in Sweden. The decision was based on the approval to ratify the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, adopted by the Council of Europe (1995; 1992). FCNM has been described as being the first multilateral instrument to protect the rights of the minorities (Malloy, 2005). Before 1999, the minority groups in Sweden had been a visible, yet not identified part of the society (Lainio, 1999).

The reasons behind identifying the Swedish Finns as one of the national minority groups were based on the fact that the language had been used in the geographical area of Sweden for approximately 600 years, and that prior to 1809 Finland was part of Sweden (Hyltenstam, 1999). Finns, as well as the other identified minority groups in Sweden, were also recognised as having been in a subordinate position and “periodically openly opposed by the majority society” (DO, 2008, p.5). The oppressed situation had also been acknowledged by the members of the Swedish Finnish minority, and in 1999, Lainio (1999) argued that Swedish Finns have for decades been a group that has fallen between authorities, as they have not been seen as migrants, nor have they been identified as a national minority group.

Through the course of time, the observation showed that the actions taken by the state to ensure the protection of the culture and language of the national minorities were not effective enough. Based on the recommendations received from the Advisory Committee (Council of Europe, 2003; Council of Europe, 2007), Sweden introduced a new strategy for minority rights in 2009 (Regeringskansliet, 2009). The new strategy contained several changes that would take place to improve the rights of the national minorities in the country. According to the Regeringskansliet (2009), the aim was to further ensure the actualisation of the Council of

Europe's minority conventions by improving the protection of the national minorities, their language and culture. As a result, a new Act on 'National Minorities and National Minority Languages' (2009) came into force in 2010. The major change compared to the previous legislation was the widening of the obligation of providing services in the national minority languages to the entire country, instead of only in particular regions. What is more, the Language Act, adopted in 2009, reconfirmed the status of the national minority languages by stating that all residents of Sweden are to be given an opportunity to learn Swedish, and aside that "persons belonging to a national minority are to be given the opportunity to learn, develop and use the minority language" (Language Act, 2009).

In the latest state report (SOU, 2017) concerning the state of the Swedish Finnish minority, it is stated that although the establishment of the official framework for the protection of the national minorities and their languages has improved the situation, the concrete practices taking place at the municipal level need to be developed. Furthermore, it was criticised (ibid.) that the national minority politics have not been embedded as part of the everyday politics, but have rather been pushed aside to the margins. The report demands that in a practical level, aside other things, more resources are needed for establishing effective language revitalisation actions in order to maintain the language heritage of the third generation of Swedish Finns, as well as to safeguard the provision of elderly care services in the Finnish language.

Gothenburg as a Finnish administrative area

The National Minority Act (2009) established the term administrative area⁶ to identify municipalities, which have a specific role in enhancing the culture and language of a certain national minority group. The administrative areas were established for Finnish, Meänkieli and Sami. Becoming an administrative area is voluntary and at the time when the Act was adopted, 23 municipalities were named as Finnish administrative areas. By 2018, the number has risen to 65 (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, n.d.). Gothenburg became one of the administrative areas in February 1, 2011. The protection of national minorities in Gothenburg is identified as a part of human rights work, which is a ground for all the work carried out in the municipality (City of Gothenburg, 2014). The action plan⁷ concerning the Finnish administration in Gothenburg states that the work is carried out in cooperation with the Swedish Finnish minority.

Snellman (2003) states that Finns became the largest migrant population in Gothenburg in the 1960's, and the considerable minority has existed in the city ever since. By the 1990's, the number of Swedish Finns in Gothenburg equated 5% of the population of the city. Up until today, the percentage of the Swedish Finns has stayed somewhat the same. At the end of 2014, there were approximately 30,000 first, second or third generation Swedish Finns residing in Gothenburg, 7000 of them being part of the first-generation of migrants (Sisuradio, 2018b). Additionally, there are approximately 19,000 Swedish Finns residing in the municipalities surrounding Gothenburg. The number of Swedish Finns is steadily growing, but the number of the individuals belonging to the first generation has decreased by 10,000 during the last four years. (Sisuradio 2018a).

The action plan (City of Gothenburg, 2014) states that although the Swedish Finnish minority is one of the largest minority groups in Gothenburg, many of the members from the second and third generation have not learnt the Finnish language. This is partly due to the guidance given

⁶ Förvaltningsområde

⁷ Handlingsplan

by the Swedish school and health care authorities in the 1980's to the Finnish parents, which encouraged the parents to avoid speaking Finnish with their children (ibid.). Thus, one of the essential goals of the minority work carried out in Gothenburg is to safeguard the power of the Swedish Finnish minority to decide upon issues concerning their own everyday life and to be treated equally in comparison to the rest of the society. The city of Gothenburg identifies the following rights concerning the members belonging to the Swedish Finnish minority:

1. Right to receive day care partly or fully in Finnish language, regardless of the language used at home
2. Right to an elderly care partly or fully in Finnish language
3. Right to communicate with the municipal services in Finnish both orally and in writing
4. The city of Gothenburg has the responsibility to protect and enhance the development of the Finnish language in culture and free time activities
5. The city of Gothenburg has the responsibility to enable the participation of the Swedish Finnish minority in decision-making concerning the minority group
6. The city of Gothenburg has the responsibility to provide advice and inform the members of the Swedish Finnish minority about their legislative rights

(City of Gothenburg, n.d.)

Additionally, the representatives of the Swedish Finnish minority have expressed that the majority society in Gothenburg does not have even the basic knowledge about the existence of the Swedish Finnish minority, nor about Gothenburg being a Finnish administrative area (City of Gothenburg, 2014). Therefore, providing information for the majority population about the existence of the minorities, as well as the rights individuals have as part of a minority, are identified as fundamentally important parts of minority work in the city. The action plan (ibid.) states that increasing the awareness among the majority, as well as fighting against the stereotypical perceptions of Swedish Finns will be best carried out by provision of information.

CHAPTER THREE

Literature review

The following chapter consists of two parts, out of which the first one focuses on reflecting on the existing studies conducted among the Swedish Finnish minority in Sweden. Furthermore, as this study examines the narratives constructed regarding migration experiences, it is necessary to overview the existing literature on the topic in general. Hence, the second part of this chapter provides reflections of studies conducted among other migrant populations with similar focus. Considering that the existing research data on the topic is enormous, the literature review focuses on research conducted with ethnic groups who share somewhat similar characteristics with the Swedish Finnish minority.

Literature about Finns in Sweden

The extensive labour migration from Finland to Sweden after the Second World War and the considerable migrant group that had formed in Sweden due to that, has been an inspiration for many researchers. However, Weckström (2016) argues that relatively little research has been conducted on the topic in contrast to the large-scale consequences that the migration movement had both in Sweden and in Finland. In general, the focus of research often correlates with the developmental stage of the researched group (Etnisten Suhteiden Neuvosto, 2004). In the case of the Finnish migrants in Sweden, the early research concerning the group was mainly focusing on the reasons of migration and the immediate problems faced by the migrant group in their country of destination (see for example Hormia, 1971; Leiniö, 1979; 1984; Koiranen, 1986; Hujanen, 1986). The question of schooling and language rights received attention among researchers when the number of Finnish children in school increased some years after the largest wave of labour migrants. The questions of identity and integration, on the other hand, were highlighted in research from 1980's onwards, followed by topics concerning minority rights, the ageing first-generation population and the language development of the third generation of Swedish Finns (Björklund, 2012). In the framework of this study, it is most relevant to review the more recent studies focusing on long-time migration experiences and the experiences of the first-generation Swedish Finns in today's Sweden, as well as those studies that have been conducted in the geographical area of Gothenburg.

The ages of the participants of this study varied between 70-77 years. In the 2000's, them, as many others of the first-generation Swedish Finns, reached retirement age. Simultaneously, the interest of the researchers towards the ageing Swedish Finnish population and especially their national minority status in relation to the provided elderly care services in Finnish language has increased. Heikkilä (2004) has written several studies on the situation of the Finnish elderly in Sweden. In her doctoral thesis, she conducted interviews among the elderly Finnish people in Sweden with a purpose to obtain an understanding of the Finnish elderly's perception of the Swedish health care, and to examine the role of ethnicity in the context of that. In her study, conducted only a few years after the identification of the national minorities, Heikkilä (2004, p.1) notes that policy framework for the provision of elderly care in Finnish language exists, but "in practice this is still rare". Her findings additionally support the view that many of the first-generation Swedish Finns have strong affiliations with their ethnic background, stating

that “the elderly Finnish immigrants were bearers of a strong Finnish identity” (ibid., p.31). Also Virtala (2012) has analysed the experiences of the Sweden Finns as retirees and service users of elderly care, and states that although there exists individual differences among the participants, the importance of the mother tongue and social networks among one’s own ethnic group during older age were clearly expressed.

Out of the studies conducted among the Swedish Finns in Gothenburg, many are life history studies that aimed at describing the everyday life of the migrant population in the growing industrial centre. The study ‘Sallan suurin kylä – Göteborg’ [Salla’s biggest village – Gothenburg] (Snellman, 2003) is based on an oral history study conducted among the Swedish Finns in Gothenburg, who emigrated from the Finnish Lapland in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Some of the interviews were conducted with individuals who had eventually re-migrated back to Finland. Likewise, Lamér (2015) examined the lives and experiences of the Finnish labour migrants in the harbour industry in Gothenburg in the 1960’s and 1970’s in her book ‘Raskasmetalli – Suomalaiset laivanrakentajat Göteborgissa’ [Heavy metal – Finns in the harbour industry in Gothenburg]. It was found by both authors that there exists a sense of community and belonging among the Finnish minority in Gothenburg, and it was concluded that the informal social security provided by the fellow countrymen during the first years after migration undoubtedly influenced the development of a strong ethnic identity amongst the group members.

Suutari (2000), in his study ‘Götajoen jenkka’ [The Jenkka of the river-Göta], focuses also on the sense of community by examining the identity formation of Swedish Finns through Finnish dance music in Gothenburg. In his longitudinal study, he also touches upon the status change of the Swedish Finns from an immigrant group into a national minority, and argues that the change in the official status of the group has influenced the representations of Finnishness in Sweden positively. In the same context, Suutari (ibid.) however emphasises the role of micro-level social activities within the minority in supporting and strengthening the ethnic identity of the minority group. In relation to this, Björklund (2012) – whose quantitative study analyses the state of the Swedish Finnish population in the 2000’s - describes that the lack of Swedish language skills during the first years after the migration isolated the Finnish migrant population from the rest of the society, which was on its part influencing the level of activity amongst the local Finnish associations. However, Björklund (2012) reiterates that the definition ‘Swedish Finns’ is connected to time and space and is thus constantly developing and changing its meaning.

The doctoral thesis of Kuosmanen (2001) does not go in line with the other presented studies, but provides an insightful reflection on the integration process and socialisation of Finnish men in Sweden, by providing an analysis of 28 in-depth interviews with both well integrated and deeply marginalised Finnish men in Gothenburg. Kuosmanen (ibid.) was especially interested in reflecting on the childhood experiences of the participants in the framework of masculinity, and aimed to understand how have these experiences and circumstances influenced their social careers in Sweden. Kuosmanen’s intersectional study interprets the significance of gender and ethnicity in the context of migration and highlights that although many Finnish men integrated well to the Swedish society, others suffered a loss of status and dignity after the emigration, due to lack of language skills and the negative stereotypical ideas of Finns in Sweden some decades ago.

Literature about narrated migration experiences

The concepts used in the context of migration are versatile, as are the time and space specific factors affecting the content of the existing literature on self-narration among migrants. In the context of the Swedish Finns, the changing use of terminology, such as the use of concepts 'migrant' and 'minority' has been noted by researchers. For instance, Lainio (1996) argues that the terminology identifying the Swedish Finns has developed over time, alongside with the construction of minority identity and the changes taking place in the surrounding society. The Swedish Finns that were identified as temporary labour migrants in the 1960's gradually turned into being a nationally recognised minority group in the end of the 1990's. On the other hand, Clary-Lemon (2010), who conducted oral history interviews among the Irish community in Canada about their national identity in her study "We're not ethnic, we're Irish! Oral histories and discursive construction of immigrant identity", highlights the self-identification of migrant groups as an important part of the identity construction, being constructed in constant comparison between the surrounding groups. Thus, Clary-Lemon (2010) emphasises that the highly variable collection of understandings about 'who are we' is strongly connected to the perception of who are seen as 'us' and who are seen as 'them'.

Varjonen et al. (2013) argue that when linked to a migration event, ethnic identity is constructed in reflection to two reference groups: the majority group in the country of destination and the majority group in the country of origin. They (ibid.) further argue that the decreasing connections to the country of origin create a "double minority status", which complicates the identity construction of such groups. By conducting focus group interviews among Ingrian Finns both before and after their migration from Russia to Finland, the researchers studied the ethnic identity construction of the participants with discursive methods. Varjonen et al. (ibid.) analyse that the Ingrian Finns construct their identity from a combination of biological and social characteristics collected both from Russia and Finland, by negotiating and interpreting the common values within both majority groups. The biological characteristics, roots and genes are highlighted as meaningful in the context of self-identification, and "ethnic identity was constructed as biologically inherited and thus as something that the surrounding society would not change" (ibid., p.126). Even though the position of Ingrian Finns is distinct from the one of the Swedish Finns due to the historical connection Ingrian Finns have to both of the countries, it can be argued that the insights of the study especially in relation to the biologically inherited attributes are utilisable in other contexts as well.

Buffel (2017), on the other hand, studied the notion of 'home' in relation to identity construction of ageing migrants in her study with the first-generation Turkish migrants in Brussels, Belgium. In the findings, the participants, who had likewise migrated to Belgium as labour migrants in the 1960's and 1970's, conceptualised the meaning of 'home' being two-folded, as they simultaneously longed to move back to Turkey, but on the other hand had their more recent roots and family members in the new home country. Buffel (2017) determined that in the process of developing attachment to the host society, the participants had used practical means to "establish a connection with the place they left behind" (ibid., p.7). Examples of such means were, for instance, being surrounded by one's ethnic community, religious and cultural services and ethnic businesses. On the other hand, Buffel (ibid.) as well as Clary-Lemon (2010) and Varjonen et al. (2013) found that there exists a sense of exclusion among the participants in both the country of origin and the country of destination, as a quotation from a Turkish participant shows: "In Turkey we are viewed as Europeans and here we are viewed as foreigners" (Buffel 2017, p.9).

Summary

Much of the research introduced above in the context of the Swedish Finnish migrants is based on ethnographic studies or life history interviews and thus provides rich, detailed descriptions of the everyday life of this migrant population. The research findings proved to be very helpful when aiming to gain deeper understanding on the lives of the first-generation Swedish Finns. As a whole, the findings also mirror the heterogeneity there exists among this group, for example in the degree of attachment to one's own ethnic community. At the same time, the existing research seems to mostly focus on the group of first-generation Swedish Finns whose ethnic identification as a Finnish person is rather strong, and who actively use the Finnish language. However, what is missing is research conducted among those individuals belonging to the first-generation of Swedish Finns who have become assimilated to the Swedish society, and no longer strongly identify themselves as Finns.

On the other hand, the research introduced in the second subchapter reveals that there are many similarities in the migration processes of different groups, especially when examining their experiences connected to the long stay in the host societies. On the other hand, the literature presented above, as well as the findings of this study illustrate that the history and background of the migrant group in the country of origin play an important role in the integration process. What is more, the research findings, both among the Swedish Finns and other migrant groups, highlight the importance of conducting more research amongst ageing migrants, as their position in relation to both the other generations of migrants and other elderly is distinctively different. The studies of Virtala (2011) and Heikkilä (2004) provide meaningful discussions on this topic, but at the same time their strong focus to healthcare prevents them from considering the position of the elderly Swedish Finns in a wider social and political framework.

CHAPTER FOUR

Theoretical framework

The aim of this study is to analyse the self-produced narratives of the first-generation Swedish Finns in order to examine their life events and migration experiences from an individual micro perspective. The theoretical framework, consisting of social constructionism and concepts of 'narrative', 'narrated self' and 'acculturation', functions as a medium of viewing the data from a certain theoretical point of view. In the following chapter, the mentioned theoretical approaches and concepts are presented and their use in the context of this paper is discussed.

Social constructionism

Social constructionism is a theoretical orientation which contests the positivist epistemology with a statement that knowledge is not objective, and that many of the normative perceptions human communities base their knowledge and understanding on, are actually influenced by the cultural and historical frameworks we live in (Burr, 2015). The idea dates back to writers in North America and Britain within a postmodern approach, who argued that there exists no hidden structure in the world, rejecting thus the power of religion and church in determining ultimate truths. The emerge of social constructionist ideologies took place in the latter half of the 20th century, when researchers defined social phenomena as something being created in the social interaction between human beings. Social constructionism is often adopted by those "wishing to challenge oppressive and discriminatory practices in, for example, gender and sexuality, disability and race" (ibid., p.23). As the target group of this study is an ethnic minority population with a history of being in a disadvantageous position in the host society, this perspective is specifically highlighted. Aside that, the framework of social constructionism is adopted in order to emphasise the continuously evolving and changing nature of knowledge, as well as the impact of social, historical and political frameworks in defining the conceptual world around us, which is also being highlighted by the other theoretical tools of this study.

Elder-Vass (2012, p.4) argues there being "a range of social constructionisms, each striking a different balance between traditional sociological arguments and postmodern innovations". Those approaches based on the idea of social constructionism claim that the historical context has defined our understanding on what is natural and expected. That is to say, concepts such as 'gender' and 'currency' have been constructed to have a particular normative value or a role (ibid.). Burr (2015) states that seeing normative understanding as culturally and historically specific also means that the knowledge is a product of communication between individuals, and thus "the goings-on between people in the course of their everyday are seen as the practices during which our shared versions of knowledge are constructed" (ibid., p.5). In the light of this, the changing status of the Swedish Finns both in the micro- and macro-levels functions as a good example on illustrating how historical and socio-cultural frameworks modify our perceptions and affect the ways groups are categorised. Weckström (2016) describes such a meaning-changing process as gradual, requiring the efforts of a larger number of people.

Furthermore, social constructionist approaches give intrinsic value to language. Burr (2015, p.52) describes the examination of language as "the keystone of social constructionism", as the

meaning-making and other social processes highlighted by the social constructionist orientation take place in interaction between individuals. Language is understood as a way to construct the world, instead of being defined merely as a way of communication. Burr (2015, p.10) argues that “we are each born into a world where the conceptual frameworks and categories used by the people in our culture already exist”, and thus language should be understood as a “pre-condition for thought” (ibid.). In the context of migration, language and the skills in using it technically and socially become strongly embedded in power relations, as the social codes built into language and interaction may not be similar in the country of destination in comparison to the country of origin. What is more, language is argued to be the key in understanding the moral rules of a society, and Wareing (2004, p.10-11) defines language as “an arena where the concepts of right (...) and duty are created, and thus language actually creates power, as well as being a site where power is performed”. On the other hand, in the case of the Swedish Finnish minority, the power of language has been significant in strengthening the in-group interaction and creating a feeling of minority identity (Weckström, 2016).

Although this study does not examine the technical use of language, the role of language as an interactive tool and as means of producing both a sense of belonging and feeling of exclusion has been identified. The importance of the use of language and the skills in it have also been noticed in prior research concerning the Swedish Finnish minority. Weckström (2016), for example, notes language being one of the major topics emerging from the interview data in connection with Finnishness and self-identification among the second-generation Swedish Finns. Virtala (2011) also highlights the significance of language in the context of elderly migrants, who often tend to start using their mother tongue in higher degrees after their retirement, which in its turn may negatively affect their abilities to interact with the majority population in the host society. In close connection to this, the following subchapter discusses the nature of narrative and its use in self-identification.

Concepts

Bryman (2012) defines concepts as key elements of social research. As concepts are often defined in various manners by different researchers, it is necessary to present and discuss the main concepts used in this research paper. The concepts presented in this section, ‘narrative’ and ‘narrated self’ as well as the concept of ‘acculturation’ aim to provide clarification on how these terms have been defined and used in this study.

Narrative

Narrative was chosen as a concept to frame the theoretical knowledge of this paper in order to increase one’s understanding of human interaction, and the factors influencing the content of the narratives produced by individuals. In an everyday language, narratives are often referred to as storytelling, being closely linked with all kinds of social interaction between human beings. Normally, narrative consists of a series of events, which are illustrated from the perspective of the narrator (Elliot, 2005). In the course of recalling an event or a happening, the narrator makes constant conscious and unconscious decisions on how the narrative is organised and what details are left out or included in the story. These decisions are often motivated with an aim of making the story meaningful to a particular audience (ibid.). Hall & Matarese (2013, p.80) emphasise that narratives are often embedded in making a point, and thus “the events in question are organised in such a way that the resulting narrative has consequences for both the narrator and the listener”. Furthermore, Elliot (2005) summarises three factors defining the

nature of narratives: they are meaningful, social and chronological. Temporality as an central aspect defining narratives is embedded in the last two factors, as the meaningfulness of the narrative is constructed in dependence to the audience in an interactional social situation. The meaningfulness of narratives is also closely related to the ability of the narrator to provide a closure to the story. Elliot (2005) notes that the challenge when analysing historical narratives lies often precisely in their open-endedness. Boenisch-Brednich (2002, p.68) argues that when migration experiences are examined in the form of narratives, they become “part of an autobiographical narrative which is never told as a whole, but emerges in short entities”. Boenisch-Brednich (2002), however, continues to argue that migration histories that began several decades ago, may already have gained their closure and be identified as a “finalized project of earlier life” (ibid., p.69), hence enabling the observation of the experience as a whole.

Elliot (2005) emphasises the social nature of narratives by highlighting the significance of negotiation in narrative production. In the context of this study, the social nature of narratives is given special attention. When narrative-telling is understood as an interactional situation rather than an objective event where information is exchanged between two individuals, the listener’s role in influencing the content and direction of the narrative become significantly important. Furthermore, the interactive situations where narratives are normally produced, are guided by the norms and rules produced by the surrounding society. The listener and the narrator act according to certain learned social code, including body language and gestures. The norms produced in the surrounding society likewise define not only the correctness of the content, but also the expectations of roles adopted by different gender and age groups (ibid.). Furthermore, it can be stated that the intersectional power differences between the listener and the narrator inevitably influence the way the story is being produced. What is more, especially in the context of an audio-recorded interview, “the narrator may be influenced by imagined or possible future audiences” (Elliot, 2005, p.11). Therefore, in light of that it can be argued that like any narratives, the ones produced in the context of this study are unique in nature.

Finally, the concept ‘narrative’ was chosen to be part of the theoretical framework due to the need to emphasise that when interview data is explored in a form of narratives, it becomes easier to focus on the stories instead of their tellers. Thus, instead of the narratives being sole descriptions of the narrator’s inner thoughts, they are combined products of social settings, interaction and private thoughts.

The narrated self

The second concept constructing the theoretical framework of this study is ‘narrated self’. Although the aim of this study is not to provide definitions of the participants’ identities, the poststructuralist research links individual narratives strongly with representation of self and of identity construction (Elliot, 2005). Also in the context of this data, the in-written descriptions of selves became vividly visible in the data. The concept ‘narrated self’ was chosen to frame the analysis concerning the self-descriptions. The social constructionist view to the psychological concept of ‘self’ has been versatile. The concept, identified by Burr (2015, p.205) as “person in terms of personality characteristics, attitudes and motivations”, has not been entirely adopted by the social constructionist orientation, but nor has it been rejected. Therefore, Burr (ibid.) argues “the concept of self can be reclaimed without compromising social constructionism’s theoretical assumptions”. The concept of identity in its essential definition is, on the other hand, contested by social constructionism, and the term is instead used in the meaning of being a social phenomenon, coming into existence in social life interactions. When the concepts of self and identity are discussed in connection with narratives, their nature as fluid

and changeable becomes highlighted. Hall & Matarese (2013, p.81) state that “by creating and performing stories we are able to establish a coherent sense of who we are and at least, for the time being, we can create self-understanding”. When narrating our inner self, we reflect with our past, compare the current state with a variety of ‘what if’s and “look back on the selves we once were” (Andrews, 2014, p.3). Thus, like narratives, also the presentation of self-in-form narratives is ever-changing and evolving.

In the same way how social context influences the production of narratives in general, it also has an impact on the construction of self-narratives. Analysing the significance of social context in the formulation of self-representative narratives could be done by borrowing Goffman’s (1969) view of co-produced identities. In his theory of self-representation, Goffman argues that the presentation of self becomes fulfilled only after the surrounding audience has validated it, and describes the social settings of narrative production with the terminology of a theatre stage. Many other researchers have come to emphasise the role of social negotiation in the formulation of self-narratives. Elliot (2005, p.127) highlights the essential role of social relationships affecting our self-representation, stating that “our ‘self-narratives’ must be supported or at least tolerated by those around us”, whereas Andrews (2014) points out that the Other is not only influential in validating the narrative, but instead, the whole individual narration of self is based on reflecting one’s own position in comparison with the Others. In this view, the mentioned Other does not only refer to the immediate society around us, as today’s media brings a variety of information to our reach, constantly influencing and shaping our collective and individual self-narratives. The reflective action employed by individuals when constructing their self-narratives becomes further highlighted in the context of migration (Boenisch-Brednich, 2002).

Also the macro narrative of a certain group sets social expectations to the individual narratives, and although individuals possess the abilities to construct unique self-narratives, the existing macro narrative framework is often unconsciously utilised to frame the individual narrative (Fog Olwig, 2011). The macro narrative of the first-generation of Swedish Finns who migrated to Sweden during the 1960’s and 1970’s could, for example, be the one provided in the Background chapter of this paper. The theory of pull and push factors in the context of Sweden and Finland displays a clear trajectory of events, causes and consequences, due to which a significant number of individuals made the decision to rather spontaneously pack their belongings and move to a new country. Once in Sweden, the macro narrative of the Swedish Finns tells a story of a hard-working migrant population, who were most often defined by ethnicity-related stereotypes and prejudices, making it difficult for the Swedish Finns to integrate to their host society. Although this macro narrative was described and also confirmed several times in the interviews conducted in the context of this study, Fog Olwig (2011) argues that such descriptions do not necessarily prove the homogeneity of the narratives. Furthermore, when analysing the reasons behind migration, migrants themselves often reaffirm the plot of the grand narrative. However, “such pragmatic statements should not be read at face value as factual descriptions of motivations for migration” (ibid., p.157), but instead “they can be seen to be inscribed in well-established narratives of migration that are related to validate the importance of travel abroad and confer social recognition on migrants” (ibid.). The connection between individual and collective narratives illustrates the intimate relationship between the micro-level individual experiences to the macro-level stories. This will be examined in the following section in the context of migration, by introducing the concept of acculturation.

Acculturation is employed to be the third conceptual tool of this study. Psychological and social scientific research has focused on individual's adaptation to a new cultural context for a long period of time. The concept of acculturation was developed to explain the alteration that takes place in a continuous contact of two or more cultures. The process was initially theorised as unidimensional, but today, the multidimensional approach to acculturation - which defines the process taking place in several domains simultaneously - is favoured by many researchers (Fox et al., 2013). Acculturation was chosen as a suitable concept in the framework of this study, where migration experiences play such a pivotal role in the narratives of the individuals. In this study, the concept is approached from a socially constructed angle, which emphasises the variability of migrant populations and social contexts. However, in order to gain an understanding of the topic, it is necessary to discuss the development of the concept within the field of psychology.

One of the influential researchers in the field of acculturation has been Berry, whom focused on the development of individual behaviour when migrating to a new culture, by developing a bi-dimensional model on acculturation (Fox et al., 2013). In this model, Berry approaches the concept of acculturation by describing four strategies that individuals and groups adopt in an encounter with different cultures: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation (ibid.). Integration refers to a process of combining aspects from both cultures. In other words, it refers to a situation where an individual aims to create a connection to the new society without discarding one's origins. In assimilation, on the other hand, the norms and practices of the dominant culture are embraced at the cost of abandoning the original culture. Separation strategy is defined as opposite to assimilation, leading to the avoidance of the surrounding culture and placing emphasis on one's original cultural behaviour. Finally, marginalisation refers to individuals who both fail to adopt the practices of the dominant culture and lose contact with their original culture, thus developing "a de-identified personality resultant from superficially inhabiting two cultures at once, but feeling like a relative stranger in both" (ibid., p.271).

Each of the mentioned strategies consist of two components: attitudes and behaviour. To say, individual's opinion on how to acculturate and the actual actions taken by the individual. Furthermore, acculturation is defined occurring both on an individual level in form of behavioural changes and at a group level in the form of changing cultural practices, structures and institutions (Berry, 2005). The bi-dimensionality of the model refers to the process involving both the new arriving migrant population and the country of destination, which entails that the process of acculturation is rarely straightforward. Berry (2005, p.705) states, for example, that "integration can only be 'freely' chosen and successfully pursued by non-dominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity", addressing thus the power relationships embedded in intercultural encounters in the context of migration. Padilla & Perez (2003, p.37) argue that the strength in Berry's model was that it "recognized the importance of multicultural societies, minority individuals and groups, and the fact that individuals have a choice in the matter of how far they are willing to go in the acculturation process".

However, while Berry's model has been prominent in further understanding the complexities of acculturation processes, the model has been criticised of reviewing the different strategies as stable and universal, and hence "providing a de-contextualised and acultural account of acculturation" (Andreouli, 2013, p.166). Andreouli (2013) argues instead for the dialogical

nature of the acculturation process and states acculturation being “a meaning-making process whereby migrants need to reconstruct their social representations and identities within a new context” (ibid., p.166-167). Andreouli agrees with Berry by simultaneously emphasising the bi-dimensional nature of acculturation, and names state policies and existing dominant social representations of migrant groups as considerable factors affecting the interaction, and thus the acculturation between groups. In this study, Berry’s model on acculturation is loosely taken into account by applying it to the social constructionist framework. That is to say, this study employs the different strategies described by Berry as an underlying understanding of phases that may evolve or change form over the course of time and according to the setting. Bhatia & Ram (2009, p.142) argue that “in the period of increasing globalization, the rapid creation of multinationals, the formation of diasporic communities, massive flows of transmigration, and border crossings, acculturation becomes increasingly complicated”. However, I argue that as the focus of this study is on a time period when the global migration was notably smaller in comparison with today’s societies, the concept of acculturation can be utilised to frame the process of settling within a new society and culture.

CHAPTER FIVE

Methodology

This study is a qualitative analysis, based on seven oral history interviews conducted with first-generation Swedish Finns who migrated to Sweden during the years 1961-1970. As the aim of this study is to examine the narratives disclosed by the participants and to analyse the subsequent motives, it is important that the chosen methodology provides tools for examining the micro-level dimensions of history. Additionally, when social constructionist orientation is applied in a research setting, it has a considerable influence on how the study is conducted and how the collected data is analysed (Burr, 2015). With an aim of contextualising the knowledge regarding certain events, periods of times and groups of people, this study provides an arena for the individuals to voice their opinions and to be part of building their own story. Thus, the interviews were conducted by using the oral history interviewing method, which highlights the significance of multi-layered history writing and the relevance of personal experiences, attitudes and memories in the context of it. The collected data was thereafter analysed by using the thematic narrative analysis, with an aim of perceiving the essential core of the collected narratives in order to analyse them as a whole.

In this chapter, reflective descriptions on the chosen methodology and the course of the study are provided. Firstly, the researcher's role in the process and the motives behind choosing the topic are discussed, and the use of specific research methods as tools is justified. Secondly, the data collection process is presented in its totality, including the description of oral history interview method, the sampling procedure and the process of conducting the interviews. This is followed by an introduction of the data analysis, also including the description of thematic narrative analysis and the transcribing process. Finally, the validity and reliability of the research and its ethical integrity are critically examined.

Discovering the topic

My personal motivation to analyse the experiences of elderly migrants evolves from the fascination I have towards the ability of the human nature to adapt and to develop in the events of change. It was only after my arrival from Finland to Sweden in 2015 when I learned that Sweden has a considerable Finnish minority population, originating mostly from a massive labour movement in the mid 20th century. Very soon after my arrival I also got to learn that there existed, and perhaps still exists, stereotypes on how Finnish people behave and how their character is like. As many of these stereotypical pictures of the Swedish Finns were remarkably negative in nature, I grew interested in hearing the individual stories of the people behind the stereotypes. How has it been to migrate from Finland to Sweden in the times when there existed major socio-economic differences between the two countries? How has it been to live in another country as a migrant for such a long time? How has it changed you as an individual? Weckström (2016) notes in her study on the second-generation of Swedish Finns that the “images and representations of Sweden's Finns have changed tremendously over the past decades” (ibid., p.12). Is this relevant only in the case of the second and third-generation of Swedish Finns, or also applicable to the lives of the first-generation?

The researcher's role

When research is conducted with qualitative methods, it becomes utterly important to consider the role of the researcher in the process. Weckström (2016, p.25) points out that an assumption that research could be carried out “in some autonomous realm insulated from the wider society and from particular biography of the researcher” is absurd. As narratives are defined as being “socially situated interactive performances produced in particular settings for particular purposes” (Hardwick & Worsley, 2010, p.109), this becomes even more apparent. I met the participants of this study as a rather young female and a university student, and as a person who had quite recently migrated from Finland to Sweden. As it can be argued that the interaction between the researcher and the participants leaves its marks on the data, and as it is challenging for the researcher to provide a value-free, objective analysis of the collected data, it is crucially important to acknowledge this and to reflect upon it. Reflexivity, which is identified by Burr (2015, p.176) as one of the major terms used in describing a variety of actions in social constructionist research, highlights the “issue of explicitly acknowledging the personal and political values and perspective informing the research”.

In trying to avoid hijacking the stories of the first-generation Swedish Finns by my own pre-expectations, theories and background knowledge, a number of measures were taken. Firstly, I spent time reflecting upon how my presence in the interview situation may have influenced representation of the participants' lives. Patel (2005), who ponders over the same questions in her research, came to a conclusion that “I cannot say for sure in what ways and to what degrees the components of my identity affected each of the six [participants] constructions. For example, would being a female interviewer make another female [--] more or less inhibited in telling me about their life?” (ibid., p.340). In this study, instead of aiming to minimise the influence of the researcher's role in the knowledge production, it has instead been identified in each stage, making it thus visible within the research findings.

My standing as a newly migrated Finn in Sweden situated me to a two-folded position in relation to the participants. Although I had, like them, migrated from Finland to Sweden, the conditions in both countries during the time of the migration and the circumstances leading to my decision to migrate were distinctively different from the ones of the participants. My position as a middle-class university student in today's Sweden cannot be compared to the situation into which the participants of this study arrived 50 years ago. What is more, I do not personally identify myself as a member of the Swedish Finnish national minority. However, I do share similar characteristics with the participants, language being the major one. Sharing the same mother tongue is an important and empowering factor, especially when discussing topics linked to one's identity and life experiences (Snellman, 2003). Hence, it could be argued that my two-folded position was a well-functioning ground for the interview session, as my ethnic background and language skills provided the tools for a deeper interaction, whilst my inexperience in migration events allowed the participants to tell me the whole of their story, without my own pre-assumptions affecting this. However, at the same time where my ethnicity as a Finn might create ground for a deep rapport, it is also noteworthy to mention that it has most likely also impacted on how the narratives turned out to be. For instance, in case I would be ethnically Swedish, it can be assumed that the participants would have formed their storylines in a different manner.

Justification of the methodology

Bryman (2012, p.19) notes that “methods are not simply neutral tools: they are linked in the ways in which social scientists envision the connection between different viewpoints about the nature of social reality and how it should be examined”. Therefore, the choice of research methods is closely linked with the epistemological and ontological approaches used as the framework of research. Epistemological orientation of research informs the reader of the understanding the researcher has about how knowledge can be acquired, what kind of methods provide best tools in analysing research findings and what is the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Leavy, 2011). Ontological considerations, on the other hand, refer to the ways the researcher sees “the nature of social phenomena – are they relatively inert and beyond our influence or are they very much a product of social interaction?” (Bryman, 2012, p.6), and how that phenomena can be studied.

Humphries (2008) divides epistemological and ontological approaches roughly to constructivist and realist paradigms, “though ‘positivist’ is used frequently with a similar meaning to ‘realist’, and ‘phenomenological’ or ‘post-positivist’ have broadly similar meanings to ‘constructivist’” (ibid., p.9). This research is guided by the constructivist understanding, which sees there existing several impressions of reality, due to which also knowledge is a “constructed representation” and “subject to continual change” (ibid., p.13). Hence, the choice of data collection methodology and method of analysis used in this study are social constructivist in nature. Although not all social constructionist approaches fully reject the mainstream findings in psychology and sociology, they raise awareness on being cautious when considering how historical, cultural, political and ideological interests influence research findings. Likewise, in this paper the social constructionist understanding is not utilised in its most extreme form, but rather as a tool to criticise the conventional, positivist way of seeing the self, identity and society as stable and unchangeable. In other words, the approach in this paper could be identified as “realist social constructionism” (Elder-Vass, 2012, p.7).

The choice of data collection and analysing methods was done with considerations on their utility in the context of social constructionist orientation, but equally reflecting on their usability in allowing the micro-level perspectives to become visible in the data. Oral history interviewing method is characterised as a process during which the researcher takes part actively in knowledge production (Leavy, 2011). Correspondingly, the collaborative relationship and the reciprocity in the process of oral history interviews are strongly constructive in nature. Narrative analysis, on the other hand, can be used in several types of research, but in the context of this study it is harnessed to be utilised with social constructive methods, being embedded in the ideology, which sees narratives as subjective realities constructed by individuals (Sosulski et al., 2010). Both the oral history method and the narrative analysis are based on an ideology of listening, rather than asking, due to which they were seen as suitable tools to be utilised in this study.

Apart from basing the research methodology on linear epistemological and ontological considerations, it is also essential that the chosen set of methodological tools reflect with the posed research questions. The research questions of this study aim at exploring the construction of narratives, and hence the use of narrative analysis was seen as the best choice for the method of analysis. To give an example, the use of critical discourse analysis, which examines “how discourses reproduce and maintain hegemony and discriminatory social relations that often lead to marginalisation of certain groups” (Weckström, 2016, p.28) would emphasise different topics in the data, and therefore shift the focus of the research findings. What is more, in the

spirit of the social constructivist understanding of multi-layered nature of reality, the research questions are not formulated with a purpose of developing major understanding on social phenomena, but rather to examine individual narratives.

Data collection

The following section will provide detailed descriptions on oral history as a method for data collection, after which the sampling procedure and the actual conduction of interviews are illustrated.

Oral history interview

The nature of this study is qualitative. Qualitative social research is part of the naturalistic research methods, which seeks to gain profound understanding about human behaviour (Merriam, 2016). The method of qualitative research was chosen for this study due to its curious nature and with an assumption that in the context of this study, the possibility in capturing the deeper meanings and perceptions within people's opinions and thoughts is higher when using qualitative research methods. Rubin & Rubin (2005, p.3) state that with the help of in-depth interviews the researcher can "understand experiences and reconstruct events in which you did not participate" and thus "extend your intellectual and emotional reach across age, occupation, class, race, sex, and geographical boundaries" (ibid.). Oral history is a qualitative interview method with its roots in anthropology. It was established as an official technique for historical documentation in 1948 and is today used across disciplines (Leavy, 2011). In social sciences, the oral history method was initially adopted by the feminist movement in their attempt to subject marginalised groups of women and to "unearth subjugated knowledges" (Leavy, 2011, p.3). The method emphasises the perspective and expertise of the interviewees, who will be referred to as participants, and emerges from an ideology that "individual actors have valuable knowledge to share based on their life experiences, including their behaviours, rituals, attitudes, values and belief" (ibid., p.9). It seeks to uncover the answers to questions 'how' and 'why' about the lives of the participants, and the ideas that have framed their interaction with other people (Patel, 2005).

The role of the researcher during an oral history interview is to act as a facilitator, allowing the participant to lead the conversation and to shape the content of the interview. It is thus essential that the researcher adopts an open mentality by accepting that the character and content of the discussion will only be revealed during the actual interview. The oral history interviewing method is often mentioned in parallel with life history interviews, but unlike life history interviews, oral history interviewing tends to focus on specific events or periods of time in the lives of the individuals (Bryman, 2012). However, unlike in other types of in-depth interviews, the questions in oral history interviews are not solely limited to the topic per se. Instead, they aim to cover an extensive part of the life of the participant and in so doing, expose processes and link the experiences of the participant to the surrounding external framework. In the social science context, the oral history research is at its best when it succeeds in inquiring the relevant critical questions about social life that are closely linked to the lives of the individuals. Thus, finding linkages between the micro- and macro-level of realities is one of the essential dimensions of the oral history method. To achieve this, oral history interviews focus on the personal experiences of the participants and the memories they have about past events, times and social settings (Leavy, 2011). By connecting the individual experiences with the surrounding social context, oral historians aim to fill a gap in the historical record with the

voices of those individuals or groups who have been “marginalised, silenced, disenfranchised or otherwise had their experiences and perspectives left out of the historical record” (ibid., p.15).

Patel (2005) states that the findings from an oral history study cannot be labelled as factual truths, as they are based on memories and personal experiences. More accurately, they could be described as descriptions of subjective realities. Kaivola-Bregenhøj (1996) also points out that as the topics covered in the interview partly concern events that occurred a long time ago, “part of it [life story] have become thinner and generalised, while others have become sharper, ‘key’ narratives structuring the life story” (ibid., p.45). This is not, however, problematic, since the nature of the oral history method is not leaning solely on the collection of facts, and nor does the subjective aspect of the findings indicate them being untruthful or inaccurate. What is more, the epistemology of this study sees the socially constructed realities provided by the participants as a valid piece of historical information. Patel (2005, p.328) continues that each encounter between the researcher and the participant “involves some sort of reflexive construction of social life experiences” and highlights that the knowledge generated in the process of the research is a combination of the collaborative encounter during the interview, followed by the analysis and interpretation of the content. Leavy (2011, p.5) likewise states that “researchers actively participate in the knowledge-building process”, which emphasises the ontological positioning of oral history method of seeing the research as a process during which knowledge is generated.

Due to the broad fashion of the oral history interview method, the researcher often conducts several interviews with the same participant (Leavy, 2011). In the context of this study, the limited timeframe did not allow for more than one interview being conducted with each participant. To compensate the second interview session, a feedback phone call was made with each participant some weeks after the interview to show appreciation of their participation and to acknowledge and gather any feelings felt after the interview (read more in Conducting the interviews).

Sampling procedure

In this study, purposive sampling was applied during the course of recruiting participants to the study. Purposive sampling belongs under the category of non-probability sampling methods, which are often used in qualitative research projects. The goal of purposive sampling is to sample the participants of a study or a case in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions which are being asked. (Bryman, 2012) Additionally, Engel & Schutt (2014) define willingness to talk and having a range of opinions concerning the topic as criteria, which will ensure a rich set of data. In other words, the researcher chooses the participants with the research goal in mind. Although purposive sampling has its benefits, it also carries risks, which are mainly linked to the findings being rarely a representable sample of a certain community, as the data is “much more likely being composed from its central groups” (Thompson & Bornat, 2017). In the case of this study, for example, it is possible that individuals with highly negative experiences or poor socio-economic situation have not been reached to participate in the study.

In an ideal situation, the selection of participants would be continued until a certain level of completeness and saturation is reached (Engel & Schutt, 2014). However, due to the limited timeframe of this study, the size of the sample (7 participants) was decided from the early stages of the process and no additional participants joined in order to refill any gap in the findings. Nonetheless, as this study aims at presenting the ways individuals are constructing their

personal narratives rather than providing a general overview on the lives of the first-generation Swedish Finns, the small data sample is justified, and does not jeopardise the findings of the study. This view is supported by Burmeister & Aitken (2012) who state that the data saturation is not dependant on only the number of the participants, but also the depth of the data.

To be able to analyse the findings in the historical and political timeframe, the criteria for the participants was decided based on their year of arrival to Sweden. Also, as I was explicitly interested in the experiences of those Swedish Finns who had themselves made the decision to migrate, I limited my sample to individuals who had arrived in Sweden as adults or as independent minors. Finally, the sample search was limited to concern individuals residing within the city of Gothenburg. This geographical limitation was drawn to ease the sampling procedure, but simultaneously there existed an interest to reflect the study findings with the development of the national minority politics in Sweden. Gothenburg is one of the 65 Finnish administrative areas in Sweden, which are committed in supporting and preserving the Swedish Finnish minority and their language in everyday life (Länstyrelsen Stockholm, n.d.). To summarise, during my sample selection I was looking for individuals filling the following criteria:

1. Belongs to the first-generation of Swedish Finns
2. Migrated from Finland to Sweden during the 1960's and 1970's as adults or as independent minors
3. Resides in the geographical area of Gothenburg

Before starting the sampling procedure, I actively participated in different Swedish Finnish events in Gothenburg and interacted with individuals who had migrated to Sweden from Finland. Apart from informing myself about the research and academic studies conducted on the topic, I read novels and articles written by Swedish Finns, familiarised myself with the current political discussion concerning the group and watched documentaries and TV-series related to the topic. I was also provided the opportunity to meet and discuss the topic with researchers currently studying or having previously studied the Swedish Finnish minority, as well as meeting with a process manager in charge of the Swedish Finnish minority issues in the city of Gothenburg. In addition to that, I studied the history of the Swedish migration and minority politics in order to understand the wider, structural framework affecting the lives of the participants. As Janesick (2010) notes, it is essential for the oral history interviewer to have knowledge on the social context in which the participants live and have lived in, as it helps one to comprehend the historical and political forces that have affected the decisions the individuals have made and the environment they have been imbedded in.

In order to reach the locals identifying themselves as first-generation Swedish Finns, I emailed⁸ four Swedish Finnish associations who organise weekly activities for the retired Swedish Finns in Gothenburg. I purposefully did not aim to find interviewees through my personal contacts, as I felt that the relationship might have affected to content of the interviews. I did not receive instant replies to my inquiries, and thus after a short period of time I contacted each association by phone. Each of the representatives of the associations welcomed me to their premises to tell more about my research, and suggested a date when they knew their members would be present in numbers. In the end, I visited two of the association personally and one of the associations printed my email and shared the information to their visitors. Due to time limitations of this study, I cancelled my visit to the third association, as I had already agreed interviews with a maximum number of participants. When conducting oral history interviews, the depth of the

⁸ See appendix 1

interviews is more important than the number of interviewees (Janesick, 2010), and in order to be able to focus properly on each of the participants, the number of participants was limited to seven. In order to highlight the reciprocity and cooperative nature of the study, I asked the participants themselves to decide the location for the interview (Leavy, 2011). One of the participants suggested the association premises, whereas all the rest invited me to their homes.

The final sample included three men and four women, out of whom, two couples were interviewed together. Thus, all in all five interviews were conducted with a total number of seven participants. Even though the equal gender division was not in the top of my priority list, in the end of the recruitment process I intentionally approached men in order to gain a somewhat balanced representation between genders. The participants arrived to Sweden between the years 1961-1970 and their age span varied between 16 to 29 years at the time of arrival. The participants are presented with pseudonyms to protect their identity. Each of the participants chose their pseudonyms themselves.

Participant	Gender	Year of arrival	Age when arriving to Sweden
Henrik	Male	1962	21
Samppa	Male	1961	16
Erkki	Male	1962	17
Leena	Female	1970	22
Jatta	Female	1969	29
Viivi	Female	1967	21
Elina	Female	1962	22

I was already aware during the sampling procedure that even though the oral history method has its grounds on a deep rapport, which often mean conducting several interview sessions with each participant, I would not be able to meet the participants more than once. Thus, I put effort into spending time with the people during my visits in the association premises, showed interest in their everyday lives and informed them of my background, with an aim of establishing grounds for an open interaction during the upcoming interviews (Patel, 2005). Although these brief discussions cannot be labelled as preliminary sessions, which Leavy (2011) describes as the beginning of the rapport-building process when applying the oral history method, I hope that they gave a positive first-expression of myself and the upcoming interview. I was genuinely interested in interacting with the people I met during my visits, and I believe that this was visible to the people I interacted with.

Conducting the interviews

Five interviews with seven individuals were conducted during March 2018. All the interviews were conducted in Finnish. The interviews were scheduled during a face-to-face meeting in different association premises, and all apart from one interview were subsequently conducted in the homes of the participants. I started each session by informing the participants of the aim

of the research and asking them to read through the information sheet⁹, after which the participant was asked to read and sign the informed consent¹⁰. I left the information sheet and a copy of the informed consent with my contact details to the participants, in case they would want to return to it later and contact myself.

In order to give the participants the freedom to create an interview content that represented their opinions and perspective of their life experiences, the interview sessions were conducted without an interview guide. However, in order to keep track on the topics that would possibly emerge during the sessions, prior the interviews I had drafted a list of a chronological set of keywords¹¹ for myself. Additionally, towards the end of each of the sessions I intentionally brought up two topics:

1. Are you aware of the Swedish Finns' national minority position and what is your opinion on it?
2. Would you identify yourself as a Finn or as a Swede?

Thus, the choice of the represented topics in the analysis chapter is two-folded, as some of the topics covered in the interviews were consciously introduced by the researcher. However, as the questions were posed at the very end of each meeting, it can be argued that they did not affect the rest of the interview content. Apart from that, I was cautious of my comments and focused on letting the participants decide the direction of the interviews. Yet with that said, it is impossible to say how much my presence and unconscious leading affected the outcome of the interviews and subsequent data.

Due to the free form of the interview session, each of the interviews was unique in structure, even though many of the topics were simultaneously touched upon by each participant to some degree. The interview sessions were also different based on how talkative the participants turned out to be, which affected the degree of my participation. Thompson & Bornat (2017: 22) argue that when conducting oral history interviews, “the oral historian has to be a good listener, the informant an active helper”. Thus, the degree in which I took part in the interviews varied as other participants demanded more support in guiding them through their stories. What is more, two of the interviews were conducted with married couples, which can have influenced the content of the final data. In the course of these interviews, my role as an interviewer faded away, as the two participants also took part in asking and answering each other's questions.

Sosulski et al. (2010, p.35, emphasis added) state that “life histories *allow* a spectrum of experiences to emerge - negative and positive - within the context of the person's whole life”. This study aimed to let the participants make the decisions on how to conceptualise one's life and the events that have affected it. Thus, I did not demand the participants to continue talking about topics they would not want to talk about. Bryman (2012, p.142) notes that in many instances, “these refusals will be based on a feeling that certain questions delve into private realms, which respondents do not wish to make public, regardless of the fact that the interview is in private”. For example, during one session a participant requested me to leave out a topic she had talked about, due to which it is not mentioned in the analysis of this study. Although the data would perhaps become richer if this narrative could have been included in the findings,

⁹ See appendix 2

¹⁰ See appendix 3

¹¹ See appendix 4

it would severely harm the privacy of the participant, making such a decision ethically dubious (Bryman, 2012).

After reading through the information sheet and familiarising the participant with the informed consent form, I stated that I do not have any specific questions to ask and requested them to start talking about their lives. Often, the participants started their story chronologically from their childhood, or the conditions in Finland after the Second World War prior their birth.

Saana: And as I had written there, I don't have any list of questions with me

Jatta: Yes.

Saana: So, I would just be interested in hearing about how your life has been like?

Jatta: Yes. From how far back shall I start? (laughter) (2)

The majority of questions asked were of a probing nature as to get more details of particular topics or to understand the motives behind decisions made by the participants. See the example below:

Jatta: (--) And the more you learn the language, the easier it becomes. But I have always had that need, that I must learn. There were many of those, when the kids were talking, you realised it after living here in Sweden for two or three years, the kids in the neighbourhood could speak fluent Swedish and they spoke Swedish to their parents, who didn't understand anything. That they almost teased their parents by not wanting to respond to the Finnish speech and it was - I saw terrible conflicts around me just because the parents didn't learn the language. And they relied on having other Finns, that there is a translator and then you make it through this day again and so on. And they never learned. But, but, I was lucky, since I had that must, that I need to learn.

Saana: What was that must? Did it come from yourself then or //

Jatta: // It came from myself, so that I can live in this society.

Saana: I see.

Jatta: So that I can express myself and that I can take care of my children and get them all they could need. It was like a burning desire inside me. (3)

Plummer (2001) states that the importance of creating a trusting relationship between the researcher and the interviewee is highly essential when conducting interviews linked to people's life histories. The same argument is used as grounds in reasoning the importance of doing several interviews with a single participant when conducting oral history interviews (Patel, 2005). As the time limit hindered myself from having several interview sessions with each participant, I did my best to build rapport and keep up a positive atmosphere during and after the actual interview. In most cases, the conversation did not end when the tape recording was stopped, but instead, I was invited to see the house or have coffee with the participants. The length of the audio recordings varied between 40-110 minutes, but the visits often took several hours. At the end of each visit, I gave the participant a chocolate gift box as a gesture of gratitude and reciprocity.

Approximately a month after conducting the interviews, I contacted each of the participants by phone to collect feedback on the interview session. I started each phone call by expressing my gratitude for their participation and updated them on how the project had proceeded. After that, I posed a question about the interview session itself, asking the participants regarding their feelings after the interview and if there were any details or topics which they had thought about after the session. In order to improve the transparency of the study, I also asked each participant how was it to talk about their life experiences with me as an unknown person and finally requested them to choose a pseudonym themselves to be used in this paper. None of the participants expressed regret or negative feelings regarding the interview sessions, and some of the phone calls continued with other topics after I had asked my questions. All in all, I am confident in stating that the participants were left with a positive memory of taking part in this research study.

Data analysis

In this study, the data was analysed by using thematic narrative analysis, which in line with the oral history method emphasises the relevance of a bottom-up perspective and individual perceptions in meaning-making processes. In the following section, the relationship between the theoretical framework and data analysis is presented, after which thematic narrative analysis is introduced and the transcribing process as well as the analysing of the data are illustrated in detail.

Inductive reasoning

In this study, the interplay between the interview data and the theoretical framework is inductive in nature. Bryman (2012, p.26) defines inductive reasoning as a method where “theory is an outcome of research”, in comparison to deductive reasoning, where the theoretical framework is utilised in creating a hypothesis, which guides the steps of the study. The inductive reasoning was chosen as a conduct of this study to emphasise the first-hand knowledge that emerged from the experiences and perceptions of the participants. In practice, this means that the coding of the data took place inductively, themes arising solely from the conducted interviews. The theoretical concepts presented in the earlier chapter were chosen after conducting the interviews, based on the focus of the data.

Thematic narrative analysis

Thematic narrative analysis is a form of analysis described as a method which employs stories produced by participants to analyse their meaning-making processes, to say, the selection of topics that are used in constructing the narratives is explored. Furthermore, another focus in the process of analysing is to examine the connections there exists between the individual narratives and the surrounding macro spectrums. (Josselson, 2014) The history of narrative analysis as a research method emerges from the field of psychology, however, Larsson & Sjöblom (2009) state that the technique has also been successfully used in the context of social work research and practice. Ross & Green (2011, p.114) argue that “thematic narrative analysis allows the potential for alternative narratives to emerge offering a more coherent and convincing story to be told”, portraying it as a bottom-up approach that challenges the existing macro narratives and their generalisability. The uniqueness of narrative analysis in comparison to many other methodological tools is that it mostly aims at retaining the narratives as a whole, “rather than fragmenting it into discursive units or thematic categories” (Josselson, 2014, p.226). The same

principle applies to thematic narrative analysis, as thematising of the content is done with a case-centred approach, aiming to keep the narratives at least partly intact, instead of forming themes across the cases. Kohler Riessman (2008) argues the wide perspective in the analysing process being the primary factor distinguishing thematic narrative analysis from the grounded theory approach. Thematic narrative analysis method is employed both by the essentialist and constructivist school of thought, which implies that there exist various opinions on how the method should relate to the data, and how authentic the collected narratives are (ibid.). In the context of social constructionist orientation, the method defines the analysed narratives as unfinished, non-fixed constructions of self that are always created in interaction with the surrounding others (Josselson, 2014). Andrews et al. (2013, p.97) also highlight the social context in which the narratives analysed are being produced, stating that "ultimately how we construct, interpret, digest and recount for others our own experiences bears a strong relationship to the story-lines that are already 'out there'".

In this paper, thematic narrative analysis is utilised to examine the self-representation of the participants, hence an exploration of the decisions they make during the interview sessions when constructing the sequences of events into meaningful narratives and storylines. The focus is thus on 'what' was said and 'why' was it said, instead of 'how' it was said. Although language is seen as having intrinsic value in itself, is it not in the centre of focus of this paper. In other words, the focus in the analysing process is "almost exclusively on 'told' – informants' reports of events and experiences - rather than aspects of 'the telling'" (Kohler Riessman, 2008, p.54). However, it is inevitable that in the course of the interviews, the participants leave some details unsaid by accident, whilst other details, thoughts or storylines are consciously left outside the discussion. Therefore, this paper is also employing a holistic view in examining the decisions made on which details and life events are given attention and which ones are not mentioned at all: Which topics are highlighted by the participants? Which life events are downplayed or made meaningless? (Larsson & Sjöblom., 2014). To summarise, the narrative analysing process in this paper is "one of piecing together data, making the invisible apparent, deciding what is significant and insignificant, and linking the seemingly unrelated facets of experience together" (Josselson 2014, p.227).

Transcribing

The recorded audio files were transcribed soon after the interview into written form by using the verbatim transcription method. Verbatim transcribing refers to a method where the words are transcribed exactly as they are expressed on tape, including notable silences, laughter and utterances (Leavy, 2011). Besides that, the necessary gestures, overlapping speech and participant changing place or picking an object were marked to the text with the following markers:

// Overlapping speech //
(laughter)
(points at an object)
(...) notable silence

In this paper, the original extracts from the transcripts are used without beautifying the sentence structure or editing them in any other way. Leavy (2011, p.54) states that "edited transcripts can alter perceptions of the race, class, age, education, ethnicity, geography, and so on" and thus "decisions about editing transcripts are linked to power, authority and meaning-making" (ibid.). In practice this would also mean that the dialects of the participants would be visible in

the transcripts. That said, it proved to be challenging to include the character of the participants in the extracts translated into English. Therefore, all the original extracts in Finnish are presented in the appendix of this paper to emphasise the character that is visible in the texts in the form of dialects and ways of speaking.

Analysing the data

After the interview data was transcribed, the actual analysing process was carried out. To begin with, each of the interview transcripts was read a couple of times to retrieve the content to mind as a whole. Even though in the course of the analysing process I returned to read the transcripts several times, the initial reading of the transcripts with no thematising process in mind helped to see the interviews as narratives, instead of them being immediately divided into sections representing specific themes. Initially, the aim was to use the analysing software Nvivo to simplify the analysing process. However, after a short trial, I felt that the use of the software directed me to focus strongly on specific quotations and lines, as the programme view prevented me from seeing the interview transcripts as a whole. As a result of that, the themes that I found from the data were merely a group of chronological life events, such as “childhood” and “migration to Sweden”. As my intention was not to produce analysis of the life histories of the participants, I decided to return to reading the transcripts in a form of printed paper copies. This decision proved to be the right one, and the final analysis process was carried out manually, by marking the found themes to the printed transcripts with the help of highlighting pens.

The thematising was executed by isolating and ordering the relevant episodes with numbered codes. After that, the codes were examined to find similarities between them, and the codes were organised under certain themes. In the end, five themes were identified:

THEMES	CODES
1. Work back then, leisure time today	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work, work tasks, work environment • Satisfying retirement age • Hobbies, free time activities
2. The changing notion of ‘home’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being an ‘outsider’ in Finland • Descriptions of home and belonging in Sweden • Similarities in Sweden and Finland
3. The language skills mattered then, and they matter today as well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions of language skills • Language learning • Use of Swedish language in everyday life
4. Our children, they have become Swedes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising up children in Sweden • Children’s language skills in childhood • Children’s language skills today • Grandchildren
5. Being a Finn, and being proud of it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic self-identification • Citizenship • Comparison between Finnishness and other ethnicities

The whole analysing process took place in the original interviewing language, after which the chosen extracts were translated into English. The thematised parts of each interview were copy-pasted into a separate Word Office document, after which each theme was scrutinised, and the extracts were organised into a logical order. Most suitable extracts for the final paper were selected to illustrate patterns under specific themes.

Finally, in order to explore the findings in the context of the social and political macro structures, the analysis returned to examining the interview transcripts as a whole. In practice, this means returning to the factual information and research findings relating to the position of the Swedish Finnish population in Sweden over time and its development from a migrant population into a national minority. Additionally, in order to compare the micro-level experiences with the macro-level structures, the interview data was once again scrutinised with a focus on existing macro-level frameworks and structures that might have influenced the content of the individual narratives. As a result of that, two discussion topics are presented in the findings chapter of this paper: 1) the linkage of micro- and macro-level narratives in the participants' reasons of migrating to Sweden and 2) the impact of the changing social and political status of the Swedish Finns in the narratives of the participants.

Validity and reliability of the data

Reliability and validity are most often defined as the determining factors, which are utilised in examining the rigour of academic, social research (Bryman, 2012). Both validity and reliability can be divided into external and internal factors. External validity refers to the generalisability of the findings to the whole population, and internal validity defines “whether the instrument accurately measures what it purports to measure” (Hernon & Schwartz, 2009, p.73). Internal validity furthermore refers to the correctness of the chain of analysis and the level of assessment taken regarding the surrounding conditions and other factors that might affect the findings of the study (ibid.) Reliability, on the other hand, indicates the possibilities to reproduce the study using similar methodology (Bryman, 2012). Although these concepts have been established as measurement to value the correctness of an academic study, they function better in the framework of quantitative research, as the references to measurability and generalisability are not entirely applicable in the context of qualitative research. Due to this, qualitative research has often been questioned for not being robust especially regarding external validity (Hernon & Schwartz, 2009).

Juárez-Cedillo et al. (2009) argue, however, that no method alone can guarantee the validity of the research findings. They continue by stating that instead, the “credibility is achieved when the results of a research project are true for the persons who were studied and for others who have experienced it or have been in contact with the phenomenon being researched, and thus make it possible to extend the findings” (ibid., p.55). What is more, the concepts of reliability and validity are based on the realist epistemology, assuming that there exists one definite truth about social phenomena (Bryman, 2012). Levine & Sebe Bom Meihy (2001) likewise contest against the solid way of validifying research, stating that “projects are at risk of failing if the researcher attempts to uncover the unvarnished ‘truth’ about past events or issues” (ibid., p.10895). Instead, “what oral historians should be after, rather, is insight gained from interpretation and background and the experience of interview and life history subjects” (ibid.).

It is, however, necessary to provide proof of the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). Hence, a considerable part of this paper is dedicated to the detailed chapter on methodology to make the research process as transparent as possible. Furthermore,

to strengthen the reliability of this study, the copies of the documents and emails used in the sampling and data collection phase are presented in the appendixes both in Finnish and in English. Weckström (2016) further states that another sign of reliability of research is the acknowledgement of the impact the choice of methodology may have on the findings of the research, as well as a smooth interplay of the different methods applied. In this paper, these topic has been discussed in detail in chapter Justification of the methodology.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are the backbone of academic research and are thus necessary to address in order to strengthen the integrity of the research findings. Thorough ethically sound credentials when conducting research, analysing the findings and writing the paper also validate the research in the eyes of other researchers, the public and the participants of the study (Israel, 2015). In its purest form, ethics in social research could be summarised to not causing harm to the participants of the study (Swedish Research Council, 2017). In the Swedish context, the ethical conduct of research is regulated with various laws and rules, but they often do not cover studies carried out in higher education programmes (SFS, 2003, section 2). Codex (2018) states thus that foremost, the “researcher him/herself has the ultimate responsibility to see that the research is of good quality and is morally acceptable”. To ensure the ethical correctness of this paper, I have, aside relevant literature on the topic, familiarised myself with the Good Research Practice guidelines (Swedish Research Council, 2017) that address the relevant legislation and ethical requirements in the context of research practices in Sweden.

When research ethics are viewed more profoundly, it can be identified that there exists variations between ethical orientations (Israel, 2015). In this paper, aside from concentrating on rational reasoning regarding ethical considerations, the ethics of care is given strong importance. Israel (2015) defines ethics of care as an approach which “stresses people's relationships with one another, the importance of context and nurturing relationships“ (ibid., p.18). Hence, the approach “requires researchers to understand how their positions in hierarchies of power might affect their perceptions and to challenge the possibility and value of maintaining neutral and distanced relationships with research participants” (Brabeck & Brabeck, 2009 in Israel 2015, p.18). In this paper, ethics of care has been used as a framework when, for instance, estimating the possibility to ask probe questions on sensitive topics, based on the developed relationship between the researcher and the participant. Hence, the conducted interviews may vary in their level of depth, as asking of sensitive questions felt more ethically approvable in some situations than in others. Consequently, these decisions are profoundly linked to the power between the researcher and the researched, and on the question of who decides the course of the story during the interview session. Although it is not possible to make the interview situation entirely free of power relations, analysing and acknowledging the existence of those factors upgrade the level of integrity of the study (Bryman, 2012).

What is more, especially in the context of oral history interviewing, it is utterly important that the researcher acknowledges the sensitiveness and importance of the life stories shared by the participants (Leavy, 2011). Thus, during the interview session, I did not only aim to provide the space for the participants to tell their story, but also to show signs of gratitude for allowing me to hear these stories. Allowing the participants to decide where the interview session will take place, handing a chocolate gift box as a concrete sign of gratitude at the end of each interview, and talking about my own life story when asked, were all acts of reciprocity which aimed at balancing the possibly existing power relations in the interview session. Most importantly, a detailed summary written in Finnish will be provided for the participants of the

study to ensure their access to the findings, as all of the participants might not be fluent in the English language.

That said, participating in research always involves risks (Israel, 2015). In the context of this study, the possible harms included are mostly emotional. As participating in an oral history study “have the potential to be uniquely beneficial to research participants” (Leavy, 2011, p.20) as an empowering experience, there exists risks that the interview session would be followed by emotional difficulties and the recalling of past, distressing events. Haynes (2010) notes that the nature of an oral history interview might increase the risk of emotional harm for the participants, as:

“The level of disclosure in an oral history narrative may place the participant at risk of exposing their identity in two ways: first, in terms of being recognisable to others, which can be potentially problematic for both career and family relationships; and second, in terms of exposing their inner sense of self, with corresponding potentially therapeutic or distressing emotional consequences” (Haynes, 2010, p.229).

Since, as a researcher, I do not have the professional abilities to provide a higher level of comfort, support and advice if such situations would occur, I had mentally prepared myself to find out about possible services available for support, and planned to conduct a follow-up call the day after, if it felt necessary. During the interview sessions, however, I did not detect any mental distress from the side of the participants. On the contrary, most of them seemed happy to share their life stories, and some of them expressed this feeling clearly at the end of the interview session.

As mentioned by Haynes (2010), another major area connected with the ‘no harm’ principle is the confidentiality of the data. Bryman (2012, p.136) states that thus, “care needs to be taken when findings are being published to ensure that individuals are not identified or identifiable”. However, it would be deceptive to promise the participants that their identity would remain entirely anonymous throughout the research process (Swedish Research Council, 2017). Hence, the participants in this study were ensured that I would do my best to guarantee the confidentiality of the data. In practice, this means protecting the personal information of the participants, which includes coding particular details to safeguard their anonymity. The names of the participants have all been replaced with pseudonyms, and some of the place names have been changed. What is more, especially due to the in-depth and personal nature of oral history interview, it has also been of high importance to acquire informed consent from the participants. Israel (2015, p.79) defines the content of informed consent being two-folded, as “participants need first to comprehend and second to agree voluntarily to the nature of the research and their role within it”. Informed consent should thus inform the participant about the plan of the study, aim of the research, methodology and the possible risks included (ibid.). Also, the informed consent should inform the participants about the voluntary nature of participation and the right to end the involvement at any stage of the process (Codex, 2018). In this study, the informed consent form was introduced together with an informational sheet prior starting the interviews. Furthermore, the informed consent was re-reflected on with each participant during the feedback phone call.

Instead of only examining the ethical correctness in the framework of the actual interview sessions, ethical considerations should be employed throughout the research process. During

this study, a considerable amount of time has been spent thinking about the ethical conduct linked to the interpretation of the data. Haynes (2010) argues that although oral history interviewing is often described as a method that gives the voice to those oppressed or marginalised, during the analysing process the “control of the narrative ultimately shifts to the researcher with a potential imbalance of power over how the material is interpreted” (ibid., p.226). As a solution, Leavy (2011) suggests, for example, sending the transcripts to the participants to be approved, and to offer an opportunity to change prior statements or to further expand on certain topics. Unfortunately, due to the limited timeframe of this study, there was no time for such major acts. Haynes (2010) also notes that such steps might end up endangering the depth and content of the research, as it can lead to the “participants withdrawing all or part of their contribution or wanting to edit it so heavily that nuances were lost” (ibid., p.226). Instead, each participant was contacted by phone after the interview for feedback. To ensure the transparency of the research process and to emphasise the social constructionist nature of the research findings, much attention has been given on describing the methodology employed in the process, and the standpoints, goals and pre-assumptions of the researcher. Finally, to avoid over-interpreting the data due to eagerness to compose remarkable findings based on the experiences of the individual participants (Patel, 2005), the research questions and the aim of the study have been carefully worded to focus on the narratives, instead of individuals as a whole.

Reflections on methodology

In this study, much time has been devoted to describe and analyse the utilised methodological tools to justify their use and validate the research as a whole. However, the robust ideological framework behind each chosen method has also been useful practical help during the entire research process. The framework of oral history interviewing, for example, functioned as a constant reminder to allow the participant to lead the conversation during the interviews and to acknowledge the role of the researcher in each stage of the process. Similarly, the ideology behind narrative analysis supported the work of seeing the interviews as entities, which was useful in each step of the analysing process. What is more, social constructionism, which acted as the backbone of this research from the beginning until the end, helped in focusing and once again re-focusing the analysis process to a specific direction.

CHAPTER SIX

Findings and analysis

The following chapter analyses and discusses the collected interview data in connection with the theoretical framework and the earlier literature presented in the previous chapters of this paper. By doing so, the chapter addresses the research questions of this study:

- How do the narratives portray the changes that have taken place in the lives of the participants during their long stay in Sweden?
- How do the participants construct their narrated-selves in relation to their migration experience?
- How do the narratives reflect with the social and political contexts of their time?

The chapter is divided into three subchapters. First, a brief presentation of the participants of the study is provided. Following that, the second subchapter presents the five themes that present the main finding of this study, illustrating the experiences related to the participants' long stay in Sweden. Lastly, in the final subchapter, these findings are discussed in reflection with the social and political macro structures of Finland and Sweden over the period of the last 50 years.

Short presentation of the participants

The findings are based on oral history interviews conducted with seven individuals who are identified as first-generation Swedish Finns. Prior to presenting these findings, each participant will be briefly introduced.

Henrik arrived in the Gothenburg region as a 21-year-old young man in 1962. He recalls having migrated to Sweden in search of adventures and better income, despite the fact that he already had a job in Finland. He was encouraged by his peers, who had similar expectations.

Samppa migrated to Gothenburg to work for the first time in 1961, when he was only 16 years old. His sister lived in Sweden, which made the decision-making easy. Samppa recalls having moved back to Finland to complete his military service, but Sweden attracted him to a degree that he returned back and settled permanently in Gothenburg in 1965.

Erkki was likewise only 17 years old when he arrived in Sweden in search of work in 1962. He narrates his migration-decision being based purely on the need to find a job, at the point when no other options were available. He settled in Gothenburg after having worked in another part of Sweden for some years.

Leena migrated to Sweden as a 22-year-old with her husband and a small child in 1970. Leena describes that their income levels in Finland were so low that it made surviving challenging, due to which they were interested when they heard about the work opportunities and better income levels in Sweden. The family migrated directly from southern Finland to Gothenburg.

Jatta was a mother of four when she moved to Gothenburg in 1969 at the age of 29. She describes that the decision to migrate was based on finding a source of income for the father of her children, as he had had difficulties in finding work in Finland. Jatta herself, on the other hand, had a job in Finland.

Viivi was 21 years old when she got a request to move to Sweden to become a nanny for a Finnish family in 1967. As future opportunities in the home district looked weak, she agreed to move. In search of better salaries, Viivi left the babysitting job in northern Sweden and moved to Gothenburg to work in the industrial sector in 1969.

Elina arrived in Gothenburg in 1962, being 22 years old at the time. She was persuaded to move by her sister, who had migrated to Sweden earlier. Elina had a job in Finland, and she reasons her decision to migrate with adventurousness.

Long-term experiences of being a Finn in Sweden

When the narratives were examined in the context of the participants' long stay in Sweden, five themes could be identified. The degree in which these topics were discussed by individual participants varied, as well as their opinion on the topics covered. Nevertheless, the five presented themes vividly illustrate how in a wide time frame, the long stay in another country may change person's perception about everyday life.

The themes presented below are the following:

1. Theme 1: Work back then, leisure time today
2. Theme 2: The changing notion of 'home'
3. Theme 3: The language skills mattered then, and they matter today as well
4. Theme 4: Our children, they have become Swedes
5. Theme 5: Being a Finns, and being proud of it

Theme 1: Work back then, leisure time today

The first theme depicts the distinctive shift most of the narratives had which divided the chronological narratives to 'the life back then' and to 'the life today'. The narratives describing life during the first decades after migration consisted mainly on detailed descriptions of work-related topics. On the other hand, the stories focusing on life during the last decade had notably different content within them, consisting largely of descriptions about different free time activities, such as arts and crafts, wood crafting, fishing, sports and gardening. Although it is obvious that the narratives produced by retired individuals will include a shift in the description of everyday life activities, it was still surprising to explore the distinctive tone differences of the narratives from one time to another. Viivi's description of their move to a new apartment, for example, illustrates the feeling of hurry that was present in several narratives:

Viivi: We slept on the floor during the first month, we were both working and we had no time to go and buy the furniture. (4)

Björklund (2012) notes that 40% of all the Finns who migrated to Sweden in the 1960's and 70's were young, aged 18-24, as were the participants of this study. Hence, they were in their best working age, and even women who had recently become mothers, entered the job market

briefly after giving birth. Elina, for example, recalls having returned to work six months after having a child. Hence, work was a dominant theme in the narratives described both by men and women. During their careers, the participants worked, for example, in the car, harbour and bearing industry, and in different cleaning tasks. Work was a characterising factor in the narratives even when it was not depicted as pleasant or enjoyable:

Leena: I have been working on the assembly line [in the car industry], and that was really stressful at times. It is indeed a conveyor belt, it goes at different speeds, depending on the need, and at times there was a fault and then it of course stopped. But when it was going fast (laughter), it's good if you could keep up and paint the piece you were supposed to paint before the next one came. And when we had a break, we were wearing the protective masks and awful overalls. We didn't have time to take off the overalls, but the masks at least. And then one had to take off all the grease from our faces before running up the stairs to eat lunch at the cafeteria (laughter). And then quickly back before the assembly line starts moving again, you had to be there (laughter). It was terribly stressful when you think of it. But I was young then. (5)

Although the narratives 'back then' did include some individual descriptions of hobbies and dance events, they were not a distinctive part of the stories. On the other hand, work place was in many instances described as the place where socialization took place. For example, Henrik recalls his experiences when working in the harbour industry and note "What was interesting on the dockyard was that the friend relationships there were so good, the best I have experienced". Viivi likewise recalls her positive memories of working in the car industry:

Viivi: At times we were singing while we worked. And there was this Turkish person, he was listening to us and he was a good singer. So, after a while we heard him singing 'tuku tuku lampaitani'. And our boss said that there's no way he could sing it. We said that he definitely can, you will see, and asked him to be present when the assembly line stops. Well, he pretended to be doing some paper work and then we suddenly started singing, and then the Turkish man started singing as well and even moving his hands, and he sang all the letters correct, the whole first verse (laughter). So our boss came and said that you have earned free coffee for yourselves, and pastries. He had been waiting for a chance to hear him sing (laughter). We had fun as well! And twice a year Volvo offered us a dinner outside, we went to a restaurant or to a Stena Line. We had a very good atmosphere there. (6)

When describing the everyday life after retirement, the narratives became more versatile in their content. Aside describing the everyday life in Gothenburg, many participants included stories regarding their trips to Finland during holidays to visit friends and family, many of them visiting Finland at least once a year. However, Finland was not the only destination the participants travelled to, but instead, the narratives included descriptions of travels inside and outside of Sweden. As some of the participants had children who had migrated from Sweden to other countries in their adult years, trips to visit them constructed part of the narratives.

Leena: There's one time of a year when we always travel, and that is Christmas. We are always gone during the Christmas, in the south. For two weeks. And then we have another shorter trip, we go to Denmark by bike. That trip lasts from four days to a week. It has become shorter nowadays. We have like a group, they are approximately the same age, like a bicycle group. We are ten people.

Erkki: Yes

Leena: So we are going now again

Erkki: We used to be 20.

Leena: Yes, in best times we were 20. (7)

Most of the participants were also committed to different voluntary work activities at the Finnish associations or at the church, Jatta for example explaining having “*sold herself*” to the Finnish retirement association and Viivi describing her voluntary commitment to the church as something that she “*would not change a day of*”. It needs to be noted, however, that the strong role of the church and association activities in the lives of the participants is probably related to the sampling process of this study. However, all in all it is interesting that Björklund (2012) presents similar findings in her extensive study among the Swedish Finnish migrants, many of the respondents describing their migration experience in two-divisional manner. Virtala (2011), on the other hand, supports the findings by stating that according to her study, the majority of the first-generation Swedish Finnish respondents are nowadays content with their life and financially prepared for their retirement age.

The shift in the narratives could indicate that most of the participants' experience regarding their migration narratives had come to an end. Boenisch-Brednich (2002, p.68) states that in cases where “the migration took place so long ago that it is a point of certainty in the narrative of the biography”, the story can get its closure and thus be portrayed in a very different light than the migration narratives of those who are still in the process of finding their place in the new society. It could be argued that the way the narratives in the context of this study were formulated indicate most of the participants having gotten the closure to their migration experience. What is more, the experiences presented in the framework of this first theme also highlight the social nature of narratives and make the basic elements of a narrative distinctively visible: the stories are constructed in a chronological order from a beginning to an end, aiming to make a point to the listener (Hall & Matarese, 2013). The narratives presented under this theme also visualise the conscious and unconscious decision-making taking place in the mind of the participants when producing the stories, as it is obvious that the content of their lives was not, and is not, as one-sided as narrated. Thereby, the participants have left certain topics uncovered, focusing instead on other themes.

Theme 2: The changing notion of 'home'

The second identified theme illustrates how the participants' reflections towards their country of origin have changed during the course of their long stay in Sweden. The participants, who are aged 70-77, have resided in Sweden between 48 to 57 years, making that the major part of their lives. At the same time, as it became apparent in the previous section, all of them visit Finland regularly. However, the narratives depict that through the course of time, the notion of 'home' has become more and more detached from Finland, influenced by a variety of factors. Leena, for example, reflects on her own experiences on how the lack of a concrete home suddenly changed her perception of Finland and the feeling of belonging there. As a result, Finland started to resemble more of a holiday destination than a 'home':

Leena: During the first years [after migration] we travelled to Finland, when the kids were small and we were still married. In Finland, we went to visit relatives, we even had a tent with us. And it was kind of like a place where you just visit, it wasn't any more like a – the so-called home country started becoming a strange place. If someone would ask me today, I'd say that this [Sweden] is my home country. (8)

When asking her to specify how quickly the feeling of 'strangeness' in connection to Finland evolved, she states that it started in "quite an early stage". Like Leena, many of the other participants also describe it having been common to visit Finland on holidays. In the extract below, Henrik recalls his memories from summer trips to Finland and states that the habit of traveling to the country of origin on a regular basis eventually changed, being replaced with other activities. On the contrary to Leena's reflection, however, Henrik expresses a different level of attachment to Finland as the ultimate 'home country':

Henrik: Once you had worked for 11 months, it felt good to refresh a bit, and that meant traveling to Finland.

Saana: Like on holidays?

Henrik: Yes, in the beginning it was once a year, when the children were small. But then the breaks in the between became longer and longer, several years.

Saana: How was it then to be in Finland?

Henrik: Well, it was in the summer so the weather was good, there was a chance to swim, and you felt like you were home again. (9)

The two extracts above illustrate the variety of migration narratives that exists. Buffel (2017, p.3) notes that it is common for first-generation migrants to feel attachment to both their country of origin as well as to their country of destination. However, when the interviews were examined as a whole, it could be indicated that the feeling of being an 'outsider' in Finland was a dominating characteristic in majority of the narratives. Also Björklund (2012) came to a similar conclusion, stating that a strong majority of the respondents in her study on Swedish Finns felt like home in Sweden, and that the degree of settlement correlated clearly with the length of their stay. The participants of this study described various reasons explaining the detachment from Finland. Many of the participants expressed that the country they once knew has changed both in the context of infrastructure and culture, affecting thus their attachment to the country itself, like stated below by Jatta:

Saana: How did it feel to be there [in Finland]?

Jatta: Well, it's nice to meet those people who have been here visiting us. But everything has changed there, I don't think I would want to live there anymore. Even the language has changed so that I don't understand everything (laughter). There are all the new words - although I would surely manage to buy milk from the shop (laughter) (10)

The importance of close relationships was another factor that seemed to explain the detachment of the notion of 'home' from Finland. It was apparent that having close family members in Finland was a strong pull factor that also kept the ties to the country of origin alive. On the

other hand, when those factors became fewer, the feeling of ‘home’ in Finland also decreased. This is illustrated in the comment of Viivi, who states that “*It is just so, that when your parents are no longer there, the urge to go to Finland is not like before. I don’t know what is it, although all the sisters and their families are there. But it feels like that one person is missing, your mother*”. The following narrative from Samppa follows a similar reasoning:

Saana: Yeah. Have you then ever had any plans of returning?

Samppa: No, no. Never. Apart from holidays.

Saana: Why?

Samppa: Well I don’t know, it’s not like I would have any longing to a home, since that place that was my home has no-one left there who I knew as a child. Everyone have died or moved away. It would be just a strange place for me. It would be like starting from the beginning.

Saana: Yes, it is often so that it is the people who matter.

Samppa: Yes, so it is. (11)

At the same time, as it is illustrated in the comment below by Jatta, the narratives of the elderly Swedish Finns also portray that the long stay in Sweden has resulted in them establishing more social networks in Sweden than in Finland in form of friends, children and grandchildren, making the thought of Finland more distant and abstract. Hence, although having family in Sweden does not automatically seem to result in a deeper feeling of belongingness in the country, it has obviously strengthened the rooting in Sweden.

Jatta: And then it is of course that when you have your whole family here, it is impossible to leave, and I wouldn’t even want to. And today, when we have retired, things are okay and we are not starving. (12)

Aside the concrete factors such as infrastructure and social networks, Buffel (2017) identifies the making of a concrete decision of staying as a significant factor affecting the attachment or detachment to the country of origin. Based on the study on first-generation Turkish migration in Belgium, Buffel (ibid.) argues that the feeling of temporariness and unsettlement hinders the migrants from settling to the host society. This topic arose also from the narratives of this study. For example, Leena, who defines herself feeling home in Sweden, recalls there being a moment before her daughter started school, when she decided that they are not returning to Finland. Jatta, likewise, mentions that when she was younger, she had plans on migrating back to Finland in an older age and purchasing “*a red house with white frames*”, but continues to say that nowadays she is settled and content in Sweden. Henrik, on the other hand, narrates his story differently:

Saana: Do you feel like home here [in Sweden]?

Elina: Well, kind of.

Henrik: One always tells to the others that ‘I have settled’, but you never know of your future. It is -- Finland is valuable.

Saana: Have you any plans of moving back there some time?

Elina: To Finland? No.

Henrik: Well, I guess I must move there alone then (laughter) I can’t get the others to join me (laughter) (13)

Henrik's expression portrays an alternative story to the otherwise homogenous narratives projecting the sense of belonging and feeling of not belonging to a nation or a society. Nevertheless, the findings in general indicate that unlike in the findings of Buffel (2013), all the participants constructed their narratives one-dimensionally, connecting the notion of 'home' strongly either to Sweden or Finland. Buffel (ibid.), on the other hand, discovered the respondents having a two-dimensional attachment to both their country of origin and their current residence. What is more, unlike in the studies conducted by Varjonen et al. (2013), Clary-Lemon (2010) and Buffel (2013), the participants of this study did not articulate any notion of a so-called double minority status, which would illustrate them experiencing feeling of exclusion both in Finland and Sweden. At the same time, however, as it becomes apparent when examining the following themes, many of the participants did not describe having a strong connection to the majority population in Sweden. On the other hand, similar to the findings of Buffel (2013), it is indicated within this study that the feeling of 'home' in the new host society has been supported by establishing a connection to the country of origin in a form of cultural practices and ethnic businesses. In the narratives of the participants of this study, especially mentions of cultural practices such as Finnish dance music, traditional games, singing and sauna could be identified from the data.

To conclude, as it is impossible to totally detect why the narratives produced in the context of this study differ from the research conducted among other minority populations, it could be assumed that the feeling of belonging correlates with the economic and social comfortability. Buffel (2017) observed that poverty was described as one of the underlying reasons of longing to return to the country of origin. On the contrary, the participants of this study did not mention economic difficulties at all. Furthermore, the cultural similarity between the Finnish and Swedish societies might lessen the need of the Swedish Finns to maintain strong relations to Finland. The similarity of the countries were mentioned by Leena and Erkki, and also by Jatta, who stated "*we are almost like sisters to each other, Finns and Swedes*".

Theme 3: The language skills mattered then, and they matter today as well

Whereas the two previous themes highlight various changes that are narrated to have occurred during the course of staying in Sweden, the third theme emphasises the substantial role which language skills or the lack of them hold throughout the migration narratives. As none of the participants had knowledge in Swedish language prior to migrating, the topic emerged naturally when recalling the arrival to Sweden, as illustrated in the extract by Jatta:

Jatta: See, the school [for the children] was fully Swedish speaking and we had just moved here, we didn't know the language, not me nor the father of the children. I could speak a little bit, since I had worked at a butcher's in Helsinki. Just enough to say thank you and you're welcome, and when the women came and asked 'ska vi få 50g lördagskorv!' (laughter). That little it was, saying thank you and varsågod, that was pretty much all I knew. (14)

However, the language skills were not only referred to in connection to the arrival, but the use of Swedish in everyday life throughout the course of the long stay was linked to several phases of the migration experience. Also Björklund's (2012) study revealed that almost a third of the respondents born in 1912-1929 described their Swedish language skills as weak. Thus, although the study otherwise identifies the long stay as a defining factor in the development of a feeling of belonging, the results linked to language skills do not support this view. The narratives

collected in this study indicate similar findings, as many of the participants described their Swedish language skills as below average. However, some participants had learned the Swedish language in higher degree than the others.

The reasons for the challenges migrants face when learning the majority language are various. In the study among Finnish men in Sweden, Kuosmanen (2001) came to a conclusion that aside the person's own willingness and capability of learning the language, the period of time of migrating to Sweden also influenced the language learning process. Kuosmanen (ibid.) argues that the Finnish migrants who arrived to Sweden before the end of 1960's had better opportunities to learn Swedish, as there were not as many Finns in Sweden, and thus there existed less opportunity to depend upon the language proficiency of other Finns. In the context of this study, the participants reflected on their language skills in various ways. Some participants referred to, as Kuosmanen (2001) suggests, to the language environment they ended up spending time in. Elina, who arrived to Gothenburg in 1962, recalls the following:

Elina: Yes we came with my sister, "you should just come here", she got us jobs, we were working in Mölndal. I didn't work there long, since we lived in Kålltorp and it took so long to get there with a tram. So I started working in a men's clothes store. I liked it there. That's where I learnt Swedish, there was no Finnish people there. I had to learn. I liked working there. (15)

In contrast to Elina's narrative, Viivi, who migrated to Sweden in 1967, describes her language environment in a very different way, hence supporting Kuosmanen's (2001) argument regarding the causal relation between the time of arrival and the spirit of the language learning environment:

Saana: Was there a big difference between living in Finland and in Sweden?

Viivi: In the beginning I didn't want to [live here] because my language skills were so weak. For example, when cooking, I had to be very careful in checking what to buy. See, I knew how to cook but I had to check that it was a right ingredient. And if I didn't find something, I looked the word up in a dictionary and then went back to the shop with the name of the product written on a piece of a paper. It wasn't easy. And then Volvo started arranging language classes, they were on Saturdays so that we had six-day-weeks. Then you got paid also for that Saturday when you were in the course.

Saana: Was it useful?

Viivi: Well I think the system here in Sweden is wrong. See, you know that there are migrants from many different countries in the same group. Some people learn Swedish faster than we Finns. They would move forward, while the Finns had to wonder that what did that word mean, since the teacher was also a Swede. It wasn't easy. So we Finns, we just quit. We said that the others are just much wiser than we are, that it doesn't make sense to be in the same course.

Saana: Were there many Finns in those courses?

Viivi: You ask. That's a wrong question. You could say that at Volvo it was more useful to know Finnish than Swedish (laughter). The Swedish speakers learnt Finnish instead. (16)

Björklund (2012) states that it was common for the Finnish migrants to live and socialise mainly with the own ethnic group, which was enabled by them being concentrated strongly to the same residential areas and workplaces. In the same context, Virtala (2011) argues it having been impossible for the Finnish migrants to become full members of the Swedish society, since the employers solved the problem of language barriers by employing Finnish speaking supervisors - which for its part decreased the need to learn the local language. It could be argued that Viivi's narrative is a vivid illustration of such a situation where the combination of underlying, multi-layered factors on micro-, meso- and macro-level influence the language learning process of an individual migrant. What is more, the reasoning Viivi utilises as the core of her narrative depicts the difficulty the individuals might have in understanding the structural factors affecting the situations experienced by migrants.

Similarly to Viivi's narrative, the successful language stories also emphasised personal characteristics and abilities as the most significant factors influencing the language learning process. The participants who described having adopted the use of Swedish from the early stages, predominantly referred to their 'will' as an underlying reason for being able to learn Swedish. Jatta describes that she learned Swedish due to the "*burning need*" she had to survive, and Samppa states himself as having had "*a principle to be in touch with Swedish people a lot*", which had influenced his Swedish language skills positively. Henrik likewise mentions his own motivation as a core of learning the new language:

Saana: When you moved, did you know any Swedish?

Henrik: No, well, I had studied a little bit, I still have that letter [for job seeking]. But it wasn't, it is quite simple when I have looked at it later on, you won't get far with that. But I think I learned the everyday Swedish quite fast. After half a year I stopped using an interpreter. I just tried to manage on my own. I had decided that I want to learn the language. It is very important. (17)

The above examples, each with its way, make the power of language distinguishable. When language is examined in the context of social constructionism, its powerful position becomes even further highlighted, as "the values and beliefs we hold which seem to be 'normal' and 'common sense' are in fact constructs of the organisations and institutions around us, created and shared through language" (Wareing, 2004, p.11). Therefore, as noted by Virtala (2011), language can be then be portrayed as the gateway through which one becomes part of a society. At the same time, Kuosmanen (2001) emphasises that the ability to learn a language is based on a set of intersectional factors. Thus, it could be argued that although the narratives above describe the inner motivation being the main reason behind mastering a foreign language, the individuals are, in fact, being influenced by several factors. Such factors could be for example family background, educational background and current situation, as well as the environmental factors and the macro-level structures.

The importance of language skills does not disappear when a person retires. Virtala (2011) notes that, on the contrary, as the everyday life of retired migrants involves being within environments where only the minority language is utilised, it is stated that the risks of them becoming even more powerless in their elderly age increases. Jatta's narrative about her current language environment supports this argument, as she states that "*I start to forget it [Swedish], when I'm not working anymore*". Jatta continues to state, "*I know that the older you get, the easier you start forgetting the last learnt language*", and describes how she maintains

her Swedish skills by reading books, doing crosswords and talking with the neighbours. All in all, it seemed that those who had learned Swedish at the early stages of their stay, were most proficient in the language today also. However, the narratives demonstrate that all the participants manage at least everyday situations in Swedish, even though they would not describe themselves as being fluent in the language. The variations between the language skills of the participants were wide. Whereby those whose language skills were weaker and who had little connection with the majority population, referred to their Swedish language skills mainly in connection with health care services. On the other hand, Samppa, who described having a strong Swedish-speaking network around him, estimated his language skills in Finnish and Swedish as equally good.

When the findings under this theme of language skills is compared with the development of a notion of 'home' in Sweden (Theme 2), it is interesting to notice that the language skills in Swedish do not seem to be directly correlating with the feeling of belonging which the participants experience in Sweden. What is more, even though learning the language of a host society could be seen as a major part of settling in to a new society (Virtala 2011), and language was discussed in great detail in each of the interviews, the narratives did not contain descriptions of encounters with the Swedish majority. On the contrary, Henrik notes that he has not "*seen the need*" to be in touch with the Swedish-speaking population. Out of the seven participants, a clear majority described themselves as having very limited social networks amongst the Swedish-speaking majority. Thus, the only connections consisted mainly of children's spouses or acquaintances in the same residential area. The participants likewise did not mention any expectations they would have relating to two-way integration, as only Henrik admits that he would have expected the Swedish state to offer them the Swedish citizenship after having worked and lived in the country for such a long time. To conclude, it could be argued that the feeling of belonging to Sweden amongst those Swedish Finns who have a strong ethnic community around them cannot be measured based on their level of Swedish skills, or on the degree of social networks they have among the majority society.

Theme 4: Our children, they have become Swedes

The fourth theme demonstrates the combination of proudness and disappointment the narratives hold in relation to when the participants describe their children and grandchildren in the context of their ethnicity or their language skills. Children and grandchildren were a topic brought up actively by those participants who had children. All of them stated that their home language after migrating to Sweden was Finnish:

Leena: At home, we only spoke Finnish. It was only if a Swedish-speaking friend [of the children] came to visit, when they could speak Swedish. But among ourselves, we always spoke Finnish. And I read to them so much. And made them read, aloud (laughter) always in the evenings. (18)

None of the participants had had their children in fully Finnish speaking classes. Some of the participants' children, however, attended Finnish language classes during the week. Majority of the other participants' responses were synonymous with Leena's, whereby *of course* they were speaking Finnish with their children at home. However, at the same time, when the narratives highlighted the speaking of Finnish with children at home as a self-evident fact, they simultaneously did not emphasise the importance of learning Finnish in school. Also the children's Swedish skills had little role in the narratives. Only one participant mentioned their

children having had difficulties in learning Swedish, which can be explained by the fact that the many of the children were born only after the parents had migrated to Sweden.

It must be also noted that the opinions regarding children's language teaching have undergone tremendous changes already within the time period during which the participants migrated to Sweden (Björklund, 2012). This may explain, particularly, the opinions of those participants who arrived in Sweden at the beginning of the 1960's. Björklund (2012) notes that in the 1960's, the school career of the Finnish migrant children was not given significant attention, as the number of the Finnish children was still quite low. When the Finnish labour migrants started arriving to Sweden in numbers, some schools employed Finnish-speaking assistants with an aim to support the schooling of those children who did not know Swedish. The importance of Finnish language development of the children was, however, not given attention, until in 1968; when the Swedish state decided to start supporting mother tongue development. However, in light of the narratives constructed by the participants of this study, it could be argued that even though the language debate has been one of the characterising factors in the political discussions concerning the Swedish Finnish minority group from the 1970's onwards, not all individual members of the minority group have been engaged to the topic.

Nevertheless, based on the narratives, it could be indicated that even though the participants had not actively engaged in the establishment of the Finnish mother tongue teaching in the Swedish schools, they did, however, have expectations concerning their children's ethnic identification. Thus, when the narratives proceeded to describe the situation of the children today, the content of the narratives became two-folded. On the one side, the narratives illustrate the proudness that the participants expressed regarding situations where their children or grandchildren show interest towards their Finnish heritage, Leena for example stating her son being "*such a fan of Finland*" and Jatta describing how much compliments her daughter has received of being able to provide service in Finnish at work. In a similar tone, Elina refers to her grandchild Siiri on several occasions, complementing her pronunciation in Finnish and stating:

Elina: Siiri would want to visit Finland. That people always ask her about her Finnish passport, she was born three month before they [parents] married. She was born in the spring and they married in the summer. Because of that, she has a Finnish passport. See, they ask 'Have you ever been to Finland?', she says that she has never been there but she has a Finnish passport. She would want to go there. (19)

On the other side, the underlying tone also indicated there existing feelings of disappointment in relation to the children's ethnic belongingness. Henrik, for example expresses his disappointment about his son not having been willing to complete military service in Finland. The Swedish-speaking partners of the children were mentioned by many as one of the reasons why the children have not acknowledged fully being 'a Finn'. What is more, it became visible that there exists a certain kind of a spirit of 'giving up' in relation to passing on the *Finnishness* to the children and grandchildren:

Jatta: Now the cultural activities have become less, we used to have singing competitions, dance competitions, throwing an axe competitions, between the Finnish associations. But it has now faded, since we have become old and the younger ones won't join the associations. They have their Swedish partners and then the family and other stuff.

Saana: Yeah, they have lived a very different life, to come here as a very young child and then grow up in the Swedish society.

Jatta: Yes, yes, yes. They have become Swedes. (20)

The feeling of giving up was even more prominent when the narratives turned into describing the grandchildren. Jatta for example, continued to state it being a shame that her grandchildren cannot speak Finnish. Right after that, she however notes that “*perhaps it is other languages that they need more nowadays, English, German and French, instead of Finnish – times change*”, accepting reluctantly the situation as it is. Samppa shares a similar kind of view in the extract below, as he expresses his disappointment about the situation, seeing the change as something the first-generation of Swedish Finns cannot influence:

Saana: Was it then important to you that your children would also learn Finnish?

Samppa: Yes of course, but my grandchildren cannot speak [Finnish] and I think that is a bad thing.

Saana: Mm.

Samppa: They can count to ten but that’s about it. My daughter’s children, they always said when they visited Finland that ‘we should learn, we should learn’. Since they weren’t able to speak at all when they were there. But it stayed on the level of a speech. Well she has a Swedish husband and. That is how it is. We must adapt to what we have. (21)

The findings indicate there exists a rather fixed and static idea of ‘Finnishness’ among the participants. It is implied that if the second- and third-generation Swedish Finns have not adopted similar ways of embracing their Finnish heritage as their parents did, their Finnish roots will disappear. However, ethnicity, as any other socially constructed concept, evolves and complies within the existing social, historical and political framework (Burr, 2015). Thus, although there exists heterogeneity among the second-generation Swedish Finns and therefore individuals perceive themselves in various manners, it could be argued that there exists a generational gap in what is understood embracing ‘Finnishness’. For instance, Weckström (2016), who studied the ethnic belongingness of the second-generation Swedish Finns, found that even though language was identified as an important factor embodying the ethnic identity, ‘Finnishness’ was also embedded in feelings. What is more, Weckström (ibid.) argues that although the Finnishness among the second-generation Swedish Finns might not be inserted in the traditional activities like going to sauna, ethnic heritage is part of one’s self-representation in other ways. Also Björklund (2012) came to similar conclusions based on the results of a quantitative study among the Swedish Finns in the 2000’s.

Theme 5: Being a Finn, and being proud of it

The fifth theme that was identified illustrating the 50-year long stay in Sweden, was the participants’ deep ethnic self-identification as Finns, and the positive characteristics the ethnicity was connected with. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, in the end of the interview, each participant was asked to reflect on whether they define themselves as Finns or as Swedes. The following examples are thus mostly a direct outcome of the posed question. However, the narratives produced as a result of that proved to be fascinating in nature, revealing the deep rooting of the national identity within individuals who have resided in another country for half a century. For example, when Viivi was asked of her ethnic self-identification, she

replied by saying “*You guess. A Finn. You can’t make me a Swede even if you try!*”. Jatta, likewise, expressed her strong identification as a Finn by emphasising that even though she does no longer hold a Finnish citizenship, the ‘Finnishness’ is ‘inside her’:

Saana: Does the citizenship have more meaning than just being a passport?

Jatta: I don’t think so. Because we Finns and Swedes are however quite similar. I don’t think it makes a difference, Finland is anyway my native country, I feel it inside me. I accept Sweden and Swedes as they are. There are no such cultural conflicts between Finland and Sweden as there are in the countries in South and mid-Europe, those [differences] are so big than they can barely live in the same part of the city (laughter). Finland will always be Finland to me, that is my home country, and it doesn’t make any difference which country’s citizenship I have. It is most important what I think inside me, in my own mind, even though it doesn’t show in a paper that I am a Finn. But I am, anyway. (22)

Furthermore, instead of referring to ethnicity in a vacuum, the participants utilised their Finnishness as an explaining factor when describing certain characteristics they possessed. For example, when examining the work-related stories in more detail, it showed that instead of the tone of the narratives being negative, there was a certain proudness within them. Erkki, for instance, states that Finnish people have a reputation as hard workers, which would mean that he simultaneously embeds his own self-representation on determination and diligence. Likewise, in the following comment from Jatta, the underlying assumption includes a statement of Finns as diligent workers:

Jatta: Somehow it feels that Sweden was like a paradise, since one could earn so much money here (laughter). And that was surely one of the reasons why so many Finns move here, better salaries. There were a lot of available jobs back then. Although those jobs were heavy ones, all the work at the factories, it was heavy, the workers in the harbour industry and forestry, it wasn’t easy. (23)

In his study, Kortteinen (cited in Kuosmanen 2001, p.81) argues that the Finnish perception of work ethic is grounded in the traditions and ways of working in the agrarian society. Thus, there exists a presumption that life is hard and that one must survive through it, after which one can experience a feeling of proudness. Kortteinen (ibid.) argues that this ideology has especially impacted the mind-set of the individuals belonging to the war generations. As the extracts above illustrate, a similar attitude could be detected in the narratives in this study. In a similar vein, the narratives describing childhood experiences and the life before migration were also often characterised with the theme of overcoming hardships and challenges. Henrik, for instance, starts the interview session by describing his family background, recalling how the Second World War destroyed the infrastructure of their residential area to the degree that people had “*to start the life from a beginning, when all their property was gone*”. Leena likewise states that prior to migrating to Sweden, their life was “*so small, we had lack of everything*”. Migrating to Sweden was described by the majority of the participants as a drastic change in the living standards:

Saana: What kind of an experience was it to move [to Sweden]?

Erkki: Well, actually it was a really good experience, first because the salaries here were so good and there was work as much as one could do. It felt almost like you had come to heaven. Comparing to being unemployed and hungry, when you couldn't eat as much as you wanted. There was a big difference. (24)

Determination and diligent work ethic were also used as a scale when making comparisons between Finns, other migrant groups and the majority population. For instance, the Swedish welfare benefits, such as paid sick leave and housing allowances, which were established in Sweden in the 1960's, unlike in Finland, were used by Jatta as an example to describe the work-shy attitude existing in the Swedish society at the time of their arrival. She notes that *"it almost made me laugh, that how can it be that things have been organised as stupidly as that"*. Comparativeness was also present when talking about other migrant populations. Henrik expressed his disappointment towards the inequality he sees existing in the manner of how different migrants groups are being treated, even though they do not, in his opinion, maintain a similar level of work ethic in comparison to the Finnish migrants:

Henrik: Nowadays, when all these people have come here, it looks like they get everything they want. And they want a lot. We, on the other hand, didn't know that we could even ask and I don't believe we would have received anything either. We have got everything we have by working. (25)

All in all, the findings indicate that even though historical references often define the Swedish Finnish minority as an oppressed group, the narratives presented by the participants do not reflect weakness or powerlessness. The participants construct the hardships encountered in childhood and life in Finland - as well as the difficulties in learning the language and having to do hard manual labour - as challenges that they have overcome. Furthermore, they use their Finnishness as an explaining factor when doing so. This attitude is clearly depicted by Jatta, who states that *"Even if you get sick, then you just have to live with the inconveniences, that's okay. If I had given up when I got sick, I wouldn't exist anymore. It must be the Finnish persistence that does it, and personality as well"*. This final theme further illustrates the complexity of the sense of belonging and the factors influencing one's self-identification. The first-generation Swedish Finns, who migrated to Sweden as young adults in the 1960's and 1970's and ended up settling down in the neighbouring country, have simultaneously changed and stayed the same. At the same time, their perceptions regarding the country of origin, the surrounding host society and the fellow members of the migrant group have evolved and developed over time.

When the findings from these presented five themes are examined in reflection with Berry's (2005) acculturation strategies, it could be stated that to some degree, the participants have adopted the separation strategy, as most of the participants' have very limited connections to the surrounding host society. However, Berry (2005, p.705) points out that *"this formulation is from the perspective of non-dominant peoples, and is based on the assumption that such groups and their individual members have the freedom to choose how they want to acculturate"*. Therefore, when examining the acculturation strategies employed by individuals and groups, the macro structures and the reception from the majority society must be taken into account (ibid.). Likewise, in order to understand the multilayered composition of individuals' experiences as a member of a migrant group, it is essential to explore the social and political

context in which these experiences have taken place. Thus, in the following subchapter, the findings of this paper are further examined in the framework of the macro-level structures of the surrounding Swedish society.

Social and political context of the narratives

One of the salient aspects of the oral history interview method is its tendency to bring forth the linkages existing between the macro structures and the analysed micro-narratives (Leavy, 2011). What is more, the social constructionist view stresses the influence of the existing social, historical and political frameworks in our perception of the world (Burr, 2015). Hence, it becomes necessary to view the findings of this study in light of its micro-macro linkages. It must be noted, however, that as the narratives conducted in the context of this study focus on micro-level experiences of being part of an extensive labour migration movement from Finland to Sweden, technically the entire paper addresses the linkages between micro- and macro-levels. So far in the findings chapter of this paper, it has been concluded that the participants associate the uncertainty and migration experiences to their past lives, and the notion of ‘home’ is connected to the current host society. However, the questions regarding language skills, children’s ethnic belonging and the participants’ own ethnic identification seem still very relevant topics. Simultaneously, the storylines produced by the participants are strongly based on individual decision-making and responsibility, leaving the macro-level structures virtually unmentioned.

This subchapter will specifically focus on examining the findings in regards to their connection with the social and political context of their time. Two observations in this framework are presented. Firstly, the motives behind the individual migration decisions are reflected upon, in the framework of how these decisions become part of constructing the macro narrative of the Swedish Finns. Thereafter, the changing perception of the Swedish Finnish minority in Sweden will be considered, and the effect that the minority politics have had in changing the status of the migrant population.

In search of adventures or a better life, or both of them?

In this study, seven individuals were interviewed regarding their migration experiences in Sweden. When the participants described the motives behind their decision to migrate to Sweden, two alternative narratives were identified. Four participants, Leena, Jatta, Viivi and Erkki recalled having migrated to Sweden due to unemployment and economic challenges, affecting either themselves or their partners. They based their narratives on a statement that the decision to migrate was one of their only options. Viivi, for example described her experiences by saying “*it was so that I worked 2-3 month in a year, and when the work ended, there was no money coming from anywhere – I had no choice*”. Jatta and Leena likewise referred to economic challenges and Leena recalled that time by stating “*we managed, but just barely*”. On the other hand, Elina, Samppa and Henrik based their migration narratives on adventurousness. When Henrik was asked for his reasons to migrate to Sweden, he laughed and said “*that’s what youngsters do, I was a bit of an adventurous mind*”. Elina and Samppa also ground their motives on spontaneity, which was awoken by friends of relatives already residing in Sweden. Björklund (2012) notes that the migration decision among the young Finnish people was, in general, often made in haste due to the availability of jobs and housing in Sweden, as well as the already existing networks in the country. Also, the proximity of the countries made the return seem simple, affecting thus the decision to migrate. However, Björklund (ibid.) does

note that aside economic factors, the urge to see the world also acted as an encouragement for many of the young migrants.

Fog Olwig (2016) argues that migration studies in general tend to emphasise the pull and push factors as the sole incentives explaining labour migration, and that the framing of migration as “a search for ‘a better life’” (ibid., p.158) highlights the hierarchical positioning between the migrants and the majority society. This puts an emphasis on the negative qualities of the labour migrants. Hence, the inclusion of alternative stories based on “curiosity, fantasy and the desire to explore different places and cultures” (ibid.) could drastically change the overall perception that the majority have of a certain migrant population. Also in the case of the Swedish Finnish migrants, the macro narrative tends to focus on describing the socially and economically disadvantageous position of the first-generation Swedish Finns. Such problem-focused mentality is visible especially in the research conducted during the first decades after the mass labour migration movement (Weckström, 2016).

Fog Olwig (2016) claims that the larger physical and mental structures influence the content of narratives produced by individual members of migrant groups, as individuals end up adopting the roles they are being positioned to them by the macro narratives. Thus, even though the migration narratives of the participants in this study – whose migration decisions were based on economic challenges - were not wrong or false, they may have overlooked other personal qualities. This, in turn, leads to a situation where stories of the individuals are being solely framed by their powerless situation in both societies. On the other hand, the migration narratives that portray the journey to Sweden as an adventure, represent the underrepresented group of individuals and should be, in greater degree, included in the existing narrative regarding the first-generation Swedish Finns.

The changing status of the Swedish Finns

Second observation done in the framework of the micro-macro linkages highlights that the participants reflect to a very minor degree to how Swedish Finns have been perceived by both the Swedish state and the members of the majority society. This is regardless the fact that the official status of the Swedish Finns has gone through major changes during the last 50 years, as the migrants who arrived as temporary guest workers are now identified as a national minority of the country. Adreouli (2013, p.169) claims that “in order to understand identity negotiations during acculturation, we need to consider how different cultures are represented by migrants as well as how migrants themselves are positioned by dominant social representations”. Simultaneously, Burr (2015) stresses the power relations that are embedded in socially constructed knowledge, as “they have implications for what it is permissible for different people to do, and how they may legitimately treat others” (ibid., p.5).

In light of that, the 50 year long stay of the first-generation Swedish Finns in Sweden would offer a fruitful ground to examine how the changes happening in the surrounding society, both in social and political context, reflect upon the micro experiences of the individuals belonging to minority populations. Although this extensive topic would deserve a chance to be explored in a paper of its own, it is necessary to briefly introduce the topic in the context of this paper as well. Following, the narratives of the participants are first examined in how they address the participants’ social status in Sweden, after which the narratives are examined to see if they reflect with the changes taken place in the political status of the Swedish Finns.

In order to first gain an understanding of how the participants perceive their social status and the changes that may have happened over time, the interview data was scrutinised to see how the narratives address different interaction situations with the majority population. As already noted under Theme 3, it soon became apparent that the narratives discussed this topic to a very limited degree. However, some different positionings could be identified. For example, when Henrik described the reception he received when arriving in Sweden, he referred to negative encounters, stating that *“I had like a feeling, many times when I met someone, that there was some sort of disrespect from their side”*. Jatta, on the other hand, emphasised her own positive attitude when interacting with the Swedish society as she stated *“if I started to argue and claim and complain, I would surely receive similar responses from them”*. It seems like in general, the participants constructed the narratives without including the majority society or its influence in the formation of their everyday lives (see for example Theme 1).

All in all, the participants presented their migration stories strongly in one-dimensional light, and expressed no expectations about two-way integration in the social context. At the same time, research findings support the view that prejudices and negative stereotypes regarding Swedish Finns have indeed decreased over time, meaning that the perceptions among the majority population have changed. Researchers have identified various reasons leading to such development. Suutari (2004) connects the status change to a level of education of the individuals belonging to the Swedish Finnish minority. The findings of Suutari (2004) indicate that the negative stigma that was connected to being a Finn has decreased in concurrence with the second-generation Swedish Finns educating themselves, and thus rising to the higher social class category. Weckström (2016, p.12), on the other hand, notes that today *“Finns are in general portrayed in a positive light in the Swedish media”*, in contrast to the situation in the 1970’s. Likewise, the changes in the social status are in correlation with Finland as a country becoming more equal with Sweden in terms of economy and the welfare system (ibid.).

When the positioning of the first-generation Swedish Finns is analysed by looking at their political/ official positioning in Sweden, the national minority status granted to the group in 1999 needs to be recognised. Berry (2005, p.706) argues that in order for migrants to successfully become part of a society, the host society is expected to *“adapt national institutions (e.g., education, health, labour) to better meet the needs of all groups now living together in the plural society”*. In the case of the Swedish Finns, the recognition of Swedish Finns as a national minority is evidently such an adaptation. However, when analysing the interview data, it was found that the political status of the Swedish Finns was barely addressed in the narratives. As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, each of the participants were asked during the interviews to give their opinion regarding the Swedish state officially identifying the Swedish Finns as a national minority group in Sweden. Even though all the participants admitted being aware of their national minority status, most of the participants answered to the question briefly, without showing notable interest to the topic. Only Jatta seemed to have more knowledge on the topic, being also the only one referring to the status of Gothenburg as a Finnish administrative area.

When the participants were asked if they knew the rights they were entitled to as members of the national minority, Leena and Samppa both named the language rights, Leena stating that *“at least we have the right to get interpretation support if we go to see a doctor or visit other offices, but I guess that is the only concrete thing”*, whereas Samppa identified the language services as *“very important for those who cannot speak the language”*. Hence, based on the narratives it could be carefully argued that the knowledge about the national minority rights seems to be rather weak, at least among those individuals who are not in the most vulnerable

situation in terms of language skills or health. However, the comment of Jatta below illustrates there existing both interest and need for national minority services:

Jatta: I made a name list in the association premises and asked how many people would be interested in having a place in a Finnish-speaking elderly care, when that day comes. In 15 minutes I collected 70 names, and I send it forward to the municipality. (26)

Whether the individual members are aware of the political decision-making and their full rights as members of a national minority or not, it is evident that the status of the Swedish Finns in the political context has changed. At the same time, although it was not directly identified that the changes taking place in the social and political context regarding the status of the Swedish Finns would have influenced the quality of their life, the narratives of the participants are following a certain kind of trajectory from negative towards positive. With the limited data connected to this topic, it is impossible to argue toward one direction or another. Instead, many questions arise. For example, as much of the research referring to the changing assumptions regarding the Swedish Finns is strongly linked to the second-generation of Swedish Finns, are these findings relevant in the case of the first-generation Swedish Finns as well? It was also interesting to note that the reactions towards the national minority status did not awake more discussion. Is it because the participants do not have information about their rights, because they do not perceive them as significant to themselves, or because they are regarded as ineffective or non-reachable? These questions are intriguing, and should be addressed in greater detail in another context. This will be further reflected under the chapter Suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to explore the elderly migrants' life experiences of migrating and settling permanently into new society, and thus, seven first-generation Swedish Finns - who migrated to Sweden during 1961-1970 - were interviewed. Furthermore, the study's aim was to analyse the narratives in order to find out how is the self-representation of the participants visible in the narratives, and how do the narratives reflect upon the societal and political structures around them. In that context, the study specifically aimed at analysing, how does the changing status from a temporary labour migrant population into an officially recognised national minority possibly influence the micro-level narratives of the participants. The group of participants consisted of four women and three men, aged 70-77. They had arrived in Sweden at the ages of 16-29, and have resided in Sweden between 48 to 57 years. The participants originated from various areas in Finland, but had been residing in Gothenburg and the nearby areas most parts of their stay in Sweden.

The first research question of this paper asks *How do the narratives portray the changes that have taken place in the lives of the participants during their long stay in Sweden?* In the context of that, five themes were identified. All in all, the themes illustrate the complexity of acculturation processes and highlight that the different aspects linked to it, such as language skills, feeling of belonging and interaction with the majority population, do not always correlate with each other. For example, weak language skills did not automatically determine that the individual would be marginalised from the society. On the contrary, most of the participants explicitly expressed that they connect the notion of 'home' to Sweden rather than to Finland, even though, at the same time, they described having very little meaningful interaction with individuals representing the majority population. However, when these conclusions are considered in connection with each other, it becomes apparent that they are not necessarily conflicting with each other, but rather provide an interesting illustration of how a minority population have found a way to construct a sense of belonging, while maintaining their ethnic identification in a society where they have both politically and socially in a disadvantageous position (Lainio, 1999). These conditions have been enabled by the strong Finnish migrant community that exists in Sweden.

In connection to this, the second interview question further asks *How do the participants construct their narrated-selves in relation to their migration experience?* In other words, how do the narratives portray the storytellers themselves. As it has been noted earlier, the intention of this study is not to define the identity of the individual participants, but rather to examine, what kind of descriptions of self can be found from the oral history narratives produced by the interviewees. At the same time, it is worth emphasising that the dynamic nature of narratives simultaneously affects the nature of the self-narratives (Andrews, 2014). As storytelling in general is adjusted depending on the context, the content of the self-narratives simultaneously evolves. In the context of the interviews conducted within this study, both the researcher's presence and the acknowledgement of the research context can be seen having influenced the self-representation of the participants.

However, when the interview data is analysed to examine the descriptions of selves weaved into the narratives, it comes forth that ethnicity is a prominent part of the descriptions. This was visible especially in Theme 5, where the participants describe their ethnicity as strongly Finnish. Aside from which, ethnicity was the defining factor also in the consistency of free time activities, as well as in the content of the social networks of the participants. The participants chose Finnish association activities over the Swedish ones, read Swedish Finnish newspapers, attended Finnish-speaking church and watched Finnish TV. This confirms the findings of both Lamér (2015) and Snellman (2003), who both found that the strong ethnic community surrounding the individuals belonging to the Swedish Finns have had an impact to the development of their self-identification. What is more, instead of solely referring to Finnishness in the narratives, the ethnicity was connected to positive characteristics, like determination and diligence. Such descriptions became visible especially when the participants compared themselves to other migrant populations, or the majority population. Andrews (2014) states that comparative action is one of the fundamental elements of constructing a self-narrative, as in order for one to understand the construction of self, they must inevitably develop an understanding of the Other. What is more, “this construction of self and other is ongoing, and draws equally on (situated) knowledge and imagination, reaching out not only to the future (aspirations and fears), but deeply rooted in our pasts (sometimes acknowledged, sometimes hidden)” (ibid., p.8).

In light of this, it could be argued that aside the fact that migrating to another country brings a whole new aspect to the everyday lives of individuals, it likewise brings drastic changes to the ways people describe themselves. What is more, it could be further argued that the minority position of the Swedish Finns and the presence of the Other in a form of the majority of Swedes increases the role of ethnicity in the self-narratives of the participants. This statement is supported by Clary-Lemon (2010), who noted in the study among the first-generation Irish-Canadians that especially when reviewing the discursive methods utilised in the construction of migrants’ self-narratives, the division between ‘us’ and ‘them’ was distinctively present. Moreover, the findings discussed under Theme 2 illustrate that instead of solely negotiating their position in comparison to the majority group in Sweden, the first-generation Swedish Finns reflect their positioning towards another majority group: the Finnish people residing in Finland. In the context of this, Clary-Lemon (2010, p.9) introduces the concept of “imagined communities of nations”, stating that the national identification of populations who have emigrated outside the nation country comprise of a combination of “imagined national culture” (ibid.) of the country of origin, and the idea of what is ‘means’ to belong to a certain ethnic group.

Furthermore, the findings illustrate how the understanding of the concept of ethnicity itself directs the ways in which individuals construct their own ethnic identification. By referring to the current Finland and its language as something ‘strange’ and to their children and grandchildren as ‘not Finnish’, the participants constructed their ethnic ‘Finnishness’ as something unchangeable and definitive. Even though it would be impossible to draw conclusions on the inner meaning of ethnic identification based on the limited interview data collected in the context of this study, it could be argued that in the case of the first-generation Swedish Finns, the consequences leading from a strong ethnic affiliation are multi-layered. At the same time when the ethnic community has obviously helped in settling down and eventually creating a feeling of belonging in the new country, it has simultaneously hindered the interaction between the individuals in the majority and minority groups, offering an ‘easy way out’ from the acculturation struggle. On the other hand, when taking into consideration the coercive assimilation strategies utilised to merge the minority population into the Swedish

majority, the strong ethnic identification adopts a different kind of an echo. What is more, the narratives of the participants visualise the difficulty individuals can have in seeing the larger macro-level structures influencing them and the decisions they make in their everyday lives. As a result, the narratives are mostly characterised as one-dimensional, emphasising the individual's own responsibility. These observations on their part reflect to the third question, *How do the narratives reflect with the social and political contexts of their time?* This question is especially relevant to social work practitioners, as it highlights the importance of acknowledging both visible and hidden macro structures existing in societies, for instance in a form of state policies, content produced by the mainstream media and stereotypical perceptions existing among the majority population.

As a conclusion, it must be again emphasised that this paper has aimed at providing a wide, multi-layered analysis of the *narratives* produced by the seven participants of this study. Therefore, this paper does not aim to exclusively describe the lives or feelings of the people who participated in the study. On the contrary, the composition of the study aims at highlighting the fact that the participants themselves have either consciously or unconsciously made decisions on which narratives to include and which to exclude, making it fundamentally their own story. In the same note, it is thus necessary to mention that the analysis of the data is providing only one interpretation of the stories, being influenced by the researcher's attitude, beliefs, values and background. To conclude, the following subchapter will identify particular areas which would deserve to be addressed in the future research on the Swedish Finnish minority.

Suggestions for future research

In the course of the analysing process, several questions arose. As the limited resources of this study decreased the possibilities to address these issues in the paper, the questions should be recommended as research topics covered in future research. First of all, I want to encourage everyone to conduct research amongst elderly people, who possess tremendous amounts valuable knowledge, experience and observations. In the context of that, there are three topics which would, based on the research findings, deserve to be studied in more detail.

First, as it was discussed under Theme 4, it seems that there exists generational differences among the Swedish Finnish minority population on what is understood by 'ethnicity'. In order to gain a deeper understanding of this generational gap, it would be highly interesting to conduct in-depth interviews with migrants and their offspring from different generations, and to compare their ethnic identification and understanding of what it means to belong to an ethnic minority. In such a setting, being able to conduct interviews within the same families would further provide grounds for understanding intergenerational communication in a more in-depth manner. Secondly, although gender differences were not addressed in this paper, some of the interviews indirectly illustrated the gender dimension and its influence in constructing the everyday lives of the participants. In light of that, an intersectional study amongst elderly migrants regarding their perception of gender roles and the changes that have taken place in that spectrum would provide viewpoints that could elaborate upon the constructive nature of gender. Thirdly, as it was already mentioned when discussing the relation of the social and political structures to the micro narratives of the participants (See chapter The changing status of the Swedish Finns), the examination of micro- and macro-level factors awakened several questions. It would be especially relevant to explore the individuals' perceptions of their national minority status in more detail. Increased knowledge on the topic would not only expand

the understanding regarding the micro-level perspectives, but would simultaneously stimulate the human rights actions to be taken at the structural level of the society as well.

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Appendix 1: Email to the Swedish Finnish associations

Hei,

Nimeni on Saana Boahen, ja olen maisteriopiskelija Göteborgin yliopistolla Social Work and Human Rights-maisteriohjelmassa. Olen aloittamassa maisterinopintoihin kuuluvan lopputyöni, ja tarkoitukseni on haastatella ensimmäisen sukupolven ruotsinsuomalaisia, jotka ovat muuttaneet Ruotsiin 1960-70-luvuilla.

Haastattelut ovat elämäkerrallisia ja keskittyvät henkilökohtaisiin kokemuksiin maahanmuutosta ja kotoutumisesta. Tutkimuksen tarkoitus on tarjota yksilöperspektiiviä siihen, miten haastateltavat kokevat ruotsinsuomalaisten aseman muuttumisen työperäisistä siirtolaisista kansalliseksi vähemmistöksi, ja miten tämä muutos on näkynyt heidän arjessaan ja vastaanottamisessaan palveluissa vuosien aikana. Olen erityisen kiinnostunut löytämään haastateltavia, jotka kokevat kuuluvansa vahvasti suomalaiseen vähemmistöön Ruotsissa niin kielen kuin kulttuurinkin kautta.

Uskoisin, että teidän jäsenistänne kenties löytyisi kiinnostavia haastateltavia, ja pohdin siksi, olisiko mahdollista että pääsisin teidän kauttanne keskustelemaan paikallisten ruotsinsuomalaisten kanssa? Voisin esimerkiksi tulla kertomaan itsestäni ja tutkimuksestani lähiaikoina jonkun muun järjestetyn ohjelman aikaan, jolloin paikalla olisi useampi kävijöistäne?

Kiitos jo etukäteen avusta!

Ystävällisin terveisin,
Saana Boahen
Masters student
University of Gothenburg
Tel: 07 xxx xxx xx

Hi,

My name is Saana Boahen and I am a master's student at the University of Gothenburg in a programme Social Work and Human Rights. I am starting the final thesis which is part of my studies with an aim to interview first-generation Swedish Finns, who have migrated to Sweden in the 1960's and 1970's.

Interviews will be in a form of life stories and focus on personal experiences in migration and integration. The aim of the study is to provide individual perspective on how the interviewees experience the change of their status from labour migrants into national minority and whether this change has been shown in their everyday life and in the services they have received. I am especially interested in finding participants who have a strong feeling of belonging in the Finnish minority in Sweden through language and culture.

I believe that I could find interested participants among your members and I am thus wondering if it was possible to meet local Swedish Finns through you? I could for example come to tell about myself and my research in the nearby future during a time several of your members would be present?

Thank you already in advance!

Kind regards,
Saana Boahen
Masters student
University of Gothenburg
Tel: 07 xxx xxx xx

Appendix 2: Information sheet

TIETOA TUTKIMUKSESTA

Minun nimeni on Saana Boahen ja olen maisteriopiskelija Göteborgin yliopistolta. Opiskelen sosiaalityön maisterintutkintoa ”Sosiaalityö ja ihmisoikeudet”-koulutusohjelmassa. Olen kirjoittamassa opintoihin kuuluvaa lopputyötäni, joka on elämäkerrallinen haastattelututkimus ensimmäisen polven ruotsinsuomalaisista.

Mikäli päätät osallistua tähän haastattelututkimukseen ja tutkimuksen tarkoitus tai mikään yksityiskohta on Sinulle epäselvä, voit missä tahansa vaiheessa ottaa minuun yhteyttä puhelimitse tai sähköpostitse. Kirjoitan lopputyöni englannin kielellä, mutta tulen toimittamaan haastatteluun osallistuneille suomenkielisen tiivistelmän työstäni.

Tutkimuksen tarkoitus

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus on haastatella Ruotsiin 1960- ja 1970-luvuilla aikuisina/itsenäisesti muuttaneita ensimmäisen sukupolven suomalaisia. Haastattelujen kautta olen kiinnostunut keräämään haastateltavien kokemuksia maahanmuutosta ja kotoutumisesta, sekä siitä minkälaista on ollut asua, työskennellä ja kasvattaa perhettä Ruotsissa suomalaisena. Olen myös kiinnostunut ymmärtämään, miten haastateltavat kokevat asemansa muuttuneen Ruotsissa saapumisesta tähän päivään.

Kiinnostukseni aiheeseen kumpuaa omasta maahanmuuttokokemuksestani Ruotsiin 2010-luvulla. Koen historiallisen tiedon keräämisen normaalista ihmisten elämästä tavattoman kiinnostavaksi, mutta myös hyvin tärkeäksi.

Tutkimuksen eteneminen

Osallisena tähän tutkimukseen suostut siihen, että sinua haastatellaan vapaasti valitsemassasi paikassa maaliskuussa 2018. Haastattelun kesto on määrittelemätön ja riippuu Sinusta. Haastattelu on elämäkerrallinen, ja pääpaino on haastateltavan omilla kokemuksilla. Haastatteluun ei ole erillistä kysymyslistaa, vaan se on luonteeltaan keskusteluomaista. Haastattelu nauhoitetaan, jonka jälkeen ääninauha puretaan kirjallisesti.

Kirjallisessa raportissa haastattelua käytetään analysoinnin pohjana, ja suoria lainauksia haastattelunauhasta voidaan käyttää tekstin vahvistuksena. Lainaukset pyritään kuitenkin aina valitsemaan niin, ettei niistä käy ilmi haastateltavan henkilöllisyyttä. Tarvittaessa myös muun muassa paikannimiä voidaan muuttaa tai poistaa tekstistä.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY

My name is Saana Boahen and I am a student at the Masters' Programme "Social Work and Human Rights" at the University of Gothenburg. I am currently writing my master thesis, which is a qualitative interview study about the first-generation Swedish Finns, who have migrated to Sweden in 1960's and 1970's.

In case you decide to participate to this study, you are welcome to ask questions throughout the process and contact me at any time via phone or email. The final report of this research will be written in English, but I will provide a summary in Finnish for the participants of the study.

The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to interview first-generation Swedish Finns, who have migrated to Sweden during the 1960's and 1970's as adults / independently. In the study, I am interested in hearing the experiences of the participants have about migration and integration and how it has been to live, work and raise a family in Sweden as a Finnish person. I am also interested in understanding, how have the situation of the participants changed during the time of staying in Sweden.

My personal interest to the topic emerges from personal migration experience from Finland to Sweden in the 2010's. I see the collection of knowledge about the everyday life of people throughout the history as fascinating, but also as very important.

The procedure of the study

As a participant of this study, you agree to be interviewed, in a location chosen by You, in March 2018. The duration of the interview is undefined and depends on Your will. The interview is conducted by using the oral history method where the emphasis is on the experiences of the participant. Thus, instead of being structured by a list of questions, the interview is discussion-like. The interview will be audio-recorded and, later, transcribed.

In the written study report, the interview will be part of a data set used as grounds for the analysis. Direct quotations from the interview may be used to strengthen the text. The quotations will, however, always be chosen so that the anonymity of the participants is safeguarded. If necessary, the names of places or other details may be changed or hidden.

Appendix 3: Informed consent

SUOSTUMUS HAASTATTELUTUTKIMUKSEEN

Tästä lomakkeesta saat tietoa haastattelumateriaalin käytöstä. Haastattelu on osa maisteritutkinnon lopputyötä ”Sosiaalityö ja ihmisoikeudet”-koulutusohjelmassa Göteborgin yliopistossa.

Allekirjoittamalla tämän lomakkeen, annat suostumuksesi seuraavaan:

- Olen lukenut ja ymmärtänyt ’Tietoa tutkimuksesta’-lomakkeen
- Olen saanut mahdollisuuden kysyä kysymyksiä tutkimukseen liittyen
- Annan suostumukseni haastattelun nauhoittamiseen
- Olen saanut tietoa haastattelun luottamuksellisuudesta ja tiedän, että haastattelija tekee parhaansa suojatakseen henkilöllisyyteni koko tutkimuksen ajan
- Tutkimusraportista ei tule käymään ilmi nimeni eikä muita henkilötietojani
- Olen tietoinen siitä, että suoria lainauksia haastattelustani saatetaan käyttää osana kirjallista tutkimusraporttia
- Voin keskeyttää osallisuuteni tutkimukseen myös haastattelun tekemisen jälkeen, ilman että minun tarvitsee antaa siihen erillistä selitystä

Tätä suostumuslomaketta on allekirjoitettu kaksi kappaletta, joista toinen jää minulle ja toinen tutkimuksen tekijälle.

Paikka

Aika

Allekirjoitus

Nimen selvennys

Haastattelijan yhteystiedot

Saana Boahen

e-post (removed)

puh: (removed)

INFORMED CONSENT

The following paper informs you as an interviewee about the use of data collected during this interview. The interview is conducted as part of a final thesis in the Masters' Programme "Social Work and Human Rights" at the University of Gothenburg.

By signing this agreement, the participant agrees to the following points:

- I have read and understood the 'Study Information'-sheet and I understand the purpose of this interview
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study
- I have given my consent that the interview can be recorded
- I am aware that the interviewer will do her best to safeguard the confidentiality of the data and that my name or other personal details will not be revealed
- I understand that my direct words may be quoted in the written report of the research project
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give any explanation to it

Two copies of this form have been signed, one for the participant and one for the interviewer.

Place

Date

Signature

Name

Interviewer's contact details

Saana Boahen

e-post (removed)

tel: (removed)

Appendix 4: The list of keywords

- 1. Name and year of birth**
- 2. Childhood**
- 3. Adult life in Finland before migration**
 - a. Education, work, career
 - b. Other participation (politics, religion etc.)
- 4. Migration**
 - a. Why did you move? Why to Sweden? With whom did you arrive?
 - b. Expectations about life in Sweden
 - c. How was it to arrive? Housing, work, reception?
 - d. How did it feel to visit Finland during holidays?
- 5. Housing**
 - a. Living environment? How did you end up there?
 - b. Did you move a lot?
- 6. Work**
 - a. Working in Sweden
 - b. As a Finn in the working life
- 7. Everyday life**
 - a. Free time
 - b. Participation to third sector associations
 - c. Food traditions
- 8. Language**
 - a. Swedish skills at arrival
 - b. Studying Swedish
 - c. The importance of language
 - d. Finnish language and children
 - e. Language today
- 9. Liaison to Finland**
 - a. Plans of returning
 - b. Communication with family and friends in Finland
 - c. Visits to Finland
 - d. Longing to Finland
- 10. Finnishness**
 - a. Swedish Finnishness?
 - b. What does it mean to you?
 - c. Citizenship
- 11. Future**
 - a. Your own future
 - b. The future of your children and grandchildren

Appendix 5: The extracts in original language

(1) Erkki: Mä kuulin kavereilta että Ruotsissa oli töitä ihan kuin paljon vaan ja mä kävin sitten satamassa Turussa kysymässä että mitä laivalippu maksaa niin Tukholmaan. Sitten ku ei ollu enää ku ne rahat jäljellä ni sitten oli ostettava se lippu ja lähdettävä sitte Tukholmaan. Sitte mä laivalla tapasin kaks niin tavallaan kohtalotoveria, vaikka ne oli vähän paremmassa asemassa, niillä oli vähän rahaa jäljellä mutta mulla ei ollu kyllä yhtään. Että mä olin ihan niin sanotusti PA. Mutta nii, nää kaks sitte, ni se toinen sano että hän osaa jopa ruotsia mutta se kyllä osoittautu että se ruotsin kielen taito ei ollu kyllä niin pätevää kun hän anto ymmärtää. Mutta kuitenkin on sen verran hyötyä että heillä oli sitä rahaa. Ja sitte nii, me Tukholmasta asemalta, siin oli suomalaisia semmosia laitapuolen kulkijoita, nii sit kysyttiin jos ne joku osaa hyvin ruotsia ja siinä yks lähti, sano että kyllä hän osaa ja lähti meidän mukaan tulkiksi sitte. Ja mentiin työnvälitystoimistoon sitten Tukholmassa. Ja sitte ku selvis että osaa hitsata ni mulleki oli viis paikkaa mistä sai valita että mihin halua lähteä töihin.

(2) Saana: Ja niinku mä olin tossa kirjottanu ni mulla ei oo minkäänlaista kysymyslistaa.

Jatta: Niin.

Saana: Elikkä, elikkä tuota. Mua kiinnostais vaan kuulla että, minkälainen sinun elämä on ollut.

Jatta: Niin. Kuinka pitkältä aloitan? (naurua)

(3) Jatta: (--) Ja mitä enemmän kieltä oppi niin sitä helpommaksihan se tuli. Mutta mulla oli aina se tarve että mun täytyy oppia. Ku paljon oli sellasia jotka, kun lapset puhu, sit huomas sen ku oli pari kolme vuotta asunut Ruotsissa, naapurin lapset puhu täyttä ruotsia ja puhuvat ruotsia vanhemmilleen, jotka eivät ymmärtäneet yhtään mitä he puhuivat. Että melkein oikein kiusas vanhempiaan sillä että ne ei halunnu vastata siihen suomen kieleen ja, oli, mä näin siis ympärilläni hirveitä konflikteja siis just sen takia että vanhemmat ei oppinu kieltä. Ja turvautuvat siihen että ku on muita suomalaisia niin tosta saadaan tulkki ja, sit menee taas tämän päivän yli ja niin edelleen. Eivätkä oppineet koskaan sitte. Mutta mutta, mulla nyt oli onni sitte että mulla oli se pakko että mun täytyy oppia.

Saana: Mikä se on se pakko? Tuliks se niinku omasta itestään että ite halus //

Jatta: // Se tuli omasta itestä, sen takia että mä pystyn elämään tässä yhteiskunnassa.

Saana: Aivan.

Jatta: Että mä pystyn tuomaan itseni julki ja mä pystyn pitämään niinku lapsistani huolta ja saamaan niille kaiken mahdollisen mitä he saattaa tarvita. Että se, se oli semmonen polte mikä mulla oli.

(4) Viivi: Ensimmäisen kuukauden me nukuttiin lattialla, kumpikin töissä oli, ei kerinny tuota käymään hakemassa noita huonekaluja.

(5) Leena: Mutta oon ollu siellä mukana siellä baanatöissä, että se todella oli stressaavaa välillä. Se oli tosiaan baana, nehän oli eri vauhtia aina eri, miten ne sai kuljetettua niitä ja miten oli tarvetta, ja milloin oli jotain vikaa ni sit tuli tietysti paussia. Mutta silloin ku se meni kovaa (naurua), ni hyvä että pysy perässä ja kerkes maalaamaan sen osan mitä piti maalata ku jo sit tuli seuraava. Ja sitte vielä ku tuli paussi, rasti, ni sitte ku meillähän oli ne semmoset frilyftsmaskit, kauheet haalarit. No haalareita me ei vaihdettu kyllä, mutta maskit kyllä ja sitte rasva pois sitte naamasta ja äkkiä raput ylös ja tonne ruokalaan ottaa sitte mitä kerkee siinä syödä (naurua) ja sitte äkkiä takasin ennen ku se baana lähtee, siellä on oltava (naurua). Se on ihan hirveitä stressiä ku nyt lähtee. Sitä oli nuori silloin.

(6) Viivi: Me ko saatettiin pistää lauluksi baanalla suomeksi välillä ko tehtiin töitä. Niin tuota, se turkkilainen, se kuunteli vähän aikaa ja se oli hyvä laulamaan. Ni alko kuulumaan jonkun ajan päästä ni tuku tuku lampaitani. Ja pomo sano että se ei ossaa. Met sanottiin että kyllä se tuota, me hommataan että sie näet, että katto koska baana pysähtyy. Noniin, se meni muka sinne omien paperiensa kanssa ja kuunteli siellä. Ja me alettiin yhtäkkiä laulamaan ja se turkkilainen alko vetämään ja se vielä käsillä ja se laulo kaikki kirjaimetki tuli, koko ensimmäinen säkeistö (naurua) Niin se pomo tuli ja sano että kyllä, te olette ansainneet huomenna ilmaiset kahavit, pullakahvit. Että hän on oottanut tätä tilaisuutta kauan että hän kuulee ku se laulaa (naurua) Että meillä oli hauskaaki! Ja sitte kuljethiin pal, kaks kertaa vuoressa Volvo tarjos meille ulkona ruoan, sit mentiin johonki ravintolaan tai tälleen Stena Linelle tai. Joo, että meillä oli hirveen hyvä työporukka.

(7) Leena: On yks aika vuodesta millon me lähetään tonne matkoille, se on joulu. Me ollaan joulu aina pois, etelässä. Kaks viikkoa. Ja sitten on toinen semmonen pikkumatka, me mennään Tanskaan pyörillä. Polkupyörillä. Ja me ollaan siellä neljästä päivästä viikkoon. Nykyään se on lyhentynyt. Meillä on semmonen ryhmä. Myös tää samanikäisiä suurin piirtein, semmonen pyöräilyryhmä. Ni onko meitä kymmenen nyt lähössä

Erkki: Joo

Leena: Me lähetään nyt sitte

Erkki: Ennen oli 20

Leena: Joo, parhaimpina aikoina oli 20.

(8) Leena: Silloin ensimmäisiä vuosia ku käytiin Suomessa, silloin ku lapset oli pieniä ja me oltiin vielä avioliitossa. Ni käytiin Suomessa ni sukulaisillahan sitä käydään sillai kylässä, mellä oli telttaki vielä mukana silloin. Ni se oli vaan semmonen paikka missä käytiin niinkö, ei se enää - se alko vierastua niinku se niinsanottu kotimaa. Että tänä päivänä jos joku kysyy, ni tää on mun kotimaa.

(9) Henrik: Kun oli 11kk ollu työssä niin sitä mielellään lähti sitte vähän tuulettumaan, et se oli sitte Suomeen.

Saana: Ihan niinku lomille käymään?

Henrik: Niin, se oli yleensä että kerran vuodessa alkuaikaan, ku oli lapset pienempiä. Mutta sitten se rupes venymään se matka vuosiksi ja useammiksi vuosiksi ja.

Saana: Minkälaista siellä Suomessa sitte oli käyä?

Henrik: No, kyllähän se meni siinä ku oli hyvät ilmat, se oli keskikesällä, siellä pääsi uimaan ja oli, tunsii että sitä taas on kotonaan.

(10) Saana: Miltä se sitten tuntuu siellä käydä [Suomessa]?

Jatta: No, se on ihan kiva ku siellä on näitä tuttuja ihmisiä ketkä on käyneet täällä. Mutta onhan siellä niin paljon muuttunut kaikki, että en mä varmaan niinku haluais muuttaa sinne enää asumaan. Kielikin on ihan niin ettei sitä kohta enää ymmärrä (naurua). Kaikki on uusia sanoja ja - vaikka kyllähän siellä tietysti vielä maitokaupassa pärjää (naurua)

(11) Saana: niin. Onks sulla koskaan sitte ollu suunnitelmissa palata takaisin missään vaiheessa?

Samppa: Ei, ei. Ei milloinkaan. Muuta ku lomalla.

Saana: Miksei?

Samppa: No en mä tiiä, en mä oo semmonen että mulla olis kotipaikkakaan kaipuuta sillee, koska sehän mikä on mun kotipaikka ni eihän siellä oo ketään semmosta jota oli silloin ku minä

olin lapsi. Kaikki on kuollu tai muuttanu pois. Sitte jos menis sinne on ihan oudossa ympäristössä. Alottais niinku alusta taas.

Saana: Näinhän se on että ihmiset sen tekee sen paikan monesti että.

Samppa: Nii-i, kyllä.

(12) Jatta: Ja nyt sitten tietysti kun täällä on ja elää ja on perhe täällä, niin eihän täältä mihkään voi ajatellakaan lähtevänsä eikä haluakaan lähteä. Ja sitte tänä päivänä kun on eläkkeellä ni asiat on sen verran hyvin että ei näe nälkää.

(13) Saana: Ootteko te sitte tänne kotiutunu?

Elina: No, tavallaan

Henrik: Kyllähän heikäläisille aina kertoo että on kotiutunut mutta eihän sitä tulevaisuuttaan koskaan tiedä. Sehän on -- ettei kyllä se Suomi on arvokas

Saana: Onko teillä suunnitelmissa että joskus sinne muuttais takaisin?

Elina: Suomeen? Ei

Henrik: No kai sinne yksin sitte täytyy lähteä (nauraa) Ei sinne muita saa mukaan tulemaan (nauraa)

(14) Jatta: Kato se [koulu] oli täysin ruotsinkielinen ja me oltiin vasta muutettu ni eihän me, me ei osattu kukaan, ei minä eikä minä eikä tuota lasten isä osannu ruotsia. Mä osasin sen verran että mä olin ollu Helsingissä lihakaupassa töissä. Justiin sen kiitos ja ole hyvä ja ku ne tätit tuli ja kysy että ska vi få 50g lauantaimekka, lördagskorv! (nauraa) Se oli siis niin yksinkertaista, se kiitokset ja varsågod, ni se oli melkein se mitä osas kieltä

(15) Elina: Joo me tultiin mun siskon, ”tulkaa tänne nytte”, se hommas meille työpaikan, me oltiin Mölndahlissa töissä. Emmä siellä ollu kauaa töissä, ko asuttiin Källtorpissa, pitkä matka kulkee raitiovaunulla, ni mä menin Redbergplatsenilla herrain, miesten liikkeeseen. Siellä mä tykkäsin olla. Siel mä opin ruotsin, siel ei ollu yhtään suomalaista. Pakko opetella. Siellä oli kyllä kiva olla töissä.

(16) Saana: No entäs se ero sitten Suomessa asumisen ja Ruotsissa asumisen, oliko siinä isoa eroa?

Viivi: Sanotaan että mie en tahtonu ensin katto ku se oli niin huono se Ruotsin kielen taito. Esimerkiksi ruoan laitossa, minun piti hirveän tarkasti kattoo että mitä mie otan ja laitan ruoaksi. Katto ku mie osasin ruoan laittaa mutta se piti tarkoin kattoo että oikea tuli. Ja sitte sanakirjasta hakee kotona jos ei jotaki löytäny ni tuota ni sitte kauppaan mennä ja näyttää lunttilappua. Että ei se helppoa ollu. Ja sitte Volvolla ku meillä alettiin niitä kielikurseja pittää, niitä pettiin lauantaina että meillä oli kuuspäiväsiä työviikkoja. Siitä sai palkan sitte lauantaina sitte ko niitten kielikurssilla.

Saana: No olikos siitä hyötyä?

Viivi: No, sanotaanpa että täällä Ruotsissa on minun mielestä on väärä systeemi. Kattopa, sie tiität että siirtolaisia panhaan monesta maasta sannaan ryhmään. Joillekin tarttuu paljon paremmin se ruotsin kieli ko meille suomalaisille päähän. Että pääsit etteenpäin nopeampaa ku monesti suomalainen joutuu miettimään sitä sannaä että mitä se tarkoittaa, ko opettaja on ruotsalainen. Niin se ei ollu mihkään helppo. Ni katto, me kertakaikkiaan suomalaiset lopetettiin se. Me sanottiin että ne on niin paljon viisaampia ku me, että tämä ei kannata että se pittää olla semmoset jotka samalla tasolla on siinä ruotsin kielessä.

Saana: Oliko siellä paljon suomalaisia siellä kurseilla sitte?

Viivi: Kysy vaan . Se on väärä kysymys. Sanotaan että Volvolla pärjäs suomen kielellä paremmin mitä ruotsin kielellä (nauraa). Että ruotsalaiset oppi suomea.

(17) Saana: Mites silloin ku te saavuitte ni osasitteko te ruotsia?

Henrik: Eei, juu mä olin vähän opiskellu kyllä, mulla on tallessa vieläkin se kirje, mutta ei se on, se on niin, aika yksinkertainen, mutta tuota niin se on mulla tallella vielä se kirje ja tuota, ku mä oon sitä joskus kattonu ni, eihän se kyllä pitkälle, sillä ei pitkälle kyllä mennä. Mutta mä tykkäsin että mä opin aika, sen arkipäiväruotsin aika nopeesti. Mä puolen vuoden päästä ni mä en enää käyttäny tulkkia. Mä yritin solkata itte. Mä olin päättäny että mä haluan oppia tän kielen että nii. Se on kauheen tärkeää.

(18) Leena: meillä puhuttiin koko aika oven sisäpuolella suomea. Ainoastaan jos tuli ruotsinkielinen kaveri niin silloin tietysti sai puhua ruotsia. Mutta muuten niinku keskenämme aina suomea. Ja mä luin ihan hirveen paljon niille. Ja mä laitoin ne ite lukemaan, kovaa (naurua) aina illalla.

(19) Elina: Niinku Siiri [nimi muutettu] haluais lähteä Suomeen käymään. Et he kysyvät aina häneltä ku sillä on suomalainen passi, ku se syntyy ennen ku ne meni naimisiin. Kolme kuukautta ku se syntyy keväällä ja ni ne meni kesällä naimisiin. Mutta se sai sen suomalaisen passin. Kato, ooks sä käyny koskaan Suomessa? Kysyvät tää nainen ko mä en oo koskaan käyny Suomessa ja mulla on suomalainen passi. Se haluais käydä.

(20) Jatta: Nyt on ehkä vähemmin ollu justiin tätä kulttuuripuolta, ku meillähän oli meillä oli laulukilpailuja, meillä oli tanssikilpailua ja kirveenheittokilpailua, siis suomalaisseurojen välillä. Mutta se on nyt hiipunu et kaikki alkaa tulla niin vanhaksi ja nuoremmat ei enää lähde mukaan yhdistystoimintaan, koska niillä on useilla sitte ne ruotsalaiset kaverit että se tulee se perhe ja tulee ne muut hössötykset siihen että.

Saana: Niin joo, he on eläny aivan erilaisen elämän sitte heidän näkökulmastaan ku pienenä tänne ja sitte kasvanu tavallaan ruotsalaisessa yhteiskunnassa

Jatta: Nii, nii, nii. Niistä on tullu ruotsalaisia.

(21) Saana: Oliks se sitten tärkeetä että lapsetkin oppi suomea?

Samppa: Kyllä tottakai, mutta lapsenlapset ku ei ossaa ni mä, musta se on huono asia.

Saana: Mm.

Samppa: Kyllä ne osaa kymmeneen laskea mutta siinä se sitten onki. Tyttären lapset ni, ne oli ni puhu siihen aikaan aina ku kävi Suomessa et pitäis opetella, pitäis opetella. Ku ei osanneet yhtään puhua siellä ku olivat. Mutta se jäi siihen vaan siihen puheeseen. Ku hälläkin on ruotsalainen mies ja. Se on semmosta. Pitää sopeutua mitä on.

(22) Saana: onks sillä kansalaisuudella sitte jotaki muuta merkitystä ku passi?

Jatta: Ei mun mielestä. Koska me ollaan kuitenkin aika samanlaisia, ruotsalaiset ja suomalaiset. Että ei mun mielestä oo mitään merkitystä sillä, Suomi on kuitenkin mun kotimaani, sen tunnen sisälläni, mutta mää kuitenkin siis hyväksyn Ruotsin ja ruotsalaiset sellasena ku he on. Ei siinä niinku, ei Suomen ja Ruotsin välillä oo semmosia kulttuurikrokkeja niinkun on näitten keski- ja etelä-Eurooppalaisten välillä ja muun maalaisten, nehän on niin suuria, suuria että se on niin ettei pystyy olemaan samassa kaupunginosassa edes (Naurua) että niin, verrattavina siihen Suomi ja Ruotsi. Mehän ollaan melkein niinku siskoksia suomalaiset ja ruotsalaiset keskenämme että. Ei siinä oo mun mielestäni, ja se on siis Suomi on mulle aina Suomi, se on mun kotimaani, ja sillä ei oo mitään väliä minkä maan kansalainen mä olen. Ei se, se on se mitä on täällä, on omissa ajatuksissa ja mielessä niin, se on musta se tärkein, vaikkei se sitten paperilla näykään, että mä oon suomalainen. Mä oon kuitenkin.

(23) Jatta: Ruotsihan oli paratiisi ku täällä sai niin paljon rahaa (naurua). Ja varmasti oli semmonen asia joka veti suomalaisia tänne, täällä oli paremmat palkat. Täällä oli töitä siihen aikaan. Vaikka ne työt sitte oli todella työtä eikä mitään, että kaikki mitä tonne tehtaille tuli, sehän oli raskasta työtä, satamatyöläiset ja kaikki nämä, metsätyöläiset joita tuli hirveen paljon, varsinki tonne keski- ja pohjois-Ruotsiin. Ei se helppoa ollu.

(24) Saana: No minkälainen kokemus se sitten oli muuttaa?
Erkki: No, oikeastaan niin, se oli tosiaan hyvä kokemus, koska tota ni, ensinnäkin niin, palkat oli niin hyviä silloin täällä, että nii, ja sitte töitä oli niin paljon ku viitti tehdä, että se tuntu lähes tulkoon että niin sitä oli tullu vähän niinku taivasten valtakuntaan. Verrattuna ku oli työttömänä ja puolinälissään ku ei voinu edes syödä niin paljon ku olis halunnu että niin, se oli iso ero.

(25) Henrik: Sillä tavalla että nykyään ku tänne tullaan, on tullu porukkaa niin, näyttää siltä että niille löytyy kaikki mitä ne haluaa, ja ne haluaa kanssa. Että ei me olla osattu pyytääkään mitään, eikä me varmaan ois saatukaan. Kyllä me ite on kaikki hankittu sillä työllä.

(26) Jatta: Mä tein semmosen nimikeräyslistan [järjestön nimi poistettu], et kuinka monta niinkun olis halukkaita menemään suomenkieliseen hoitoon kun se päivä tulee. Ni mä 15 minuutissa keräsin 70 nimeä ja lähetin sen kunnanherroille.