Even though the number of immigrant workers from Eastern Europe has increased significantly, very little research about them has been done in Norway. While stereotypes about these immigrants exist, there is little knowledge about who the Eastern European immigrants are, what they think, and how they perceive themselves.

Following EU enlargement in 2004 there has been a sharp increase of migrant workers from new EU countries. In Norway, the increased labor migration is considered to be a result of the Norwegian economy and demand for labor, combined with expanded access to work in Norway for job seekers from the new EU countries. Labour immigrants from Poland are currently the largest immigrant group in Norway. After Poland, persons from Lithuania are given the most work permits. There is a great majority of males among labour migrants. Following the extensive labor immigration, family immigration also increased. There are many who have come on the family unification of Lithuanian citizens.

About Lithuanians, Statistics Norway says that by January 1, 2011 there were 16,396 Lithuanian citizens in Norway. According to the former ambassador of Lithuania in Norway, Alfonsas Eidintas, there are about 30,000 Lithuanians in Norway, because not all of them are included in official statistics.

This statistics show that Norway is a popular country for migrant workers from Lithuania, and this is despite the fact that Lithuanians in Norway often became victims of human trafficking. According to data furnished by the groups against trafficking in Norway (KOM), from 2007 on Lithuanian migrants are in fourth place for human trafficking between Romania and the Philippi-
This issue deserves attention, because the poor economic situation alone cannot explain it. Further studies of Lithuanian immigrants and their identities could defeat the stereotypes and show the complexity of migrant life.

There are almost no studies in the sociological or psychological fields about Lithuanian migrants in Norway, and I have been unable to find any research about Lithuanians’ linguistic practices in Norway.

Hence, in this article I discuss how the participants index and preform identities through their discourse as well as the relationship between the informants’ nationality and their feeling of identity. I also try to show how Lithuanian immigrants understand their nationalism in Norway, how their feeling of belonging and national identity has been transformed, and to what extent all this has affected linguistic practice.

I investigate this language-identity nexus by using mixed methods research (triangulation). The research combines both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were obtained from a self-completion questionnaire with open and closed questions, and qualitative data were picked up from semi-structured interviews and from a collection and analysis of literature on the subject.

The most significant data were collected from a self-completed questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with five Lithuanian families in Oslo / Akershus, a total of 18 people. The main criteria which I had for the informants was the family’s length of stay in Norway and its desire to stay in Norway, since for my purpose I needed informants who are familiar with Norwegian culture and in one way or another identify themselves with this country.

After completing the anonymous questionnaire, in written form, about their personal background, language skills, feeling of national identity, sense of belonging, and attitude to the language, adults were asked to discuss questions about their sense of belonging and feeling of national identity orally. The focus group technique allowed me to develop an understanding of why people feel the way they do.

Five Lithuanian families, of course, cannot yield completely generalized conclusions, but together with the facts from the other studies and the description of the social setting in which the research was conducted, they can shed reasonably reliable light on this topic, and the findings can be generalized to a theory.

Constructionist approach to identity

According to John E. Joseph, no one claims to be an essentialist today. Nor will the author of this study do so; instead I will concentrate more on a constructionist approach, since I feel a constructionist approach best explains all points of our changing global society. However, in carrying out this research J. E. Joseph’s remark that there “must remain space for essentialism … or we can never comprehend the whole point for which identities are constructed” will be kept in mind.

In our case, both the reorganization of the Soviet Union and of the Eastern bloc countries in 1989-91 and then the opening of the borders for former Soviet republics have contributed to a strong awareness of the fluidity and arbitrariness of nationality, and therefore also of national identity. For participants of this study (as thousands and thousands of other immigrants) this had such a big impact that the traditional understanding of national identity as something imposed by birth or early circumstances and remaining unchanged thereafter doesn’t fit them anymore.
This fact forces us to study their identity in a constructionist light, as something they construct throughout their lives.

In the last decades there have been two approaches to language and identity at work – essentialism and constructionism. An ‘essentialist’ approach is one in which categories such as nationality, gender, and so forth are taken as determinate givens in terms of which linguistic behavior can be analyzed. Even though this approach was dominant until the 1990s, it coexisted with the ‘constructionist’ approach, which understands identity as flexible, created, and constantly changing in the course of interaction among constructs.

H. Fink has developed a semantic model of the identity concept where he attempts to explain the opposition between essentialism and constructivism. It is a triangle of numeric, generic, and qualitative identities, which are separate but at the same time mutually dependent on each other. None of them can stand alone. From this model we can clearly see that an individual’s identity consists of both permanent and changeable elements. **Numerical identity** suggests that something throughout its existence is the same as itself and unlike any other thing. Numerical identity helps to give meaning to the concept of identity-change because it provides a fixed point in relation to what is changing. **Generic identity** is when something is the same as something else, the same with respect to kind of class, character, type, or category, as distinct from other classes, characters, types, or categories. **Qualitative identity** is when something is like something else or links in one or more specific ways, unlike other things that are not similar in that particular way.

Fink emphasizes that much of what we call identity is identity-awareness and sense of identity. Varying awareness about our own identity is made up of degrees of our numerical, generic, and qualitative identities. According to Fink, identity is both fixed and changing. Every individual always has a diversity of identities – an identity complex.

Unn Røyneland writes that based on this theory about identity, the language one learns as a child is part of the individual’s numerical identity, as it is something one has received without even having chosen it, and it was learned more or less automatically. One can choose to use one of the languages or not, but they will still be considered a part of the individual’s numerical identity, in the sense that it is something one has had, which is part of an individual’s numerical identity and part of that individual’s language history. On the other hand, language is part of the generic identity, as the language places individuals into categories or groups together with other individuals of the same kind. At the same time, language is part of an individual’s qualitative identity, because some individuals resemble each other in a certain way by speaking the same language, dialect, or register; however, these people can be very different in a number of other ways as well.

In this study N. Mendoza-Denton’s understanding of identity will be accepted, where identity means the active negotiation of an individual’s relationship with larger social constructs. Linguistic behavior will be understood as a set of acts of identity in which people negotiate both their personal identity and their search for social roles.

We can explore the shifting and negotiated nature of social identities within talk as well as the values attached to the different codes by their speakers as social identities are made manifest through talk: the actual language, ‘code’ (‘we-code’ and ‘they-code’), and the content and context. The majority language, the ‘they-code’, is associated with more formal, stiffer, and less personal out-group relations, whereas the minority language, the ‘we code’, is associated with in-group and informal activities. They are not a determinate given, but open to transformation.
Anna de Fina argues for the existence of a variety of modes of emergence of identity within discourse. The first mode is when narrators use particular linguistic devices such as first person singular or plural pronouns to refer to themselves, or when they employ or switch between linguistic codes. They then convey their identities by adhering to telling norms and styles that are shared by other members of their communities. Secondly, when narrators use particular accents, impersonate, imitate, use a different voice, or imply other kinds of devices that allow them to express footings, they perform identities. Finally, the third mode is when narrators adopt identification strategies for themselves and others as characters in the story-world, or when they critically present characters as breaking social rules. Then they accept, contest, and discuss their identities.

Emigrants always experience the tension of retaining and (re)establishing their national identity. Actors representative of an official political context, such as school, family, country, or medium, lead to identity changes of individual social groups – identifying with or conversely separating themselves from the nation. Therefore, in the contexts of migration, conscious or unconscious national identity preservation efforts are characteristic of the emigrants. Another thing that is happening with immigrants’ national identity is that their territoriality and historical memory is re-constructed and loyalty to two or more States is reconciled: the immigrant moves from one cultural context to another and the integration process takes place.

V. Liubiniene writes both that national identity is shaped by national consciousness and that national identity consists of national consciousness. A mature individual, who has his defined sense of belonging to one or another nation, forms his or her national consciousness out of cherished values, traditions, customs, a system of symbols, historical experience, attitudes, norms, and so on, all developed over the centuries. Identification with the nation lets us answer the fundamental question of humanity: what and who I am or we are. Despite the fact that during globalization our interests extend beyond national boundaries, in the politics of national identity the most important criteria in selecting whether we belong to one country or another is whether these criteria provide an opportunity to belong to one of them or the other, thus there always exists a barrier (we-ness/they-ness).

To close it is definitely necessary to mention Anderson’s aprioristic approach to language within identity, his definition of the nation as an imagined political community and the trope of ‘we-ness’ on which the imagined national community is built. Despite Hobsbawm’s critique of Anderson’s theory as granting language too much influence, and using national languages as though they were a constant, this theory remains valid. It is relevant for some countries, Lithuania for example, and this fact keeps Anderson’s theory worthy of interest.

**Lithuanian informants’ personal background**

**Age, length of stay in Norway, age at arrival**

Tables 1 and 2 show Lithuanian informants’ age at the time of the interview, length of stay in Norway, and the age range. Five Lithuanian families were interviewed, for a total eighteen persons: four men (one of them Norwegian), five women, five boys and four girls. The adults are 29 to 47 years old and the children are two to eighteen years old.
We see that the men stayed in Norway lon-
erg than the women. The reason is that men
very often come to Norway first and after a
year or more invite their woman and chil-
dren to join them. We will see this later when
speaking about the causes of immigration.

The majority of the Lithuanian adults
(five) have higher education, one has stud-
ed in college, one finished secondary school
only, and one didn’t want to say (see Table
in the Appendix). The women work as a
housemaid (one woman), as mother tongue
teachers or ‘mormålslærere’ (two women),
and two women are housewives. One man
is a road worker and two are house builders.
We see that our participants confirm the
findings of the IMDI project “Vi blir”:
the educational level among immigrants is high
and many of them are not working accord-
ing their education.

The relatively low Lithuanian knowledge
of the Norwegian language (see Appendix
Table 4) confirms IMDI project’s “Vi blir”
data: migrant workers from the Baltic area
have low proficiency in Norwegian”.

### Education and job

The majority of the Lithuanian adults
(five) have higher education, one has stud-
ed in college, one finished secondary school
only, and one didn’t want to say (see Table
in the Appendix). The women work as a
housemaid (one woman), as mother tongue
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is a road worker and two are house builders.
We see that our participants confirm the
findings of the IMDI project “Vi blir”: the
educational level among immigrants is high
and many of them are not working accord-
ning their education.

### Cause of immigration

For three of the Lithuanian participants
the cause of immigration was work, for two
marriage, and for three family reunion. All
the women moved for family reunion, or be-
cause her husband was working in Norway,
or because her husband was Norwegian. All
the Lithuanian men moved trying to improve
their family’s economic situation.

**LT1 family.** Husband moved to Norway
because he got a better paid job here than in
Lithuania. Wife immigrated because husband
had a job in Oslo. They both think that there
are better social guarantees here, in Norway.

**LT2 family.** Husband moved to Norway
because he got a better paid job here than in
Lithuania. Wife immigrated because husband
had a job in Oslo. They both think that there
are better social guarantees here, in Norway.

#### Table 1. Sample of 18 speakers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>4 (1 of them</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Norwegian)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td>32-47</td>
<td>29-43</td>
<td>2-18</td>
<td>2-17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 2. Speaker’s age at arrival in Norway and length to stay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age at arrival</td>
<td>25-41</td>
<td>23-41</td>
<td>Birth-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of stay in years</td>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>2-7</td>
<td>2-7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in Lithuania. Wife immigrated because husband had a job in Oslo.

**LT3 family.** Husband moved to Norway because he couldn’t find work in Lithuania; he got a job here in Norway. Wife immigrated because husband had a job in Oslo.

**LT4 family.** Woman immigrated because of marriage with a Norwegian.

**LT5 family.** Woman immigrated because of marriage with a Norwegian.

**Mother tongue preservation**

For immigrants’ children, who are born and/or grow up in a different country than their parents, the term ‘mother tongue’ is ambiguous, and many researches choose to use ‘first language’ and ‘second language’ instead. In general, ‘mother tongue’ is understood as the dialect or language that one grew up speaking at home. It is used in the home and other private spaces and contexts which are the least penetrable to objective observation.

This term was ambiguous for the Lithuanian informants as well. First, not all parents could say what language is the mother tongue for their child. Second, living and studying in Norway, children develop Norwegian language skills more than their parents’ native language skills. Only in those families where parents make considerable effort to maintain the mother tongue in their children’s lives do children develop an equal ability in their mother tongue and the state language. Otherwise the parents’ native language comes to be used only as a home and family language for children.

For example, the LT2 family has a two-and-a-half-year-old daughter. Her nationality is Lithuanian. She can speak two languages – Lithuanian and Norwegian. She first started to speak Lithuanian, but when she began to go to a Norwegian kindergarten, she began to speak more and more Norwegian. As a result, it is currently very difficult to say which she will choose in the future – whether she will keep both languages or lose her parents’ native tongue. Her parents couldn’t decide if her mother tongue is Lithuanian or Norwegian. It is difficult to say what language she knows best. Her mother, father, and grandparents speak Lithuanian with her. She speaks Lithuanian with her parents and Norwegian with friends or when she plays. Sometimes she mixes languages together. Her patterns are somewhere in between those of her parents and those of the community.

Even though the boy from the LT4 family has Lithuanian nationality and has a Lithuanian father (the Norwegian man is only a stepfather to him), he claims to be a Norwegian. This boy is six years old, was born in Lithuania and lived the first three years of his life in Lithuania. He first started to speak Lithuanian when he was two and a half years old, and lost the language after moving to Norway. The boy experienced some difficulties in his language development, and also refused to speak Lithuanian; as a result his mother decided to quit trying with Lithuanian for a while so that he could learn at least one language well. The mother doesn’t speak Norwegian very well; it is difficult for her to speak Norwegian but she speaks it to her both sons regardless, not wanting to miss them, and wanting some authority over them. She only rarely tries to speak Lithuanian with them, but when she does it she receives no reaction. Two of her boys (at two and three years old) have learned Norwegian from their (step-) father and in kindergarten. They are fluent in Norwegian. The boys can understand some Lithuanian, but can’t and don’t want to speak it; they speak only Norwegian. The older can say some simple Lithuanian words, for example, *filmukas* – film, *gerai* – good, *taip* – yes, *ne* – no.
The LT5 family is the example with spouses of mixed nationality where the child kept his mother tongue. This is understandable because he moved to Norway just three years ago, at the age of fifteen, and has a Lithuanian father. He shares patterns with his mother.

The girls from the LT1 family moved to Norway with their mother only two years ago, at the ages of 15, 13 and 6; the father already lived here. Consequently these girls have had a good input from their motherland, Lithuania. They have now learned Norwegian at school, and currently have a better proficiency in Norwegian than their parents (see Appendix, Table).

The oldest daughter (17 years old) can understand, speak, and write Norwegian quite well, and read well. The middle daughter (15 years old) can understand and read Norwegian very well, and speak and write Norwegian well. The youngest daughter (8 years old) can speak, understand, read and write just a little bit of Norwegian. All are fluent in Lithuanian as native language speakers, and the family doesn't feel the need to reinforce their mother tongue proficiency with a Lithuanian language school or ‘morsmålsopplæring’.

The man of the LT3 family moved to Norway eight years ago, and his wife with the children came after one year. The older brother was then six years old. The younger brother was born in Norway. Both brothers are behind in proficiency in both the Lithuanian and Norwegian languages; they are not perfect in either language. This problem is quite common in multinational Oslo/Akershus schools.

For example, the four-year-old has phonological problems with some Lithuanian sounds, especially with the sound r. He pronounces this sound in Norwegian in a good way; the problem is due to the different requirements for this sound in Lithuanian and Norwegian. He also sees no difference between plural and singular, and usually avoids the plural entirely and says tre kat or trys katinukas (three cats). The other kindergarten children of the same age and from families with two Norwegian spouses had no problems to use plural in the correct manner. The sentence structure in the four year old boy’s speech is upside-down and the words often go in any order.

He first started to speak in Lithuanian. With his mother, father, older brother, and grandparents he speaks Lithuanian, and they speak only Lithuanian with him. With his best friends he speaks Lithuanian or Norwegian.

The older brother reports in the questionnaire that he is ‘fluent’ in Lithuanian, and has ‘very good’ Norwegian skills. He says that his mother tongue is Lithuanian, and thinks that he has a greater ability in Norwegian than in Lithuanian, but indeed his teacher at Norwegian secondary school is very concerned about his language skills.

With his mother and father he speaks Norwegian and Lithuanian, while with his younger brother and grandparents he speaks Lithuanian. They speak Lithuanian with him, but sometimes when he doesn’t understand what they mean in Lithuanian his mother or father explains it in Norwegian. With his best friends he speaks Lithuanian or Norwegian, depending on the friend.

Understanding and feeling of national identity

It is possible to understand national identity in the senses of citizenship or ethnic origin. In the Soviet Union this issue was very clear – a person’s ethnic origin was called nationality and this never changed, no matter what citizenship they had.

There were different lines in the passport for nationality (ethnic origin) and citizenship. A person could, for example, be a citizen of the Soviet Lithuanian Republic and
be Russian, even though his/her parents and grandparents lived in Lithuania. This understanding of nationality has remained up to the present day in the former Soviet Union. Only life in a multicultural and open Norwegian society constructs a different understanding of the notion of nationality.

In the questionnaire all the Lithuanian adults marked their and their spouses’ nationality as Lithuanian, and one boy from the LT4 family with a Norwegian father was marked as Lithuanian and Norwegian, because he has dual citizenship.

This was the reported objective national identity based on ethnic origin and citizenship, though informants do not have a common understanding of the notion of nationality.

The subjective feeling can be completely different from the objective one. In the questionnaire the participants were asked what they feel they are. They could choose one or more of these answers: Lithuanian, Norwegian, European, World Citizen, It Is Hard To Say, Other.

The boy from the LT4 family has a Lithuanian mother and a Lithuanian father, but his stepfather is Norwegian. The boy was born in Lithuania, has Lithuanian citizenship, but says that he is Norwegian and refuses to communicate in Lithuanian. Hence, ethno-genealogical parameters (such as ethnic origin and place of birth) are crucial for all adults of both target groups, but for the children it can be their ethnic origin, place of birth and/or whether they grew up in Norway that matters.

None of the adult participants found it difficult to determine who she/he is, and none of the adult participants reported that they feel themselves Norwegian: four felt themselves Lithuanian, three European and three World Citizens (see also Appendix, Tables 5-6). To be European or a World Citizen includes Lithuanian, but it also means to be part of a wider context than one particular nation.

Children who were less than six years old couldn’t completely understand the question, so only the answers of the children who are six or more years old will be discussed and presented here (see Appendix, Table 3). One child from a family with both parents Lithuanian feels himself European and two children (one from the family with both parents Russian and one from the family with one Norwegian and one Lithuanian parent) feel themselves World Citizens.

Before drawing any conclusions it is worth looking at what, according to the participants, describes identity (see Appendix, Table). The participants think that language, the origin of the family, how you were brought up, the culture you prefer, and the history of your country describe national identity. The native language itself is one of the parts of identity.

The history of the country and language are important issues for Lithuanians participants, but they note that identity is most linked to the culture a person prefers.

Children older than six years (five children from Lithuanian families and five children from Russian families) were asked what language they would like to speak with their children. Only one child from Lithuania answered that she would like to speak Lithuanian, two Lithuanian children would like to speak Norwegian, and two children would like to speak Norwegian and Lithuanian.

Lithuanians put weight on the culture a person prefers and during the interviews they stressed the different culture between Lithuanians and Norwegians and expressed willingness to keep their own culture. For example, all the participants like comfortable Norwegian clothes, the politeness and secure society in Norway. On the other hand, the LT1 man and wife hate Norwegian food; the LT2 spouse is indignant at the Norwegian custom of keeping their old parents in homes for the elderly and not with themselves as it is common in Lithuania; and the LT4 wife...
calls it sacrilege that her husband’s family eats meat on Christmas Eve as it is not allowed in Lithuanian Catholic culture. Only one family, LT₃, said that they keep their own culture, but try to adjust themselves to the Norwegian one as well.

It is not that Lithuanians completely reject Norwegian culture; they accept things that they find positive from both Lithuanian and Norwegian culture, and reject things that they don’t like in Norwegian or Lithuanian culture.

We can see that by introducing themselves in a certain way and attributing certain moral characters to their own nation and right or wrong behaviors, Lithuanian participants build representations that are a basic part of their national group ideologies.

National identity, manifested through talk

Discourse fits perfectly for the study of identity because it always expresses personal experience and understanding of events in a subjective and culturally determined way. Furthermore, some linguistic strategies are always used in discourses that are related to one’s conception of self and others.

All informants could choose the language in which they would like to write their answers in the questionnaire and speak during the interview. Lithuanian informants chose to use Lithuanian, so the preferred code for informants was their native language. The native language is definitely we-code for adults’ informants. Its province is the family and people with the same native language. Lithuanians use their native language at home and in intimate talk. Lithuanians also use Lithuanian in official situations, for example, work, to communicate with people of the same origin.

It is more complicated with the children, and in some cases it is not possible to make a priori assumptions about which code has the putative ‘we’ functions and which the ‘they’ functions. In only some of the oldest is the ethnic language fully understood and expressed as we-code. This is for the 17-year-old Lithuanian girl from LT₁ and the 18-year-old Lithuanian boy from LT₅. The Lithuanian boy and girl switch from the Norwegian language to the Lithuanian as soon as they can. For the children from LT₄, the we-code is Norwegian. For all others, the we-code depends on the social context.

For Lithuanian children the ethnic language is we-code at home and with siblings or Lithuanian friends, regardless of whether the environment is Lithuanian (at home or in a Lithuanian school) or Norwegian (for example, on a bus). With Norwegian friends both the Lithuanian children have Norwegian as we-code. They feel themselves or want to feel as part of a group of Norwegian children, but not as from an ethnic minority group.

As asked directly in the questionnaire, none of the adults felt Norwegian, but in talk their self identification sometimes changed.

The analysis of the discourses outlined showed four cases of adults’ understanding of identity:

Identity is stable for both adults and children. If you are born Lithuanian/Russian you will stay Lithuanian/Russian all your life no matter what (Families LT₁, LT₅).

Identity is stable for adults, since it is too late for them to be ones with a different culture, but the personalities of children are not yet formed, so their identity changes, they can be/are ‘norwegianized’ and/or feel Norwegian (Families LT₄, LT₂).

Identity is slightly changing, when a person lives in a different culture. So both adults and children are ‘norwegianized’ (Family LT₃).

For example, LT₅’s discourse (see Appendix, Discourse 1). Here we can see that national identity is argued to remain stable and none of its components are changing. The
woman and her son feel Lithuanians ethnically, socially, and officially. The woman in particular holds the strong position that only origin and mother tongue are important in a person’s feeling of identity, and any social changes such as new languages or different culture, or civil changes such as different citizenship, can’t change the original identity (lines 1-5). The repetition in different words about never changing feeling in connection with Lithuanian nationality has the effect of emphasizing the importance of this fact (tu niekad nesijausi norvegas (line 1), tu vis tiek nebusi norvegas (line 2), tu nebusi (line 3), tavy ta nuomone nepasikeis (line 5)). The woman understands nationality as given from the birth and transferred by the mother (tapatybė turi ateiti su motinos pienu, line 4). She highlights numerical identity which is fixed. In this light generic identity, which is something that places individuals into groups together with other individuals of the same kind, also seems unchangeable for her. Even if the person speaks perfect Norwegian, according to her, he/she will never be Norwegian (Nesvarbu, kad tu kabesi norvegiskai idealiai, bet tu nebusi (line 3)). She accepts that Lithuanians can come to resemble Norwegians by speaking Norwegian (qualitative identity), but it doesn’t seem enough for her to cause changes in feelings of national identity and nationality. Nation and language are very frequently connected in her discourse. To identify himself/herself with the nation means to speak nation’s language (jeigu tu tapatiniesi su ta tauta (line 17))...tai kaip gi dabar nekalbesi savo kalba? (line 19). Nevertheless, the woman distinguishes the nation and its government. She doesn’t like how the government governs the nation and expresses this in line 18: “mes sakom: o va cia ten tokia ar anokia, gerai, bet tai valdzia, bet patys zmones” (“we say: it is such and such [a government], ok, but it is the government, while the people themselves”). In this line we can see an opposition being drawn between the government and the nation. In line 18 she says but the people themselves and in line 19 she amplifies her thought by saying the nation itself. It is the people of Lithuania, or Lithuanians, she identifies herself with.

Line 18 is interesting because of the changed pronoun. Throughout the discourse the pronoun tu (you in singular) is used, but in this line tu is changed to mes (we). Both pronouns show that discourse is other-oriented since the use of tu and mes represents detachment from the self as a specific individual.

The frequent use of we is observed and described by Anna de Fina in her study about Mexican immigrants in America. This phenomenon she calls chorality, and argues that choral evaluation is presented by immigrant speakers as an essentially collective enterprise. I have to notice that use of tu in the above discourse is an even stronger collective enterprise. It has the opposite semantic connotation in the sense that in the case of we the plural is used instead of the singular, instead of one person’s experiences, and in the case of tu the singular you is used to vanish among many other personalities, to identify yourself with a whole nation.

Tu is used to express statements completely obvious to the narrator, statements that she is completely sure everybody would accept, and mes is used to express a collective enterprise that can be disputed by some Lithuanians. Both pronouns show that the discourse producer identifies herself with the nation, she doesn’t exclude herself from the nation. Where she explains that it is impossible for a person to become Norwegian, she describes her own thoughts and feelings and at the same time she is convinced that it fits everyone: her, me as interlocutor, all Lithuanians. While talking about dissatisfaction with the Lithuanian government, she understands that probably not everyone feels the same way. In fact, saying tu in this
context could sound as though she accuses me, her interlocutor, of being dissatisfied with the Lithuanian government, and she doesn’t know if I am. That’s why the use of mes is more appropriate – it still shows the collective enterprise, but not necessarily including me or those Lithuanians who like the government.

The laugh after line 9 is also meaningful. It indicates that the importance of the mother tongue is so obvious to her that it is almost stupid to ask her about that (lines 9-10). When I showed that this is not so obvious by asking her why she thinks so, she is slightly distracted (Na, kaip kodėl?, line 16) and her explanatory speech is not flowing afterwards (lines 17-19).

Her son adopts the same tu strategy and the same approach to the strong interface between language and nation (lines 8-12). Even though he is not sure how to formulate this, he says it somehow feels that his discourse sounds a little bit strange and keeps silent for three seconds thinking. To rescue him and keep a cozy atmosphere, I change my interlocutor (line 13).

However, at the beginning of his speech the son brings up another aspect of national language. He sees language as a bridge in communication with his own family, for example, his grandmother and grandfather. Missing the native language for immigrants can mean losing communication with some relatives.

LT3’s discourse (see Appendix, Discourse 2) is of interest as well.

This discourse is very interesting for several reasons. First is the use of pronouns. The interviewee answers my question using the pronoun A (I), but after some sentences moves to the pronoun tu (you) which, as I argued before, is an essentially collective enterprise. This other-oriented discourse is a general characteristic of the Lithuanians, while the Russians answer the same question with the first singular pronoun Ja (I) and continue with it. Both languages from the linguistic point of view have the same capabilities, so this phenomenon must have some psychological reasons. Maybe tu (you) for the Lithuanians works as a protection mechanism in an insecure society. Using tu they detach themselves from their own personality and then it is safer for them to express their private feelings and thoughts, because then they speak as if not only about themselves.

Another thing that is of interest because it distinguishes this discourse from the others is the woman’s attempts to build and negotiate a negative identity for Norwegians and a positive one for Lithuanians in connection with their inner qualities. In other families’ discourse negativity is directed only to Norwegian food.

The woman uses ethnic labels that create Norwegian-Lithuanian opposition. Friendliness is a trait that characterizes Lithuanians and it opposes them to the local group, the cold Norwegians (lines 13-15). Such labeling is connected with an attitude that one ethnic group holds toward another, and it can seem factual to the discourse producers because of such psychosocial factors as long-term isolation from the local group due to having little facility in the Norwegian language. The woman has lived in Norway for seven years with minimum local language skills (see Appendix, Table 4) and she is the only one from all adult participants with only a secondary school education (see Appendix, Table 3). It is possible that due to lacking language skills and low education she has difficulties adjusting to and integrating herself in a new society.

The third point of interest is that discourse producers openly represent contesting and competing identities when they present in a positive way one Lithuanian woman as a character breaking Lithuanian social rules (lines 45-54).
The whole discourse began from the ethnic identity as *we-code* as a starting point (lines 1-19), but during the talk this Lithuanian identity was covered by a slightly Norwegian one (lines 36-54). The woman understands nationality as given from the family. It is a family that forwards national culture and language (lines 7, 18). She stresses unchanging numerical identity until her husband joins the conversation and highlights generic identity by placing himself into one more general group – human being (lines 26-27). Then he narrows it to Lithuanian and European. He doesn’t manage to cross European boarders even though he tries in line 28. He says that he can be Lithuanian, European, or African, but after a short pause corrects himself. This self-repair is meaningful, as is the laugh coming right after it (line 29). It shows boundaries in the feeling of identity. The stereotype of an African man for Lithuanians is a man with a black skin; the interlocutor has white skin, so he can’t be African (even though this statement is not true in reality). He has been too quick to speak, has talked nonsense and it is obvious to everybody in the room — that’s why it is funny.

We can see from the lines 13-15 discussed above that immigrants do not always feel gratitude towards the host country but rather express mixed feelings about the host society. The woman feels that Norwegians don’t accept her and she thinks that they are cold people. But when her husband enters the room and claims a broader understanding of national identity – as a European or a human being, not just a Lithuanian – the talk turns to a different link, the interlocutors show that they are positive on some Norwegian values, so that integration, or ‘Norwegianization’, can take place.

Norwegian identity comes into play when the participants accept values attached to the different codes, for example, clothing fashion in Norway (lines 26-38). Dressing is quite an important part of identity as it belongs to daily activities, and expresses personality and belonging to one or another social group. Even though globalization around the world continues to unify people’s clothing, it still varies from nation to nation. Each nation has its own traditions for clothing, because native clothing comes from the climate and a wide variety of living conditions.

The emphasis to the statement “you will become like the persons you communicate with” is given through repetition of crucial lines uttered by both interlocutors. First the man states it (line 34), and then at the end of the discussion the woman repeats it (line 54). Also in the middle there are repetitions and assertions made by both interlocutors that this statement is true (lines 43-44). That is how the new identity takes place – through communication.

**Conclusion**

In this study the feeling of belonging, the sense of national identity and how this affects linguistic practice have been analyzed.

The informants are, in a sense, quite young, between 28 and 47 years old, their children are between two and eighteen years old. The Lithuanian adult informants’ length of stay in Norway is between two and seven years. Hence, we are talking about modern migration here.

The mean length of stay for the Lithuanians is 4.5 years. This is no accident, since immigration from Lithuania increased only two to three years ago. Most of the participants have higher education, the main cause for their coming to Norway was economic, and most of the Lithuanian participants are overqualified for their jobs. These facts match the official statistics.

The analysis has shown that Lithuanian immigrants feel tensions in their quest to
maintain, transform or maybe even lose their national identity. Participants preserve their national identity putting weight on the factors that seem most important to them. Language is one of the most important factors for the Lithuanians, but they put more weight on the culture a person prefers, and during the interviews they stressed cultural differences between Lithuanians and Norwegians. Preservation of national identity is characteristic of Lithuanians; on the other hand, migrants gradually reconstruct their national identity, move from one cultural context to another, and integration takes place.

As demonstrated in this study, a social environment such as a family leads to the (re)construction of different social groups to identify with, or conversely to separate themselves from, the nation; and it is possible to see the manifestation of that in the language of utterance.

Discourse with adults began from the ethnic identity as *we-code* in a starting point, and in most cases it stayed stable. But, for example, during the talk with LT3 Lithuanian identity was covered by lightly Norwegian one. The participants accepted the values, attached to the different code, and expressed their identity through the content and context. They follow their ethnic traditions, but accept Norwegian traditions as well, taking from both cultures things that seem reasonable to them. The Lithuanians have the feeling of belonging to two societies.

The use of linguistic devices such as the first singular or second singular pronouns to refer to themselves is meaningful as participants convey their identities by it. The Lithuanians prefer the second singular pronoun *tu* (*you*). This *tu* phenomenon could be a kind of lack of courage to reveal one’s experiences and can work as a protection mechanism in an insecure society.

Lithuanians detach themselves from their own personality and vanish between many others by using *tu* (*you*). *Tu* is an essentially collective enterprise.

The laugh in discourse is also meaningful as it shows the boundaries in the understanding of identity.

In the interview, the participants expressed collective values through their own evaluation of life in Norway and used nationality as an important identification category for self and others. In the discourse analysis, it is possible to see how the shift from Lithuanian to Norwegian in the discourses connects the same speaker to different national identities. The participants’ sense of belonging to one and/or another nation is expressed through the categorization and shows them to be holding the same values and behaving in a particular way. They conveyed contradictory dual and hybrid identities by shifting self-description in connection with different societies and experience.

The self-identification of the informants is affected by both subjective and objective factors. Ethno-genealogical parameters (such as ethnic origin and place of birth) are crucial for all adults of both target groups, but the children reflect parent’s attitudes, thus it can be their ethnic origin, place of birth and/or whether they grew up in Norway that matters. Many Lithuanians reported to identify either with their Lithuanian ethnicity, as Europeans or as world citizens.

How the Lithuanian and Russian adults understand stability and change of their identity depends on what parts of identity they emphasize. If one emphasizes numeric identity, she/he believes that identity is stable, if generic – person believes that it is changing.

The informants declare a dual identity by feeling a strong connection with their land of origin, national language and at the same time more or less accepting the Norwegian culture. They express these shifting and negotiating identities through actual language, *we-code/they-code*, content and the context.
Both target groups take what they think is the best from the two cultures and reject what they think is bad. They combine and blend aspects of both Norwegian culture and the culture of origin. The informants carry out this selection according to their common national values, traditions, norms of behavior, and personal attitudes. Besides that, they are strongly influenced by the Norwegian context. This leads to identity changes of the individual and influences the linguistic practices as well. Such findings demonstrate the veracity and relevance of the constructionist approach which was taken as a basis for this thesis.

APPENDIX

Tables

Table 3. Members of Lithuanian families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LT1</td>
<td>45/lithuanian</td>
<td>43/lithuanian</td>
<td>17 g/lith, 8 g/lith, 15 g/lith</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>College/Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT2</td>
<td>32/lith</td>
<td>29/lith</td>
<td>2 g/lith</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Higher education/Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT3</td>
<td>35/lith</td>
<td>32/lith</td>
<td>5 b/lith, 13 b/lith</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>didn't want to say/Secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT4</td>
<td>Didn’t participate/norw</td>
<td>34/lith</td>
<td>2 b/norwegian and lith, 6 b/lith</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-/Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT5</td>
<td>45/norw</td>
<td>38/lith</td>
<td>18 b/lith'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Higher education/Higher education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Child from a previous marriage in Lithuania.
Table 4. Norwegian studies and proficiency in Lithuanian families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants (age of children)</th>
<th>Length to stay in years</th>
<th>The way of learning</th>
<th>General proficiency of Norwegian language*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT1 man</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adult education courses</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT1 woman</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Private Norwegian courses</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT1 girl (17)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT1 girl (15)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT1 girl (8)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT2 man</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adult education courses</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT2 woman</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Adult education courses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT2 girl (2)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT3 man</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT3 woman</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adult education courses</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT3 boy (13)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT3 boy (4)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT4 woman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Adult education courses, family</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT4 boy (6)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kindergarten, family</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT4 boy (2)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kindergarten, family</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT5 woman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Adult education courses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT5 boy (18)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1—a little bit.  
2—quite good.  
3—good.  
4—very good.
Table 5. Understanding of national identity (adults).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you feel you are?</th>
<th>Lithuanian</th>
<th>Russian</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>World citizen</th>
<th>It is hard to say</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanians (8 participants)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegians (2 participants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Understanding of national identity. Children (only those who could understand the question – 6 years old and older).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you feel you are?</th>
<th>Lithuanian</th>
<th>Russian</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>World citizen</th>
<th>It is hard to say</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From families with both Lithuanian parents (4 participants)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From families with one Norwegian and one Lithuanian parent (2 participants)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. What, according adults’ participants, describes national identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity (2)</th>
<th>Lithuanians</th>
<th>Russians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>language</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin of family</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how man was brought up</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultura he prefers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history of his country</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCOURSE SETS

Transcription conventions

W – wife, R – researcher, H – husband, S – son. [ ] mean start/end of overlap; < > non linguistic action; falling intonation followed by noticeable pause (as at the end of declarative sentence); continuing intonation; ? rising intonation followed by noticeable pause (as at the end of interrogative sentence); # noticeable pause shorter than one second; ( ) noticeable one second or longer pause; – self repair.

Discourse 1. LT5 family

W. Tu niekad nesijausi norvegas, nors tu ir priimsi Norvegijoje pilietybę kada nors gyvenime.
Bet tu vis tiek nebusi norvegas, kuris cia gimes, kuris cia auges, kurio saknys cia yra.
Nesvarbu, kad tu kalbesi norvegiskai idealiai, bet tu nebusi.
Ta tapatybe turi ateiti su motinos pienu, as taip manau.
(1,5 second pause)
Jei gyvensi, kad ir dvidesimt metu, tavy ta nuomone nepasikeis.
R. Mhm. Ar svarbu gimtaju kalba moketi?
S. Nu, siaip yra svarbu.

Jeigu turi seima pavyzdziui Lietuvoje, baba ar seneli, taigi negalesi sneketi kokia anglu kalba, nemoka.
R. Del giminiu svarbu.
S. Nu, del giminiu svarbu.
Ir taip yra siaip gerai ismokti savo –
(1-second pause)
kaip tautybe savo
(3-seconds pause)
R. Mhm. Na, o Ruta ka?
W. Aisku.
<laughs>
R. O kodel?
W. Na, kaip kodel?
Jeigu tu tapatiniesi su ta tauta ir galvoji apie tai, kad tarkim nesvarbu, kaip ten bebutu
(1,2-second pause)
mes sakom: o va cia ten tokia ar anokia, gerai, bet tai valdzia, bet patys zmones
(1,4-second pause)
pati tauta, tai aisku, nu tai kaipgi dabar nekalbesi savo kalba?

Discourse 2. LT3 family

R. Kas tu jautiesi esanti?
W. Lietuve.
R. Nesijauti Norvegei?
W. Ne, nemanau, kad kada aplamai jausiuos norvege.
Vis tiek saknys lietuviskos.
Aisku, stengiesi, deriniesi prie tu Norvegu bet vis tiek kultūra, visos sventes išliks lietuviskai.
R. Mhm.
W. Gal kazkada, kai jau gyvensi 10-20 metu Norvegijoje, gal tada ir išjaukės i ta kultūra.
(1,2 seconds pause)
Jeigu bendrautum vien su Norvegais, tai ir išjaukės
Kadangi cia musu visas tas draugu ratas lietuviskai vien, tai ir jaukėmes lietuviskai.
R. Ar manai, kad siaip nu norvegai nepriima i savo tarpa, ar tiesiog net nesinori [jums draugauti]?
W. Nu, jie tokie yra, jie yra
(1,2 second pause)
salti zmones iš tikrų
(1 second pause)
Ne, mes draugiskiau vis tiek kazkaip, kazkaip jie nepriima i savo dusis.
R. Gerai. Tada kas nulemia asmens tapatybė?
W. Na, tai is tikrų, tapatybe tai is kur kiles
(1,3 second pause)
Vis tiek gi nuo tavo seimos, tevu gi ateina,
kokia tavo kalba buvo
(1 second pause)
busuismokinta. Kokie paprociai visokie
busoismokinta, ta ir perduodu.
<Man came into the room>
R. O, eiks, prisijungsi.
Mes va diskutuojam dabar.
W. Kas, tavo manymu, nulemia asmens tapatybė?
M. Ta, prasme, vaikui?
R. Ne, tavo paties irgi.
Na, pirmiausia, kas tu jautiesi esas?
M. Eee. As tai siaip nesirstau, ar cia lietuvis
(1,5 seconds pause)
As tai zmogum jauciuosi.
Man tai ten vienodai, ar tai lietuvis, ar europietis, ar afrikietis.
(2 seconds pause)
Ne, gal afrikietis, ne.
<everybody laughs>
W. Europietis.
M. Europietis.
R. Va, tai mes ta ir diskutavom, o po to perejom prie kito klausimo, kas nulemia asmens tapatybė.
M. Manyciau priklauso nuo to kuo bendrauji, su kuo buni daugių.
Posakis labai tinka: "Su kuo sutapsi, tuo ir pats tapasi".
Cia, cia labai labai.
R. Na, gerai, tu susidedi dabar su norvegais.
Patampi norvegu?
M. Nu, visisku, ne.
Bet sunorvegėtum stipria.
R. Mhm.
M. Sunorvegėtum stipria. Tai aplinka
(1,2 second pause)
butu labiau.
Tas veikia, veikia is tikrų.
W. Veikia, veikia.
Tu ir Natalijos pavyzdi paimk.
Bendradarbe musu.
Moteriai 44, bus 45.
(2 seconds pause)
R. Mhm.
W. Vaiksto, kaip nezinau kas.
Dziniukai, bliuzkutes trumpos.
M. O anksčiau buvo eiline moteriske me-tuose, kukli ir panasai.
W. Sijonas ilgais, skarelemis.
(‘R. Tai palaikut kas cia?
Cia sunorvegėjimas?
W. Cia, kaip sakoma su kuo bendrauji, tuo
ir pats tapasi.

Endnotes
1 Cited by Anna de Fina Indentity in narra-
2 The definition of immigrants is unders-
tood in the SN (Statistics Norway) sense: immigrants are persons who have either immigrated to Norway and do not have a Norwegian background (also referred to as
first-generation), or who were born in Norway of two foreign-born parents and who have four foreign-born grandparents.


19 Ten pat.


21 And it is not only about language skills here. Two boys of the Lithuanian family (LT3) were observed during one year. Case studies revealed the impact of language skills on social and psychological development of the children. The children’s psychological insecurity, reticence and fear of social isola-
Tautinė tapatybė Norvegijos lietuvių diskurse: tarp išsaugojimo ir praradimo

Šia studija parodoma, kaip tautinė tapatybė lietuvių migrantų Osle šeimose yra kons­truojama, rekonstruojama ir išreiškiama per diskursą, ir koks ryšys yra tarp tautinio identiteto, priklausomy tautai jausmo bei kalbos vartojimo. Tam yra taikomi mišrūs tyrimo metodai (trianguliacija) – kiekybiniai ir ko­kybiniai tyrimo metodai.

Tapatybė suvokiama ne tik kaip tam tikras psichologinis savęs klasifikavimas, arba pri­skyrimas tam tikrai grupei, kuris atsispindi žmonių socialiniame elgesyje, bet greičiau kaip kažkas, kas yra kuriama per socialinius veiksmus, o ypač per kalbą.

Tyrimas parodė, kad lietuviai bando integruotis ir susitapati su priimanciųja šali­mi daugiau per kultūrą nei per kalbą. Jie yra kaip tiltai, jungiantys dvi kultūras, iš abiejų kultūrų pasiimantys tai, kas jiems atrodo yra gera, ir atmetantys tai, kas jiems nepririmti­na, nors viena kultūra vis dėlto išlieka domi­nuojanti. Tirimieji tapatinė save ne tik su Lietuva, jie taip pat jaučiasi esą europiečiai ar pasaulio piliečiai.

Dalyviai per interviu vertindami savo gyvenimą Norvegijoje išreiškė kolekty­vines vertynes ir tautybę naudojo kaip svarbia identifikacijos kategoriją. Dalyvių savęs tapatinimas su viena ar kita tauta pasireiškią per klasifikavimą, vertinimą ir vertybių ar elgesio priėmimą. Jie taip pat demonstruoja prieštarinės, dvigubos savo tapatybes, keis­dami savęs apibūdinimą, kai kalba apie skirtingas visuomenes ar patyrimus.

Iš tyrimo galima daryti išvadą, kad lietu­viai emigrantai jaučia dilemą išlaikyti, transformuoti, o gal prarasti tautinę tapatybę. Socialinė aplinka, pvz., šeima, veda į atskirų socialinių grupei tapatybės pok­yčius – tapatinėt ir, priešingai, atskirsti save nuo tautos. Nors tautinio identiteto išsaugojimo pastangos yra būdingos lietuvių emigran­tams, palaipsniui migrantų tautinis tapatūmas rekonstruojamas, suderinamas lojalumo daugiau nei vienai valstybei, emigrantai persikelia iš vieno kultūrinio konteksto į kitą arba tampa tiltais, kurie jungia abį kultūras, vyksta integracija.