Cultural Scripts of Parenting and State Institutions in the Context of Post-Socialist Migrations: Russian-speaking Migrant Parents in Finland

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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January 2022

Abstract

This thesis provides an in-depth, qualitative study of Russian-speaking migrant parents' experiences of parenting and state institutions in Finland. The fieldwork for this study was conducted from June 2018 to May 2019, focusing on the capital area and the city of Tampere in southern Finland. This study contributes to migration studies through a transnational framework. Analysing how migrant parents understand and conceptualise parenting in a transnational environment, this study provides new insights to the formation of transnational identities. Moreover, this study investigates the roles of state institutions as a part of this transnational environment, giving the study practical and political implications.

The framework of cultural scripts of parenting takes centre stage in this study. Echoing existing research on socio-cultural identities, cultural scripts are understood as flexible models of behaviour, a 'tool kit' from which identities are constructed. Significantly, as a framework cultural script presumes an interaction between the individual, community, and social norms. Rather than straight-forward socialisation from above to a role such as that of a mother or a father, the process is more complex. Individuals become mothers and fathers by taking part in available practices and discourses that define them as such in the eyes of others and themselves. By analysing data from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Russian-speaking migrant parents, the research investigates what kind of elements migrant parents draw on to construct their cultural scripts of parenting, including how a good parent interacts with state institutions and uses public services.

This study frames parenting as a historically and socially situated cultural product. Russian-speaking migration in Finland is placed into the context of post-socialist migrations. This study particularly analyses how historical legacies are present in the ways in which Russian-speaking parents in Finland describe their relationship. Through the framework of cultural scripts, this study offers an innovative way of analysing transnational identities and practices.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the following people and organisations who have helped me undertake this research:

My supervisors Professor Rebecca Kay, Dr Maud Bracke and Dr Ammon Cheskin for their support, advice, and encouragement,

Dr Meri Kulmala for acting as my supervisor and Dr Sari Autio-Sarasmo for her support during my stay at University of Helsinki,

College of Social Sciences at University of Glasgow, Emil Aaltonen Foundation, and the Finnish Migration Institute for funding this study,

All the participants in this study for telling me their stories, and all the organisations and associations who made this study possible through their generous help,

The INREES network at University of Helsinki for acting as a peer support network and a source of inspiration,

Family and friends who have supported me throughout this journey, especially Cathy for all the laughs and adventures; my mother for always encouraging me to follow my academic interests; and my grandmother, who unfortunately did not get to see me complete my PhD journey, but through her support made my university education possible

Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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Signature: _____

Introduction

Purpose and background of the study

When asked to imagine how she would have raised her children if she had not migrated to Finland, Nadia, mother of two sons married to a fellow Russian-speaker, replied that she is 'almost sure that of course it'd be different'. She further explained:

> Firstly, I would've never met the people who have told me that there are these books, this system. On the other hand, what's going on around the kids, the family, the mother has an impact ... I really read a lot that you can shout at a child, or you can explain using words, and I like explaining more.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Nadia's experience speaks to the essence of the topic of this study: how migration places parents in a new sociocultural context which might hold different ideas of parenthood and how parents respond to these new influences. Using qualitative methodology, this study examines how Russian-speaking migrant parents experience parenting and state institutions in Finland. Rather than static, this thesis follows the field of cultural parenting studies and views good parenting as a historically and socially situated cultural product. The focus, therefore, becomes how the parents interact with predominant parenting styles and ideals as well as institutions and experts in their new home country (Lind et al., 2016).

In this study, I analyse the lived experience of parenting through the framework of cultural scripts. These scripts are adaptable models of behaviours, a 'toolkit' which individuals use to give meaning to collective identities and display belonging to a social group. Importantly, the formation of cultural scripts requires an interaction between the individual and their sociocultural environment, meaning the individual has a degree of agency in constructing their cultural script (Appiah, 1994). The framework also draws from transnational theory. In constructing their cultural scripts of parenting, migrant

parents reference the parenting norms, discourses, and practices from both their country of origin and their new home country (Anthias et al., 2013).

Previous studies have noted the complex relationship between migrants' parenting practices and the host country context, including state institutions and public services (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008; Telegdi-Csetri, 2018). Migrant parents can experience these services in a variety of ways, ranging from an integral help to parenthood to an unwelcome interference in the family's private life (Andresen & Richter, 2012). Focusing on the largest migrant group in Finland, Russian speakers, this study particularly analyses how historical legacies are present in the ways in which Russian-speaking parents in Finland describe their relationship to the, particularly in terms of ideas of social fairness and gender relations. Finland is often presented as a Nordic welfare state, with the state encouraging gender equality in the family through policies such as shared parental leave. Russia, on the other hand, has been lacking a similar robust social support network for families especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and overall discourses on the family emphasise conservative, patriarchal gender norms clearly separating men's authoritative position and the women's 'natural' place as a nurturer of children (Cook, 2011; Saarinen, 2007). On the other hand, the Finnish family policy has also been criticised for possessing underlying inflexible gender norms and ideas of mothers as nurturers and fathers as breadwinners (Haataja & Nyberg, 2006). However different or similar, in both countries the state institutions and families are in a constant negotiation over what good parenthood entails, and what support structures are necessary for parenthood to be done successfully. This research analyses with which state institutions Russian-speaking parents engage and factors contribute to the outcomes of these encounters. In addition to its contribution to academic discussions on migrant adaptation, the analysis of migrant parents' interactions with state institutions in a transnational environment brings additional societal and political relevance to this study.

Aims and Theoretical Framework

In this study, I approach experiences of parenting from a transnational framework. This framework is based on the idea that migrants have multiple national and ethnic identities, social ties to their country of origin, and refer two or more cultural frames without necessarily compromising their incorporation to their new home country (Anthias et al., 2013; Schiller et al., 1992). However, the exact definition of what a transnational identity entails and what elements contribute to its formation is still developing in migration studies (Levitt, 2015). This study builds on the existing understandings of transnationalism and defines them further by analysing the experiences of Russian-speaking migrant parents through the framework of parenting scripts. In this framework the focus is on the parents' self-presentation and how they construct an ideal of parenting which accommodates the prominent models of parenting present in both their former and current home countries as well as what factors contribute to variations of this ideal parenting. How the parents incorporate different elements from different 'toolkits' in their parenting scripts forms the central research question of this study. With this framework this study contributes to migration studies by exploring how transnational identities are constructed and what kind of variations exist within transnational experiences. Furthermore, this study explores how intersecting identity categories, such as national and gender identities impact the migration experience.

The theoretical concept of cultural scripts takes centre stage in this study. Echoing scholars like Appiah, here cultural scripts are understood as flexible models of behaviour, a 'tool kit' from which identities are constructed. This 'tool kit' is used to give meaning and content to collective identities which in turn are vital in the formation of individual identities (Appiah, 1994). Significantly, as a framework cultural script presumes an interaction between the individual, community, and social norms. Rather than straight-forward socialisation from above to a role such as that of a mother or a father the process is more complex. Individuals become mothers and fathers by taking part in available practices and discourses that define them as such in the eyes of others and themselves (Jones, 1993; Mehrotra, 2016). Access to the varied

practices and discourses which could form a cultural script are governed by which social and cultural norms (Mehrotra 2016). Not all practices or discourses are equal. Rather some are stronger than others, becoming essentialised 'truths' which are more difficult to contest (Mehrotra, 2016).

Using the framework of cultural scripts, the research will focus on the following main research question, which is further divided into three interconnected sub-questions:

How are transnational cultural scripts of parenting and state institutions played out in the lived experience of Russian parents residing in Finland?

1. What type of elements Russian-speaking parents draw on to construct a cultural script of parenting in their everyday lives?

2. How do Russian-speaking parents engage with Finnish state institutions and what factors contribute to different attitudes towards state institutions among Russian-speaking parents?

3. How do Russian-speaking parents draw on intersecting cultural scripts of national identity and parenthood to show their 'deservingness' of social support and assert their identity as a good parent?

Thesis overview and structure

Chapter 1 defines the theoretical framework of parenting scripts and introduces the relevant related concepts which are used throughout the study. The framework draws substantially on findings in the field of parenting studies. Parenting is seen as a multidirectional exercise, and the parents construct their scripts of good parenting in interaction with various co-actors of parenting, which range from family members to state institutions. The chapter also outlines how this study approaches migration and the state. The second section of the chapter focuses on the transnational aspects of the framework and explains how previous research has used transnational theory in the area of parenting studies. The third and final section describes the anthropological approach to the state

present in the study, in which the state ‘comes into being’ through dominant discourses as well as everyday interactions with state actors and institutions.

Chapter 2 details the methodology and research process of this study. The chapter connects the research design, namely the choice of research methods, semi-structured interviews alongside expert interviews and participant observation, to the research questions and theoretical framework. The chapter also provides a description of the research process, including in which localities the data was gathered as well as how participants where recruited. The final part of the chapter focuses on the languages of the study and my positionality as a researcher.

Chapter 3 lays out the context of Russian-speaking migration to Finland. The chapter outlines general trends of Russian-speaking migration and explains how they are present in the context of Finland, for example in the varied ethnic identities among Russian-speaking migrants. Additionally, the chapter looks at the specificities of the Finnish case, for example the welfare state context, the position of Russia as the ‘other’ and the gendered nature of Russian-speaking migration to Finland.

Chapter 4 turns to the empirical findings of the study. The chapter focuses on the role of transnational imagination within scripts of parenting and how the interviewed parents perceive Finland and their respective countries of origin as parenting environments. I argue that the interviewees draw from multiple culturally significant imaginaries in which Finland is strongly associated with the ‘West’ and a part of ‘Europe’ in a way the interviewees home countries are not. Transnational imagination is one of the central elements of the parents’ parenting scripts and form the base of their interaction with state institutions and actors in Finland. Particularly significant to the interviewees’ parenting scripts is the idea of a ‘better life’ for their children in Europe, including not only material and physical safety, but increased cultural capital, too. However, Europe is also seen as the ‘other’, meaning the parents often feel insecure or unsure how to display good parenting within their parenting environment.

Chapter 5 continues the theme of transnational imagination and focuses on how the interviewees construct difference between themselves and Finnish parents. The chapter traces how parenting ideals set by the Soviet-Russian educational discourse *vospitanie* influence the interviewees' parenting scripts as well as how these ideals are mixed into different discourses on good parenting. While the differences in parenting practices and orientations on which the parents comment, such as discipline, are often the same, they can be given either a positive or a negative meaning depending on the parent's general attitude towards the 'West' of 'Europe'. A similar pattern is found in the second part of the chapter which focuses on the parents' view of Finnish schools. These discourses on styles of parenting form an important element in parents' cultural scripts of parenting. Additionally, how they adapt these discourses represents an example of different types of transnational identities.

Chapter 6 turns the attention to co-actors of parenting in the private sphere. I identify two main co-actors the interviewees refer to within their scripts of parenting. The first important co-actor is the interviewees' respective partners and an active co-parenting relationship is seen as the ideal type of relationship. Interviewees rely on gendered parenting discourses in describing the different parenting duties of mothers and fathers. Adherence to these roles is also used to construct difference to Finnish parents. Secondly, I discuss grandparents as co-actors of parenting. The interviewees see grandparents, particularly grandmothers, as vital support in childcare but often reject their parenting advice. The position of authority grandparents traditionally hold is taken over by peer groups, expert advice, and the parents' own intuition.

Chapter 7 continues the analysis of parenting co-actors. In this chapter, I focus on the institutional co-actors of parenting. I argue that the ideas associated with difference between Finnish and Russian styles of parenting are reflected in how the parents experience the respective state institutions. The parents' interaction with the state highlights their 'lived citizenship', their expectations of the state as a co-actor, and how they display their deservingness of social support. Finnish institutions are seen as either caring and fulfilling their duty towards parents or conversely as too lax and rewarding undeserving parents.

Healthcare institutions are the most influential when it comes to changes in parenting scripts after migration to Finland. Here, the element of self-care for the parents is introduced to their scripts of parenting.

Chapter 8 focuses on language learning as its own significant element of the interviewees' parenting scripts. Language learning touches on many of aspects parenting scripts discussed in previous chapters such as transnational imagination, a 'better future' and good migrant parenting. In this chapter, I identify three different script variations regarding language learning. The first variation emphasises Finnish above other languages, the second variation is concerned with keeping Russian in par with Finnish, and the third variation places English as a third important language aside Finnish and Russian. I argue that the different variations are largely based on the parents' transnational imagination and their conceptions of a 'better future', but also reflect the practical elements everyday elements of their children's lives, such as which languages are prominent in their social world.

1 Researching Parenting in a Transnational Environment: Cultural Scripts as a Framework

1.1 Introduction: cultural scripts as a framework

The following chapter explores and explains the theoretical underpinnings of this study, more specifically the framework of cultural scripts. The framework of this study is based on a notion of cultural scripts put towards by Appiah. In an essay examining multiculturalism, Appiah forwards a definition of collective identities and 'culture' as scripts, which can be imagined through the metaphor of a 'tool kit'. This tool kit is a collection of behaviours and discourses, taking part in which connect the identity formation process of the individual to collective identities. Appiah notes that

> cross-culturally it matters to people that their lives have a certain narrative unity; they want to be able to tell a story of their lives that makes sense. The story—my story—should cohere in the way appropriate by the standards made available in my culture to a person of my identity (Appiah, 1994, p. 24)

In Appiah's definition cultural scripts, therefore, are devices through which individuals can shape their life plans and how they tell their life story to others. Cultural scripts are not static or uniform from one individual to another, however, but are born out of interaction with the individual, community, and social norms (Appiah 1994). In the cultural script Individuals construct an identity by taking part in available practices and discourses that define them as such in the eyes of others and themselves (Jones 1993, Mehrotra 2016).

Appiah's original essay is focused on a philosophical argument for a multicultural society rather than providing an empirically grounded theory. However, his ideas of how to investigate collective identities without essentialising them has been utilised by researchers. Cultural scripts are used to identify discourses and practices which underpin identities and how these are reproduced. In his in-depth analysis of how racial and gender identities intersect and contradict each other in hip-hop culture, Jeffries uses Appiah's notion of varied scripts to

investigate how social authenticity is constructed through elevating certain discourses and practices to the position of essentialised truths that work as an instant mark of belonging. Jeffries concludes that while 'robust authenticity scripts' can be empowering, they also have the power to inflict social isolation on individuals who challenge the essentialised truths (Jeffries, 2011). Closer to the topic of this research, Mehrotra utilises cultural scripts to find the discourses that underpin migrant South Asian women's gender identity in the US. Mehrotra concludes that in her interviewees' life narratives marriage and marriageability arise as the defining factor of womanhood. These discourses are reproduced in interactions with others from the community and retelling of the life story (Mehrotra, 2016).

As a framework, therefore, cultural scripts have considerable flexibility. This flexibility is central for investigating the sociocultural construction of parenting in a transnational setting which has multiple, sometimes even conflicting notions of parenting. Taking this multifaceted environment into account, this study develops its own version of cultural scripts of parenting. Starting from Appiah's work, the framework of this study draws together insights from family studies but also from transnational theory as well as literature on the state. In the following sections, I will demonstrate how and why these literatures are used in this study's analytical framework. The second section is focused on how this study defines parenting itself and how the cultural script framework is utilised in this study. The subsequent sections outline the concepts relating to migration and the state used in this research. The third section focuses on migration and how transnationalism helps to understand the formation of cultural scripts of parenting. The fourth section details how the state is understood in this research and how it relates to cultural scripts of parenting. Finally, in the conclusion, these elements are drawn together to form the framework of cultural scripts of parenting this study utilises.

1.2 Defining parenting and parenting scripts

While experiences of parenting either as a parent, child or observer are universal part of the human experience, analytically picking apart parenting is

not a simple task. Parenting can be and has been analysed from multiple angles. With this in mind, the next section will explain how this study defines parenting as a caring relationship, conducted in negotiation with the social, cultural, and institutional environment in which parenting is 'done'. Additionally, this section illustrates how this definition is connected to social identity and cultural scripts of parenting.

1.2.1 Parenting practices

Early studies of parenting focused on a one-sided endeavour, coming from the parent to the child. In this line of enquiry, studies have commented on the divide between authoritarian style and permissive styles of parenting, focusing on case studies from Western countries (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). However, parenting can be expanded on beyond a one-way relationship controlled by the parent to include a more balanced approach. In this approach not only the relationship between parent and child is reciprocal but parenting happens in relation to the wider environment (Lind et al., 2016; Morgan & Dawson, 2011; Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). At its core, parenting represents a caring relationship between the parent and child. Rather than a simple one-way relationship, caring relationships are multidimensional (Fisher & Tronto, 1990; Zechner, 2007). They include tangible aspects of care giving, how should care be carried out, but also ideological components, what should be cared for and by whom (Fisher & Tronto, 1990). These two components, the tangible and ideological are in constant interaction and inform the production of the other.

Conceptualising parenting through the prism of parenting practices as developed by Morgan has been influential in parenting studies. Embedded in historical and social contexts, parenting practices are inherently fluid and subject to contestation (Morgan & Dawson, 2011). Parenting practices are something that are done in families' everyday life, routines which can be taken for granted by parents. Their significance is shown how by how parents place them in wider systems of meaning, sociocultural norms, and ideological constructs. These wider systems of meaning, on the other hand, are not only created between the parent and child but also in interaction with the wider environment in which parenting is undertaken (Lind et al., 2016; Morgan & Dawson, 2011). Parenting

practices are something that not only need ‘doing’ but also ‘displaying’. Not only is parenting something that is ‘done’ through parenting practices between parent and the child, but the meaning of the action must be understood by relevant others for the action to constitute a parenting practice (Finch 2007). In other words, parents must interact with the sociocultural construction of parenting, i.e., of what or whom should be taken care of by whom and how, in order to claim a social identity as a parent. This construction of parenting is highly gendered, with women and men expected to do parenting differently from one another and perform different parenting practices. The exact way in which parenting practices are gendered are also context specific and are one of the cultural norms migrant parents meet in their new home country.

1.2.2 Co-actors of parenting

Recognition by others is especially relevant to the identity of a ‘good parent’. The basic social identity of a parent, in which an individual is recognised as a parent requires, in simplified terms, ‘only’ the existence of children and some degree of caring relationship with them to exist. Identity as a ‘good parent’, which arguable most aspire to achieve, requires more (Lind et al. 2016). What is required is context specific. For example, situations like divorce or moving from being a stay-at-home parent to employment can change what is needed to be recognised as a good parent (Finch 2007). The question of by whom a given individual needs or wants to be allocated the identity of a good parent is also significant. There are multiple of ‘co-actors’ of parenting with whom parenting is constructed and to whom parenting is displayed. On the one hand, the immediate social circle such as partner, relatives, or friends are important but on the other hand more distant co-actors of parenting such as teachers, healthcare professionals or state bureaucrats are also significant (Lind et al. 2016, Finch 2007). On top of the impact on psychological well-being, being or not being recognised as a ‘good parent’ can have tangible repercussions. Social exclusion from the immediate social circle and loss of childcare assistance can be one consequence. Intervention from social services or loss of social assistance in the form of benefits can be another (Finch 2007).

Parenting, therefore, is not a static model which can be measured against an ideal. Rather it is constructed through interaction between parent and the child as well as the surrounding environment. The ways in which parents negotiate with and seek knowledge from a wide array of co-actors of parenting, such as experts, teachers, healthcare professionals, relatives or even politicians influence the shape which parenting takes in everyday life. Contextualising parenting is, therefore, paramount in understanding both tangible resources involved in parenting but also the discourses parents encounter (Lind et al., 2016; Ochocka & Janzen, 2008).

1.2.3 Transnational cultural scripts of parenting: the framework

In constructing a framework of cultural scripts of parenting, I posit the script is formed of two parts: ideological, taking part in discourses of parenting and concrete, doing parenting in the everyday through parenting practices. These two components form the essential 'toolkit' of constructing a parenting identity. However, just as important are the 'co-actors' of parenting and how they influence the available tools in the toolkit. Firstly, the individual cultural script of parenting is conceptualised into two parts: orientations and parenting practices. These two elements are based on existing research on parenting practices but also on a framework of migrant parenting developed by Ochocka and Janzen, discussed in detail in section 3.2. Separating orientations into its own element emphasises the ideological part of parenting, including values, hopes and fears for the future but also expectations for children's behaviours and how a good parent should act and think (Ochocka and Janzen 2008). These are the discourses and cultural norms of parenting the individual takes part in. The second element, parenting practices, focuses on how parenting is 'done' in the everyday (Morgan and Dawson 2011). These two are interact with each other and are integrally connected. Crucially, the focus of this study is on how the parents present their parenting practices, their ideal parenting practices rather than determining what objectively happens in the everyday. The nature of the main research data of this study, semi-structured interviews, lends itself to this approach. Together parenting orientations and practices offer answers to what being a good parent, Russian-speaking parent, or migrant parent entail, even if

parents are not able to fulfil their script of parenting in all situations. As mentioned, parents build their own script of parenting using the available 'tools'. As such scripts are individual but share elements. Therefore, this study will refer to 'variations' of cultural scripts to identify groups of similar scripts.

Just as important as the elements 'inside' the script are the co-actors of parenting. In this study, these are understood to be transnational. Transnational theory recognises the continued influence of social and cultural influences from the country of origin in the lives of migrants while they at the same time adapt to their new home country. Even further, transnational theory also posits a creation of a transnational space beyond nation states. This theoretical background is discussed in section three.

Several co-actors of parenting were included in the framework based on previous family studies, discussed above, and studies on migrant parenting discussed in section three. Migrant parents receive and seek information in multiple languages. Additionally, the 'co-actors' of parenting continue to be transnational. Co-actors of significance in the country of origin include family (grandparents in particular) and friends but also the state. Most migrants remain citizens of their country of origin and can use services across the border. On the other hand, family and friends in the country of residence, migrant or otherwise, are significant influences on parenting (Ochocka and Janzen 2008). Other actors parenting might need to be displayed to are co-nationals in the country of residence who can offer substantial social support, especially at the beginning of the migration process. Additionally, Finnish peers, meaning fellow parents with migrant parents come into contact at day care, school and so forth can potentially be a co-actor of parenting. The degree of importance these 'co-actors' have is individual and can play out in different ways, resulting in variations in the cultural script. As a research design choice, the state is focused on as a co-actor of parenting. This choice fills a gap in the current parenting literature and addresses the relationship the state has with migrant parenting. This study's approach to the state including everyday citizenship as well as the role of institutions and street level bureaucrats is discussed in section four.

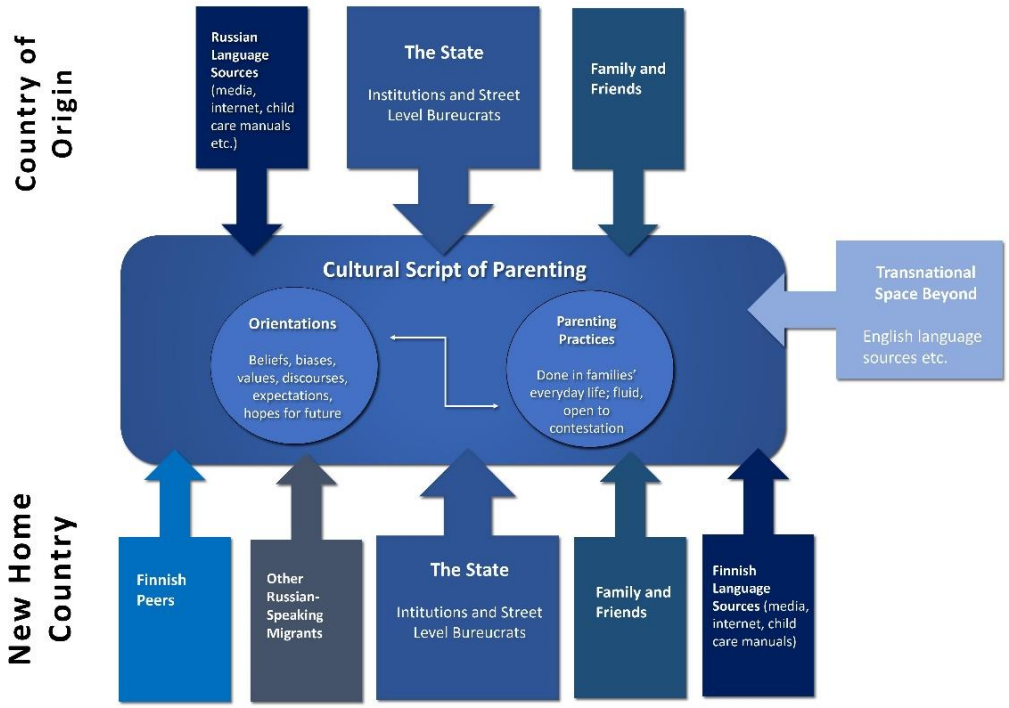

Figure 1: Script of Parenting

1.3 Parenting and migration

The movement of people across borders is problematic for nation states. On the one hand, even the most cynical acknowledge states must seek to encourage migration to gain material benefits for the state, namely, to gain skilled and unskilled labour force and new taxpayers. On the other hand, migration disrupts a series of congruencies that construct and legitimise the nation state: state and nation, ethnonational identity, and citizenship (discussed further in section four) as well as culture and polity (Brubaker, 2010). While the construction of the nation state as a polity of citizens with 'common cultural values' has never been a reality for all citizens, several researchers have noted the process of migration as a potential or even a likely catalyst to a reconfiguration of social identity. Moving away from an imagined national community requires the individual, and minorities collectively, to reconstruct cultural scripts and settle the complicated meanings of social identities (Brubaker 2009, Merino and Tileagă 2011, Pustułka 2016). The migration process puts into question the taken-for-granted everyday

routines of parenting and the wider systems of meaning they are connected to. Furthermore, the 'co-actors' of parenting parents need to engage with in their new home country might have different expectations than in the country of origin.

The two next sections discuss the transnational nature of cultural scripts of migrant parenting. First, the analytical frameworks researchers have suggested on migrant adaptation are evaluated and this study's approach to transnationalism is outlined. Second, the studies on migrant parenting I draw on are detailed.

1.3.1 Migrant adaptation: From acculturation to transnationalism

As parenting scripts are created in close, multidirectional interaction with the surrounding social, cultural and institutional environment, it is important to ask what that environment looks like for migrant parents. In this context, the salient question is how migrants perceive their social world after migration, what type of space do they see themselves occupying, where do they feel they belong (Vertovec, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Researchers disagree on how migrants orient themselves after settling in their new home country: towards the social, cultural, and institutional environment of their new home country, of their country of origin or some type of mix of the two. Often theory on migrant adaptation is presented as a struggle between two frameworks: acculturation and transnationalism.

As a framework, acculturation focuses on analysing how migrants act in the environment of their new home country exclusively. The framework follows Berry's theorisation of migrants' acculturation attitudes into four possible strategies: assimilation (discarding previous cultural identity in favour of that of the majority's); integration (maintaining cultural identity but interacting actively with majority culture and society); separation (maintaining cultural identity and avoiding contact with the majority); and marginalisation (discarding cultural identity and avoiding contact with the majority) (Berry, 1997). In survey-based studies, migrant minority communities and the native majority have both been shown, in name, to favour integration as an acculturation

strategy (Anthias et al., 2013; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003). Commonly integration is understood as a form of multi-ethnic society in which the minority holds significant ties to the majority population but maintains cultural distinctiveness, creating a 'coming together' of two cultures (Varjonen et al., 2018). However, studies have found integration holds different meanings for the majority and the minority. Members of the majority grouping especially tend to understand integration in ways in which closely resemble cultural assimilation of the minority. In practice, the rhetoric of integration is designed to compel the minority to draw closer to the hegemonic majority culture and models of behaviour. For the minority, however, assimilation or even one-sided integration represents a potential loss of an important facet of identity. Given the choice, minority members have been found to favour separation from the majority to outright assimilation. Conversely, the majority often views the separation and marginalisation strategies as a potential threat to societal cohesion (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003; Varjonen et al., 2018).

However, multiple scholars have been critical of the above acculturation model altogether, arguing it poorly reflects the realities of global migration, which involves extensive contact with the country of origin enabled by modern technology (Schiller et al., 1992; Vertovec, 2004). Even further, the rhetoric of integration has been criticised as actually disguising a demand to culturally assimilate, creating a requirement for migrants to show a knowledge and subscription to the receiving-country's 'culture and values', sometimes even before migration to gain rights as a member of the polity (Anthias et al., 2013). Likewise, acculturation theory can also be criticised for conceptualising minority and majority groups too rigidly, effectively essentialising ethnic groups (Fenton, 2010). Presenting not only an analytical problem, these terms carry the potential for normative rhetoric used to limit 'undeserving', 'non-integrated' migrants from the full benefits of membership in the national polity at the level of everyday experiences of migration (Anthias et al., 2013).

Given the limits and problematic implications of acculturation theory, I draw from transnationalism as a framework. Simply put, transnationalism advocates for a research framework which recognises that migrants continue to hold

multiple national and/or ethnic identities and multi-national social ties which shape their personal and social identities. Continuing social ties in the country of origin or referring to two or more cultural frames is not a hindrance to participating in the new home country (Schiller et al., 1992; Vertovec, 2001, 2004). Rather, transnational individuals might even hold more cultural capital because of their mobility, potentially impacting positively on the receiving society as well as their country of origin (Anthias et al., 2013; Richter & Andresen, 2012b; Schiller et al., 1992; Tastsoglou & Dobrowolsky, 2017; Vertovec, 2001).

Central to transnational migration studies is the idea of a perceptual transformation in various arenas brought on by migration, changing the way migrants take part in sociocultural practices and discourses (Vertovec 2004). In investigating the social formation and identities of returnee Dominicans, Guarnizo invokes Bourdieu's conceptualisation of habitus. For Guarnizo, transnational habitus includes 'a particular set of dualistic dispositions' which the migrant uses to navigate through their everyday life (Guarnizo 1997, 311). Migration loosens facets of identity previously understood as fixed and taken for granted, shaping the very idea of home and creating multiple sites of belonging (Ralph and Staeheli 2011). Researchers disagree to what extent this shift of belonging and identity happens, however. Many advance the concept of 'transnational belonging' in which migrants create a site of belonging and identities which supersede nation states. This raises the possibility of non-territorialised and post-national communities offering an alternative to nation states as sources of belonging, citizenship, and identity. Such belonging could for example be 'European' or even citizen of the world'. (Schiller, Basch, and Szanton Blanc 1992, Vertovec 2004). Another approach to transnationalism takes its cue more from writers such as Bauböck, who has pointed out how nation states continue to shape transnational activity and provide the frame of reference for migrant's sociocultural activities (Bauböck 2002, 2003).

Transnationalism has also been critiqued. For example, the framework has been criticised for lack of theoretical clarity, for example regarding its relationship to preceding concepts such as integration, acculturation, or multiculturalism

(Pustułka 2016). Studying Polish women migrants in Germany and the United Kingdom, Pustułka criticises the positioning of transnationalism/mobility and integration/settlement as 'either-or' alternatives, and points to the need to continue to use multiple analytical frames alongside transnationalism to better understand migrant identities (Pustułka 2016). In a similar vein, Conway et al. find in their study among young returning Trinidadians with a dual nationality that transnationalism does not necessarily supersede national identity in the minds of the returnees. Influenced significantly by family ties, feelings of national belonging continue to be exhibited, and might even become stronger, while the dual citizenship is viewed pragmatically rather than sentimentally (Conway, Potter, and St Bernard 2008). Translocalism further questions the way transnationalism privileges the nation as the primary category of analysis. Instead, translocalism highlights the local context, such as cities, neighbourhoods, homes and families, and the impact they have on migrants' sociocultural identities, practices, and everyday experiences (Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013).

This study starts from the assumption that there are variations between the social, cultural, and institutional environments migrant parents inhabit. In terms of sociocultural discourses and practices, the three spaces, home country exclusively, transnational between home country and country of origin or transnational beyond are not mutually exclusive forms of migrant adaptation. Rather it is dependent on 'transnational imagination' of the individual migrant, how they perceive their social world, and what resources, such as language skills, they possess to access that world (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011). Furthermore, the mediating effect of local identities through which national, migrant, and parenting identities are experienced is considered in analysing the variations of cultural scripts.

1.3.2 Studies on migrant parenting

The next subsections detail the main studies from which this study's theoretical framework draws. These studies guide the elements which have been included in the conception of cultural scripts of parenting used in this study. The first subsection focuses on the framework developed by Ochocka and Jansen. The

second subsection looks at how migration has been gendered and how this affects migrant parenting.

1.3.2.1 Understanding migrant parenting

In analysing changes in cultural scripts of parenting, this study draws from a framework developed by Ochocka and Janzen. The study from which the authors' framework is derived is qualitative but the number of participants is high: the sample includes 317 participants, interviewed in 50 focus groups, comprised of recent migrants to Canada from 12 language groups (Cantonese, Farsi, Gujarati, Mandarin, Pashtu/Dari, Punjabi, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog/Filipino, and Tamil). The framework stresses the negotiation between migrant parents and the host country context, underlining the culturally constructed nature of parenting. On the other hand, Ochocka and Janzen avoid essentialising culture, by recognising the tension between group and individual perspectives. Even within families, the way in which individuals negotiate influences can differ (Ochocka and Janzen 2008). This idea is similar to cultural scripts. Cultural scripts connect group and individual identities but are not identical across individual. While some practices and discourses are stronger than others and therefore more difficult to reject, cultural scripts are flexible and individual.

Ochocka and Janzen's framework is comprised of six components. The first component is parenting orientations. Orientations are largely value based and cover many aspects of the discourses in which parents take part. This includes expectations of children's behaviour and hopes for their future but also how a good parent should act and think. Secondly Ochocka and Janzen name parenting styles. This component is similar to parenting practices in that it includes the ways in which parents interact with their children, i.e., 'do parenting'. These two components, according to the authors, already exist from the time before migration. The third component, new host country context is described as a filter which introduces the parents to new parenting orientations and styles as well as places their old ones into a new context. This potentially leads to modification of parenting orientations and styles, which is the fourth component. The fifth component is parenting contribution, which recognises the

influence and contributions migrant parents can also have on the host country context. Finally, the sixth component is parenting supports, which deals with the support migrant parents need to understand and settle in their new host country, help through parenting modifications, and encourage a dialogue between migrant parents and the host country (Ochocka and Janzen 2008).

In the Nordic context this framework has been successfully utilised by Osman et al (2016). in a study investigating Somali-born parents' experiences of and needs from parenthood support programmes in Sweden. The authors name the Somali-born parents' parenting style as 'parenting in transition'. Parenting in transition is divided into two parts: challenges and improved parenting. Challenges parents experienced encompassed loss of social support networks as well as lack of knowledge of state bureaucracy and cultural norms, including gender roles such as dual-earner families. However, the parents involved in this study showed willingness to change their parenting style, particularly move away from authoritative forms of parenting to more conversational style in cooperation with their children. To this end they were hoping to access more support programmes which would give them more parenting knowledge (Osman et al. 2016).

The way in which this research treats cultural scripts is influenced by Ochocka and Janzen's model. In particular, the conception of cultural scripts of parenting in this study incorporates the model's notion of parenting orientations as a half of parenting scripts alongside parenting practices. However, this study takes the analysis further. This study's framework draws concepts from parenting studies, putting parenting practices as the second half of parenting scripts. In this framework, parenting practices encompasses Ochocka and Janzen's notion of parenting styles but incorporates the host country context as more than just a filter that can lead to modifications or contributions to the host country context. The idea of parenting orientations and practices as a part of parenting scripts draws from transnational theory which Ochocka and Janzen do not use. Rather than an element which exists before migration, orientations and practices continue to evolve after migration. Migrant parents can adopt, reject, or reshape parenting influences from the host country context or even utilise a

pick-and-mix approach to parenting orientations and practices from their home and host countries. Furthermore, using cultural scripts, I can analyse the role of the state as a co-actor of parenting in as an active, evolving co-actor rather than a static filter. In addition, I can analyse other possible co-actors and their interaction with the parents and state co-actors.

1.3.2.2 Gendering migrant parenting

Gendering migration has enabled studies to step away from characterising the female migrant as a passive follower in the migration process and also allowed for exploration of migrant men's roles and identities beyond the wage-earning economic migrant (Pustułka, 2016; Pustułka et al., 2015; Schiller et al., 1992). Gender identity is not only a crucial part of individual identity but also provides an important facet of the construction of national identity. What it means to be a woman or man of a certain nationality is one of the 'grand narratives' underpinning the history of the imagined national community (Lomsky-Feder & Rapoport, 2008; Rapoport et al., 2002). Scholars have argued that gender roles particularly are brought into sharp focus in migration. Ideas of masculinity and femininity are shaped by the migration process in a way that might not have been possible without distance from often taken for granted formulations of gender roles (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Pustułka, 2016; Pustułka et al., 2015). This can have a significant effect on parenting scripts. The questions of who should act in a caregiving role and how are closely linked to constructions of gender roles. Parenting, motherhood, and fatherhood are some of the strongest expressions of gender roles and an irreplaceable part of the grand narratives through which national identity is constructed (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Fisher & Tronto, 1990; Pustułka, 2016).

In this line of enquiry, the differentiated roles of women and men as caregivers have been analysed. Researchers have for example pointed out the enduring nature of transnational bonds. These include for example women's continuing responsibilities for physical and emotional care giving to elderly relatives even at a distance. Another often explored topic is migrant mothers' reliance on networks with co-nationals or grandmothers still based in their country of origin for childcare (Bojarczuk & Mühlau, 2017b; Tastsoglou & Dobrowolsky, 2017). In

Tastsoglou and Dobrowolsky's study on gender and care relationships in transnational families in Nova Scotia, men of the families also provided emotional care through transnational ties but ultimately conform to a 'bread-winner' model of masculinity, seeing themselves duty bound to offer care in the form of monetary assistance first and foremost (Tastsoglou & Dobrowolsky, 2017). Researchers have noted the familial transnational networks of care as potentially having an empowering and securing effect but they have also criticised the lack of provision by the nation-state for the invariably female providers of unofficial care (Tastsoglou & Dobrowolsky, 2017). This lack of provision is made tangible in everyday experiences of female migrants, such as formalities of border crossing (Davydova & Pöllänen, 2010; Pöllänen, 2013).

Migration can affect gender roles in multiple ways for different individuals. For some, the experience of migration facilitates a reshaping of gender roles to correspond to the ideals of the receiving society, but for others it means holding onto the archetypal gender roles present in their native country in a heightened manner. Strzemecka's study on the gender identities of Polish migrant children in Norway comes the closest to explicitly theorising a transnational gender identity, with Polish girls especially adopting more 'masculine' behaviours in school among their Norwegian peers, while demonstrating more feminine traits at home and especially on visits to Poland (Strzemecka, 2017). However, although Strzemecka conceptualises Norway as a more open society with little gender conservatism, Polish boys participating in the study do not share the girls' enthusiasm about the breaking of gender roles. What the author terms 'social masculinisation through migration' seems to be pertinent in the identities of migrant girls, but masculine gender ideals are not feminised in the Norwegian 'gender equality regime' at least in this study (Strzemecka, 2017).

The non-uniform effect of migration can be seen in parenting practices especially well, given the importance the family is given in the transmission of national identity in most nationalist discourses. Pustułka's study on Polish migrant mothers in Britain and Germany finds a type of transnational, hybrid form of mothering to be only one of the possible models the respondents adopted ((Pustułka, 2016). Pustułka names one of the mothering strategies the

‘New Migrant Mother’ which combines elements from the archetypal self-sacrificing, ultra-feminine ‘Polish mother’ figure with discourses from their new environment. Alongside the diverse group of ‘new migrant mothers’ she also finds ‘Mother-Poles’, typically migrant mothers from a lower social class, who continue to adhere to extremely nationalist tropes of mothering, devoted to transmitting Polish culture to their children. The third type of mothering the author discusses is located at the opposite side of the spectrum; these often upper middle-class ‘Intensive Mothers’ embrace local social ties in their new countries, new forms of femininity and conform to the Western ‘ideal mother’, which places children and building their skills and capacities in the centre of family life. By discussing these three models, Pustułka shows the multiple possibilities of transnational influences on gender identity and demonstrates the class element present in transnational movement Notably, Pustułka’s study shows the possibility of a hybrid cultural script of parenting (Pustułka, 2016). This is not to suggest only the cultural script of (Richter & Andresen, 2012a) motherhood is affected by migration. For example, in a study on Polish fathers in Norway, the institutional and normative influences from Norway were a significant influence on the fathering of the respondents. By and large, the respondents found themselves in between the model of an emotionally present ‘new fatherhood’ and the traditional role of a breadwinner. Notably, however, the researchers conclude that the fathering styles and ideals of the participants exist on a continuum without a single answer to the twin pressures of the breadwinner model and new fatherhood emerging (Pustułka et al., 2015)

1.4 The state as a co-actor of migrant parenting

Researchers have noted how imbedded the state in is in our everyday actions through ‘ways which are so taken for granted they are barely noticeable’ (Painter, 2006, p. 753). State institutions and practices are present in countless activities, ranging from giving birth, schooling, travel, work, housing, to even death (Painter, 2006). Interaction with the state is an integral part of both parenting and migration, although sometimes quite differently. In terms of parenting, the state is an important source of support in the form of childcare,

schooling, and benefits but also potentially a punitive actor with the power to interfere in the family's private life (Lind et al., 2016; Richter & Andresen, 2012a). For migrants the state can also be a source of support through integration programmes, but often with the toughening attitudes towards migrants the state can act as a gate keeper to full rights as a member of society (Keskinen, 2017). While lowering birth rates have scared many European states enough to ponder more measures to support families with children, increasing the number of migrant families can be viewed quite differently, as a threat to social coherence rather than an opportunity (Keskinen, 2017). All these factors bring migrant parents into close contact with the state.

The next two sections outline this study's approach to the state as a co-actor of parenting. First, I discuss the concept of everyday citizenship, and the role of street level bureaucrats, institutions and images of the state is outlined. Second, differentiated citizenship and deservingness is examined. Third, I explore the context of the Nordic welfare state model that underpins the interviewees' experiences of the state in Finland.

1.4.1 Everyday citizenship and parenting

When analysing the state as a co-actor of migrant parenting and the relationship between parents and the state, it is vital to look at the construction of citizenship. Apart from citizenship as a form of legal status granted by the state, citizenship can be analysed as an everyday practice. Current scholarship emphasises the role of citizenship in providing political and social recognition as well as economic redistribution as a member of a given polity (Isin & Turner, 2002; Lister, 2007). Citizenship, therefore, is not static category, but something that is 'done' and comes into being through 'set of judicial, economic, political and cultural practices' (Turner, 1993, p. 2). While not all the migrant parents taking part in this study have formal citizenship, they are, nonetheless, subject to what Brubaker has called 'membership without citizenship' in their new home country (Brubaker, 2010). Settled migrants have many of the same rights and duties as naturalised citizens. They have the right to work or study, duty to pay taxes and even possibly access to state sponsored welfare. On the other hand, they have restrictions placed on them such as exclusion from voting in national

elections and crossing national borders freely without losing rights gained through residency. This research approaches citizenship by analysing how migrant parents understand and construct the rights and responsibilities linked to being a member of society, how they lay claim to those rights (Isin, 2017; Yuval-Davis, 2006). The combination of rights and duties which citizenship entails is not constant, but is enacted by exercising, claiming, and performing rights. Enacting citizenship in this way has the potential to transform its meanings and functions (Isin, 2017; Spinney et al., 2015).

Migrants are rarely passive recipients of ideas about the state and citizenship, but, based on their previous experiences bring with them ideas of how the state should act and what are its limits and duties. In this analysis of citizenship, the ways in which the state is 'understood, experienced, and reproduced in everyday encounters' (Thelen et al., 2014, p. 9) is crucial. This study draws from literature, which sees the state as constructed from two interwoven sources: firstly, discursive constructions or images of the state and secondly everyday interactions with state institutions. Discursive constructions and images of the state present in 'public culture' such as mass media create a base for the way in which the state is understood. At the same time, however, everyday interactions with state institutions shape the creation of the state as a coherent unit (Gupta, 1995; Gupta & Sharma, 2006). The state, therefore, comes into being through interactions with street level bureaucrats, officials in various state institutions who are responsible for the everyday running of the state (Lipsky, 1980). These officials play an integral part in the creation of the state and have considerable discretion in how they implement the discourses present in public culture (Gupta, 1995; Lipsky, 1980).

Citizenship like parenting, therefore, is governed by mastering cultural norms and requires forming a cultural script through which display citizenship in a way that is understood and recognised by others. Previous studies have already identified cultural citizenship, recognition alongside access to rights, as vital for the experience of truly inclusive citizenship for minorities, including migrants. However, often the public discourse surrounding migrants as members of a polity does not emphasise the 'right to be different' and pursue a sociocultural identity

of choice (Lister, 2007). Rather 'integration' is understood as a one-way commitment on the part of the migrant to 'common' cultural values of their new country, as understood by street level bureaucrats amongst others (Brubaker, 2010; Keskinen, 2017; Lister, 2009).

1.4.2 Differentiated citizenship and deservingness

As scholarship has moved away from viewing citizenship as only a legal category to analysing how citizenship is constructed, more attention has been paid to the inherent tension between inclusion and exclusion built into citizenship. Despite rhetorical universality, citizenship has neither been extended to all members of the polity nor guaranteed equal rights in practice to different social groups it has been formally given to. Neither are all citizens or members without citizenship expected to perform citizenship in the same way (Brubaker, 2010; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Migrant parents face the exclusion/inclusion tension from two directions. Firstly, differentiated citizenship can be viewed from a gendered perspective. Secondly, migrants face differentiated citizenship as racialised members of the polity, needing to show their value as a 'good migrant' (Isin, 2017; Lister, 2007).

As citizenship has historically had an implicit focus on action outside of the home, women's caring duties in the domestic sphere and gendered division of labour have placed women in a double bind. Performing the duty of care work is a prerequisite for claiming good citizenship for women, but, at the same time, this duty remains less valued (Lister, 2007). This tendency has been strengthened by neoliberal thought, as work and welfare rights have been increasingly linked (Kingfisher, 2002). The exact way in which the state, the labour market, and the domestic sphere of the family combine differs from state to state, however. The notion of a gender contract, in other words, how rights and duties are distributed among men and women and what roles the genders are supposed to fill, can vary, making it one of the cultural norms migrants need to master. Feminisation of care work is a constant, but scholars have pointed to different welfare regimes based on how strong an assumption of a male breadwinner with a female dependent there is (Lewis, 1992; Mósesdóttir & Ellingsæter, 2019). Furthermore, researchers have also pointed to differences

between the care regimes of states, the division of care work between the domestic sphere and services provided by the state (Mahon et al., 2012; Ploug, 2012). However, while the details vary between states, citizenship remains gendered everywhere and means different things to men and women, as well as different intersecting identities within those gendered categories (Lister, 2007).

The tension between inclusion and exclusion has implications for migrants as migrants per se. Despite critique, the idea of hegemonic communities sharing common values and culture as the basis of a nation remains powerful in every-day understandings and political discourses. While political rhetoric presents citizenship as achievable regardless of ethnicity, solely based on civic values, these viewpoints only serve to feed the 'myth of ethnocultural neutrality' (Kymlicka & Opalski, 2001). The supposedly civic minded Western European states view potential migrants differently based on ethnicity and country of origin, and different groups of migrants are not placed on an equal footing when seeking membership in the national polity (Kymlicka & Opalski, 2001; van Riemsdijk, 2010). Depending on their place on the 'ethnic hierarchy' of their new home country, even naturalised migrants are continuously racialised in encounters with street level bureaucrats and members of the public alike. Integration, understood as a one-way commitment from the migrant to 'common cultural values', becomes the mark of a 'good migrant'. Migrants are consistently seen as less entitled to rights associated with citizenship, including welfare provision. Paid labour is emphasised as a mark of the 'good migrant', who needs to demonstrate their value to the polity in which they seek membership (Anthias et al., 2013).

Rights and duties associated with citizenship can therefore vary between groups. Perceived compliance with these culturally and socially constructed norms and practices is an integral part of gaining insider status, performing citizenship and laying claim to rights by showing 'deservingness'. Some of the practices and norms are particular, state specific, others cross borders. Notably, however, these constructions are mutable and contain multiple, sometimes contradictory, impulses. For example, the above presented constructions can be challenged by referring to universal human rights or ideal of gender equality, two norms which

also underpin the legitimisation of state power in modern welfare societies (Isin, 2017; Kay, 2011; Lister, 2007), discussed further in the following section. Therefore, there are multiple, conceivable ways in which to claim the position as a 'deserving' citizen. Parenting is in the centre of showing deservingness. Producing the next generation of citizens to continue the nation state and raising this generation to be 'proper' citizens is one of the most basic duties underpinning citizenship (Yuval-Davis, 2006). On the other hand, good parenting also includes knowledge and usage of the right state services at the right time. The cultural scripts of parenting and citizenship, thus, intersect in significant ways and are worth investigating together.

1.4.3 Defining the Nordic welfare state

Alongside citizenship, the concept of the welfare state is an important context underpinning the interviewees' construction of the state as a co-actor of parenting. Researchers have noted the difficulties in formulating a precise definition for the concept of the welfare state, noting that the concept is as much about practices and policies as well as ideals and paradigms (Anttonen & Sipilä, 2000, p. 14). In the case of the Nordic model of welfare states, scholars have pointed to two central defining features. The first is the role of the state as a provider of social services in contrast to only social insurance. Unlike with social insurance, which is distributed by the central government, the emphasis on services in turn places emphasis on local and regional authorities, namely municipalities, which are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of these services. (Anttonen, 1990; Kroger, 2011). The second central feature is ideal of universalism and equal access to services for all citizens. Private service providers and third-sector actors supplement care services, but the public sector is mainly responsible for the production of welfare. An important part of this ideal is also territorial equality and harmonisation of local services. Crucially, these two features are in tension with one another. On the one hand, the Nordic model of welfare promotes local freedom, but also seeks to enforce territorial equality and implement measures through which the central government can control the production of welfare. Historically, this tension has led to a push-and-pull effect between the central government and local municipalities, in

which the two distribute and redistribute power between themselves (Anttonen & Sipilä, 2000; Kroger, 2011, pp. 13-14).

In this study, I analyse how the interviewees experience the state in their everyday lives. In line with the conceptualisation of Nordic welfare states as 'social service states' by Anttonen (1990), a significant part of this experience are the welfare services arranged by municipalities. In my analysis of the interviewees' experiences, I use the term 'the state' to refer to the whole apparatus of state government. Whether talking about the social services arranged by the municipality or the benefit structure provided by the central government, the interviewees apply similar discourses on the roles and responsibilities of the state. This highlights the combined role of public discourse and personal experiences in the construction of the state noted by Gupta, discussed above (Gupta, 1995).

While the precise definition of the welfare state is elusive, the term holds considerable discursive and normative power. Julkunen argues that in the decades following the Second World War, Finnish political discourse became framed around the concept of the welfare state, and the ideals of society, universalism, and equality (Julkunen, 2017, pp. 40-41). Particularly, the idea of a Nordic welfare state as something aspirational, cut above the rest when it comes to equality and the production of welfare, holds a firm position in Finnish political discourse. This is the ideal against which the achievements and failings of the Finnish state are judged. According to Julkunen, the commitment to the idea of the welfare state is unquestioned. Rather than questioning the existence or the goodness of the welfare state as a form of governance, reforms and austerity measures are justified through ostensibly ideologically neutral a rhetoric of economics, productivity, and financing of welfare production (Julkunen, 2017, pp. 324-330). This is discursive environment around the welfare state provides an important context to how the interviewed Russian-speaking parents experience the Finnish state and will be explored further in chapter 7.

1.5 Conclusion: Transnational cultural scripts of parenting and state institutions

This study uses the framework of cultural scripts to analyse migrant parenting as a sociocultural phenomenon. In this framework, both the ideological parts of parenting, orientations, and the tangible parts, parenting practices are considered. Additionally, the relational construction of parenting with the socio-cultural environment is analysed through the co-actors of parenting. The central question is what constitutes good parenting when moving from one country to another and how good parenting is displayed in this new environment.

Cultural scripts are understood as transnational in this research. How migrant parents adopt, reject, and reshape new parenting orientations and practices in the new home country are important parts of forming a parenting script. On the other hand, what orientations and practices remain or are reshaped is just as central. The interaction between these two spaces is enduring and contacts to the country of origin continue to shape parenting scripts after migration (Vertovec, 2004). Additionally, this study treats transnationalism critically, recognising that even before migration, cultural scripts of parenting are not uniform but rather variations influenced by multiple factors such as local identities or familial connections (Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013). Nonetheless, identifying specifically what orientations and practices which unite and differentiate between the parenting scripts upheld by Russian-speaking parents in this study is one of the central tasks of this research.

The research design of this study is particularly interested in the role of the state as a co-actor of parenting, thus connecting cultural scripts to societal structures. This is done through investigating migrant parents' interaction with the state through everyday citizenship, images of the state and contact with state institutions (Gupta, 1995; Isin, 2017). Both parenting and citizenship are seen as governed by cultural scripts which guide expectations of the state and how to show deservingness as a 'good' parent, migrant, and citizen (Isin, 2017; Lind et al., 2016; Lister, 2007). Additionally, the policies and paradigms connected with the Nordic welfare state model provide an important context to the parents' everyday citizenship and contact with state institutions (Anttonen &

Sipilä, 2000). The next chapter focuses on the details of this study's methodology and research design of this study and how these considerations relate back to the theoretical framework of cultural scripts.

2 Methodology and Research Process

2.1 Introduction

This chapter details the methodological choices and organisation of this study as well as how those choices relate to the framework of the study discussed in the previous chapter. The core of this study is the theoretical concept of cultural scripts, flexible models of behaviour underpinning collective identities. This idea of identities as constructed and dynamic directs the overall research design, detailed in section 2. Qualitative in nature, data collection of the research was focused on a field work period in two locations in Finland, Greater Helsinki area and the city of Tampere. The methods of recruitment of respondents for semi-structured interviews and the two locations are described in section 3. This section also discusses the study's approach to the location specific nature of the respondents' accounts and the details of the recruitment process. The next section is dedicated to the associations and NGOs that took part in the study. Finally, section 5 offers a critical reflection on the language of the study and researcher positionality. The section also discusses how these reflections have been considered in the analysis of the data.

2.2 Research Design

The theoretical concept of cultural scripts takes centre stage in this study, and this is reflected in the research design. The study explores the concept of a cultural script in a transnational setting, examining the effect of changing social norms in migration and theorising the development of a transnational cultural script of parenting (Pustułka 2016). In order to access the cultural script among migrant Russian-speaking parents the research design of the study was constructed to be in-depth and qualitative in nature. The complexity of cultural scripts including the multifaceted interaction between the individual and social norms are echoed in the choice of qualitative methodology, producing detailed data on a specific case study (Denzin & Ryan, 2007). Special weight in the research process was put on a 'field work' period seeking immersion in the spaces habited by the researched group (Mitchell 2007). The field work phase of

the study lasted for approximately a year, beginning in June 2018 and finishing in May 2019.

The three methods chosen for the study were expert interviews, semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Expert interviews fulfilled two functions. First, in the beginning of the study, expert interviews provided information on salient themes, which guided the structure of the semi-structured interviews. Secondly, expert interviews provided a viewpoint from NGOs, Russian-speaking associations and public sector employees on the interaction of the state and Russian-speaking migrant parents. This information gives the study a more rounded view on contacts between the state and Russian-speaking parents, including what the experts see as more general trends in their work. Semi-structured interviews form the main body of data of the study. The interviews provided the in-depth look at the functioning of cultural scripts of parenting and state action in the respondents' everyday lives. Finally, participant observation was added as a method to gain more information on the communal aspects of the cultural script of parenting, which added to the data from the interviews.

In the following section the three methods are discussed in more detail, starting with expert interviews, followed by semi-structured interviews and finally participant observation. A full table of participants in semi-structured interviews can be found in appendix 1 and a listing of expert interviewees and organisations involved with the study in appendix 2.

2.2.1 Pilot study and expert interviews

Expert interviews were collected from three types of organisations that were theorised as being important sources of information on the interaction between Russian-speaking migrant parents and the Finnish state. Firstly, there were Finnish NGOs working on a national level, namely The Family Federation of Finland and The Central Union of Child Welfare, which both have experts on Russian-speakers in Finland. Secondly there were smaller Russian-speaking associations, which offer various services and activities to Russian-speaking families. Thirdly, I interviewed a Russian-speaking advisor at a migrant information centre, which was a part of the public services at one of the cities I

conducted research. This interview represented a point of view from public services migrant parents might use. In the Nordic welfare state model, including in Finland, NGOs and other civil society actors work closely with state institutions, both as supplementary producers of welfare services as well as advocates for varied interest groups, such as families and children (Anttonen & Sipilä, 2000, pp. 49-53; Loga, 2018). This in mind, the expert interviews offered an important perspective to state institutions from professionals who work with parents but are not quite part of the institutional framework.

Expert interviews were collected in two different phases of the field work process. The majority of the expert interviews, five in total, were collected in the first month of field work, termed a pilot study. The pilot portion of the study was especially important for the further development of the research as it offered the opportunity to collect material which would be used to identify salient themes in the cultural scripts of parenting (Bernard and Dawson 2011). As the study continued into recruiting participants for semi-structured interviews in the second phase of field work, a further two expert interviews were collected from volunteers involved in cooperating Russian-speaking associations. The expert interviews in this phase brought more information on the role of Russian-speaking associations in migrant parenting and provided a useful first point of contact with the two new associations. After these two organisations, no more expert interviews were conducted, or new organisations added to the study. After seven expert interviews, I determined that I had collected enough data to use as a base for the semi-structured interviews and created enough connections to help with recruiting participants for the semi-structured interviews.

All expert interviews followed a similar structure, focused on three themes. The first set of questions focused on the organisation structure and how is it situated in the landscape of Russian-speaking associations or Finnish NGOs. The second theme revolved around questions on Russian-speaking migrant parents and the Finnish welfare system from the organisation's point of view. The third and final set of questions centred on the expert's views on the challenges and important common cultural characteristics of Russian-speaking migrant parenting. Overall,

the time commitment for the expert interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 1 hour.

The expert interviews gave two types of different information, which impacted on the structure of the semi-structured interviews. Firstly, the Russian-speaking organisations offered ground-up type of information on the sort of services Russian-speaking migrant parents seek in their everyday lives. Secondly, the NGOs working on a national level provided information on wider trends of Russian-speaking migrant participants and welfare services as well as examples of conflicts between state institutions and Russian-speaking parents. The expert interviews, therefore, laid the foundation for the main fieldwork involved parents. The expert interviewees provided contextual information as well as assistance in recruitment and suggestions on which areas to explore more deeply with the parents. Consequently, I refer mainly to the semi-structured interviews with parents in the empirical findings of the study and do not cite the experts interviews themselves directly.

2.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

The main body of the research consists of 40 semi-structured interviews with Russian-speaking parents. Based on the themes arising from the expert interviews I devised a structure for semi-structured interviews and started collecting semi-structured interviews in October 2018. The interviews focused on the participants' experiences of parenting in Finland and Russia. The interviews were conducted in various settings, mostly responding to what seemed most convenient to the interviewee. The time commitment of the in-depth interview, estimated at 1-2 hours from the outset, proved challenging to many participants. This was mitigated by holding some interviews in participants' homes, but many also found it convenient to hold the interview over the phone or through Skype. If participants wanted to meet face-to-face but preferred the interview to take place somewhere other than their home, cafes or conference rooms in libraries were used. In analysing the interviews, I have not found the location to have been of a significant impact on the interview quality. The length of the interviews ranged from 35 minutes to full two hours.

While originally the study's focus was on single parents, during the first participant observations and the initial handful of interviews, it became clear the study should be expanded to include all types of Russian-speaking parents, not only single parents. While originally, I theorised single parents would be in a more contact to the state apparatus and therefore in a better position to offer information on this aspect of the study, this restriction was too strict. Recruitment of only single parents proved difficult and closed out many interested participants. Expanding the participant group also changed the study's approach to the state. Schools and kindergartens were always going to be an important manifestation of the state, but the study moved from focusing on things like social benefits to child healthcare and citizenship status of the different family members. While these aspects of the state were important to single parents, they had wider significance and applied to two-parent families, which were less likely to have experience with social benefits. Overall, this approach in developing the research frame throughout the field work phase fits with the ethnographic approach taken by this study, emphasising the need to let the field work findings move the direction the research takes (Mitchell 2007). Although the study moved to a wider focus of all types of Russian-speaking parents, the research still has a strong component geared towards studying single parenthood, which is fitting as single mothers are estimated to make up a large part of the Russian-speaking migrant population in Finland (Saarinen 2007, Varjonen, Zamiatin et al. 2017). Additionally, single parenthood holds much cultural significance in both the Finnish and Russian contexts (May 2011, Utrata 2015).

The label of a Russian speaker is a complicated one and includes many ethnic and national groups (Byford, 2012; Cheskin & Kachuyevski, 2019; Pechurina, 2017). All participants in the study self-identify as Russian speakers, which in practice meant that at least one of the participants' parents was Russian-speaking and Russian was one of their mother tongues. Most of the participants were originally from Russia (31) but there were also Russian speakers from Estonia (7), Ukraine (1), Belarus (1) and Bulgaria (1). One of the interviewees was born in Ukraine but her family moved to Russia when she was 10 months old, and for this reason I have counted her as a Russian participant. This type of

complexity of national identity among Russian speakers is not unusual, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3. While mothers made up most of the interviewees, also fathers were also invited to take part in the study. Previous research has identified the significance of grandparents and intergenerational families in migrant contexts, and in order to include this aspect in the study, six participants with already grown children and younger grandchildren were invited to take part in the study (Bojarczuk and Mühlau 2017). Most interviewees had a degree from higher education from either Finland or their countries of origin as is typical for Russian-speaking migrants in Finland (Varjonen et al., 2017), but there were also individual participants who did not have a degree from higher education. Furthermore, many of the participants did not work in an occupation which reflected their educational background, were unemployed or were stay-at-home mothers. The educational backgrounds of participants are included in in the list of participants in appendix 1. In two cases the interviewee's educational background was not explicitly stated within the interview, and in these cases I have included the participants' professions.

The interview structure combined elements from narrative interviewing and thematic interviews (Bernard and Dawson 2011, Abrams 2016). The structure was roughly divided into two parts: life before migration and life after migration. The interviews started with questions on the interviewee's childhood, progressing to recounting their life right up to migration and how their life had changed after migrating to Finland. This narrative element in the beginning of the interview was utilised to call up reflection on the overall impact of migration on parenting and view of the state. The second part was organised more thematically, going through different aspects of the state the interviewees encounter as migrant parents, such as day care or school. The themes in the second part of the interview also included links the interviewees continue to have to their country of origin and what aspects of their cultural heritage they wish to impart to their children. The guide for semi-structured interviews can be found in appendix 3. As in the narrative part of the interview, the focus of the questions was on comparison and change. Depending on the interviewee, the interview could have had more narrative or thematic elements. Some

interviewees had a clear overarching narrative of parenthood and migration whereas others felt more comfortable replying to questions centred around a theme at a time. The goal of the semi-structured interviews was to reveal the ways in which the parents discursively projected their scripts of parenting, and this construction is the main focus of analysis in this study. In the next section, I discuss participant observations, which provided accompanying data on the type of support and services the parents sought from Russian-speaking associations.

2.2.3 Participant observation

The participant observation focused on activities and discussion groups organised for or Russian-speaking families. Participant observation was carried out in organisations that organise local day-to-day activities and support services to the Russian-speaking community. These included approximately 10 separate events, with 5-15 participants each, except for a Christmas and New year's celebration which was attended by at least 50 parents and children. Four events were informal weekly get-togethers for Russian-speaking mothers and their children not yet going to school. Two events were lectures organised for Russian-speaking mothers by a Russian-speaking association for mothers in the capital area, one on sexual education in Finnish schools and the other on children's rights in Finland. It should be noted that these types of events were also a regular occurrence in the said organisation and have had other type of topics such as healthy eating, but these two happened in the observation period. The other participant observations happened in fairy tale readings for children, a popular dance and music group for children under seven as well as a Russian language theatre summer camp. The two former ones were organised by local libraries one in Tampere and the other in Helsinki while the last one was held by a Russian-speaking organisation.

The participant observation provided opportunities to establish connections with potential interviewees as well as provided supplemental information for the semi-structured interviewees. The participant observation sought to characterise the activities associations offer to Russian-speaking parents as well as how the parents take advantage of these resources. Initial observation focused on typifying what type of activities are organised, where are they are held, how are

they advertised and how many people take part on average. The goal of the participant observations was to gain more information on what kind of activities the parents wanted their children take part in and which parenting topics the parents discussed or sought more information about without being prompted by a researcher. Things related to displaying good parenting such as formality of the activity for example in terms of dress, gender of the participants, the overall interest in the activity was observed. Importantly, in activities meant for the whole family, the focus of the observation was on participating adults and the staff leading the event not on the participating children. The activities were not audio or video recorded in any way, but instead the observation was based on notes taken at the activities as well as any additional materials offered by the organisation. Like expert interviews, participant observations supported the study's main data from semi-structured interviews and such I only reference them once in the empirical analysis of this study. However, the supplemental information from participant observations helped to strengthen the analysis of the semi-structured interviews. They also helped me to focus on elements of parenting relevant to Russian-speaking migrant parents in Finland within the interviews and gain a fuller picture of the parenting environment of the interviewed parents.

2.2.4 Analysis

The analysis of the data from semi-structured interviews employed an appropriately modified schema analysis model to echo the framework of cultural scripts (Bernard and Dawson 2011). In the analysis model, the focus is on uncovering underlying rules of behaviour through which the interviewees structure their migrant and parenting experiences (Bernard and Dawson 2011, Castleberry and Nolen 2018). Field notes and expert interviews were examined less closely, and instead treated as background information.

Utilising a node structure in NVivo software, the data was coded around seven different categories which had several subcategories. The six major categories used in the coding were the state; education; family relationships; cultural parenting identity; transnational parenting; migration and family histories. To further differentiate the analysis, the seven main themes were further broken

down into subcategories. For example, the state category included seven subcategories including experiences with state institutions encounters with street level bureaucrats and comparisons between Russia (or other country of origin) and Finland as states. If appropriate, the subcategory was further broken down to ensure the rigour of the analysis. For example, in the family relationships category, a subcategory that featured heavily was mothers speaking about fathers/husbands. This category was then broken into my partner as a father/husband and statements on fatherhood in general. As coding progressed, some of the tertiary categories were combined to accommodate the structure of the interviews. For instance, in the category of encounters with street level bureaucrats, it was impossible to separately code the encounters under an individual institutions due to the fact that most interviewees tended to merge their encounters into one narrative. The full coding structure can be found as appendix 4. In the analysis phase the interviews were left in their original language of either Russian, Finnish or English. More on the selection of language for interviews is detailed in section 5.

2.3 Engaging Russian-speaking parents: organisation of field work

The most laborious and challenging part of the field work process proved to be engaging Russian-speaking parents and recruiting them as participants for the semi-structured interviews. The following describes the data collection process in more detail. Two aspects are highlighted: the ways in which participants were recruited for semi-structured interviews and the location of fieldwork.

2.3.1 Recruitment of participants

The initial contact with respondents of the semi-structured interviews happened mainly through three different avenues: Russian-speaking associations, libraries and social media. The choices of recruitment avenues arose from both theoretical as well as practical concerns. Firstly, the study purposefully targeted Russian-speaking parents through spaces that could be described as casual and part of everyday routines. This approach was adopted in order to better understand how these more informal spaces and communities shape the parents'

construction of their cultural scripts of parenting. Secondly, the three different avenues of recruitment are all spaces where many Russian-speaking parents are present. This coupled with the informal, unintimidating space of contact was conducive for finding enough respondents to make the study viable. Below the three different avenues are described in detail. Additionally, limitations of this recruitment approach are discussed.

2.3.1.1 Avenues of recruitment

The first point of contact for recruitment of participants were Russian-speaking associations that work locally, providing activities and services to Russian-speaking families. This initial approach was decided in the research design phase during which I theorised this avenue would be the best way to gain access to Russian-speaking spaces and engage Russian-speaking migrant parents in an everyday setting. The organisations and associations that provided data for this study can roughly be divided into two groups. Firstly, there are 'grass-roots' associations that operate on a local level, focusing on recreational activities or events alongside providing their members with information on various aspects on life in Finland, including institutions like school or the social insurance institutions. Secondly, there are NGOs with a national profile that have experts who offer professional advice and support to Russian-speaking parents who struggle to engage with Finnish state institutions such as the child protective services. Additionally, these NGOs support or even produce research and seek to influence policymaking on a national level. The first type of association offered experts in the form of volunteers in charge of running the association, opportunities for participant observation and chances to contact possible participants for semi-structured interviews. The second type of organisations mainly provided expert interviewees in the pilot phase of the study, but also some contacts of possible participants for semi-structured interviews. The details of the different associations can be found in section in appendix 2.

Gaining access to the associations worked similarly in all cases. Initially, I approached the association through email or social media. This then led to an expert interview with a volunteer or employee in a significant position within the association. After this point potential respondents were contacted through

two main ways. Firstly, participants were contacted through informal conversations at participant observations. Secondly, through contacts gained from the expert interviewee volunteer and later the interviewees gained from participant observations. Volunteers in the associations were instrumental in the recruitment of respondents as they would point me to the direction of association members who they thought would be willing to participate in an interview.

In the semi-structured interviews, libraries arose as a major provider of services to Russian-speaking families. The capital area especially holds an organised network of libraries, including a possibility of operating the libraries' websites and electronic services fully in Russian. The libraries also make full use of their Russian-speaking staff by organising multiple events as well as weekly hobbies for Russian-speaking children and families. In the capital area, I initially contacted the Russian language library whose staff then advised me to contact one of their employees who ran a popular dance and music group for children under 10. This led to a participant observation in one of their practices and a number of semi-structured interviews

The library services in Russian in the Tampere area are more modest, mostly centring around one twice-a-month fairy tale reading for toddlers. Nonetheless, library services were important tools for parenting in the minds of interviewees from Tampere as well, and I had the opportunity for a participant observation in one of the fairy tale readings, too. However, no semi-structured interviews arose from this opportunity. This is likely because at the time the study was looking for single parents only. This narrowed the potential participant pool and seemed to be a more socially stigmatised than parenthood in general, making single parents less likely to come forward and volunteer to be interviewed.

Social media entered the recruiting strategy after an interviewee from the early stages of the study suggested it. The main avenue of recruiting participants were Facebook groups. While VKontakte is the largest social media site in Russia, in Finland Facebook continues to be popular and many of the Russian-speaking

migrants have profiles in both. Facebook also offered an ease of targeting an ad through groups aimed at Russian-speakers living in Finland.

Facebook groups were strictly used only for recruiting participants, not other data collection. I started with posting on the two regional Facebook groups, Russian-speakers in Helsinki and Russian-speakers in Tampere. After that I also posted on some of the Facebook groups of the associations I worked with. Additionally, one of my interviewees acted as an administrator in another group, Russian-speaking mothers in the Capital area, and she posted an ad in that group on my behalf. However, most of my interviewees contacted through Facebook came from a group called Everything about Finland. As suggested by the group's name, this group seems to be interested in learning more about life in Finland and in sharing their own experiences, which explains the interest the Facebook ad generated. Another advantage was undoubtedly the group's large size of approximately 17 400 people.

2.3.1.2 Problems of recruitment: participant selection and anonymity

As a small-scale qualitative study, this research holds the danger of selection bias. However, as the purpose of this study is not to produce statistically significant data, but rather explore the themes prevalent in Russian-speaking migrant parents' understanding of parenting within a transnational context, this selection bias does not negate the significance of the findings of this study. A snowball sampling was used in the recruitment of participants, in which interviewees introduced more potential participants into the study. While associations were a great resource in the study, snowball sampling within the associations meant that the study reached parents who are active in their communities. Previous studies have already theorised that local ethnic communities help migrants to adapt to their new country of residence. Furthermore, support from these communities to which Russian-speaking associations belong, creates social capital and confidence for migrants that take part in them (Erdal & Oeppen, 2013; Kivisto, 2001). Therefore, the migrants with the most fractured relationship with state institutions and the highest risk of social exclusion are not to be found in these associations.

Already in previous studies on Russian-speakers in Finland it has been noted that there is a difficulty in reaching Russian-speakers from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (Varjonen, Zamiatin et al. 2017). Choosing to participate in a study requires a certain kind of activity which can be lessened by socially and financially wearing situations. Indeed, even taking into account the high levels of education among Russian speakers in Finland (Varjonen, Zamiatin et al. 2017), the sample of this study leans to the highly educated, with seven of the 40 participants having PhDs and working in a research capacity and most participants reporting to have at least an undergraduate degree. On the other hand, with the diversified locations of recruiting participants many different types of interviewees, including unemployed participants or interviewees educated to a vocational level were reached. Moreover, with social media the study added a space to the avenues of recruitment which requires a less active mode of engagement than associations.

The avenues of recruitment were also problematic in terms of reaching Russian-speaking fathers. Researchers have found that while motherhood is emphasised in the Russian cultural context, men are pushed to define their identity in terms of work outside of the home (Kiblitskaya 2000, Kukhterin 2000). In keeping with this, Russian-speaking men also tend to be less involved with Russian-speaking organisations aimed at families than women, meaning less chances of face-to-face interactions. Overall, a small number of men, five in total took part in the study. This low level of willing participants is in line with other studies with the focus on Russian men (Bell and Pustułka 2017, Souralová and Fialová 2017). Of the five male participants, only one was actively involved in an organisation involved with arranging activities for parents and children. Reaching fathers for a study of this kind is a problem that is not easily solved. Snowball-sampling brought most of my male respondents, with female respondents asking either their partner or other male acquaintances to take part in the study. Even with this approach, one of the female respondents reported back to me that two of the male friends she had asked felt too embarrassed to participate in an interview.

In a study involving only a small number of participants and snowball-sampling in close-knit communities, anonymity is another salient issue (Bernard and Dawson 2011). The topic of parenting might be an everyday occurrence, but it is still a highly personal theme. While participants are referred to by pseudonyms, all interviewees were made aware that they could still be recognised by family or friends reading the study. They were also offered the choice of retreating from the study, even after the interview was completed. In some cases, the interviewees wanted to relay details of their life story off recorder, which they could do. Furthermore, the interviewees were asked whether they would like other researchers to be able to use the anonymised transcript of their interview. Most interviewees gave their permission for other researchers to use their interview, with some even being excited by the possibility their experiences could inform even more research. The participants who declined to give permission usually worked in a field in the university sector and felt it would be easy for others to recognize them despite the anonymisation.

In contrast to semi-structured interviews, the respondents in expert interviews were given the choice of appearing in the study with their own name. To protect anonymity further, the participating Russian-speaking associations working on a community level have been anonymised. This was a difficult decision as most of the volunteers interviewed agreed to appear with their own name, and I would like to give credit to organisations that aided me in this research. However, due to the relatively small size of these organisations, members who were interviewed would have even less of a chance to not be recognised. Furthermore, in the interviews with volunteers the line between an expert and a private person accounting personal details is not always clear. Similarly working at the grass roots level, the expert interviewed at the Migrant Information Centre has been anonymised for the same reasons as volunteers. In the case of expert interviews with actors from national level NGOs, experts have been named with their permission. The reasoning for this is that these experts have commented on the themes in a professional capacity and they have done so before on other public forums. Therefore, their personal life is not on display, and they are not in danger of social ostracization due to the views they have expressed.

2.3.2 Locations of the study

The environment of state institutions and everyday life Russian-speaking migrants encounter in Finland is to an extent location-specific, especially given the power local municipalities hold over organising welfare services (Kroger, 2011). Most Russian-speaking migrants live in large cities in Southern Finland or in Eastern Finland close to the border to Russia. Large cities in Southern Finland are home to extensive public and private service networks as well as more job opportunities than economically less prosperous cities in Eastern or Northern Finland. Additionally, large cities in Southern Finland typically hold a more diverse population, making Russian-speakers only one of multiple migrant groups. Percentage wise Russian-speakers make up the largest migrant group in provinces like Northern Karelia located along the Eastern border and can face more discrimination and xenophobia due to their status as the 'only' migrant group (Säävälä 2007-2008, Puuronen 2011).

For the purposes of this study two major cities in Finland were selected: Greater Helsinki area and Tampere. The term Greater Helsinki area is used to refer Helsinki and the surrounding 14 municipalities and cities, which are commonly considered to be commuter towns and exurbs of Helsinki. The core of this area is called the capital area, which consists of the cities of Helsinki, Vantaa, Espoo and Kaunianen. The municipalities and cities in Greater Helsinki area cooperate closely, and common services include public transport, waste management and specialised healthcare. In terms of population, the Greater Helsinki area is in a league of its own with a population of approximately 1,2 million in a country of approximately 5,5 million inhabitants in total (Statistics Finland 2016). Tampere, on the other hand, is the third largest city in Finland with approximately 235,000 inhabitants. It is located in Southern Finland, approximately 179 kilometres north of the city of Helsinki, serviced by 1,5-hour train connection from the capital area. While compared to Greater Helsinki, Tampere is smaller in terms of population and economic output, it remains one of the only three Finnish cities forecasted to experience growth in terms of population and economy by the year 2040 (Raeste, 2019).

Greater Helsinki and Tampere were chosen as fieldwork locations for two reasons. Firstly, both of the cities have a significant Russian-speaking population and active Russian-speaking organisations. In the capital area Russian is the most commonly spoken foreign language, and approximately 31,300 Russian-speakers or 41,5% of Russian-speakers in Finland reside in the area. Expectedly, there is also a wide array of Russian-speaking associations that offer recreational activities, typically for families (Dhalmann, 2013; Varjonen et al., 2017). In Tampere as well Russian remains the most commonly spoken foreign native language and is home to active Russian-speaking associations but like other cities outside of Eastern Finland or the capital area have been less utilised in studies (Kokko, 2013; Varjonen et al., 2017). The second reason for the choice of fieldwork locations was practical. Both the Capital area and Tampere were familiar to the researcher beforehand and transitioning between the two cities relatively convenient. This made the fieldwork process more manageable.

While the study is not attempting to use a comparative framework, the data collected from two different locations is used to establish a broader idea on how Russian-speaking migrants interact with public spaces and institutions. Especially the expert interviews with volunteers from Russian-speaking associations collected from these two areas shed light on the ways in which location affects the above said interactions. Furthermore, participant observations were conducted in both Tampere and the Capital area, showing differences. These differences came from both the different landscape of Russian-speaking organisations in the two areas as well as the different structure of public services. The association observed in Tampere has been active for 20 years and has established itself as the main Russian-speaking association in Tampere. In 2017, for instance, it organised over 100 events and boated a membership of 500 people. The association in the Capital area on the other hand has been active for approximately 8 years, and while growing, it is only one of many options for Russian-speaking parents in the Capital area. On the other hand, the library services, another important space for participant observation, are different in the two locations. While the Capital area holds multiple large libraries, many of which are the site for Russian-speaking activities, in Tampere the central library in town centre is the only one to hold regular Russian-speaking activities. These

activities are less frequent and less varied. For a broader selection of Russian language literature, library users in cities like Tampere can use an interlibrary loan system to order books from the Russian-speaking library in the Capital area, but for Russian-speakers in the capital area, this resource is right at hand.

Furthermore, the locations of the parents, who took part in the semi-structured interviews, broaden this study's view on different ways of interacting with public spaces and institutions. Recruitment of participants in Tampere proved more difficult than in the Capital area, despite gaining access to Russian-speaking associations and activities in both. Through social media, too, Russian-speaking parents in Greater Helsinki and particularly the Capital area proved more eager to volunteer to be interviewed. On the other hand, adding social media to the recruitment tools produced a few parents willing to take part in a phone interview from locations other than Greater Helsinki or Tampere. These included one mother from a small town in Southern Finland, approximately 140 km from Helsinki; two mothers from two different cities in Eastern Finland; and finally, a father, who had moved from Tampere to a major city in the West Coast of Finland. Together with four interviewees from Tampere, eight out of forty-one respondents came outside of Greater Helsinki. However, many of the respondents from Greater Helsinki had lived in multiple places in Finland before their current place of residence, meaning changes and comparisons of interaction with public spaces and institutions are present in their interviews as well. These geographical variations were important background in the analysis of the interviews but are not explicitly referred to in the empirical findings of this studies presented in chapters 4-8. This was done to streamline the findings and keep the focus on larger trends which were present regardless of geographical differences. Because the sample is heavily focused on the Capital area, geographical variation was important in understanding the individual parent's experiences, but could not be applied to a general, side-by-side comparison.

2.4 Language of the study and researcher positionality

This study is decidedly trilingual with interviews having been conducted in Russian, Finnish and English with the final research output produced in English.

Indeed, linguistic practices are not only significant to the research results but played a part in the field work process as well. Although the research focused on one migrant group, the conditions of the study reflect the 'super-diversity' of migration today (Vertovec, 2010, p. 87). An array of different kinds of migrants were present within the spaces from which respondents for semi-structured interviews were recruited and participant observation. Most notably, they represented different nationalities and had different socio-economic backgrounds. Moreover, family situations, work statuses and migration histories created more diversity within these groups.

This super-diversity is reflected in the linguistic practices which marked the field work process. People I encountered within Russian-speaking spaces like the associations could have varied linguistic capabilities. Some were mono-lingual in Russian; some bilingual, speaking fluent Finnish or English alongside Russian; and some multilingual with language skills in Russian, Finnish, English and even beyond. Often these differences depended on the educational levels and socioeconomic positions of the parents. Arguably, it was easier for multilingual individuals to approach me and vice versa. While I speak Russian in a conversational level and conducted 31 of the 40 semi-structured interviews in Russian, my accent and mistakes in language usage reveal me as a native Finn immediately. Uneasiness in confiding in 'native' researchers has been noted in studies among the Russian-speaking population in Finland. In their 2019 report 'Russian-speakers in Finland today', Cultura Foundation notes that there is a gap the level of distrust Russian-speaking migrants express towards the Finnish state in private conversations with the foundation employees and the results of survey-studies conducted at a national level (Cultura Foundation 2019).

Several aspects, however, mitigated this power imbalance. While during the pilot study I mostly contacted potential expert interviewees in Finnish, but as the study progressed, the initial language of contact whether in person or online was Russian to establish trust. Moreover, the interviewees were in control of the choice of language of the interview. Only a small part of 'native' Finnish population has any Russian language skills, and my willingness to conduct interviews in Russian was well received. As a result of conducting the interviews

in Russian, the shape the interview took was more in control of the interviewee, eliciting more robust replies. Often the process of language learning was a uniting experience, as many of the interviewees felt insecure in their Finnish language ability or remembered learning Finnish upon migrating. My position as a Finnish speaker could also be construed as a benefit for the respondents. Often, interviewees lamented on the lack of Finnish speaking contacts they had and having a Finnish speaking researcher visit was seen as a chance to practice their Finnish language.

On the other hand, interactions with multilingual Russian-speaking parents during the fieldwork process supported the dominant view among sociolinguists of language. Rather than seeing languages as bounded entities, sociolinguists have argued multilingual individuals use whichever linguistic features they have in their repertoire to best communicate their message (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Jørgensen et al., 2011). Mixing languages, both within the semi-structured interviews as well as casual conversations was common. In some cases, interviewees felt that it would be better if the whole interview was conducted in a language other than Russian. The interviewees who chose to speak Finnish in the interview felt that their life was, in the words of one interviewee, ‘spent speaking Finnish’. Talking about their life in Finland in Finnish was simply more natural. For some, being able to cope in all situations in Finnish was also a source of pride. These interviewees had spent over 10 years in Finland and of the five interviewees interviewed in Finnish, three had Finnish spouses. In three cases the interviewee preferred to speak English during the interviewee. These interviewees were all researchers at Finnish universities and the interview dynamic was decidedly different as they had themselves conducted qualitative interviews. They also felt, quite rightly, that their English capacity exceeded my Russian. Therefore, again, the choice of language allowed the interviewee to exert control over the interview and the narrative that was created.

Even with these mitigating factors, as a non-native Russian-speaker I could not be considered a linguistic insider. On the other hand, I am not a linguistic outsider in a traditional sense either and the field work was conducted without the aid of an interpreter. There are other intersecting identities that make the

researcher positionality in this study complex (Abrams 2016; Cormier 2018). The study includes both male and female respondents, with their ages ranging from early thirties to early eighties. Notably, I am not a parent myself, a fact I disclosed only if interviewees asked. This happened quite often, usually after the interview, and I was purposefully vague but honest on the topic. Lacking the 'competence' of personal experience, however, usually did not hinder the interview relationship. Most likely due to my gender, interviewees quite quickly categorised me as a future mother, not quite part of their group but not excluded from it yet either (Ashwin 2000; Hult et al. 2014; Utrata 2015; Cormier 2018). Overall, most interviewees found me quite curious: a non-parent native Finn, from a university abroad speaking Russian studying Russian-speaking parents in Finland. Again, however, this curiosity could be a strength or a weakness depending on the situation. In some of the participant observations engaging with people could be challenging in the absence of common ground. On the other hand, as reported by one of my interviewees, especially in social media my profile as a native Finnish researcher looking for participants in Russian caught the attention of many exactly because they found it so unusual. Overall, as a researcher I ended up inhabiting a third space between insider and outsider, which brought benefits but also challenges (Cormier 2018).

While my ambiguous positioning on the insider/outsider paradigm might have kept participants from disclosing all their concerns on the Finnish state institutions, the native Finnish presence brought out an important discourse, namely the 'good migrant' as discussed further in chapter 7. Linguistic practices, too, such as demonstrating Finnish language capabilities can be seen as a part of this performative aspect of migrant identity. As a native Finn, my presence invoked some of the same elements of performative migrant identity that the interviewees would likely present to state institutions, and this has been taken into account when analysing the data(Abrams, 2016; Heino, 2018; Varjonen et al., 2018). On the other hand, as seen in the following chapters, the interviewees also felt comfortable enough to elicit some of their complaints on the state system and share personal details in the context of the interviews. As a native Finn myself, I have also been subject to the problematic discourses of Russianness in Finland further discussed in chapter 3. However, being aware of

these existing stereotypes helped me to pay special attention and self-reflexivity to how I conducted and analysed the interviews.

In the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, the transcripts were reviewed in the original language. This was done to stop dilution of meaning in the analysis phase. With three languages involved in all research stages, it was not obvious to which language the transcripts should be translated. Keeping the original language of the interviews intact also allowed the analysis of the contextual use of different languages as practically all interviews included a switch of language of some sort when discussing things like state institutions. In cases where quotes have been translated for the purposes of this thesis, this has been done to convey the meaning of the original rather than the exact wording (Hult, English et al. 2014, Cormier 2018). For this reason, the original language of each quotation is included along with biographical information of the interviewee and changes in language are marked. The original languages of the interviews can also be found in the list of participants in appendix 1. The English and Finnish language interviews were partly transcribed by me and partly by a transcriber due to time constraints. Although an interpreter was not used in the field work phase of the research project, two native Russian-speaking transcribers transcribed the Russian language interviews and I further checked after the transcription was completed to improve the accuracy. This process mitigated the possibility of outright mistakes such as misheard words in the transcript.

2.5 Conclusion

To compliment the core framework of cultural scripts, the research design was based on a long field work period during which three types of data was collected; expert interviews, semi-structured interviews and participant observations. Expert interviews were collected from volunteers of Russian-speaking organisations, NGOs working on a national level and public sector employees. The collection of expert interviews continued throughout the study, but the main phase of collecting expert accounts was during a pilot study, which informed the form the semi-structured took. The bulk of the data in this study

comes from 40 semi-structured interviews with Russian-speaking parents, which participant observations from Russian-speaking events compliment. These semi-structured interviews were subject to a rigorous analysis employing a type of schema analysis, while expert interviews and participant observations were treated as additional and contextual information.

The context of location and differentiated experiences of the state forms an integral part of the methodology of this study. Participants were contacted through three main avenues. Firstly, Russian-speaking organisations focusing on activities for Russian-speaking families were utilised for making face-to-face contact with potential participants and participant observation. Secondly, Russian-speaking activities organised in local libraries offered opportunities for face-to-face interactions and participant observation. Thirdly, social media was used to advertise the study. While selection bias in the choice of participants was mitigated by diversifying the avenues of contact, the sample skews to a more educated respondent in a stable financial situation. This bias is typical of research on Russian-speakers in Finland (Varjonen et al. 2017) and needs to be kept in mind in contextualising the results. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were collected from parents living in varied parts of Finland. The study focused particularly on the Greater Helsinki region and the city of Tampere, where expert interviews and participant observations also took place.

Critical reflections on this study focused largely on the intersubjectivity between a ‘native’ researcher and migrant interviewee. Language of the study forms a major part of this intersubjectivity. The study is decidedly trilingual, and the opportunity to choose the language of the interview increased the control the interviewees had over the interview situation. This trilingual nature of the interviews was carried through to the analysis of the data. The researcher positionality located in a ‘third position’ somewhere between insider and outsider provided advantages and disadvantages in the interview process (Abrams, 2016; Cormier, 2018). Most notably these have been considered in the analysis by paying special attention to the ‘good migrant’ discourse the presence of a ‘native’ researcher was perhaps more likely to bring to the forefront (Abrams, 2016; Heino, 2018; Varjonen et al., 2018).

Overall, this methodological overview introduces the research design underpinning the following analysis. The chapter also shows the rigour and thoroughness of the research process. The next chapter turns the attention to the larger framework of Russian-speaking migration to Finland, highlighting the contextual factors of this study.

3 Defining the Context: Russian-speaking Migration and Finland

3.1 Introduction

Starting from the 1990s after the collapse of Soviet Union, Russian-speaking migrants have consistently made up the largest single migrant group in Finland, with the number of Russian speakers residing in Finland exceeding 75 000 in 2016 (Brylka, Mähönen et al. 2015, Statistics Finland 2016). However, while continuously growing, the percentage of migrants in the Finnish population has remained below the European average, with the Finnish average estimated to be between 4-5% depending on the characteristic used to quantify international migrants. Most commonly Finnish migration studies quantify migrants by language, citizenship, and birthplace, reflecting the multiple possible definitions of foreign (Martikainen 2007). In addition to challenges faced by all international migrants in the evolving landscape of immigration into Finland, Russian-speaking migrants also face exclusion from the national polity through specific, historically formed conditions (Puuronen 2011).

In this chapter I briefly outline the salient elements which form the context of Russian-speaking migrants experiences of migration in Finland. First, I describe the larger framework of Russian-speaking identity. The linguistic identity as a Russian speaker encompasses many intersecting identities, including different nationalities and ethnicities, adding to the diversity of this migration population. Second, I provide the salient details specific to Russian speakers in Finland, including the sub-group of Ingrian Finns. The third and fourth parts each look at a specific aspect of Russian-speaking migration to Finland. The third part focuses on the role of the 'other' Russia plays in the construction of Finnish national identity and how this is relevant to Russian-speaking migrants' relationship to the state. Finally, the fourth part explores the gendered nature of Russian-speaking migration to Finland and how this is related to questions surrounding parenting.

3.2 Russian speakers abroad

Previous research has highlighted the diversity within the Russian-speaking migrant population (Ivashinenko, 2018; Pechurina, 2017). The varied self-identifications, belongings and attachments make it challenging to define and characterise this migrant body consistently (Byford, 2012). The term 'Russian-speaking' is in and of itself layered and encompasses multiple possible national and ethnic identifications. In large part this is linked to the status of Russian as a lingua franca and the politics within the Russian empire and later the USSR. The border-crossing nature of Russian language can be traced all the way to the Russian empire, which in the 18th and 19th centuries pushed for local elite to be educated in Russian (Pavlenko, 2008). The position of Russian as a lingua franca intensified in the USSR. The russification policies during the seventy-year Soviet rule were, however, uneven, and contradictory. On the one hand, Russian became the de facto official language deemed a necessity for all Soviet citizens. On the other hand, national institutions were maintained and strengthened, allowing the development and maintenance of national identities (Slezkine, 1994).

The uneasy relationship between Russian-speaking identity and national identity can particularly be seen as a product of Soviet era migration and post-Soviet developments. Russian language was promoted through state sponsored migration to the Soviet republics from Russian-speaking areas, and at the break-up of the Soviet Union, many of these monolingual Russian-speaking migrants suddenly found themselves in a foreign country. Many Russian speakers had moved to the former Soviet republics a long time ago or even been born in their current place of residence in the former Soviet republics, making the choice to suddenly relocate a difficult one (Carment & Nikolko, 2017; Rannut, 2008). Faced with the choice to move to the Russian federation or to stay in the newly independent country, many chose the latter. Of the post-Soviet successor states, the position of these Russian-speakers has been especially contentious in Estonia and Latvia, which both have a substantial Russian-speaking population. Existing research has noted both the symbolic and practical exclusion of the Russian-speaking population from the newly formed independent national polities

(Rannut, 2008). Researchers have argued that in response to this Russian-speakers in Estonia and Latvia have developed an identity which relies on their self-definition as linguistically and culturally Russian but has little to do with the Russian Federation as a state (Cheskin & Kachuyevski, 2019, pp. 11-13; Jašina-Schäfer & Cheskin, 2019). In contrast, in many less well researched cases of Russian-speaking identities in post-Soviet states such as Ukraine and Belarus, researchers have argued that the border between national identities and Russian-speakers is more porous. This has enabled Russian-speakers to combine their national and linguistic identity to a larger extent than in Estonia and Latvia (Cheskin & Kachuyevski, 2019, pp. 13-16). This context is significant to this study, as Estonian parents form a significant minority within the interviewees, seven out of the total of 41 parents, and there are also participants from Ukraine and Belarus. Further information on the nationalities of the participants can be found in appendix 1.

Not only questions of nationality but also socioeconomic factors have been seen as significant factors creating divisions between Russian-speaking migrants in previous research. Researchers have argued that the post-Soviet Russian-speaking migration, termed the 'fourth Russian immigration wave', is marked by the continued significance of internal divisions after migration to a new country (Kopnina, 2005). Studies point to a low interest in having Russian-speaking neighbours, the lack of a common rubric for diasporic community organisations and the significance of issues such as differing attitudes to contemporary Russian politics or even the Soviet past (Dhalmann, 2013; Ivashinenko, 2018; Kopnina, 2005; Pechurina, 2020). The preference seems to be not simply to maintain networks with any Russian-speakers but rather Russian-speakers from a compatible background with similar socioeconomic background and political affiliations. The divisions which are present in wider discourses that make up Russian national identity are transferred to Russian speakers abroad.

Russian language is, therefore, not an unambiguous marker of identity. There is, however, existing research which highlights the different ways native Russian language is an integral tool of communication between migrants and creates opportunities for common social spaces. These can be tangible spaces such as

community organisations or virtual such as internet forums (Ivashinenko, 2018; Kopnina, 2005; Pechurina, 2017). Furthermore, research has shown the emotional dimensions of language preservation and the intrinsic value placed on language. In this way, language preservation brings together Russian speaking migrants from otherwise varied backgrounds. In the UK, for example, Ivaschinenko has researched the role of heritage language schools acting to form a community between Russian-speaking migrants (Ivashinenko, 2018, pp. 40-41). Researchers have also noted the role of shared memory practices in the creation of Russian-speaking identities. While differing attitudes toward the Soviet past can create divisions between Russian-speaking migrants, the Soviet past can also act as a unifying element (Byford, 2012; Pechurina, 2020). Byford, for example, argues that the 'imagined' Soviet past provides an important cultural mythology, which provides a sense of belonging and shared past between Russian-speaking migrants. Significantly to this study, researchers have argued these type of memory practices are significant in the creation of a separate Russian-speaking identity in the Baltic states, whereas in Ukraine and Belarus these memory practices can in certain contexts be used to combine national and linguistic identities (Cheskin, 2013; Cheskin & Kachuyevski, 2019). At the same time, the Russian state has increasingly pursued the historically formed idea of *Russkyi Mir*, Russian World, connecting members of Russian diaspora created at the collapse of the Soviet Union, 'compatriots abroad' to one civilizational space through cultural, political, and economic ties to the Russian state (Kallas, 2016). 'Russian speaker' as an identity, therefore, can be a unifying element despite the diversity of the group. Furthermore, elements such as a shared Soviet past, Russia as one civilizational space and heritage language preservation are also present in how the participants of this study construct Russian-speaking parenthood.

3.3 Russian speakers in Finland

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of Russian-speaking migrants in Finland was low and consisted largely of high-skilled male migrants. Since the 1990s, however, the number of Russian-speaking migrants in Finland has increased steadily in all areas of the country. Approximately 40% of Russian-

speaking migrants in Finland reside in the economically attractive capital area, making Russian the most common foreign native language not only in the country but in the capital area as well (Dhalmann, 2013). Fewer Russian-speaking migrants reside in the more rural, less economically prosperous provinces along the eastern border, but they make up a larger proportion of resident foreigners than in the capital area. In the province of Southern Karelia, for example, Russians form over 60% of the resident foreigners in the area (Säävälä, 2007-2008). Yet, in a study focusing on the capital area, Dhalmann notes that while co-ethnic social networks formed through family, work or hobbies remain important to Russian migrants, they show little or no inclination to having neighbours from their own ethnicity. Rather, internal divisions inherited from a Russian framework, such as educational or socio-economical differences, do not lose salience in a migration setting (Dhalmann, 2013). As discussed above, studies from cities such as London and Amsterdam further collaborate the heterogeneous nature of Russian migration after the collapse of the Soviet Union and mark the continued existence of internal divisions from the homeland as the hallmark of the 'fourth Russian immigration wave' (Kopnina, 2005).

Additionally, some specific intergroup differences in the ethnic self-definition of migrants from Russia are clear in the Finnish context. Between 1990 and 2001 the Finnish government operated a return-migrant program for Russian nationals descending from 17th century Finnish migrants to the now Russian area of Ingria. The program guaranteed a returnee status subject to evidence of Finnish ethnic background and a language test (Varjonen et al., 2013). As a result, migrants holding a returnee status, dubbed Ingrian Finns, form a large part of Russian-speaking migrants in Finland (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2000). Contrary to the migration policy of the government, which defined ethnicity as an essential biological, inherited quality, in practice, the Finnish public often does not make a difference between an 'ethnically Russian' migrant and an 'ethnically Finnish' Russian-speaking migrant (Varjonen et al., 2013). In fact, scholars have submitted that Russian-speaking Estonian immigrants in Finland, too, are in a greater danger of social exclusion and discrimination than their Estonian-speaking counterparts, often explained by Estonian-speakers' greater proficiency and less obvious accent in Finnish (Mannila & Reuter, 2009). Language

proficiency and the absence of a Russian accent rather than citizenship arise as the most significant reasons in preventing exclusion especially in the job market. For example, Estonian-speaking migrants have been found to be at less risk of social marginalisation than Ingrian Finns, who are often bilingual, albeit sometimes speaking Finnish with a Russian accent, but have been raised in Russia (Mannila & Reuter, 2009; Pöllänen, 2007).

Studies investigating Ingrian Finns' own ethic identity formation likewise form a complex picture. Varjonen, Arnolds and Jasinskaja-Lahti, for example, investigate Ingrian Finns' ethnic identity construction before and after migration to Finland through discursive psychology. The study finds that before migration the interviewed Ingrian Finns constructed an ethnic identity relying on a biological repertoire, focusing on their own Finnish traits. Conversely, after migration, the interviewees reflected on their Russian cultural heritage through relying on the discourse of early life socialization as a key element in forming identity. Having been denied 'membership' as a Finn by the majority population that ascribes to them the ethnic label of 'Russian', the participants in the study were at least in the short term prevented from developing a positive ethnic identity, resulting in a 'double minority position' (Varjonen et al., 2013).

Researchers have utilised multiple different categorisations and methodologies in contending with the heterogeneity of the Russian-speaking population in Finland and the possible discord between externally ascribed ethnic labels and self-identities. Some studies, such as the study by Varjonen, Arnolds and Jasinskaja-Lahti mentioned above draw from the dissonance between external and self-identification and study the emerging negotiation of ethnic identity (Varjonen et al., 2013). Similarly, a study by Mähönen, Jasinskaja-Lahti and Liebkind exploring the polarization among immigrant adolescents, sampled only adolescents from an Ingrian Finnish background to investigate the connection between national and ethnic identities, concluding that the experience of discrimination or threat to ethnic minority identity resulted in lower national identification with Finland among the participants (Mähönen et al., 2010). On the other hand, studies also commonly treat 'Russian-speakers' as a unitary category or group together Estonian Russian-speakers with other migrants from

Russia, but separate ethnic Finns as a separate category (Dhalmann, 2013; Jääskeläinen, 2003; Mannila & Reuter, 2009). Scholarly definitions of 'Russian-speaking migrants' in Finland are, therefore, varied.

3.3.1 Russian-speaking Migrants, Narratives of Exclusion and the State

Considering shared cultural characteristics and similar physical appearance between Russian migrants and the native population that make 'blending in' possible, it can seem somewhat surprising that studies have consistently shown Finnish respondents place Russians among the least desirable immigrants (Puuronen, 2011). Here, the wider perspective of 'whiteness studies' is important. 'Whiteness studies' deconstruct and challenge the privileged position the white 'native' population of Western European countries enjoy, especially vis-à-vis East-to-West migrants (Richter & Ruspini, 2017; van Riemsdijk, 2010). Analysing the experiences of exclusion and inclusion of Polish nurses in Norway, van Riemsdijk conceptualises a discourse of 'variagated levels of whiteness'. The Norwegian superiors and co-workers of the Polish nurses use the category of whiteness flexibly to emphasise their difference or sameness depending on the context with concrete results. Superiors for instance commented positively on the Polish nurses' work ethic and 'natural ability for care work', which provided a justification for allocating Polish nurses into low skilled, low status basic care roles and shifts unacceptable to native Norwegian workers, like for example Christmas holidays (van Riemsdijk, 2010). Contrastingly, co-workers' assessments of their Polish colleagues are shaped by a narrative of incompetency and cultural backwardness also present in Russian speakers' experiences in the Finnish job market ((Jaakkola & Reuter, 2007; Puuronen, 2011), Van Riemsdijk's study also reports Polish nurses' difficulty in adjusting to this loss in status and patronising attitudes based on their country, despite having achieved a Master's level qualification (van Riemsdijk, 2010). On the other hand, when van Riemsdijk's Norwegian respondents discussed their 'visibly ethnically different' co-workers from 'Pakistan, Philippines and African countries', Polish nurses were subsumed under a homogenous umbrella identity of whiteness, 'not that different from us' (van Riemsdijk, 2010). The differentiated levels of whiteness can therefore grant

the East European migrants a spot in the created ethnic in-group, but not invariably.

The position of Russian-speaking migrants in Finland reflect the wider challenges faced by Eastern European migrants, but there are also elements specific to Finland. Attitudes towards Russian migrants have steadily become more positive after the economic recession coinciding with the initial immigration 'wave' of the 1990s. In a longitudinal study partly funded by the Finnish state, 37% of respondents said they would strongly oppose Russian migration into Finland in 1993, whereas the percentage had dropped to 21% in 2007. Nonetheless, in the same 2007 study, Russians remained the fourth least desirable nationality in the 'Finnish racial hierarchy' (Jaakkola, 2009; Puuronen, 2011). On the other hand, all of the existing studies on Finnish attitudes towards foreign migrants and ethnic hierarchies have been conducted before the onset of the 'European migration crisis' in 2015 which was covered extensively in Finnish media and led to sometimes even violent, anti-refugee protests from the Finnish public. According to a story by the Finnish public broadcasting company YLE, some Russian migrants seem to share similar negative attitudes towards the new asylum seekers (Shalygina & Liukkonen, 2016). However, more studies are needed to determine how the recent developments in migration have affected the 'Finnish racial hierarchy.

The special place reserved for negative attitudes towards Russians in Finland can be traced back to historically formed narratives used to construct Finnish national identity, which placed Russianness as one of the significant 'others' of Finnishness. The construction of Finnish national identity can be traced to 19th century Hegelian ideas of national uniqueness. While Finnish intellectuals aspired to keep Finland culturally and legislatively separate from imperial Russia through seeking to ensure Finland's autonomous position within the empire, virulent anti-Russian positioning of Finnish identity truly came into the forefront after the country became independent in 1917 (Puuronen, 2011). According to Puuronen, the first decade of the 20th century brought pan-European race ideology to Finland in full force, nursing ideas of an 'inferior Slavic race' (Puuronen, 2011). Especially after a divisive civil war in 1918, fought between a

red and white split mirroring the Russian civil war, the political needs of the white victors ushered in a period of extreme Russophobia in Finland. The winning side of the civil war gained a position of domination in virtually all areas of public and cultural life, and an idea of Finns as the guardians of Western culture against a Slavic threat by any means became a central narrative underlining the new Finnish nationhood and history (Puuronen, 2011; Raittila, 2004).

After the Second World War and the onset of the Cold War, the Russophobic discourse of the interwar period was hidden away from the public sphere and gave way to a self-censoring, realpolitik- type of public discourse recognising the power of the USSR over Finland, later termed Finlandisation. While officially claiming neutrality, after the fall of the Soviet system, scholars have argued that during the period of Finlandisation the USSR wielded a considerable influence on Finnish domestic and foreign policy. The 'friendship' between Finland and the USSR was emphasised in the political discourse, and this 'friendship' was used to silence voices criticising the Soviet Union (Forsberg & Pesu, 2016). Under the umbrella of Finlandisation several groups idealising the Soviet system also emerged in Finland, but this relative closeness to the Soviet Union did not negate the existing anti-Russian discourses. Ideas constructed in the interwar period continued to form a lasting part of Finnish cultural consciousness. These ideas were further shaped by traumatic war experiences and dehumanising war propaganda on the enemy which equated Soviet with Russian (Puuronen, 2011; Raittila, 2004). Following arguments put forward by Raittila and Puuronen, one of the most lasting parts of the ideology created in the interwar period was the othering of Russianness and Russians in Finnish culture (Puuronen, 2011; Raittila, 2004). Puuronen especially argues the derogatory term for Russian, 'ryssä', carries a racialized 'Russian hate discourse', aspects of which are also potentially present in more neutral expressions. With relatively little outwardly obvious differences between Russians and Finns to exploit, racialisation of Russians focuses on universalisation of negative traits that are seen as Russian. These are in turn used to exclude Russian migrants from a constructed idea of Finnishness. Negative 'Russian' traits include such flaws as laziness, deceitfulness, lesser intelligence as well as incompetency (Puuronen, 2011).

Negative racialized stereotypes have tangible effects for Russian migrants, who continue to experience discrimination in the labour market, despite representing one of the most highly educated migrant groups in Finland (Puuronen, 2011; Pöllänen, 2007; Varjonen et al., 2013). Additionally, a cultural image of Russia as an existential threat and people with any connection to Russia as potential 'fifth columnists' consistently features in public discussions (Puuronen, 2011). The latest example of this tendency appeared in early 2017 when news broke about a 'secret memo' instructing military officials to place personnel with a Russian-Finnish dual nationality into positions with limited access to 'vital' security information (Happonen, 2017).

The narratives of exclusion targeting Russians provide specific context in which displaying a Russian-speaking in identity in Finland is not unproblematic. Studies focusing on Russian speakers specifically in Finland have found that Russian speakers often seek to mask their linguistic identity in public spaces (Heino, 2018, pp. 64-68). Existing research has also found that Russian-speakers as a group feel the need to emphasise their position as a 'good migrant', who seeks to adapt to Finnish society more than many other migrant groups (Varjonen et al., 2018). While this tendency undoubtedly is fuelled by Russian discourses on migrancy, which often paint migrants in a negative light (Gorenburg, 2013), the anti-Russian discourses do little to counteract any concerns Russian-speaking migrants might have. In analysis of the following chapters, therefore, the baggage which Russian-speaking identity carries in Finland provides the backdrop to the parents' attempts to maintain part of their linguistic identity through parenting.

The framework of Finland as a Nordic state is significant to the context in which Russian-speaking migrants operate in Finland. Researchers have pointed out the how the supposedly civic minded Western European states view potential migrants differently based on ethnicity and country of origin. In practice, different groups of migrants are not placed on an equal footing when seeking membership in the national polity (Kymlicka & Opalski, 2001; van Riemsdijk, 2010). In the Nordic context, special attention has been paid to the welfare state as a site of nationalism and creation of exclusionary practices. In the

Nordic states, national identity has been historically formed around the state and the state's ability to provide and protect its citizens. Concurrently, provision of state offered welfare and benefits is tied to 'national membership'. Surveys conducted in Finland for instance have found have that the Finnish majority tends to see migrants as less deserving of welfare provision (Keskinen 2016). Street-level bureaucrats also recreate a rigid, permanent cultural dichotomy between migrants and the Finnish majority in dealing with cases like for instance gendered violence, hindering finding effective solutions to complex problems (Keskinen, 2011).

3.4 Gendered Nature of Russian Migration

One of the uniting features of the otherwise varied Russian-speaking migrant population in Finland is its gender composition. Overwhelmingly, the Russian-speaking population in Finland is female, a trend which has kept only strengthening since the 1990s (Statistics Finland, 2016). Judging from statistics, apart from returnee-migrants, marriage with a Finnish man seems to be a common basis for gaining a residency permit for Russian women, although better employment prospects are also cited as a significant reason for migration (Jaakkola & Reuter, 2007). Interestingly, even though Finnish men and women marry foreign nationals at approximately the same rate, the men and women tend to favour different groups. While Finnish men most often marry Russian and Estonian women, Finnish women are statistically more likely to marry West European or North African men (Martikainen, 2007). Researchers have suggested that differing gender roles represent at least a part of the explanation for the differences. In general, East European women, including both Russian and Estonian women, are thought to adhere to more traditional gender roles, which creates expectations for a home life with a conservative gender dynamic for the prospective husbands. Scholars have argued that this is especially widespread in marriages where the 'West European' man has a clearly higher standard of living than his wife (Siim, 2007). However, the gender dynamic within a transnational marriage seems to be a dynamic process rather than a strict rubric. Regarding specifically parenting, Pöllänen (2013) argues that Russian migrant women in her study were satisfied with the active parenting role their Finnish husbands took in

the family. This was especially important because the women could not rely on help from extended family, particularly grandmothers as they would if they still lived in Russia . In Siim's study on Russian mothers living in Finland, for example, the interviewees negotiated their relationship upon migration in multiple ways. Some respondents took up opportunities to pursue everyday rights and entitlements, such as getting a drivers' licence despite the husband's opposition, which they would not have considered doing in Russia. Others struggled to balance situations in which their husband could not fulfil his role as a breadwinner. In their answers, the respondents often recreated the same negative connotation 'emancipation' is given in Russian gender-discourse, in which 'emancipation' is presented as a forced Soviet era policy creating the double burden of work and family for women (Siim, 2007).

The gendered nature of Russian migration into Finland has affects the perception of Russian-speaking migrants as well as the challenges migrants themselves face in Finland. Migrants moving with a Finnish partner have been found to integrate more easily into the new social setting than migrant couples, but at the same time, migrants with a Finnish partner are potentially in danger of becoming dependent on the partner's social networks in the new environment (Jääskeläinen, 2003). Furthermore, the question of dependency is especially problematic for migrants holding a residency permit based on a relationship, as permanent residency permit can be awarded only after a four years' residency. All Nordic countries have made legislative changes to ensure victims of domestic violence continue to hold a right to residence upon divorce. However, participants on the Nordic study 'Russian Women as Immigrants in "Norden"[1]' often presented marriage as a mandatory minimum 'sentence' they needed to complete to gain a residency permit. This comparison was sometimes jokingly, sometimes more seriously (Saarinen, 2007). Moreover, the study found that in Finland especially the situation was made worse by the centralised nature of crisis help centres and public officials reiterating ideas of 'strong Russian women who can find help by themselves' (Saarinen, 2007, p. 140). By and large, in the interviews the Nordic welfare state appears Janus-faced. On one hand, the

1 The "North" in scandic languages

interviewees overwhelmingly praise the Nordic welfare state in fulfilling its role as a provider for single mothers. On the other hand, however, during marriage the state manifests itself as an intruder. Rather than a reliable ally, the state continuously breaks the women's privacy, demanding proof of their marriages' genuineness, and might even punish those escaping domestic abuse by taking away their residency permit (Saarinen, 2007).

The racialized, exclusionary 'Russian hate discourse' identified by Puuronen also seems to have a clear gendered element (Puuronen, 2011). Male and female Russian-speaking migrants share some of the negative stereotypes, such as deceitfulness and laziness, they are constructed as a threat to the national polity in different ways. While male migrants seem to embody a physical security risk as 'fifth columnists', female migrants pose a more moral risk to the nation. As noted above, public officials can question the motives of Russian women married to Finnish men, and as a result complicate various benefit application process (Puuronen, 2011; Saarinen, 2007). Commonly, Russian women are ethnically labelled as promiscuous or prone to prostitution, thus separating them from Finnish women. Consequently, Russian migrant women are vulnerable to sexual harassment in public spaces and are forced to consciously either avoid certain public spaces such as busy restaurants, or to modify their behaviour and dress to avoid unwanted attention (Davydova & Pöllänen, 2010). On the other hand, while rejecting the labels imposed from the outside society, Russian women can also emphasise their difference from Finnish women, who they see as less feminine in appearance (Saarinen, 2007). Conversely, studies have also found Russian migrant women simultaneously accepting the negative stereotypes when applied to others from a similar background but actively distancing themselves from the stereotype, asserting they are different from the rest (Säävälä, 2010).

The gendered discourse which excludes Russian migrants from 'Finnishness' also places women in a weak position in the public sphere in terms of employment. While most qualitative studies on Russian migrant women in Finland have unsurprisingly found that motherhood and the family are in a central position in the lives of the interviewees, the studies also underline the continued

importance of work- and work-related social networks in migrant women's lives (Pöllänen, 2013; Siim, 2007). However, as noted above, employment opportunities even for migrants with high qualifications can be difficult. Russian degrees are seldom recognised, and language requirements can be set artificially high and used to exclude applicants with a foreign background (Puuronen, 2011; Pöllänen, 2007). Certain professions, on the other hand, can become ethno and gender specific, as Pöllänen (2007) argues school assistant positions for Russian language children have become in the border region of Northern Karelia . Sexual harassment and accusations of prostitution can also follow Russian migrant women into the world of employment even starting from the initial job interview, further complicating the job seeking process (Pöllänen, 2007; Saarinen, 2007).

Gender, parenting and family have also been politicised between Finland and Russia on an international relations level. Starting in the early 2010s, Russian media began to run stories of Russian children being taken into foster care away from their mothers in Finland (Golubitskaay, 2010; Merikallio, 2012; Rykovtseva, 2010). Finnish media subsequently picked up on the topic, and the coverage grew in Finland after speculation the Russian state apparatus was fuelling the Russian media for its foreign and domestic policy purposes (Mäkelä, 2010). The dispute was taken to a governmental level in 2012 when the then Russian Children's Rights Commissioner commented on Russian state media that Finland should be declared a dangerous country for Russian families to live in. The Finnish foreign minister responded mildly, referring to international treaties of children's rights (Merikallio, 2012). The height of the dispute was in 2012, but new stories in Russian media of foster care cases in Finland arose again in force in 2016 (Heiskanen, 2016; RIA Novosti, 2016). Stories continued appearing sporadically afterwards, but the Russian public reaction lacked the outrage of early 2010s (Hakala, 2017; Shashina, 2017). There have also been concentrated efforts to increase cross-border cooperation between Russian and Finnish officials, including projects coordinated by the Finnish NGO Central Union for Child Welfare (Kuokkanen, 2018).

This dispute shows the gendered nature of Russian migration on multiple levels and some of the public discourses Russian-speaking parents' encounter when building their cultural scripts of parenting in Finland. On the one hand, scholars have argued that the dispute was driven by Russian domestic situation, in which low birth rates are a prominent concern and concentrated on discussions around mothers and mothering (Isola, 2013; Jäppinen & Kulmala, 2015). On the other hand, the dispute also demonstrates a clash of two different understandings of family and responsibilities of the state. Existing research has pointed out the different approaches in the Russian and Finnish state structures. While the Finnish child protective services operate under a child centric model, the Russian system focuses on the family as a unit, highlighting parental rights and responsibilities. Consequently, foster care means different things in the two countries. In Finland children can be taken into foster care in an earlier stage and the goal is that the biological parents will regain their parental rights. In Russia foster care is the final option, and parental rights are not reinstated (Isola, 2013, p. 39; Jäppinen & Kulmala, 2015). These differences in approach provide the backdrop to the parents' approach to the state as a co-actor as will be discussed in chapter 7.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the context of Russian speaking migrants in Finland. Existing research has found that many of the elements that characterise 'the fourth Russian wave' are also applicable to Russian-speaking migrants living in Finland. Like most Russian migrant groups belonging to the 'fourth wave' Russian migrants in Finland form a heterogenous group difficult to pin down definitively. The Russian speaking migrant community includes different nationalities and ethnicities, in the case of Finland most saliently Estonian Russian speakers and Ingrian Finns. Furthermore, researchers have noted the continued significance of issues such as class or political affiliation among Russian migrants. However, researchers have also found evidence of Russian language acting as a unifying element for migrants, highlighting spaces such as community organisations, internet forums and heritage language schools. Additionally, researchers have identified memory practices which unite Russian-speaking communities and

strengthen the common linguistic identity. These unifying elements at the centre of Russian-speaking identity are also among the discourses and practices from which the participants in this study draw from to construct their parenting scripts.

An important contextual factor affecting Russian-speaking migrants' experiences in Finland is the position of Russia as the 'other' in the construction Finnish national identity. Subsequently, Russians and Russianness are connected with negative stereotypes and undesirable qualities. Negative stereotypes attached to Russian migrants in Finland conform to the larger narrative of 'Eastern cultural backwardness' to which migrants from Eastern Europe are often subject. Additionally, Russian-speaking migration to Finland is highly gendered and Russian-speaking women face additional challenges. The context of exclusionary narratives is an important backdrop to analysing Russian-speaking migrants' experiences of migration as well as their relationship to the state. Despite citizenship being framed as ethnically neutral, existing research shows that different ethnic, racial, and national groups are placed on unequal footing. Consequently, showing 'deservingness' of social support can be more difficult to some groups than others. This context informs the ways in which the participants in this study approach the state as a co-actor of parenting.

The next chapter turn the attention to the empirical findings of the study. In the next chapter, I analyse the interviewees' transnational imagination. This chapter has detailed how Finns place Russia and Russian speakers within their social world, but the meanings Russian speakers give to migration to Finland and Finland as a parenting environment are quite different.

4 Transnational imagination, narratives of migration, and Finland as a parenting environment

4.1 Introduction

To understand the forms which transnational parenting scripts take, it is important to identify from which elements the interviewed Russian-speaking parents construct their image of Finland as a country. I argue that these images of Finland and Finnishness on the one hand and Russia and Russianness on the other are part of the parents' transnational imagination. This forms the base of their parenting orientations, including aspects like beliefs, values as well as expectations of the benefits and challenges of migrating, as these relate to parenting. In this way, the parenting scripts of Russian-speaking parents are not only transnational through tangible parenting practices which cross borders such as the 'flying grandmothers' from the country of origin offering vital childcare to migrant parents (Bojarczuk & Mühlau, 2017b). Rather, transnational components in parenting scripts are more complex, encompassing sociocultural elements which underpin parenting orientations, as well as associated parenting practices even if physical border crossing is not involved (Vertovec, 2001, 2004).

In this chapter, I will explore the images of Finland and the way they influence the cultural scripts of parenting the interviewees construct. First, I define the concept of transnational imagination and its place in cultural scripts of parenting. Second, I analyse the narrative of a 'better life' and the different parenting values around which the parents construct their scripts of parenting. The second section is divided into three subsections, which focus on different parts a 'better life' resulting from migration. In the first two subsections, I analyse how the parents feel migration has immediately benefitted their family and how this has shaped their parenting scripts. I argue the dominant parenting value present is security, meant in both a financial and a physical sense. In the third section I analyse the idea of 'a better future'. This section focuses on the added social capital that the parents feel their children will gain through

migration. I argue that 'Soviet' as a negative imaginary is central to how the parents construct migration as part of good parenting. In the fourth section, I analyse the tensions within the concept of a 'better life' and how the parents settle conflicting parenting values connected with transnational imaginings within their parenting scripts.

4.2 Transnational imagination and Finland as a European country

In this study, the ways in which the interviewed parents construct Finland and Russia or another country of origin vis-à-vis one another. Important also is how the interviewees place the two countries in the wider context of the world order. To analyse this construction, I use the concept of transnational imagination. My conceptualisation of transnational imagination draws from the wider literature on social imaginaries. The research on social imaginaries pays special attention to the underlying structures of how we understand the world and our place in it (Benson, 2012; Krivonos & Näre, 2019). Social imaginaries are collective discourses, but significantly individual agency is involved in the way these imaginaries are put into practice. In her study of British migration to the French countryside, Benson argues that everyday experiences, social and economic capital along with individual biographies play a significant part in how social imaginaries played out in everyday experiences (Benson, 2012). Similarly, I argue that in the case of transnational scripts of parenting, the transnational imagination underpinning parenting orientations is informed by individual experiences as well as collective discourses.

For this study, the prevailing transnational imaginary is framed by ideas about 'Europe' or 'the West'. In the interviews conducted in this study, migration to Finland is strongly equated with the idea of moving to Europe, crossing into a different political, cultural, and economic space. This is demonstrated in references to Finland as a European country and Finns as European people, but also in more tangible factors such as Finnish membership of the European Union. Geographically, Europe or the West is used to refer to Western Europe and the United States, but more than geography, Europe is a social imaginary to which certain ideas, norms and expectations are attached. These include democratic

governance, socially liberal and individualistic values, and material wealth (Feklyunina 2016, Duncan 2005). As such, Europe is not geographically fixed; rather, there are points of contention and grey areas. These include the position of the independent post-Soviet states, such as Ukraine and the Baltic states between the imagined West, post-socialist, transitional democracies and even the 'Russian World', a multinational civilisational space shared by Russian-speakers, heavily promoted in Russian foreign policy (Tolz 2007, Feklyunina 2016). However, individuals adopt these discourses about the West differently. As my interviews reveal, depending on the individual's interpretation of the transnational imagination, some of the ideas underpinning the construction of Europe can be seen as negative or a threat, but for most interviewee it was a positive, even a pull factor of migration.

Having moved from Ukraine to Finland with her husband before their 4-year-old son was born, Ludmila described their decision to migrate:

> Ukraine has a very difficult political situation and you know ... both crime and political situation ... And so we thought that it's better to move to Europe. Not necessarily it had to be Finland.
>
> [Ludmila, 35-40, Ukraine, 5-10 years in Finland, married, 1 child]

Ludmila's example is typical of interviewees who migrated from regions not directly sharing a border with Finland. A job offer, receiving a place to study or marriage to a Finnish resident were the direct reasons why the family moved specifically to Finland rather than another European country. Even if the interviewees had little knowledge of Finland beforehand, the 'Europeanness' of Finland, including the stable political situation, relative material wealth and connections to other European countries through the EU were enough to make Finland a desirable place to which to migrate. On the other hand, interviewees from Estonia and the North-West region of Russia, including cities like St. Petersburg, Petrozavodsk and Vyborg, usually had more knowledge of Finland before migration and in many cases had visited the country beforehand. While these interviewees, too, saw Finland as different and 'European', the proximity still made Finland feel more familiar. Nina, who originally moved from Vyborg to

study in Finland but ended up settling after marrying a Finnish man, described her feelings about migrating to Finland:

> It didn't feel like Finland was so much 'abroad' as England, which was unattainable! Meaning something that is difficult or impossible to achieve. Or Paris, or America, they felt like that. Finland is Finland, close and around the corner. It's not even so terribly ... I know that many people from Vyborg and St. Petersburg don't even think of Finland as a foreign country since it's a nearby country, it's not that threshold to go there is very high.
>
> [Nina, Vyborg Russia, 40-45, 11-15 years in Finland, married, 1 child]

By comparison with more distant Western countries such as England, Finland presents a more attainable, familiar option.

Europe and the West have a long history in the Russian identity discourse as an 'other' against which 'Russianness' is built, and this history can be seen in the transnational imagination of the interviewees and the way in which they view parenting in Finland. In wider discourses, the position Europe holds is often contradictory, sometimes seen as aspirational, modern, and economically superior, sometimes morally corrupt and reprehensible (Duncan, 2005; Tolz, 2007). The themes of 'catching up' to the imagined West holds a central position in both Soviet and pre-Soviet Russian cultural history. At the same time it competes with past experiences, memories and imaginations associated with Soviet Russia's cultural isolationism and ideology of social superiority to the West' (Pilkington, 2002, p. 4). Scholars have shown the imagined West continues to hold a multi-faceted position in the everyday identity formation. Regarding youth culture, Pilkington argues that Russian youth adopted a 'pick and mix' approach towards Western and local cultural commodities in the early 2000s, suggesting the open-endedness of the meanings given to the imagined West (Pilkington, 2002). Moreover, scholars such as Gurova as well as Rytkönen and Pietilä have noted that while members of the Russian middle class in particular embrace the imagined West and Europe as the standards of a good life, they simultaneously continue to subscribe to norms from the Soviet era, such as *kultur'nost* , culturedness, and select egalitarian values (Gurova, 2012; Rytkönen & Pietilä, 2012). The centrality of transnational imaginings of the West

in Russian-language identity and cultural discourses has two main implications for the cultural scripts of parenting the interviewees in this study construct. First, the centrality of these imaginings means they form an essential part of the 'toolkit' from which they can form their parenting identity and tell their life story as a migrant parent to others. Second, because the meanings given to the imagined West are not fixed, different individuals can adopt, reject, or transform them in different ways, causing variations in their parenting scripts.

4.2.1 'Better life', present and future

One of the central images within the parents' transnational imagination is the idea of a 'better life', in which 'Europe' and Europeanness is given largely positive meanings. Achieving a 'better life' through migration is a narrative which is present in multiple studies on migration not only from Russian but also from other post-socialist countries (Krivonos and Näre 2019, Sime 2018, Kilkey, Plomien, and Perrons 2014, Trevena and Kay 2018). Research on post-socialist migrations has shown how for most migrants, a 'better life' is intrinsically linked to their hopes for their family's and children's future, not only their own ambitions. For the parents, therefore, a 'better life' is connected to how migration to the imagined West can help them to 'do parenting' as they feel they should. This imaginary draws particularly heavily from the idea of 'catching up to the West'. Daria, who originally migrated to Finland with her then teenage daughter to marry her Finnish partner described her expectations of life in Finland:

> I thought it would be much better to be honest (laughs). You know, Russians have a saying "it's good where we are not." These are just such thoughts. … Well, those high expectations didn't really come true, I thought it was easier for people to live in Finland than in Russia. But in reality, everything turned out to be about the same: you need to study, work, pay taxes - then everything will be fine with you.
>
> [Daria, Kostomuksha Russia, 40-45, 5-10 years in Finland, 3 children]

The idea that 'it's easier to live in Finland', which Daria mentions when describing her image of Finland before migration, is something the interviewed parents mention often in explaining their willingness to migrate. As I explore

below, while the discourse of a ‘better life’ has a material, economic component, it encapsulates more complex ideas including physical security and cultural capital.

When it comes to how the parents construct their parenting scripts after migration, the ‘better life’ is integrally connected to the kind of environment the parents want their children to grow up in. Andrei, who grew up near the Finnish border and later migrated to Finland after his mother, described his thoughts when visiting his mother in Finland:

> I also wanted to stay to study and the standard of living, the economic, social level of the country, the infrastructure of cities - everything is so much better developed than in Russia that I thought, “If I have children … it will be very good for my children if they live and grow up in Finland ... From here it is easier to access anywhere in the world than from Russia”.
>
> [Andrei, 35-40, Murmansk Russia, 11-15 years in Finland, married, 2 children]

Andrei’s description illustrates the multifaceted nature of a ‘better life’ and how it fits into the parenting scripts which migrant parents construct. Andrei’s imagined Finland is integrally connected to his script of good parenting. The aspects of this imagined Finland which Andrei highlights give an important insight to his parenting values and his idea of what kind of environment a good father should provide for his children. Some of Andrei’s transnational imagining is connected to material benefits, such as the standard of living, but there is also a more fundamental underlying theme of ‘development’ and ‘catching up with the West’ in more intangible ways. Particularly, Andrei references the increased opportunities his children have in Finland compared to those they would have in Russia, emphasising the idea of Finland as a part of a wider idea of ‘Europe’ and ‘the West’. As shown by Andrei’s example, therefore, when the parents draw from transnational imaginings to describe the positives and negatives of parenting in Finland, the parenting values they adopt are complex, and not reducible to material benefits alone.

In the following sections, I further analyse the transnational imagination of 'Europe', the concept of a 'better life' and the transnational imaginary the parents have adopted as a part of their parenting scripts. First, I analyse the more tangible elements of a 'better life': material and physical safety. Second, I analyse the concept of a 'better future' and how the parents imagine their children's future after they have grown up in Europe. Finally, I explore the tensions and insecurities within the meanings given to a 'better life'.

4.2.2 Material security and parenting as providing

When asked to describe the best things about parenting in Finland, the majority of interviewees emphasised feelings of security and stability. Pavel, who has two daughters in their twenties living in Russia and now a daughter in elementary school in Finland summed up the feelings of many of the interviewed parents:

> In Finland, I like the fact that if we take, for example, the family … the attention paid to families is very high, and in general a lot of attention is paid to the individual. And therefore, here, of course, you can build your future confidently if you have a family. In Russia there is no such thing. That is, you have to plan a long time before starting a family. It is somehow easier in this regard.
>
> [Pavel, 40-45, Russia, married, 3 children, in Russian]

Achieving the type of material security Pavel describes is an essential part of the parenting orientations of the interviewed parents and often the catalyst for migration or reason for continued settlement. As Pavel explained above, the interviewed parents feel they can make the decision to start a family responsibly, because their ability to provide for the family in the long term is guaranteed. This highlights two major parenting values around which the parents construct their parenting scripts and justify migration within those scripts. The first is the idea of 'responsible parenting'. 'Responsible parenting' is a parenting discourse which emphasises careful planning and keeping up with up-to-date parenting advice and as the foundation of good parenting. The idea of good parenting within responsible parenting is highly normative and rigid, with little room to slip up from the ideal of an active and informed parent. This model of good parenting relates to developments in parenting discourses in Western

countries in the second half of the twentieth century (Chernova, 2012, p. 7). However, researchers have argued the discourse has also been influential in shaping Russian parenting discourses, especially after the socio-political upheaval of the 1990s (Chernova, 2012; Shpakovskaya, 2015; Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2018). Second, this way of constructing parenting scripts, highlights the importance of parenting as providing. The ability to provide materially for one's family is placed as a central duty in the scripts of parenting my interviewees constructed and is at the heart of what a 'better life' in Europe means to them.

In the Soviet and post-Soviet, providing materially has been more central to good fatherhood than good motherhood (Kukhterin, 2000). Among the interviewees in this study, fathers tended to emphasise the material improvement migration has brought to them and their families slightly more than the interviewed mothers. Andrei described how migration to Finland had changed his life:

> I realized that my life was becoming better, I could afford to buy an expensive car, I could go on vacation. My level of self-sufficiency, self-reflection, it increased, with every new step in my life ... Well, I don't know, in Finland I feel more protected (*zashchishcheno*) than I would if I lived in Russia.
>
> [Andrei, 35-40, Russia, married, 2 children, in Russian]

However, the central parenting value of experiencing long-term material security was not limited to the interviewed fathers. Larisa, who originally migrated to Finland to study but ended up staying and starting a family with a fellow Russian-speaking Estonian, explained that in Finland becoming a parent is less stressful than it would have been Estonia:

> It is better that in Finland there is no such stress, that is, I think that there is less stress, because the social system is arranged in such a way that it supports you not to be afraid. Because in many countries people are afraid to give birth, because they are afraid, that it will not be elementary to buy clothes. The social system is very well thought out, in fact.
>
> [Larisa, Estonia, 30-35, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Larisa contrasts this feeling of security to what she imagines parenting in Estonia would have been like saying: 'of course, I have no experience [in Estonia] but judging by my childhood, yes, we lived poorly, it was not easy for my mother, she carried it all on herself'. Significantly, Larisa's account shows the intertwining of experience and transnational imagination. While Larisa certainly has second-hand knowledge of parenting in Estonia, in imagining Estonia as a parenting environment, she relies on collective narratives and imaginings which negatively compare her post-Soviet former home country to the 'European' Finland.

In the interviewees' parenting scripts, the feeling of material security is integrally connected to images of the state. The type of security the parents refer to is best captured by Russian words *zashchita*, protection or *zashchishcheno*, protected. Anfisa, who migrated after meeting her Ingrian Finn husband, described her feelings towards the Finnish system of social support:

> I agree that everything really works here. And we feel protected (*chuvstvuyem sebya zashchishchennymi*) here. I know that if something happens, I will receive medical assistance, children and me. It's the same somewhere in the school. I know that if I sent my child to school, then everything will be safe (*bezopasno*) for my child, and the same is in the kindergarten.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, two children, in Russian]

She further contrasts this to Russia, remarking: 'in Russia, if you don't have any money, no one will help you. But here you have some kind of protection (*zashchishchennos*t)'. Similarly, Pavel noted that in Russia 'if you are unemployed, the unemployment service will not help you much ... And that's why you have to always be at work, make money. And there, if you don't earn good money, it's very hard to think about the family when the expenses are so high.' In the parenting scripts, images of the two states are positioned against each other. Experiences with state institutions can confirm the narrative of Finnish state protections supporting the parents' parenting orientations. In the parents' transnational imagination, the economic insecurity they experienced in Russia contrasts unfavourably to Finland, which is coupled with the imagining of

a European ideal which includes the notion of a state committed to social protections.

Accessing such social protections through migration, even at a high cost to the parents themselves, is at the centre of the scripts of good parenting the parents create. Anzhelika, who migrated to Finland together with her husband and their son, explained that while she and her husband would be starting from nothing in Finland, sacrificing the careers they had built in Russia and all their social connections, the move would be worth it:

> But we thought that this is not such a high price, especially since, in fact, Finland is a welfare state. That is, this is not a move when you move to live under a bridge in a box. Here you can be sure that you'll have a roof over your head and your child won't be hungry. This is the minimum requirement for me personally for a prosperous life. That is, this is security (*bezopasnost*'), and this security (*bezopasnos*t') is stable. You are guaranteed to be in such a protected (*zashchishcheno*) situation.
>
> [Anzhelika, Russia, 35-40, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Alongside drawing from collective imaginings of Europe to describe what a 'better life' looks like, the parents adopt a script of parenting which emphasises putting the child's needs before your own. This was especially apparent with the interviewed mothers, many of whom abandoned their own career prospects in Russia when their husband was offered a job in Finland. This echoes an ideal type of parenthood that scholars like Shpakovskaya (2015) have identified among young, urban, and educated Russian mothers: 'life for the family'. With the arrival of children 'the life for myself' is expected to cease, and 'life for the family' to begin. Future plans are therefore tied to and centred around the family unit. Migration or continued settlement is meant to serve this purpose. 'Life for the family', hence intersects for women as mothers with the narrative of migration to Europe for a better life.

4.2.3 Physical safety and Finland as a parenting environment

Alongside material security, another facet of security, physical safety, is a prominent parenting value in the interviewees' parenting scripts and their

transnational imaginings of Finland as a parenting environment. While material security is described with terms like *zashchishchennost'*, this aspect of security is more often referred to with the word *bezopasnost*'. Polina, who moved to Finland in the early 2010s with her two sons and now ex-husband, identified safety as the best thing about raising children in Finland and explained:

> It is difficult for a European person to imagine how stressful it is to send your child everyday to school and wait for him to call you that he arrived. And when he of course forgets to call --- you have to wait for the first lesson to end to call him to ask if everything is alright.
>
> [Polina, 40-45, St. Petersburg Russia 5-10 years in Finland, divorced, 2 children]

For Polina, it is difficult for someone from a parenting environment such as Finland to understand the parenting reality in Russia, because the realities of parenting are so different. As with material security, moving to a parenting environment the parents feel is safer means that the parents can adopt different parenting practices and still fulfil the ideal of 'responsible parenting'. This includes everyday parenting choices such as letting children go to school by themselves younger than the interviewed parents would have if they were living in Russia. Polina gave an example of this and describes how in the first summer after the family had migrated, she let her son go to a rock concert from which he would be returning by himself at one in the morning saying:

> My child was returning at 1 am and I was absolutely calm. Absolutely! His phone ran out of battery, there was no connection with him, and I was calm at the same time; of course he would come … everything would be fine. How I worried about the children in Russian and this is how it's here; this is [the best thing about parenting in Finland] peace and safety.
>
> [Polina, 40-45, St. Petersburg Russia, 5-10 years in Finland, divorced, 2 children]

In Polina's example, her parenting script and the parenting practices a good parent adopts in this situation had been transformed. Her parenting orientation and the corresponding parenting practices changed not long after migration. As Polina and her family had not been living in Finland for very long at the time, it

was her transnational imagination of Finland and Russia vis-à-vis each other, rather than a more substantiated personal experience which played a part in this change. With her assessment of the environment changed, the need to shield her child from immediate threat diminished and other parenting values, such as providing her son with independence and enjoyable experiences, came to the forefront. These values most likely existed before migration, but the feeling of safety facilitated the change in parenting.

Other parents describe similar changes to their parenting practices after migrating to Finland. Vera, who migrated to Finland when her son was only an infant, explained why she would not consider moving back to Russia:

> Yeah, there's a really, really big difference between Finland and Russia. Because it's safe here. Because when my son is out, I can be sure that nothing is going to happen. I mean, of course something can happen, of course I'll look out the window and we always call back and forth. But in Russia, if we were there, I'd have to take him to school and then meet him after school, because there, kids … [in English] they disappear.
>
> [Vera, Russia, 40-45, single mother, 1 child, in Finnish]

In her example Vera contrasts the parenting practices she has adopted living in Finland and what she would have done in Russia. Like in Polina's case, Finland as a parenting environment has enabled Vera to follow a less stressful and intensive parenting script, easing the emotional labour connected with parenting. However, the safer parenting environment is not only seen as easier for the parent, but the interviewees also highlight how this has had a positive effect on their child's development as an individual. Viktor who migrated to Finland with his wife and then eight-year-old son, explained that for him one of the best aspects of parenting in Finland is that his son can learn to do things independently at a younger age:

> The best thing is that children are not perceived as helpless creatures, that they can ... eat for themselves. Walk to school by themselves. In Russia, … there is no such situation that a child went to school on his own … The way there is full of dangers.

> [Viktor, 35-40, Petrozavodsk Russia, 0-4 years in Finland, married 1 child]

In the interviewees parenting scripts, physical safety is not only a parenting value in and of itself, but it is connected to the value of teaching independence and self-reliance. This in turn connects to larger transnational imaginings of Finland as a European country that encourages individualism in a positive sense. Alongside physical safety and its benefits, Viktor, for example, gave an example of how his son was amazed that he was able to pick out his own lunch from a buffet at school, saying '[my son] had never experienced such freedom at school'. The 'good individualism' the interviewees see as a central part of Finnish parenting is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

4.2.4 Better future: meanings of growing up in Europe

When discussing what it means to provide a 'better life' for their children, the parents emphasise the ways in which they feel growing up in the imagined 'Europe' is different from growing up in a post-Soviet country. Although Anzhelika had been worried about 'the Russian societal context for a long time, she felt a new urgency to migrate after becoming a parent saying:

> And [my husband and I] thought that this is a good chance, first of all, for our son to grow up in some other environment and to try to form in a different way than we did.
>
> [Anzhelika, Russia, 35-40, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Anzhelika explained that 'in the Soviet state an individual was nothing … it was a machine that crushed millions of lives' and that she does not want '[her] child to grow up in a state that has such a history, a state that has not changed at all from those times, only a short time of democratic reforms and then all came back again.' Finland, on the other hand represents a different history and a different kind of environment in which to grow up. Anzhelika is not alone in her assessment. The Soviet past is particularly strongly connected with the Russian Federation also among parents from other post-Soviet countries. Anna, who migrated to Finland originally because she did not want to put her sons into a majority Russian-speaking school in Estonia, explained that she would be worried

about her children if they were to go on to higher education in Russia, explaining:

> I just feel like an outsider in that country. And in that country there is so much that I do not accept. I was uncomfortable in the Soviet system. I know that a lot of people see this Soviet experience as a positive. Personally, I see it as a negative. And accordingly, I see a lot of Soviet in the Russian Federation, and I don't want this to return, I guess.
>
> [Anna, Estonia, 40-45, 5-10 years in Finland, married, 3 children]

Anna further explained that for her it was important that she was migrating to a country where 'governing bodies have had generations to learn how to govern'. For Anna, Russia is characterised by its Soviet legacy and her experience with that system. In her view, Estonia is placed somewhere in the middle between Europe and Russia in terms of its level of 'Sovietness'.

The majority of the interviewees construct parenting scripts in which 'Soviet' is given largely negative meanings. 'Soviet' is often used to explain and describe the negative aspects of the post-Soviet space, particularly Russia, as a parenting environment. Russia's 'Sovietness' is contrasted with the 'Europeanness' of Finland. Dominika, who migrated to Finland with her husband and two children after he received a job offer in Finland, explained that for her it was important to migrate to Europe, rather than specifically to Finland. She reflects that while the Finnish education system was a major draw, overall, the deciding factor was that 'there is a very humane, humanistic approach to the individual. I like that very much.' The phrasing Dominika uses here is one that is repeated in many of the parents' accounts. The humane approach to the individual arises as a central, shared transnational imagining which the parents have adopted into their parenting scripts. This includes not only the absence of direct political oppression, but it is also connected to how the children develop and what kind of people they grow up to be. Nesteruk and Mark's study of Eastern European parents in the United Sates finds a similar construction of difference, in which the interviewed parents contrast the collectivist East European culture to the individualistic United States and draw parallels between parenting and a country's political system (Nesteruk & Marks, 2011, p. 815).

Self-sufficiency and increased opportunity are central parenting values when the parents described the 'better life' their children would have as a result of having grown up in Europe. Most interviewees mentioned the tangible, practical implications of having a passport from a country in the European Union, but the idea of a future 'better life' goes further than only practicalities. Viktor, for example, explained that he wants his son to have more opportunities than he did saying 'it seems to me that here is his personal choice of what to do and how to live is much broader than in Russia.' Anzhelika similarly described why her parents reacted positively to her family migrating:

> [Our son] …. With us everything is more or less connected to [our son]. [My parents] are glad that he'll have the chance to experience a different quality of education, a different quality of life and a society in which he'll be able to make a difference, because, of course, in Russia we believe that even with the next president the system will not change.
>
> [Anzhelika, Russia, 35-40, married, 1 child, in Russian]

The idea of a 'better life' in Europe, therefore, is connected to transnational imaginings of a 'European' way of living, a lifestyle in which more things are possible. This chimes with Krivonos and Näre's study on young Russian-speaking migrants' motivations to migrate to Finland. The authors argue that a major motivation was to achieve not only economic betterment but a 'Western lifestyle' which was contrasted with a post-Soviet lifestyle with which those who do not migrate are stuck (Krivonos and Näre 2019). Imagining of the West and post-socialism are placed in contrast to one another such that the West represents the future and opportunity whereas post-socialism is characterised by the past and lack of valuable prospects (Krivonos and Näre 2019, 1183). In the parenting scripts the interviewees construct, this dichotomy is used to articulate how migration fits to the scripts of good parenting. In taking the decision to migrate, parents are providing their children access to a 'better future' away from the lingering Sovietness of the post-Soviet region, particularly the Russian federation.

4.2.5 Better life, conflicting transnational imaginings, and parenting scripts

While the idea of a 'better life' dominates the parenting scripts the parents construct, the positive transnational imaginings do not have a monopoly in the interviewees' parenting scripts. Many of the parents describe a feeling of otherness connected to the imagined Europe. Zoya, who migrated to Finland with her husband and three children, depicts her feelings of otherness thus:

> Of course, I was worried, I don't speak right, I don't walk right, I don't behave right, I'll do something, and they'll stare at me. I understand that people [in Finland] are Europeans - they have a different culture, they are different. Well, what am I going to do, that's what I was worried about. And it was a great relief and joy for me that we were so well received here. But really ... It was just fear.
>
> [Zoya, Russia, 35-40, married, 3 children, in Russian]

Zoya later stated that while now she feels comfortable interacting with Finnish parents in events such as school assemblies, long after migration she used to feel like an outsider, unable to connect with other parents in a way she would have in Russia.

These tensions speak to ontological security which has been explored in the context of family migration in studies such as Sime's on Eastern European migrant families experiences of security and belonging (Sime, 2018). To achieve ontological security, an individual needs to be able to be sure that things such as people, objects places and meanings stay the same from one day to the next (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Skey, 2010). A sense of continuity and order to one's experiences leading to a sense of control in everyday situations and relationships with others is central to feeling ontological security (Giddens, 1991; Sime, 2018). Recognition from others, the experience that others share in the perception of the world is also a prerequisite of ontological security (Gergen, 2001; Skey, 2010). Migration can result in disruption of this kind of security in parenting as the migrant moves from one parenting environment to another with potentially vastly different parenting norms, discourses, and practices (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008; Telegdi-Csetri, 2018). Decreased ontological security not only

causes internal tension and pressure to adapt cultural scripts of parenting, but it also calls into question the narrative of a 'better life' through migration.

The feelings of otherness and ontological in/security relate directly to cultural scripts of parenting, and particularly the need for good parenting to be displayed and recognised by others. The parents express difficulties in displaying good parenting in their new 'European' parenting environment. Daria who moved to Finland with her daughter, later married and had two more children explained that even in Russia 'nowadays there is this situation that children know their rights.' She was worried over how her parenting might be interpreted differently:

> I still do not really understand how, for example, the Finns [would react], if I raised my voice to a child or grabbed his arm … And now you don't know how people would look at it or what they'd think. This is a foreign country.
>
> [Daria, Russia, 40-45, married, three children, in Russian]

For Daria, her existing parenting script conflicts with her new environment, and she is not sure how she should display good parenting to her imagined Finnish audience. Daria's example shows a situation in which her current script of parenting and the expectation of her imagined Finnish audience are in tension. In contrast to many of the parents quoted above, Daria draws more heavily from negative transnational imaginaries connected to Europe. These include critique of liberal social values. For example, she expressed worry over 'the European acceptance of homosexuality', and propaganda promoting homosexuality against which 'in Russia there are laws.' Overall, Daria was not considering migrating back to Russia, stating that 'there's nowhere to return to, and I think there's no reason even. If I were alone without children, without family, maybe I would return. … But I already have life here. I have a house here, family.' Acting like a 'responsible parent', prioritising the material security and stability of her family by staying in Finland, overrides her concerns over parenting in Finland. However, in Daria's script of parenting, 'better life' does not include the 'European lifestyles' discussed above.

Other parents also expressed a similar trade-off when it comes to parenting and migration. This is especially apparent in Yulia's example. Having lived in the UK before moving to Finland a little over three years ago with her three children and British partner, Yulia stated that she would not want her children to grow up British or Finnish.

> Ideally, I'd love to live in the country Georgia in the Caucasus. This is like an ideal, you know, culture, just the way the people are. They are open, they love you, they are very hospitable. …. But obviously it is a huge trade-off because obviously the standard of healthcare and probably education is going to be difficult. There are a lot of diseases obviously which I mean you don't wish to experience with a very little child. So even as an adult I would have probably just moved there. But with children you have limitations.
>
> [Yulia, 35-40, Russia, married, 3 children, in English/Russian]

For Yulia, therefore, Russia or another post-Soviet country like Georgia can offer ontological security, which Britain or Finland cannot. In her account, this type of security does not only mean the closeness of loved ones in Russia but wider norms governing social interaction and feeling of connectedness in non-Western countries. In Finland or 'Europe' she does not receive the type of recognition for her view of the world to feel ontologically secure. When speaking in this sense, Yulia sees Finland and Britain, as one European cultural space. However, these considerations are overridden by discourses emphasising 'responsible parenting' and 'life for the family' (Chernova, 2012; Shpakovskaya, 2015). Yulia's construction of the imagined West is consistent with the other interviewees' accounts in the way it sees the state provision and material security. However, her transnational imagination also includes imaginings of the 'East', which draw heavily on a discourse emphasising the cultural and spiritual wealth of the region to counteract claims of Western superiority (Pilkington 2002, 13). Yulia misses the type of care that comes with the culturally rich imagined East, noting that her children, too, suffer from the 'closed off' culture in Finland and need 'some warmth'. Yulia also has an opposite take on Finland when it comes to European individualism and future opportunities, stating 'as in Finland there is a very homogeneous society, very rule obeying society … And we want our children to be more relaxed.'

In Yulia and Daria's parenting orientations different parenting values are in direct conflict but in the end material security in the form of healthcare, standard of living and higher paying employment is a priority against other types of security and care. This shows the durability of the 'better life' narrative and the primacy placed on material security within the interviewees' scripts of good parenting. Moreover, it shows the emphasis placed on parental selflessness, 'responsible parenting' and 'life for the family' especially for the mothers (Chernova, 2012; Shpakovskaya, 2015). However, the interviewees accounts also show the fluidity of settlement and the impact of lived experiences (Sime 2018). Settlement is not a given but rather the benefits and caveats of settlement must be measured. Parents are reflexive in forming their cultural scripts of parenting and determining whether migration helps them parent according to what their script of good parenting dictates.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the ways in which transnational imagination influences the forms transnational cultural scripts of parenting take. The imagined West or Europe is especially important to the interviewees' parenting scripts in this study. I have argued that this imaginary has a central place in the parents' narratives of migration. It is culturally significant to the extent that it becomes an 'essentialised truth', which the parents have to address in their parenting scripts, whether it is to confirm, refute or transform it. As previous research has shown, the imagined West has multiple meanings in Russian cultural discourses and intersects with different identities such as class and nationality, giving the parents a varied 'tool kit' from which to draw.

Particularly salient is how the parents place Finland within the imagined West. Finland is seen firmly as a part of Europe and a place where the parents can build a 'better life'. The narrative of a 'better life' is closely linked to ideas of material and physical security in the present as well as a 'better future' with increased cultural capital. The emphasis placed on material and physical security highlight the importance of providing as a parenting value within the

interviewees' scripts of good parenting. On the other hand, the 'better future' element of a 'better life' adds another, less tangible parenting value: an opportunity to break away from 'Sovietness'. In many of the interviewees' parenting scripts Sovietness is seen as inherently negative and harmful to the development of the individual. Migration to 'Europe', therefore, is also a way to avoid these lingering effects of Sovietness.

However, the chance of a better life and better future is contrasted with a compromised sense of ontological security. Feelings of otherness connected to the need to display the right kind of parenting can cause internal conflict and enact change in the cultural script of parenting to regain ontological security. Moreover, these securities, advantages and disadvantages of settlement must be weighed against each other, making settlement fluid rather than set. Alongside the 'better life' narrative, another narrative 'life for the family' defines the parenting orientations of mothers in particular. This narrative dictates that a good parent, especially a good mother, places their children's interests above their own, and encourages compromise in which the parents ontological insecurity is put to the side.

The next chapter explores the themes of otherness and difference further by exploring how transnational imaginings are transferred into parenting styles. The construction of difference explored above is not only applied to Finland or Russia as parenting environments, but it can be used to give meaning to different parenting practices. Furthermore, the next chapter develops the themes explored in this chapter by investigating the meanings given to categories such as 'Soviet', 'Russian', 'Finnish' and 'European', and how they affect the interviewees' scripts of good parenting.

5 'In Finland, a lot is allowed': constructing difference between Russian and Finnish parenting

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how the interviewed Russian speaking parents construct difference between themselves and Finnish parents. Specifically, in this chapter I discuss which parenting practices, discourses, beliefs and values the parents identify as 'Russian' or 'Finnish' and how they incorporate these notions into their cultural scripts of parenting. Rather than fixed and rigid, the two categories are open-ended and reflect the respondents' transnational imaginings. As explored in the previous chapter, the 'Europeanness' of Finland playes a significant part in shaping the parents' narrative of migration and how they conceptualise parenting in Finland. Like transnational imaginings of Europe, the 'Finnishness' or 'Russianness' of parenting practices and orientations is not stable but subject to critical reflection and transformation.

In this chapter I argue that the legacies of Soviet-Russian educational discourse, *vospitanie,* are central to the scripts of parenting the interviewed parents construct. Discussed in more detail in the next section, *vospitanie* is a historically founded discourse, which emphasises parental authority and the role of the parent as a manager of the child's behaviour. However, this does not mean it is accepted uniformly without reflection. Rather, I argue that *vospitanie,* like transnational imaginings, constitutes an essentialised truth that underpins the parents' cultural scripts of parenting. It is a part of the 'tool kit' of Russian parenting identity that needs to be addressed in some way in their scripts of parenting. This must be coherent to themselves and to others, whether this means adopting, transforming, or rejecting the discourse. Because of its centrality, *vospitanie* and practices associated with it arise as a powerful tool through which to express difference from Finnish parents and even critique them. Furthermore, because of *vospitanie's* close relationship to education

(*obrazovanie)* it creates a powerful position from which evaluate and critique Finnish educational institutions.

The first section of this chapter explores the connection between parenting scripts, *vospitanie* and transnational imagination. Particularly, I analyse more closely how the interviewed parents construct difference in their parenting scripts and the elements of transnationalism within the scripts. The second section investigates the overlap between *vospitanie* and *obrazovanie* and how it effects the parents' expectations of educational institutions, namely school and day care centres.

5.2 Parenting scripts, *vospitanie* and transnational imagination

Existing research has argued that a distinct pattern of transformation is detectable in the parenting styles of Eastern European migrants to 'the West'. Scholars have posited that over time, migrant parents to western countries adopt less authoritative parenting styles, become more permissive and assume new parenting practices such as reasoning and negotiation, which give more power to the children in the parenting relationship (Driscoll et al., 2007; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011; Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). Research focusing on post-socialist societies has also explored change in parental socialisation values and styles of parenting. This change is conceptualised as a move from collectivist values emphasising interdependence (i.e., conformity, respect for elders, social responsibilities) to individualist values centring on independence (i.e., self-expression, confidence) connected to the current child-centric parenting styles in western countries (Hamzallari, 2018; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011). While these broad trends offer context to this chapter, my purpose is not to define where the parents' orientations and values fall on the authoritative/permissive scale. Rather, the analysis of how the interviewed parents construct their parenting scripts adds more nuance to the study of parenting. Utilising the framework of cultural scripts, I explore the different meanings the parents give to different parenting styles as well as how different parenting discourses, values and practices are combined in transnational parenting scripts.

As the focus of this study is parenthood as a sociocultural identity firstly, the way in which the interviewed parents create difference to other groups of parents is of key interest. The historical legacies of the Soviet-Russian educational discourse, *vospitanie*, are particularly pertinent in the analysis of how the parents construct difference to Finnish parents and assert their identity as a good parent. Previous research has shown the persistence of this discourse not only in contemporary Russian discussions of parenting, but also among Russian migrant parents, suggesting its central place in 'the tool kit' of Russian cultural scripts of parenting (Gradskova, 2015; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011; Zbenovich & Lerner, 2013). Originating from the 19th century, *vospitanie* discourse was heavily utilised in Soviet ideology on good parenting and the role of educational institutions in child-rearing (Gradskova, 2010; Kuxhausen, 2012). The core of the discourse is built upon the idea that parenting is an intentional endeavour, serious work in which parents must possess up-to-date, scientific knowledge to perform their role correctly (Kuxhausen, 2012; Zbenovich & Lerner, 2013). Good parenting is centred around educating the child. Education in this context does not only include passing on specific skills but is also focused on character building, particularly qualities such as discipline, self-sufficiency, and orderliness (Gradskova, 2010). With its focus on moulding the character of the new generation, *vospitanie* holds significant nationalistic elements. Historically, *vospitanie* has had an explicit goal of raising stronger Russian and later Soviet citizens, prepared to compete with Europe and 'the West'(Kuxhausen, 2012). As will be explored below, for the parents who adopt parenting values, beliefs, and practices consistent with *vospitanie* within their parenting scripts, *vospitanie* is an explicit part of Russian parenting and devoid of its Soviet history. These nationalistic elements of *vospitanie* connect the discourse to the complex transnational imaginings explored in chapter four. In the following sections I explore the influence of *vospitanie* on the interviewees' parenting scripts. I argue that *vospitanie* offers a strong basis of constructing difference from Finnish parents, even if in practice, the interviewees mix-and-match different parenting styles, discourses, and practices within their script of good parenting. Significantly, while the parents use a similar frame of reference based largely on *vospitanie*, the meanings they give to the same parenting practices can be the exact opposite.

5.2.1 Constructing difference

Reflecting on what are the best possible parenting practices in everyday parenting situations shapes how the interviewees construct difference between themselves and Finnish parents. In forming their scripts of parenting, the parents make choices between different types of parenting practices based on what aligns with their parenting orientations. Typically, the interviewees position themselves as outside observers and construct their narrative on events they had witnessed in public spaces. When the parents describe the differences between Finnish and Russian parenting, they utilise the transnational imaginations explored in chapter one to create a sharp contrast between the two parenting styles. Polina, who moved to Finland with her two school-aged sons and husband whom she later divorced, explicitly relates the different parenting scripts to what she sees as the different historical paths Europe and Russia have taken. She contends that 'Russia is a patriarchal society, Europe has gone in the other direction, equality and, accordingly, the attitude towards the individual is different here'. Consequently, there is a stark dichotomy between Russian parenting, characterised by parental authority and 'European' parenting, concerned with respecting the individuality of the child. She described the differences she sees saying:

> Yes, of course, I feel [different from Finnish parents], even though I had little contact with Finnish parents, but from what I see on the street, in other places, yes, Russian parents are more authoritarian parents, that is, the parental word of Russian parents is the law. As a rule, we are sergeants in our families, kids are the soldiers, and we are the sergeants.
>
> [Polina, Russia, 35-40, divorced, 2 children, in Russian]

When reflecting on her own parenting, Polina adopts parts of both parenting styles into her script of good parenting, saying she is a more 'democratic mother', who respects her sons as individuals and negotiates with them, but also wants to hold on to parental authority. In evaluating the best and worst things in Finnish parenting she sees respect for the individual and loss of parental authority as two poles of 'European' parenting: one positive and the other negative.

> [An] important component is what I already said - respect for the child's personality … personal boundaries, psychological, physical, I really appreciate it here. Bad ... and it comes from the good, as it often happens, plus and minus - they are bound together in one way or another. Sometimes kids, because of the very free environment here, sometimes they overstep the boundaries in their freedom … I hope that this won't happen to us, that we'll be in agreement.
>
> [Polina, Russia, 35-40, divorced, 2 children, in Russian]

The way Polina juxtaposes Russian and Finnish parenting is representative of how the majority of the interviewees construct difference between themselves and the Finnish parents they observe. Nesteruk and Marks' study on the experiences of Eastern European parents in the United Sates finds a similar construction of difference, in which the interviewed parents contrast the collectivist East European culture to the individualistic United States (Nesteruk & Marks, 2011, p. 815). Likewise, researching Russian-speaking families in Israel, Zbenovich and Lerner find a familiar sounding conflict between two cultural parenting styles. In their analysis, the authors argue that within these families two distinct parenting styles with different goals clash: the Soviet-Russian approach of *vospitanie* emphasising parental authority and parenting as deliberate endeavour, hard work; and the Israeli parenting discourse, grounded on the centrality of the individual and self-realisation (Zbenovich & Lerner, 2013, p. 120). The clash of parenting styles described by participants in this study centres around the same conflict between collectivist and individualist values, even if the parenting practices the parents adopt are a mix between the two parenting styles.

The parents in this study also relied on the discourse of *vospitanie* to voice criticism of Finnish parenting. The interviewees often referred to the way Finnish families act in public places as an example of the excess of freedom Finnish children have. Finnish children's lack of respect for elders was especially taken as a sign of bad parenting. Valentina, an Estonian Russian speaker with a toddler aged daughter, described what kind of behaviour she disapproves of in public spaces:

> We [my family] agree that there are no boundaries. I'm not talking about everyone. But I often notice that kids have no boundaries. Especially in public places … For example, I don't want to watch [the kids] flip tables and mugs. We are in a public place. … In many countries, there is a hierarchy of relationships, the adult is still the alpha. I am an adult, and this isn't questioned. The kids must respect this point. In Finland, it seems to me, this generational hierarchy is very much erased ….
>
> [Valentina, Estonia, 30-35, married, one daughter, in Russian]

Valentina went on to provide a specific example of the lack of boundaries she had witnessed:

> And I remember an incident. I was on the ferry. There is a small children's playroom, and a sofa like this … The Russian and Estonian parents, if their kid does something wrong, they'd pull them away and give them a telling off… For example, I was sitting on this sofa, where everyone should take off their shoes, in theory, but the Finnish mother is on her phone, and her kid, wearing shoes, is almost on me. And I can't say anything, because it's someone else's kid… Russians and Estonians would definitely discipline their kid, if they were being so rude. But in Finland a lot is allowed.

[Valentina, Estonia, 30-35, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Svetlana, who like Valentina has one toddler aged daughter born in Finland, cited a similar example from an everyday experience of difference she had observed:

> For example, just an ordinary trip to the store. Of course, I understand that kids will yell, scream, and be hysterical in stores. And no, you shouldn't hit children in any case, but sometimes they need to be shown that you can't behave like that. In this regard, there is some kind of over permissiveness) here. I don't know, I can't say that our child is perfect in everything, but in this case, we parent in a different way, a completely different way.
>
> [Svetlana, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

Culturally significant transnational imaginings are important in creating difference between Finnish and Russian-speaking parents. In Valentina and Svetlana's examples parenting is one of the elements which forms a group identity shared by the otherwise heterogenous Russian-speaking migrant

population. The mothers' examples of bad parenting indicate a script of parenting in which the principles underlying *vospitanie* are strongly present and they expect other Russian speaking parents to adhere to them as well, making these principles central to a shared Russian-speaking parenting identity. According to these principles, good parenting is based on parental authority as well as active management of children's behaviour, especially in public spaces. Teaching proper manners is one of the corner stones of managing children's behaviour, and lack of respect for adults within and outside of the family is one of the aspects of bad parenting in Nesteruk and Marks' as well as Zbenovich and Lerner's research (Nesteruk & Marks, 2011; Zbenovich & Lerner, 2013). Significantly, while both Valentina and Polina criticise Finnish parenting practices, they also uphold Finnish parents' parental authority over their own children. Valentina and Svetlana disapprove of how Finnish children act in public spaces but feel it is not their right nor responsibility to discipline them. Polina, on the other hand, is concerned about the degree to which her children will adopt the Finnish practices in the relationship between parents and children.

As discussed in the context of the meanings given to the imagined 'West' and the imagined 'East', transnational imaginings hold a multifaceted role in everyday identity construction, and there is a possibility of flexibility or even 'pick and mix' approach to cultural influences (Pilkington, 2002). It is this flexibility and blending of discourses, beliefs and practices which makes transnational parenting scripts possible. The interviewed parents showed this flexibility as well even while holding firmly to the dichotomy between imaginings of the 'East' and the 'West'. Valentina, already quoted above, is one of the parents who has strong English language skills, and actively seeks parenting information both in Russian and English. When asked about the differences between books in the two languages, Valentina formulated it as follows:

> When I start choosing books, most of the choices are obvious ... I don't choose those books which have that strictness like in the Soviet Union: don't cry, don't this and that. And I don't accept the over permissiveness, which is dominant in Europe nowadays, either.
>
> [Valentina, Estonia, 30-35, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Refusing to adopt either parenting style as given, Valentina expresses a script of parenting she feels unites both types of advice:

> With my husband, we try to have a healthy framework so that our child grows up to be a person, who respects her own boundaries and respects the boundaries of other people. That is, it seems to me that this is the main thing that all these books want to say. You should raise a healthy person in society, who enjoys life and doesn't interfere with the enjoyment of others.
>
> [Valentina, Estonia, 30-35, married,1 child, in Russian]

Valentina maintains a dichotomy between the two cultural spaces, 'Soviet' and 'Europe', but at the same time asserts her own agency in choosing which practices she incorporates into her script of parenting. Some of the language in Valentina's response is congruent with *vospitanie*, for instance the emphasis on a healthy individual and the right interaction with society.

Valentina's example speaks to another important point. While *vospitanie* continues to hold a central place in Russian language discourse on parenting, it does not exist in isolation from other parenting discourses in further international contexts. Parenting discourses, beliefs, and values from different parenting environments become intertwined easily, and create something new. As such, while *vospitanie* holds a firm place in Russian cultural script of parenting, it is not a simple marker of Russian parenting identity. The interviewed parents remark on the differences between themselves and Finnish parents but also other Russian-speaking migrant parents. In his interview, Viktor, who migrated with his wife and son who is of elementary school age, expressed quite strongly a disconnect with a romanticised version of Russian nationalism. He remarked 'I don't have any emotional bindings that, birch, is my homeland. No, I like to be where I feel good'. When asked if he feels different from Russian-speaking parents in Finland he responded:

> Now, when we talk about Russian parents, they are all divided into two groups. I don't know what to call them ... Those who are guided by some more modern sense of reality, and those who ask their parents for advice. This is [the case] in Russia, and here Russian-speakers are exactly the same. There are those who look at upbringing (*vospitanie*) in exactly the same way as we do, and with

> these people we have absolutely normal and adequate relationship to. … And there are just traditional views. Things get more complicated here [in Finland].
>
> [Viktor, Russia, 30-35, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Viktor's example speaks to Kopnina's characterisation of the 'fourth Russian immigration wave', in which common language or even ethnicity is not enough to create a sense of common identity among Russian-speaking migrants (Kopnina, 2005). Taking a completely opposite approach to parents like Svetlana who emphasise the differences between Finnish and Russian parents, the way Viktor constructs difference between parents emphasises the different groups that exist amongst Russian parents. As Viktor remarks, the differences that existed before migration, persist in Finland. The difference the parents wish to construct with their parenting scripts might not be only towards 'Finnishness' but also certain types of 'Russianness'. Rejecting parts of *vospitanie* or 'traditional views' as Viktor formulated it, can be used to achieve this goal.

5.2.2 Migration, parenting scripts and change

Other interviewed parents described observing parenting situations in which they might not have been directly involved themselves, but where simply witnessing alternative parenting practices has shaped their own parenting script. The parents describe Finnish parenting through similar attributes they give to Finland, as explored in chapter one. Finns and Finland are overwhelmingly described through terms such as calm and secure, and these are overall taken as positive traits. Galina was a single mother in Russia for many years before moving to Finland after connecting online with her current, Russian-speaking husband, whose family moved to Finland as return migrants in the 1990s. She and her husband now have two children, both under four years old, and both born in Finland. Galina named calmness as the main difference between Finnish and Russian parents, stating:

> Russian parents worry a lot that, somehow ... they worry too much. Finns just say everything is fine, everything is fine. This is probably the most important difference, but I won't say that they love less, no, they love, both Russians and Finns love their kids, but Finns are more relaxed about everything somehow, which is good.

[Galina, Russia, 35-40, married, three children, in Russian]

She emphasised her point by giving an example of a situation her sister observed in London, claiming Finnish parents are just the same while she and her sister as Russian parents are different:

> For example, my sister, she was in London, and they sat on the street and watched a mom, a dad, and a kid together. ... There was a puddle, water and they let the kid run into this puddle and splash in the water, he was all wet! The parents just looked at him, "Are you coming or not? We're going now." The baby is all wet and they didn't say anything to him. My sister was just sitting there, we are Russian parents [we would say], "Don't do that, get out of the puddle, don't go over there, you're all wet, now you need to change your clothes." But no, nothing, Finns have this too, they are calm … "Oh well … it'll dry out".
>
> [Galina, Russia, 35-40, married, three children]

While Galina maintains that the more relaxed approach in Europe is a good thing, she is ambivalent about changing her own parenting practices. Galina spends much time at the local *perhetalo*, a type of family activity centre organised by the city. In the city of Helsinki, for example, there are four perhetalo locations, which offer activities for families with small children, migrant and non-migrant alike. While Galina mostly socialises with Russian-speaking mothers there, she has observed Finnish mothers help their toddler-aged children less with food when it came time to eat lunch. Stopping short from deeming this to be a bad parenting practice, she contends that this type of 'sink-or-swim' parenting practice is just the way things are done in Finland. Observing Finnish parenting practices has made Galina widen her script of good parenting, but it has not necessarily transformed her own script of parenting or made her adopt new parenting practices. Rather, in her example she presents two cultural scripts of parenting which are both valid ways of doing parenting.

There are, however, parents who describe a more transformative effect on their script of parenting and reflect on how they feel migration has made them a better parent. This transformation commonly relates to how they communicate with their children. Many use the example of how parents manage children's misbehaviour, with or without raising their voice. Anfisa migrated to Finland

after forming a relationship with a Russian speaker living in Finland, and later had two daughters with him. She described how the parents she has observed in Finland and in Russia differ:

> In Russia, I very often see mothers yelling at children. They scream all the time. What are they shouting for? The kids are small. Why shout at them? And the parents don't know how to do anything else. They believe that they are raising them. I remember when I moved to Finland, I wondered why kids don't throw tantrums in stores in Finland. Why are the kids behaving normally here in the store? Because in Russia it's impossible. There are kids screaming, a mom is dragging on by the hand and says to him: "Shut up! Why are you yelling ?!" This happens there at every turn. And it doesn't happen here.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, two daughters, in Russian]

Anfisa gives an example of a situation that is very similar to Svetlana's example above, but gives an opposite meaning to the same managing, strict parenting style. For Anfisa, Finnish parenting is strongly connected to a different style of communication with children. This is not only a matter of tone of voice but rather she connects it to a larger idea of treating children as individuals, as a person in their own right. Anfisa believed that if she had not migrated to Finland, she would be like the other Russian parents who 'do not know how to do anything else':

> The fact that I moved to Finland, the experience has enriched me. I know it could be different. But living in Russia, I did not know this. And now I know that it can be different, that you can treat a person like a human being, that you can, for example, not shout at kids.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, 2 children]

Anfisa is not alone in mentioning a difference between Finnish and Russian parenting practices in relation to communication and discipline. Nadia, who like Anfisa had her two sons after migrating to Finland, offered a similar example of how Finnish parents act in conflict situations:

> Finnish parents are more relaxed with their kids, which means that they can sit in a puddle in their overalls and it's okay. And them trying to eat stones is not scary, you can calmly talk with your kid.

[Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

She also reflected on how her parenting would be different if she were raising her children in Russia:

> To be honest, I do not know how I would've raised my kids in Russia, I think, I'm almost sure that of course it'd be different. Firstly, I would've never met the people who have told me that there are these books, this system. On the other hand, what's going on around the kids, the family, the mother has an impact ... I really read a lot that you can shout at a child, or you can explain using words, and I like explaining more.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Nadia and Anfisa's examples have many things in common. Both approach parenting as a skill, which can be improved through gaining more information and they both explain how migration has brought them access to varied co-actors of parenting. They recognise the concrete changes in their parenting a different environment has brought and believe the alternative information they have gained has made them better parents. On the other hand, they do not relinquish their identity as a Russian-speaking parent because of the change in their script of parenting. Rather, they advocate for picking 'the best of both' in cultural scripts of parenting. This is an essential transnational feature of the interviewees' parenting scripts. Nadia and Anfisa's examples demonstrate how cultural scripts are not fixed but rather are built in interaction with the sociocultural environment. Elements of cultural parenting scripts which previously might have been taken for granted are transformed through exposure to different parenting discourses, practices, and co-actors of parenting.

5.2.3 Displaying parenting and Finnish parents

The role of Finnish co-actors of parenting, especially Finnish peers, are significant in determining how the Russian-speaking parents react to being exposed to new parenting orientations and practices. Zoya, whose three children were all born before the family migrated to Finland, recounted a parenting situation where she felt internal conflict she would not have while living in Russia:

> Children go swimming here. In Russia, even in a bad dream I would not have dreamed that my kid can go swimming in the river, in the sea in the spring, because the water is cold I wouldn't have allowed it. I still think about what people would have said. They would say "You, mommy, do you want your kid to die of pneumonia?" And here they all swim. The water is cold. It was my first summer - a culture shock that the water is cold, and all the children swim. The adults all stand on the embankment just wet their feet, while the children swim and mine wanted to join in. I had to let them go, even though there was an internal conflict, because if all the kids swim, how will I hold them back?
>
> [Zoya, 35-40, Russia, married, 3 children, in Russian]

Zoya's example shows a situation in which her parenting orientations and the corresponding parenting practices denoting good parenthood were in direct conflict of what her parenting environment expected. The internal conflict she experienced speaks to the way parenting needs 'displaying'. Parenting practices need to be understood by others present in the parenting environment, which in Zoya's example are the other parents surrounding her (Finch, 2007). What these other parents do has a direct effect on which parenting practices are available to Zoya. The pressure coming from the environment can have a transformative effect on parenting orientations as is also apparent in Zoya's example in which she lets her children do something she would not have done in Russia. Here, she is worried about both her imagined Russian audience as well as her Finnish peers who are present in the moment. On the one hand, in the Russian context letting the children swim would expose her to censure and she might potentially be labelled a bad mother. On the other hand, in her current environment, stopping her children might have similarly negative social impact. The situation is complicated by the expectations placed on Zoya as a migrant parent, who should embrace all opportunities for her children to interact with their Finnish peers. The script of good migrant parenting, therefore, is in direct conflict with Zoya's existing script of good parenting.

Several of the interviewed parents described how the different meanings given to parenting practices in the Finnish parenting environment made it more difficult to connect with their Finnish peers. When asked if she feels different from Finnish parents, Oksana, who at the time of the interview had lived in

Finland for almost a decade with her two sons, responded that in terms of 'culture' Finnish parents are different. She gives the following example:

> I will give a very funny characteristic. I would say that Finnish parents are more childish. They themselves behave more like children. In Russia you have to show that you are very serious and you are very adult. A grown-up adult. You will never jump with them and sing songs. Never. They will perform and you will watch.
>
> [Oksana, 50-55, Russia, divorced, 2 children, in English]

Oksana's example points to similar differences between Finnish and Russian parenting scripts when it comes to parental authority. She, however, reflected how parental authority is displayed through action:

> And here for instance in school festivals they... parents are so happy; they sing together with children, childish songs. I think that the border between Finnish parents and Finnish children is … not vanished but very smooth. And in Russia this border between school children and parents is very serious. Because Russian parents are afraid to look foolish.
>
> [Oksana, 50-55, Russia, divorced, 2 children, in English]

In constructing her parenting script, Oksana positions herself away from Finnish parents but also casts a critical eye on how Russian parents display parenting. In Oksana's experience, the parenting practices considered appropriate for a school festival differ between the two parenting environments. In Finch's original conception reacting to changed circumstances and re-defining relationships appropriately forms a central part of how displaying family works. The process of redefinition happens not only between the participants in the relationship but, needs to be recognized by others outside of the relationship (Finch, 2007, p. 74). In Oksana's example, the role of Finnish peers and imagined Russian ones as co-actors of parenting and their reinforcement or rejection is significant. When asked if the 'childishness' of Finnish parents has changed her behaviour she responded:

> No, I didn't start, I am even trying to resist going to all these school festivals because I am still not used to this. But my son is always very upset that I am saying I am not coming. "How can you not be coming?

> All the parents are coming, and you are not coming?! You should come!". Okay, I am coming, and I am watching this madness (laughs).
>
> [Oksana, 50+, Russia, single parent, 2 children, in English]

In the end, then, Oksana has resisted the pressure to change how she displays good parenting to her peers but has agreed to leave her comfort zone in order to match her son's idea of how a good mother behaves.

5.3 Between *vospitanie* and *obrazovanie*: Russian-speaking parents and Finnish educational institutions

The following section turns the focus on how the parents' construction of difference between Finnish and Russian parenting affects their relationship with Finnish educational institutions. Educational institutions, namely schools and day care centres, are not only a central part of parents' support network in the everyday of parenting, but also an important co-actor of parenting, and the state institutions parents most frequently encounter. The organisation and content of education are tied to political priorities and are supposed to adhere to the 'common cultural values' which underpin the image of the state as a coherent unit (Andresen & Richter, 2012). Educational institutions can exercise both the caring and normative aspects of the state, and the exact distribution of responsibilities between parents and educational institutions is subject to change. An example of this relocation of responsibilities is the tendency of the state in post-welfare societies to place more responsibilities on parents in order to allocate state resources elsewhere (Oelkers, 2012).

When considering *vospitanie*, the relationship between educational institutions and parents stands out as a significant part of the discourse. In its original conception in the 19th century, *vospitanie* was a distinctive element of child rearing separated from formal education or *obrazovanie* in Russian (Kuxhausen, 2012). However, educational institutions were also meant to take part in *vospitanie*, the children's personal and social development, not just relay academic knowledge. As such, *obrazovanie* is intrinsically intertwined with *vospitanie*. This was the case especially in the Soviet period, as all activities

children were involved in were meant to contribute to their development, and this tendency has not disappeared in post-Soviet pedagogy. Studying Russian vocational education, Popova argues that younger teachers show little regard to Soviet ideology and do not refer to explicitly communist slogans or values. However, they still adhere to their role as active shapers of students personhoods and raising students to be good members of society (Popova, 2009). Furthermore, educational institutions were not only supposed to instruct children, but also to teach parents the right way to parent. Parents were expected to take an active role in their child's development. These activities ranged from exercises perfecting fine motor skills to teaching personal hygiene. Parents were also expected to maintain regimented sleep and play schedules for their children, attend to their moral education as well as utilise the free leisure activities provided by the state, such as museums, hobbies and theatres, to provide their children with as much personal development as possible (Field, 2004; Gradskova, 2010).

While post-Soviet educational discourses have promoted the 're-familialisation' of childcare, scholars have argued that the duties of educational institutions have much continuity from the period of late socialism. The institutions have retained their role in teaching norms of behaviour for children and parents alike (Bogachenko & Perry, 2015). Previous research has especially highlighted how in the post-Soviet context the Soviet values which underpinned the norms which educational institutions were supposed to uphold have been substituted with new nationalistic ones (Bogachenko & Perry, 2015; Gradskova, 2015). In an ethnographic account of an educational children's camp Matza details multiple intertwined discourses on good parenting and the meaning of child-rearing. The camp that Matza bases his analysis on is one of the services offered by a Russian company specialising in 'psychological education', and new tools for more effective parenting, targeted at white-collar, middle-class families. He summarises the objectives of the psychological education offered as 'an elite finishing school for a neoliberal age'(Matza, 2012, p. 806). Matza finds that the educators and parents who had enrolled their children in the camp had two distinct goals they wished to achieve. The parents saw the psychological education as a competitive advantage, helping the children to develop self-

management skills that would later benefit them in their chosen field of employment. This mirrors the centrality of self-reliance (*samostoiatelnost*), which formed one of the central goals of the Soviet educational discourse (Gradskova, 2010), but adds a neoliberal twist. The educators, on the other hand, saw their work as a part of post-Soviet transformation. They referred to 'Europe' as a frame of reference for good parenting, and even explicitly stated a desire to undo the needlessly authoritarian *vospitanie*, seen as Soviet-style parenting connected with a totalitarian system (Matza, 2012).

In the following sections, I will analyse how the interviewed parents place Finnish educational institutions in their scripts of parenting and what expectations they have of the institutions as co-actors of parenting. In the first section I will focus on how the dichotomy between communitarian and individualistic parenting values is translated to the sphere of education. The second section will detail more closely how parents use 'Russianness', Finnishness' and 'Sovietness' to describe the quality of educational practices. Finally, the third section will trace the significance of education as a marker of identity as a Russian parent specifically.

5.3.1 Good Individualism: parenting values and Finnish educational institutions

When discussing the positives and negatives of the Finnish education system, the parents refered once again to a dichotomy between the individualistic values of Finnish parenting and collectivist ones of Russian parenting. Nadia, who has lived in Finland for over two decades, described humane pedagogy and integral education as the central principles in her parenting. She has spent time researching these themes on her own and feels 'happy that [her] children are growing up in Finland because here this system is used in schools and day cares.' Nadia explains in more detail how the principles she appreciates are realised in the Finnish education system:

> I like that at school, at kindergarten, there is an individual approach towards my child and he is accepted as an individual that he has these qualities and they need to be developed like this, you need to learn this, I like it. There is no competition in school, the children don't

> know who has what grades. They are friends not because of grades, but because they have similar characters and are friends because of that, and not because of the grades, of course.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Regarding these principles, therefore, Nadia thinks that 'her wishes and what the state offers coincide very well'. However, Nadia also saw the other side of the individual approach of Finnish schools:

> I don't like that teachers have less and less authority, I think this is not fair to teachers in the first place … and secondly - this is ... I mean, what are parents and the public teaching kids in that case when they become teenagers and stop respecting the teacher … Roughly speaking, teenagers, grown up children, don't respect their parents, and it's unbelievable to me. Yes, freedom of choice is good, there are a lot of children's rights, but there is also a duty, and in my opinion, little is said about that at school.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Nadia's formulation weighing individualistic values (self-development, freedom) against values focused on community and interdependence (duty, respect for elders) is a typical example of how the parents consider the strengths and weaknesses of the Finnish educational system. Development of children's self-sufficiency and self-worth are identified as the best qualities of the Finnish education system. These are part of 'good individualism', as coined by Matza in his study of Russian pedagogical discourses (Matza, 2012). Anna, an Estonian Russian-speaker with three children, spoke of 'post-Soviet schools (*postsovetskie*)' to emphasise the similarities between Russian and Estonian schools as well as their shared roots. She described how 'post-Soviet schools' fail at giving the children tools necessary to decide what they want in life:

> And Finnish children in a Finnish school are freer. Kids are more on their own. And this freedom, it seems to me, it makes it possible to understand better what you want, because when everything is just dumped on you, and you, because you were taught to be a diligent student that is what you do … and you don't have time to figure out what you want, what is important for you to do in life. ... This also takes time. And this is an important difference, I believe, between the post-Soviet school and the Finnish school.

[Anna, Estonia, 40-45, married, 3 children, in Russian]

In her account, Anna approaches the collectivism of 'post-Soviet schools' from a different angle. While post-Soviet schools, in her opinion, teach children to perform as a part of a homogenous group of students with identical needs, Finnish school gives children tools to make choices as an individual. The focus turns to more intangible skills needed in the modern world, particularly how to search for information independently. Anfisa, who at the time of the interview had one daughter in day care and one attending school, described what school is needed for:

> Schools need to teach the children to do things on their own: to look for information, to use information. In Russia, because there is constant meddling, it seems to me that it's too much. And parents have to do some of the homework.

[Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, 2 children, in Russian]

In 'good individualism', therefore, the children gain abilities which let them think and act independently. Although parents like Anna and Anfisa reject many of the values of historical *vospitanie*, in their scripts of parenting educational institutions are co-parents that not only offer academic knowledge but play a crucial role in the child's development overall. The focus on the self is consistent with larger, international developments in child psychology, but the classical formulations of *vospitanie* are not devoid of this aspect either. In this way the different discourses are complementary and can be intertwined in parenting scripts without invalidating the other, like for example in Nadia's case above. However, the practices used to achieve self-development are markedly different. While *vospitanie*'s central theme is the intensive management of a child's development by teachers and parents, 'good indvidualism' requires less direct involvement or 'constant meddling' as articulated by Anfisa above.

The focus on self-development from this angle has a significant impact on how parents communicate with educational institutions and display good parenting. Many of the parents remarked on the limited contact they have with Finnish educational institutions. Oksana, whose sons both have attended school in Russia

and in Finland, explained how she came to realise communication with teachers in Finland would be different right away:

> Yes, I understood that from the very beginning because a couple of time I was trying to call teacher in Turku to say something that he is late or something else, some minor thing. And I got the impression that this is not my business, so they deal by themselves with him. He is a big boy and they arranged everything between themselves teachers and high school students, they should stay in direct contact, not via the parent.
>
> [Oksana, Russia, 50-55, single parent, 2 children, in English]

Oksana had a neutral reaction to the change, simply stating that it was a different system, not better or worse. An often-mentioned positive difference between the Russian and Finnish systems was the type of homework and how much parental involvement is expected.

> In Russian schools they assign homework knowing that the kids won't cope with it. This means that parents have to interfere with homework all the time, because kids can't do it on their own. And so it ends up that dad does one exercise, mom does the second exercise, and the child does whatever he can. It ends up that the parents study and not the kid. This is terrible.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, 2 children, in Russian]

The example of homework illuminates the different expectations the parents feel Finnish and Russian schools place on them. The Russian educational system rewards an intensive parenting style in which the parents, particularly the mother, are heavily involved in the children's schooling as a mark of good parenting. This is a parenting value, which is strong in Soviet *vospitanie*, but also features in contemporary Russian-language pedagogical discourses (Gradskova, 2010; Protassova, 2018). For many of the parents the different practices in Finnish schools are welcomed and led to decreased parental stress. However, others feel Finnish schools demand too little, of both the parents and the children, and appreciate when Finnish schools do take an active position as a co-actor of parenting. Returning to Nadia, she states that 'it's [the parents'] duty – to teach [their kids] what is right, how they should act. After that it's the child's choice … but kids should know that they have both freedom and

responsibilities.' This is something she feels many Finnish parents fail to do and rather adopt an 'Ok, if you don't want to do it, don't' attitude. The issue does not only affect school, but Nadia saw benefits in increasing the co-operation in the children's free time citing an example from her sons' Finnish school:

> So the school helped, there was a message from the school and it was taken seriously. The teens were bothering some old people in the shopping centre, the school sent a message saying that "keep an eye on your kids and what they do after school". Make sure they don't mess around at shopping centres they should either be at home or go to hobbies. The school sends this kind of messages to parents and maybe the school's authority can somehow be used to get through to the parents.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

In Nadia's script of parenting, school as a co-parent is not only involved in the children's development in terms of their personal growth but instils them with communitarian values as well. Notably, in Nadia's examples schools' potential for intervention is directed towards children who are acting badly and their 'bad' parents, as she herself would not let her sons just idly 'mess around' in public places. These variations further illustrate how flexible parenting scripts are and how even seemingly contradictory discourses can be melded together into a coherent whole.

5.3.2 Evaluating quality: meanings of Russian, Finnish and Soviet education

When the parents evaluate the quality of educational institutions, the dichotomy of self-development, through intensive management or through giving children more freedom, are strongly attached to Russian and Finnish education, respectively. Within the interviewees' parenting scripts, the same practices can be given different meanings. In terms of day care this theme manifest itself in how the parents balance their appreciation for the more individual, 'soft approach' towards children and their desire for more structured activities which contribute towards the child's development. Dominika, who moved to Finland less than five years ago with her husband and two small children, felt she needs

to make up for the lack of structured activities in the day care to fulfil her script of good parenting:

> But I have a very good relationship with Finnish kindergarten teachers, I adore them. I just took it as it is, and I take them to the hobbies I consider necessary. Because in Moscow, in principle, if a kid goes to kindergarten, you don't have to take him anywhere further. They'll do everything with him there: drawing, music, dancing, and in general whatever you want. Both board games and chess. Just go ahead and choose.
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 30-35, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Dominika is far from the only Russian-speaking mother who engages in this kind of practice and utilises the many Russian-speaking associations and societies that offer activities for children from pronunciation practice to sport and music. Previous research has also discussed this practice especially in the field of pre-school education. Protassova for example argues that clubs and hobbies organised by Russian-speaking associations play an important role in fulfilling Russian-speaking parents' expectations of quality education, recreating a part of Russian education in Finland (Protassova, 2018).

In my study, however, many parents emphasised the downsides of too many structured activities in day care, even if they participate in Russian-speaking clubs and hobbies. Zoya, whose three children were born in Russia, mentioned that in Russian day care her daughter had a timetable of activities for each day and she could drop by anytime and see they were always learning something. However, while her daughter did learn to read at age of four as a result, she feels the Russian system is very forceful whereas Finnish day care 'accepts [the child] as they are, doesn't force them'. Similarly, Jelena, who at the time of the interview had lived in Finland for almost a year with her toddler aged daughter, disapproved of the 'systemised, very full' Russian pre-school system in which the children have little free play time. She prefered the Finnish system because it is more natural, children can play freely'. Rather than seeing the lack of structured activities as detrimental to her daughter's development, she views the ability to choose what to do and opportunities for her to communicate with

peers as more beneficial for ‘general and emotional development’ than structured activities.

When it comes to school, the parents construct a similar dichotomy between emotionally and psychologically comfortable Finnish schools and the academically competitive Russian schools. Maria, who before moving to Finland had already lived in Germany for a few years with her daughter who is now in first grade, admitted that classes in Finland are more relaxed than in Russia, but she does not see anything wrong with this approach. Rather she remarked that ‘I believe that the main thing is to have a happy person. She will find the knowledge herself, what she needs, later. I'm not in a rush to make her count faster.’ Other parents questioned whether the academic rigour of Russian schools is always appropriate especially for younger children. Vera, whose now teenaged son has completed all his schooling in Finland, doubted the benefits of starting school with many responsibilities placed on children so early:

> Because there kids are always obligated to do something. There in Russia. Which is not right, because they should have a childhood. It’s not right. And here they start elementary school softly, so that the kids enjoy [going to school].
>
> [Vera, Russia, 40-45, single parent, 1 child, in Finnish]

Similarly, Pavel, whose two older daughters live in Russia and the youngest attends school in Finland, further questioned how much academic knowledge children need in the first place:

> [Russian kids] certainly know more than here [in Finland]. And who needs this knowledge then? A person must unlearn, and then if he wants more, well, there is [in Finnish] university [in Russian] you’re welcome to go there. So, in this regard, you have a good system, [in Finnish] little by little…
>
> [Pavel, Russia, 45-50, married, 3 children, in Russian/Finnish]

However, parents also expressed concerns over their children’s future prospects and limitations a relaxed schooling system might place on them in the long run. Yulia, who lived in the UK with her three children and her British spouse before the family migrated to Finland, admited Russian schools are less ‘psychologically

comfortable as there is still lots of Soviet type approach' but wishes Finnish schools were more 'academically selective'. Like Dominika, she has taken up the responsibility of teaching her children at home remarking 'we simply do the things they don't teach at school by ourselves. We do history, literature, we read a lot, we do biology.' However, she worried about her children's future if they continue living in Finland:

> And also like academically for our children we don't see a future because our oldest child she studies at school. And at school they're very non-academic and they really want sort of follow the weakest. And we want to give them a choice basically like to go to a good school academically selective. We know that if they finish the school here there is no chance they are going to Cambridge or Oxford.
>
> [Yulia, Russia, 35-40, married, 3 children, in English]

In Yulia's example, the impact of personal experiences on parenting scripts is especially clear. She considers the opportunities which the Russian education system made possible for her and contrasts that to her own children.

When assessing the quality of different educational institutions, therefore, the parents construct a dichotomy between Finnish and Russian educational styles. In the parents' scripts of parenting, these dichotomies which are strongly associated with the meanings attached to 'Finnishness' or 'Russianness' become a way to communicate their own parenting values to others. In the construction of Finnish and Russian education, parents can give the same practices positive or negative meanings according to their own personal experiences and priorities. Finnishness can mean progressive education without stress or weak education with little content. Russianness, on the other hand, can mean quality and competitiveness, or coercion and outdated practices.

However, there is an additional category the parents refer to when discussing education, namely 'Soviet' education. Referring to the 'Sovietness' of any given practice is a near universal shorthand for bad, outdated practices. In the above examples, for instance, the remnants of 'Sovietness' in the Russian educational system are referred to by Anna, Jelena and Yulia. Anna sees post-Soviet schools as one group and suggests that their evolution has been stilted because of the

Soviet experience. She remarks that perhaps in time Estonia, too, will have a similar educational system as Finland but her children are growing up now. Jelena, on the other hand, notes that in Russian day centres 'the idea is that kids can't be left alone. They can't do what they want, there must be adults who control what the kids do. It's still the Soviet system.' In opposition to the others, Yulia sees more good than bad in the Russian educational system, but even she paints the 'Soviet' influence as a source of the negative aspects of Russian education. The way in which the parents conflate 'Sovietness' with a particular kind of education echoes how the teachers interviewed by Matza view their role as modernisers of Russian education, cleansing it from totalitarian Soviet elements (Matza, 2012). The near universal usage of 'Soviet' to denote outdated or harmful practices reinforces the role of transnational imagination in the parents' parenting scripts. There is some room for variation in the meanings given to Russian education, but Soviet is almost exclusively negative. This adds to the parents' contrasting imaginings of the West and post-Soviet, in which post-Sovietness is defined by the past and the West by modernity, explored in the previous chapter.

5.3.3 Connections between education and Russian speaking identity

As discussed in section 2, many of the interviewed parents explicitly or implicitly adopt parts of the *vospitanie* discourse into their script of parenting to emphasise their Russian-speaking identity and difference from Finnish parents. Similarly, many of the parents link their parenting practices and orientations regarding school and hobbies to their identity as Russian-speaking parent. This connection has been found in previous research, too. Most notably, Zbenovich and Lerner, studying Russian Israeli families, argue that the durability of *vospitanie* as the basis of Russian cultural parenting script goes beyond attempts to maintain cultural continuity. Rather it provides a platform for cultural competition and criticism of the parenting practices they have found in their new country (Zbenovich & Lerner, 2013, p. 123). Discussing the good and bad point of Finnish day cares, Dominika commented on the lack of structured activities and her identity as a Russian mother:

> But on the other hand, here they don't do much with the kids at day care, from a Russian mother's point of view. All Russian mothers are crazy. As you know (laughs). All the moms enrol their kids to a million different hobbies. I'm the same (laughs).
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 30-35, married, 2 children, in Russian]

While light-hearted, Dominika's statement shows that not only has she adopted providing hobbies as a part of her own script of good parenting but sees it as something she shares with other Russian-speaking mothers. This speaks to the essentialised position of the image of the involved Russian mother, who takes her children to 'a million different hobbies', meaning she manages the children's education and free time. The discourse around Russian-speaking mothers' involvement in education in general and hobbies in particular is a continuation of the intensive parenting style discussed above. The ideal of active management does not only denote clear aspects of *vospitanie* such as discipline, but elements that relate to formal education or *obrazovanie*, and areas that are situated somewhere in between. Invoking this image acts as an instant mark of belonging but refuting it could also be used to emphasise deviance from the common cultural script.

In this way, education acquires a larger meaning in the interviewees' parenting scripts than just a concern over the children's future success. It also becomes a way to transmit cultural identity. Alisa, who migrated to Finland in the 1990s with her daughter and now has a grandson, discussed the differences between Finnish and Russian parenting, noting the differences in home life:

> In general, the differences between Russians and Finns, they exist in the domestic sphere, looking at how kids are raised, how they are at school... But again, I speak only for my own generation, it's probably different for those who grew up here. Although my grandson already knows the alphabet and can read and count (laughs). He has an encyclopaedia and is reading it. A very old one, from Stalin's time. There's fifty volumes, and I'll tell him 'you need to read a volume in the evening and prepare it.' … For him it's like a game. Even though he can already read in both Finnish and Swedish, with Russian he mixes up some letters. I don't know why, but still this still exists, teaching letters and numbers.
>
> [Alisa, Estonia, 50+, single parent, 1 child, in Russian]

As a grandmother, Alisa has taken up the responsibility of transmitting some of the *vospitanie* ethos to her grandson through teaching him to read and count in Russian. In this sense, Alisa's script of parenting is much like those Fogiel-Bijaoui finds among grandmothers of the Russian migrant families from the former Soviet Union. The Russian grandmothers Fogiel-Bijaoui interviews collectively disapprove of the Israeli educational system as well as how parents educate their children. To remedy this lack of quality education, the grandmothers had adopted a mix of methods through which they sought to transmit ideas linked to *vospitanie* with which they grew up. These included speaking Russian to their grandchildren, reading them Russian literature as well as teaching them 'good manners' and self-discipline (Fogiel-Bijaoui, 2013, p. 731).

This mix of methods further demonstrates the connections between *vospitanie*, *obrazovanie* and Russian-speaking identity. Like the Russian grandmothers in Fogiel-Bijaoui's study, Alisa also prided herself on her grandson's manners and respect for older people, something she felt is lacking with many Finnish children. While she admitted to being less strict as a grandmother than she was as a mother, Alisa contrasted herself with her grandson's Finnish grandmother saying, 'as for the other grandmother, my daughter's first husband, he says: "my mother says she doesn't know why he doesn't listen to her, he does what his parents tell him." He probably does what I tell him, too.' This difference in behaviour between different authority figures is a theme which other grandmothers also reference. Marta, who migrated to Finland after both her son and daughter had done the same, declared that parenting is 'very different in Finland' and 'children are not disciplined in Finland.' Although both her children are married to fellow Russian-speakers, Marta has observed that especially her daughter-in-law has been influenced by the Finnish parenting style and needs her help:

> If the mom says to the kids: "Go to bed," they don't hear, they continue playing. No reaction at all. And when the grandmother says: "What is this ?! Put away the toys and go to bed immediately!" – they'll move. I don't beat them, I don't raise my voice to them, but they know that if they don't do as I say, then some kind of punishment will follow.

[Marta, 50+, Russia, widowed, 2 children, in Russian]

Education can become an object of conflicting identities demonstrating its central position in cultural scripts of parenting. Olga, an Ingrian Finn, migrated to Finland as a return migrant in her early 20s, like many of her family members before, including parents and grandparents. Her current husband, not himself an Ingrian Finn, migrated following her. They later married and had two children in Finland. Olga's Finnish roots, especially the Finnish language, are important to her, and something she wants to pass onto her children. This is a goal her husband does not share and according to Olga he 'doesn't feel comfortable [in Finland, doesn't feel at home here.' However, they both share reservations about Finnish parenting and educational system. Olga explained her view of Finnish parenting:

> I can't know for sure, but my opinion and what I see is that Finnish mothers and fathers, they have a more simple approach to parenting. I mean – if a kid wants something they get it, nothing is forbidden. In my opinion. We have set boundaries for the kids, what is allowed, what is not. And I keep an eye on them... I want my children to be well-behaved (*vospitannye*), I try to pay attention to this.
>
> [Olga, Russia, 30-35, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Here, Olga constructs difference through many of the same themes that are explored in section 3. These themes relate to the school world as well. Olga described how her daughter reacts to her Finnish classmates:

> The youngest, I don't think so, he doesn't notice [the differences] … The eldest, when she comes home from school, … I ask how her day was, and she will say 'the Finnish boys went crazy again, they don't listen to anyone, don't do anything'. She separates people like that depending on who she's talking about: Finnish girls or Finnish boys. Somehow, she manages to slip it into the conversation.
>
> [Olga, Russia, 30-35, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Olga felt Finnish-Russian school is a good compromise, but her husband is adamant about moving the children to a Russian school eventually:

> We go to Russia every six months, my husband goes more often, but with the kids. Our daughter visited the Finno-Ugric school there in Petrozavodsk for a day. We want her to understand what they study in a Russian school. Because of that, in addition to the Finnish-Russian school, we also study in the evenings using Russian textbooks. We decided to do this so that she would keep up with the Russian program, too, because my husband eventually wants to go back there.
>
> [Olga, Russia, 30-35, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Olga's example demonstrates how different parenting orientations and practices are incorporated into parenting scripts. Within Olga's family, education has become a battle ground between Russian and Finnish identity. Russianness is defined by both quality of education but also proper behaviour which are closely bound together. While Olga otherwise subscribes to a parenting script closely tied to elements inherited from *vospitanie*, elements of her Finnish identity remain important in her parenting script. She stresses especially the importance of language, which is discussed further in the chapter 8. Olga's example further speaks to the impact of personal experiences on parenting scripts. Undoubtedly the discomfort Olga's spouse feels in Finland has contributed to his distaste for Finnish education and reluctance to adopt any new elements to his script of parenting. Some gendered elements to parenting scripts are also potentially at play, as Olga and her spouse have followed the reverse of the typical migration scenario in which the decision is taken based on the husband's initiative or job prospects. All these intertwined elements demonstrate not only the interconnectedness of different aspects of parenting but also the salience of education in parenting scripts.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed how the interviewed parents construct difference between Russian and Finnish parenting styles and how the styles align with their own parenting scripts. This chapter introduced the historically significant vospitanie parenting discourse, which emphasises character building as the goal of good parenting and encompasses all aspects of the child's life. The analysis reveals how the transnational imaginaries explored in the previous chapter are expanded into construction of difference between Russian and

Finnish parents. Some of the parents include critique of the Finnish parenting style into their script of good parenting, whereas others construct parallel scripts in which both styles are equal. The construction of difference relies on dichotomies in which Finnish and Russian parenting are contrasted against one another. In this dichotomy Finnish parenting represents European values, particularly individualism, whereas Russian parenting is characterised by collectivism and control. While all the interviewed parents discuss these dichotomies, the meanings they give to the same parenting values, beliefs, and practices can be quite different. Some see the Finnish parenting style as humane and the extra freedom as beneficial to their children's development as individuals, others see Finnish parenting as almost neglectful, teaching Finnish children to be rude to their elders and less prepared for life as adults. Additionally, the analysis shows that even though these dichotomies are fixed, the parents show flexible 'pick-and-mix' attitude towards blending beliefs and practices to create parenting scripts in a transnational environment. In some cases, the parents can even seek to adopt elements in their parenting scripts that distance them from certain types of 'Russianness' they find problematic.

The central tension is between collectivist and individualist parenting values. When the parents construct difference to Finnish parents, elements central to *vospitanie,* such as parental control and collectivism, are brough to the forefront of their parenting scripts. Some adopt these elements and others reject them, but, significantly, all feel the need to address them in some manner in their parenting script. This centrality of *vospitanie* shows its embeddedness as a discourse and its potential to signal instant belonging to a certain group of parents. Positioning themselves as outside observers, the parents construct their narrative from events they have witnessed in public spaces. The parents who criticise Finnish parents see evidence of children with no boundaries and lack of parental authority. This ability to manage children's behaviour in public space specifically is seen as a mark of good parenting, but also Russian-speaking parenting. The parents who reject this part of *vospitanie*, in contrast, emphasise the positives of Finnish parenting. Particularly they prefer what they see as a Finnish way of communicating with children, not through authoritative measures such as shouting but through conversation and explanation. The parents have

acquired understanding of different styles of parenting through exposure to them, making their parenting transnational in nature. However, they do not relinquish their identity as Russian-speaking parents, but rather distance themselves from other kinds of Russian-speaking parents.

The reaction from Finnish parents affects the process of forming parenting scripts suitable to a transnational parenting environment. For the parents to gain acceptance, co-actors in the new parenting environment need to give the same meaning to the parenting practices. Displaying parenting in this situation has complicated layers which can lead to conflicting priorities. For many of the parents, it is not only important to establish their deservingness as a good parent in the eyes of present co-actors such as Finnish peers but also in front of an imagined Russian audience as well.

The second section of the chapter analysed more closely how the construction of difference through *vospitanie* affects the parents' expectation of Finnish educational institutions as co-actors of parenting. The same dichotomy between individualistic and communitarian values persists in the sphere of education. The dichotomies underpinning the meanings the parents give to 'Finnish' and 'Russian' education become a way to communicate their own parenting values to others. Notably, however, while many of the parents emphasise the role of education in their script of parenting as Russian parents, the meanings given to 'Soviet' education are negative regardless of how the parent positions themselves vis-à-vis 'Russian' education.

The next chapter turns attention to the co-actors of parenting, the individuals, groups, and institutions with whom the parents construct their parenting scripts. In particular, the next chapter focuses on the expectations parents have of the co-actors in the private sphere, to whom do the parents turn to for advice and support. The chapter further builds on the themes of *vospitanie* and what the interviewees consider to be the differences between Russian and Finnish parenting styles by exploring how they influence the parents' relationships with co-actors of parenting within their extended family.

6 Co-actors of parenting in the private sphere: expectations of advice and support

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the nature of parenting scripts by analysing the role of co-actors of parenting. The analysis builds on the idea of parenting as a multidirectional relationship (Fisher & Tronto, 1990). As discussed in chapter 1, Co-actors are the individuals, groups, and institutions who hold significant influence over how parenting scripts are constructed and to whom parenting is displayed, such as extended family, other parents or even healthcare professionals. Playing an integral role in shaping parenting scripts, co-actors are not only the audience to which parents must display good parenting, they also 'do' parenting in their own right (Lind et al., 2016). They hold knowledge and material resources which parents need. Not being recognised as a good parent by significant co-actors can have tangible effects on the parents' well-being and their ability to enact their scripts of good parenting. The nature of these effects and their significance depends on the co-actor and the parents' own circumstances. Possible consequences range from social exclusion to loss of informal help with childcare all the way to intervention from social services or loss of benefits (Finch, 2007).

In this chapter, I explore the significance of co-actors of parenting within the extended family, to whom the parents' turn for support and advice. Analysing co-actors in this light, I investigate what roles the parents give to different co-actors and how these roles translate to a transnational parenting environment. Co-actors of parenting within the family are often key sources of support and the ones parents view as an authority on parenting. I identify two types of co-actors of parenting within the family who feature heavily in the interviewees' parenting scripts: the spouse and the grandparents. I argue that in relation to their spouses, parents construct a script of parenting which is based on the ideal of gendered shared parenthood. This is true for both mothers and fathers in this study, but most often the spouse referred to is the father, as only six fathers

were interviewed in this study. The relationship between grandparents and parents, on the other hand, is much more contentious. While grandparents make a vital contribution to transnational parenting, my interviews indicate that the parents rarely rely on them for advice. Rather the parents connect good parenting with 'modern' advice, seeking information from co-actors of parenting outside of the family like for example the internet, online, or peer groups instead.

6.2 Co-parenting in the nuclear family: gender roles and shared parenting

Research on contemporary Russian masculinities has highlighted the alienation of men in the domestic sphere as a part of a post-Soviet gender order and the casting of the family as exclusively the mothers' concern (see for exampleAshwin & Isupova, 2018; Utrata, 2008). However, in the parenting scripts which the interviewees in this study construct, the influence of discourses on 'responsible parenthood' is significant in determining how they view their partner as a co-actor of parenting. Chernova (2012) argues that that the model of responsible parenthood which started forming in Western countries in the second half of the twentieth century, has been essential in shaping contemporary Russian practices and ideals. Responsible parenthood emphasises a conscious, knowledge-based approach to parenting and underlines the need for a partnership between the parents in order to achieve the optimal parenting outcomes (Chernova, 2012). Within the scripts of parenting that the interviewees construct, good parenting is defined by conscious cooperation, agreement, and shared parenting within the family. Overall, the interviewees in this study report that the main person with whom they discuss parenting is their partner. While the majority of the interviewees were women, both men and women responded with a resounding 'yes of course' when they were asked if they discussed parenting with their partner. Furthermore, in the cases in which the mothers felt they were not able to discuss parenting with their husband, this non-communication was framed as a negative and something to overcome. This dynamic certainly could be found in some of the interviewees' families. Anfisa, who migrated to Finland after meeting her Ingrian Finn husband, detailed how

she is only able to discuss parenting with her husband in short doses and short questions; any attempt at a longer discussion is met with an exasperated: ‘Okay, that’s enough, I can’t listen to any more of this’.

While the parents underline the need for parental cooperation, they combine the discourses on responsible parenthood with conservative gender ideals. When discussing expectations of advice and support from their partner, most of the parents, both mothers and fathers, refer to what they see as the different roles of mothers and fathers. Here, many of the parents base their scripts of parenting on a modified breadwinner ideal, a heteronormative, two-parent family structure, which previous research has identified as one of the prominent gender ideologies not only in the Russian context but also in Western Europe. While women working outside of the home is not questioned, women are still cast as the primary caregiver and secondary earner in this model (Ashwin & Isupova, 2018; Eerola et al., 2021). Scholars have noted especially the connection between Russian cultural conceptions of fatherhood and the ability to provide economically (Kiblitskaya 2000, Kukhterin 2000). Kiblitskaya argues that performing the role of the main breadwinner, *kormilets*, forms the basis of men’s status and authority in the family (Kiblitskaya 2000). Significantly, the idea of *kormilets* was modified through the promotion of women’s employment from the only wage-earner to the highest earner only earner already in the Soviet period (Ashwin and Isupova 2018). Therefore, while the cultural idea of *kormilets* continues to have cultural significance, women’s employment outside of the home is not necessarily seen by many Russian women as negative but rather as secondary to their caring role in the home (Ashwin and Isupova 2018).

Adhering to distinct gendered parenting roles provides one of the ways the interviewees differentiate between themselves and ‘Finnish’ or even ‘European’ parents. Several of the interviewed mothers brought up the idea of a ‘European father’, who takes an active part in everyday parenting. Dominika who migrated to Finland with her husband following a job offer, evoked this image when asked if it is important for her that her husband spends a lot of time with their two daughters:

> Yes. If you count the hours he probably doesn't do that much, but that's understandable - he's a manager, and it's strange to require a person who works in such a position that he ... Probably, he's not a European father.
>
> [Dominika, 35-40, Russia, married, 2 children, in Russian]

This differentiation through gendered parenting extends to the relationship between the parents, too. The interviewed mothers consistently identify their ideas of gender roles as different from what they perceive to be the Finnish norm. One of the ways interviewed mothers in this study constructed difference to Finnish mothers was their preference for a 'more traditional family model' where their husbands were the proclaimed head of the household. For example, Klaudia, who at the time of the interview had recently separated from her Russian-speaking spouse with whom she had two children, remarked that Finns have a very gender-equal family order. In contrast, she prefers clearer gender roles where 'a man is more responsible for money matters, for example, and you should respect him more ... and a woman is a little softer and can be more flexible in some things.' Gendered parenting roles, therefore, are tied to the interviewees' transnational imagination and what it means to be a Russian speaker. There is variance between parents on whether they adopt these gendered parenting roles as a part of their scripts or attempt to distance themselves from them, but it is a dominant enough discourse the most mothers felt the need to address it in some way. The idea of Russian-speaking families being 'more traditional' as Klaudia phrases it, becomes an 'essentialised truth' which the interviewees can use to describe their experience of parenting in a transnational environment and be understood by others in the same situation (Appiah, 1994; Jeffries, 2011).

6.2.1 'The different strengths of mums' and dads': gendered co-parenting and *vospitanie*

Significantly, when discussing gender roles and parenting, the interviewees do not base the need for a two-parent family solely on a modified breadwinner model. Rather, the interviewees construct their parenting scripts on a co-parenting structure in which the gendered characteristics of both parents complement and support the other. An integral part of good parenting,

according to this logic, is the ability to turn to one's partner for advice and support. When asked if it is important to her that her children have a close relationship with their father, Anna who has one child with her former husband still living in Estonia and two children with her current husband in Finland explained why she feels it would be impossible for her as a mother to fulfil the role of both parents:

> Yes, it's very important [for the children to have a close relationship with their dad], because I can't do everything alone, because the mum's role, she's soft, and her responsibility is to give warmth … In any case there should be two roles, even though they sometimes change. The father's role is that he is demanding, and through this demandingness he brings some kind of an internal structure. And I alone cannot combine these roles.
>
> [Anna, Estonia, 40-45, married, three children, in Russian]

The complementary characteristics can include both gendered and ungendered elements, but most parents present the complementary parenting roles as ultimately inherently gendered. For example, Dominika, who migrated with her husband and two children after her husband received a job offer from Finland, explained how he is often able to understand their daughter better because they have a similar temperament while she herself has a calmer personality. This is an example of an ungendered element in how co-parents' skills and personalities can support each other. However, Dominika also presented an additional, gendered example of how she and her husband work as co-parents. While Dominika admitted that she spends the most time with the children due to her husband's busy work schedule, she also argued that he brings aspects to parenting she herself could not:

> Firstly, dads know how to let go and go crazy in a really awesome way [in English] wild games (laughs). I don't think all mums know how to do that. It's kind of [in English] wild, wild West, East (laughs). Because I need games with some kind of instructions on what to do, that's more interesting for me. And they just run wild in a crazy way: lay about on the bed, hit each other with pillows, play some completely crazy games (laughs). This is the strength of all dads, I think.
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 30-35, married, two children, in Russian]

In this way, the 'strengths of all dads' complement mothers' parenting style. The formulation of difference between mothers and fathers Dominika uses as a base for her parenting script is different from Anna's but no less gendered. In their own ways, both draw from the idea of mothers as natural, primary care givers. Anna draws from a discourse that emphasises the natural role of women as soft, sensitive caregivers (Ratilainen, 2015). In contrast, Dominika's formulation reflects the different definitions often given to good motherhood and good fatherhood in terms of care work. Previous research on parenting in Western Europe has found that while good motherhood often involves management of everyday family life, routine care tasks and housework, good fatherhood is much more centred around care tasks such as play, education and recreational activities (Garner, 2015; Ives, 2015; Kaufman & Grönlund, 2019). In this way, the two discourses can co-exist comfortably.

While the persistence of a heteronormative parenting script is far from exclusive to the Russian speaking cultural sphere, the specific formulation of gender difference many of the interviewees use echoes features of *vospitanie* discourse, discussed in the previous chapter. Although the intense gender essentialism of the post-Soviet gender discourse has been seen as a reaction to Soviet egalitarianism, paradoxically, the idea of 'compatible gender roles' retains many features from the Soviet period, particularly from the 1970s onward (Ratilainen, 2015; Zhurzhenko, 2004). While motherhood and the mother's role as the natural caregiver were venerated, mothers were also seen as susceptible to overindulgence and irrationality and fathers needed to keep discipline in the family (Field, 2004). Existing research on Russian mothers and fathers supports the longevity of gendered parenting scripts with specific educational task. For example, Kay finds that Russian women interviewed in the 1990s ascribed to fathers the role of the disciplinarian in the family, making them responsible for raising their sons to be 'real men' (Kay, 2007). As illustrated by Anna's example above, in this gendered parenting discourse, women's parenting style is universally described as 'soft' and in need of men's parenting style which is characterised by strictness. The inherent skill sets of men and women as parents inform what kind of advice and support the interviewees expect from their partners. Andrei who has a school-aged son from a previous marriage and a

toddler daughter with his current wife explained why he is the stricter parent in the family:

> It can happen that the wife sometimes has moments of weakness, in raising the child, you know, moments when she gives in. We'll agree that if the child is disobedient, he'll be denied something or limited in some way, like for example sweets, going out or something else. Sometimes my wife, let's say, a woman's heart can't take it, she wants to give in, give the kid extra sweets, sometimes something like that happens.
>
> [Andrei, Russia, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

Andrei further defined the responsibilities of mothers and fathers:

> I'm talking about qualities like manhood, sense of responsibility and the like. The father is responsible for these … And for feelings of love, love for art, for beauty, the mother should teach them, because she is a woman and all of these qualities these are feminine, I don't mean weak qualities, but a sense of beauty, a sense of tact, fashion; a woman should instil all of that …
>
> [Andrei, Russia, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

The strict gendered division of qualities Andrei presents also echoes the gender essentialism present in the *vospitanie* discourse (Field, 2004; Gradskova, 2010). In this gendered script of co-parenting, both parents offer gender specific support and advice to the other. For single parents, the lack of a co-parent in the form of a partner can be a source of insecurity. Vera, who migrated to Finland over fifteen years ago with her then infant son, explained that she feels she must be both a father and a mother for her son and has felt guilty over this:

> It's exactly these things, manly things. Like going fishing together and things like that (laughs). Although of course, we played tennis and football together when he was little. But all those things that men do, you know…
>
> [Vera, Russia, 40-45, single mother, one child, in Finnish]

However, Vera mitigated the guilt over the lack of a male co-parent by pointing out her son's personality which is different from many other boys. For her raising a son alone has been easier because her son has not shown interest in

traditionally 'masculine' pastimes. She maintained that 'you can see it right away when boys are little, there's some who are fixing up their bike by themselves. But my son is not like that.' Vera counters the imperative for co-parenting support and advice from a father figure by referring to her son's individual characteristics and her own specialised knowledge of him. This strategy of emphasising the mother-child bond is like those employed by single mothers in Kay's study on Russian motherhood (Kay, 2000). Despite the new parenting influences the parents have encountered after migration, the parents continue to rely on gendered parenting scripts, proving the deeply ingrained nature of gender essentialism in their cultural scripts of parenting. In the next section, I analyse shared care work, parental authority, and why the transnational parenting environment does not seem to have a transformative effect on gendered parenting scripts for most parents.

6.2.2 'He is the head, I'm the neck': change in gendered parenting scripts, parental authority, and shared care work

While the interviewed mothers structure their scripts of parenting around active co-parenting, they also implicitly acknowledge that this is not the norm. Anna expressed her gratitude that both her former and current husband are actively involved in their children's lives:

> Well, thank God, I don't need to [act as a father and a mother], because the kids are important for my ex-husband, he pays a lot of attention to them and invests in them. And my current husband is the same, so everything is fine here.
>
> [Anna, Estonia, 40-45, married, three children, in Russian]

Similarly, Dominika related that unlike some women she never had to complain that 'my husband never changed diapers', and Eva, who has two children with her Finnish husband, related that in comparison to her friends' experiences, her situation is unusual because her husband is happy to help her when needed. Although the interviewed mothers welcomed and even expected support from their partner in childcare, fathers are often presented as 'helpers' in parenting. At the same time, mothers are presented as the parent with more knowledge about parenting, and the one to decide on what kind of parenting practices the

family ultimately adopts. Svetlana, who has a toddler aged daughter with her Russian-speaking husband, described how the two discuss parenting when they encounter problems as first-time parents:

> But generally, to be honest: I'm the neck and he's the head, where I turn, there he'll look[2]. But everything is discussed absolutely, what's the best thing to do, because this is our child after all, and maybe it's better to buy something, an expensive gift for example, maybe we'll spoil her … But yes, of course, we talk about parenting.
>
> [Svetlana, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

A similar description was common among both the interviewed mothers as well as the fathers. Svetlana's example highlights the underlying assumption that while the father should be the head of the household, ultimately the mother as a natural caregiver holds the authoritative knowledge of parenting. Therefore, it is she who coordinates how parenting is done. However, as Svetlana's phrasing indicates, this use of power needs to remain subtle and preserve the status of the male head of household. While mothers are authoritative on everyday parenting practices, when it comes to questions like the children's schooling or language learning fathers exercise their authority as the head of the household. These kinds of decisions and negotiations are discussed in chapter 8 on language learning.

When it comes to everyday parenting practices, fathers can even be subjects of 'education' from their wives. Andrei explained how his wife has helped him to let go of parenting practices that involve the use of physical punishment:

> I was also aggressive because my parents raised me like that. I didn't like it, but it was in my blood. And my wife, she really re-educated (*perevospytala*) me. She constantly tells me, how she'd do things. Meaning, she tells me to be softer, to be kinder.

[2] The phrase Svetlana uses is a classic way to describe the power struggle between women and men in the family; while men should act as the 'head' of the family, women can subvert his authority through manipulation without challenging his status directly. See for example Kay, R. (2000). *Russian women and their organizations: gender, discrimination and grassroots women's organizations, 1991-96*. Macmillan Press. , Kay, R. (2016). *Men in contemporary Russia: the fallen heroes of post-Soviet change?* Routledge. pp. 162-163.

[Andrei, Russia, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

While fathers are expected to take the mother's advice on parenting practices, mothers are less likely to seek advice from fathers. Veronika who has an infant son with her Finnish speaking husband, hesitantly admitted that she takes the lead in parenting:

> Well, he's a typical man, so he kind of doesn't... I maybe kind of take the lead in a way ... I lead this in the sense that, well, I basically know more about children than he does, or about parenting than he, so... Although he's pretty stubborn, I am too though.
>
> [Veronika, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Finnish/Russian]

Rather than her husband, Veronika seeks advice from other mothers who share her parenting philosophy, particularly from the members of a breastfeeding support group to which she belongs. Veronika's reluctance to describe her lead role in parenting indicates she does not want to undermine the script of involved co-parenting or suggest her husband falls short of the ideal involved father, proving the salience of both discourses.

The discourses the parents draw on to construct their parenting scripts in relation to their partner are consistent with existing research on gender roles in contemporary Russia. The prominence of gender essentialism and the idea of complementary gender roles in the interviewees' echo what Zhurzhenko calls the post-Soviet neo traditionalism of current Russian gender discourse (Zhurzhenko, 2004). However, the way the interviewed parents include their partners as co-actors in their parenting scripts also reflect some of the patterns of gendered care found in Western European welfare states (Doucet, 2009; Ralph, 2016; Rose et al., 2015) . In the Finnish context, Eerola et al. find that while the sharing of care is a powerful discourse with which the interviewed couples wanted to be associated, they also often took for granted the mother's primacy and the father's assistive role in parenting (Eerola et al., 2021). In terms of cultural scripts of parenting, then, there are both similarities and differences in Russian-speaking and Finnish parents' expectations of support and advice from their partners. While the Russian-speaking parents express more overt gender essentialism in their parenting scripts, both scripts draw from the

ideal shared parenting as good parenting, regardless of what the realities of everyday parenting might be. To some extent migration and the parents' experiences in Finland have strengthened this ideal, but since there are similarities in Finnish and Russian discourses in this area, the ideal of shared parenting is not a completely foreign or revolutionary idea either.

Furthermore, while Finnish gender norms can be characterised as less essentialised, the unquestioned position of the mother as the primary care giver is present in both Finnish and Russian cultural scripts of parenting. Therefore, these new norms often are not distinctive enough to challenge the existing construction of gendered parenting roles. Rather, most of parents, like Klaudia quoted above, tend to construct parallel scripts, where both ways of parenting are acceptable. However, there is a minority of cases in which migration had acted a catalyst and changed the gendered parenting roles. An example that stands out among the interviews is how Polina describes the change not only in her own script of parenting but also her husband's parenting after migration. Initially Polina, her husband and their two sons moved to Finland on his initiative and desire to experience something new. However, the couple decided to separate after the move, and after the separation Polina's husband took up more of the day-to-day parenting duties Polina used to manage by herself. Polina reflected on the change saying:

> I think that, firstly, its tradition, the difference in cultures, in Russia the family is traditionally mainly connected to the mother, the wife ... the children: all of that is female. The situation is changing gradually, but not so quickly, because Europe has a different culture in this regard. Here we found ourselves in a different culture and gradually this culture grows in us and our culture and the European one merge within us. We are open minded in this regard, and this of course is all part of us.
>
> [Polina, 40-45, Russia, separated, 2 children, in Russian]

Since migration and the separation, Polina's relationship has in fact developed closer to the ideal active, supportive co-parenting relationship:

> [W]e're in constant contact. Because we have children … I have children, this is their dad and the children should be fine with their

> dad, I do everything so that they spend as much time with their dad as possible. Sometimes I call him and say, "So, dad, when will you take the younger one next time?" not because I need a free weekend, I mean I need that, too, but the child needs it most of all.
>
> [Polina, 40-45, Russia, separated, 2 children, in Russian]

Here Polina describes how migration has shaped her parenting script into a hybrid, adopting the best parts of both parenting environments. The reason why Polina has experienced migration as a catalyst of change in the gender roles within her family while most other interviewees do not is a multifaceted question. Concrete instances of being exposed to new ideas and the increased acceptance of more fluid parenting roles is an important part. For example, Polina describes how her husband has taken responsibility over communicating with the younger son's school entirely, something which he would have not done in Russia according to her. However, there are other aspects as well, not least the separation which called for a redefinition of the couple's relationship and parenting in another way. In the end, as powerful a catalyst of change migration is, personal circumstances are important when considering challenging 'essential truths' such as gendered parenting roles.

6.3 Grandparents as co-actors in transnational scripts of parenting

Previous research has established the significance of grandparents, particularly grandmothers, in transnational care networks. Still based in their home country, these grandparents, referred to as, for example, 'international flying grannies' (Plaza, 2000), 'mobile grandmothers' (Barglowski et al., 2015) and 'floating grandmothers' (Bojarczuk & Mühlau, 2017a), defy the long distance to take an active role in migrant families (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2020). The role of grandparents is especially salient in the East European context in which grandparents have a long history in childcare. The three generational family structure largely persisted in the USSR, not only due to cultural norms and expectations placed on grandparents, but also due to housing shortages, inadequate childcare services outside the home and lack of care for the elderly (Attwood, 2010; Roberts, 2000). Traditionally, grandparental support has meant the maternal

grandmother (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2020), and this is reflected in the interviewees' experiences. Many of the interviewees note that as grandfathers their fathers are more involved than they were in their childhood, but when it comes to advice or help with childcare grandmothers are at the forefront. In this way, the different roles of the grandparents reflect the gendered parenting roles within the nuclear family discussed above.

Many of the interviewees identified the three generational family from their childhood and saw it as typically 'Russian'. Karolina, who had lived in Finland for almost a decade before recently moving to Sweden with her toddler aged son, described her family thus:

> I don't know, you could really say that our family is made up of a mother, a grandmother, and a son. Classic Russian family.
>
> [Karolina, Russia, 30-35, single mother, one child, in Russian/English]

Although Karolina's mother had not migrated with her daughter, she is still such a fixed presence that she has a central place in Karolina's description of her family now. Other single parents reported a similar family structure in which a grandmother still living in Russia has a significant presence. Maria, who at the time of the interview had only recently migrated with her daughter who had started first grade in Finland, related that her mother's participation in childcare is a prerequisite for her career as a researcher:

> At first the two of us moved here together, but three weeks ago my mum came to help me with my daughter, which is why I'm able to be here to sit and talk. Because there is someone who takes care of my daughter besides me. Mum will not live here permanently, she'll come over periodically, help here when I have to leave for work … I need to travel to other places [for work]. Mum doesn't have a permit to stay here permanently like me and my daughter, and because of that she can only be a guest.
>
> [Maria, Russia, 30-35, single mother, one child, in Russian]

While the 'mobile grandmothers' represent an important part of the family for these interviewees, they are not eligible to migrate permanently to Finland under family migration policies and have to apply for a visa for a maximum of 90

days. Not only single parents, but also interviewees from two-parent families expressed a need for childcare help from grandparents, often starting from the birth of their first child. Ksenia, who had her first child after migrating to Finland from Russia, describes how her parents came over when she was giving birth to her daughter and compares her situation to that of her sister who continues to live close to their parents. She presented her parents as one unit:

> Of course [I missed my parents], I didn't have enough support. It wasn't enough at all. When [my daughter] was born, [my parents] came over. I was still at the hospital when they arrived. They were with me for a week to help me and my husband. And then they left, and I missed them very much. This is definitely a big minus, the fact that they don't live nearby. My sister lives next to them, and they constantly help her with her daughter … And [without them] you need to look for a nanny or not go anywhere.
>
> [Ksenia, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

Existing research on Russian-speaking mothers in Finland shows a similar need for grandparental support. Studying transnational care and Russian women married to Finnish men, Pöllänen (2013) notes that Russian-speaking mothers do not get the same kind of support from their Finnish in-laws as they would from their own mother in Russia. Pöllänen concludes that the involvement of the Finnish husbands has substituted some of the care work the interviewed mothers would expect their mothers would perform in Russia (Pöllänen, 2013). In my study, the distance between the interviewed mothers and their mothers could be one of the factors explaining why the role of the husband as a co-actor is so prominent as discussed above.

6.3.1 Settling conflicting parenting scripts

Although grandmothers form an integral part of everyday childcare in the interviewees' accounts, they are not presented as equal co-parents. Maria related that regardless of the country, for her the most difficult part of being a single parent is having to make all parenting decisions by herself:

> .. it is difficult not to be able to share responsibility with someone, because even though mum helps me, she doesn't really take part in decision making … She is just there to support when I have questions,

> but all the decisions, all the responsibility, they are completely on me and it's a little difficult for me.
>
> [Maria, Russia, 30-35, single mother, one child, in Russian]

In sharp contrast to the ideal of involved co-parenting explored above, grandparents, grandmothers in particularly, are often presented as oppositional figures. The lack of direct input from grandparents severs an import link with 'Russian' or even 'Soviet' parenting orientations and practices. Physical distance brought by migration on the one hand limits the grandparents' ability to help with childcare but makes it possible for parents to shape their parenting scripts independent of the cross-generational pressure. When asked what kind of parenting advice Larisa, who migrated to Finland for study and ended up settling permanently after meeting her husband, receives from her mother, she described how her mother has had to come to terms with the distance between them:

> There's no specific themes, it's just that my mother is a strong character (laughs). She's already gotten used to the fact that we've been living in Finland for seven years. At first it was very difficult for her. At first, she tried more to give me well-meaning advice how to do something better. But then she stopped, and we already talked about that. Meaning, she understands that we live our life in this regard, that our family has its own rules. And you can't force anything on us.
>
> [Larisa, Estonia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

Parenting practices, discourses and values signalling good parenting for the parents can have the opposite meaning for the grandparents, leading to conflict. These differences in parenting scripts are especially heightened when the interviewed parent has only 'done' parenting in Finland and connected their own parents' parenting style with the negative meanings given to 'Russian' parenting discussed in the previous chapter. Irina, who had lived in Finland for close to a decade with her Russian-speaking husband before having a son, described the conflicting views she and her mother have about parenting:

> Maybe I no longer have a Russian approach, because I have been living here for a very long time and I know the values that local people have ... I think that this greatly influenced my approach and the way I

> communicate with my child. My mother, when [my son] was with her in the summer, said that he was an ill-bred child, that he didn't know how to do many things at all. … Her method, my mother's, his grandmother's, it's too strict, it doesn't suit us, our family has a soft approach.
>
> [Irina, Russia, 35-40, married, 1 child, in Russian]

Especially interviewees who have lived in Finland for a long time and have many Finnish social contacts conceptualise the differences between parenting scripts as the difference in 'Finnish' and 'Russian' parenting styles. As explored in the previous chapter, the parents construct difference between Russian and Finnish parenting styles by referring to the strictness or softness of the styles, respectively.

However, different parenting scripts between parents and grandparents are most often discussed in terms of a conflict between modern and outdated parenting practices. Veronika, who has an infant son with her Finnish-speaking husband, compared her Finnish mother-in-law and her own mother, saying neither one of them know the current recommendations for infants:

> I wouldn't say my mother-in-law interferes much at all, she really doesn't. But her advice is outdated, it's, well how should I put this... Collectively, I can say that when my son was two months old, both my mother-in-law and my mother started saying that "give him a pacifier … feed him potatoes"… When he was three months old, "now you should feed him potatoes" – both of them! I mean, both of them went on about the pacifier and the potatoes. So here you go, if you're comparing Finnish and Russian cultures, it doesn't matter, it's like they're of one mind - potatoes!
>
> [Veronika, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Finnish/Russian]

Like Veronika, when evaluating parenting advice, the parents contrast modern, 'good' parenting practices with outdated, 'bad' ones. However, the way the interviewees use modern to describe parenting is quite specific. As discussed above, for the majority it does not include radical change in gender roles, for example. Rather, modern parenting practices are contrasted with overly strict, 'outdated', parenting style, especially when it comes to the use of corporal punishment. As Veronika's example shows, when it comes to advice, using the

most up-to-date information is a central part of good, modern parenting, and this information is often lacking in grandparents' advice according to the interviewees. Therefore, migration away from the immediate influence of grandparents can act as a catalyst for parents to break away from the parenting practices of the older generation, but the parenting value of 'modernity' is just as important a reason to reject parenting advice and assert the parents' own authority.

Instead of grandparents, the parents can turn to a varied array of alternative co-actors outside of the family sphere for information on parenting practices ranging from feeding to sleep to discipline. Dominika reflected on the changes in the availability of parenting information and remarked that in Russia there is a watershed moment for parenting, and it seemed to her that whereas before parents 'asked grandparents, now … those who read tend to read professional literature and look for answers on the internet, not grandmothers.' For her the change is because 'many people understand that what grandmothers once did, maybe they did it just out of habit, and not because it was right.' Like Dominika, others also expressed their preference for 'modern, contemporary' advice. Alina, who has two children with her Russian-speaking husband and is an active member of a Russian-speaking association for mothers described how she makes decisions regarding parenting:

> I'm myself probably somewhat intuitive, if I want to know more about something the Internet is my first choice, because ... sometimes I ask my parents for advice, but the advice my mum gives might not be altogether modern ... but also I can ask for advice in Neuvola[3] … if we go for shots for example and I have questions. So yes, the Internet, but in my native language because it's more comfortable, and I can also ask friends [at Russian-speaking association], ask other mothers.
>
> [Alina, Estonia, 30-35, married, two children, in Russian]

The parents construct a sharp dichotomy between 'good' modern parenting based on all the available current information and 'bad' outdated parenting based on their own parents' practices. Grandparents' parenting scripts are

3 Finnish public maternity clinic, see next chapter for a full discussion on healthcare institutions as parenting co-actors.

positioned as stuck in the past, out-of-touch or even harmful. Rather than relying on grandparents, a good mother utilises advice from the internet, books, and likeminded peers. Information gathering and focus on peer groups is specifically the mothers' domain. While the fathers reported seeking information and advice from peers to some extent, the interviewed mothers were much more purposeful and organised in these activities. Finding the best information and asking for advice from multiple co-actors is much more central to script of good motherhood than good fatherhood. This centrality fits together with the gendered parenting roles discussed above.

Mothers are more likely to modify their parenting based on advice from these sources rather than from grandparents. Particularly, friends who are also Russian-speaking mothers form an essential non-judgemental, likeminded peer group with whom to discuss and learn about parenting. The mothers value the combination of professional advice and personal experience that fellow mothers can provide. However, a likeminded peer group does not mean all Russian speakers; aspects such as education, class, and level of integration in Finland are important when the parents choose their peer group. Eva has two daughters with her Finnish husband and at the time of the interview had lived in Finland for over a decade. She started attending events arranged by an association for Russian-speaking mothers to encourage her daughters to speak Russian. However, she expressed feelings of being out of place at the events, describing the association as a 'tea drinking club':

> Yeah, I can see (differences between myself and the other mothers.) … I don't know, my friends who've moved here a long time ago don't go there. [The other mothers] only just moved here and don't have many ties to Finland … I don't know if some of them have a job … I haven't met them anyway. ... Because they don't speak Finnish, or very little. At least this is what I understood.
>
> [Eva, Russia, 30-35, married, two children, in Finnish]

Here, therefore, the parents' parenting identity reflects the wider internal tensions within Russian-speaking identity (Kopnina, 2005; Pilkington, 2002). While the mothers value advice based on personal experience, the advice must be combined with mastery of the right, modern, commonly accepted

professional advice (Bellander & Landqvist, 2020). A significant emphasis is placed on maternal intuition, and the mother as the best expert when it comes to her own child. Svetlana explained that she does not particularly seek anyone's advice but rather does everything herself, 'purely on intuition' saying: 'I feel the child, the child feels me'. This discourse on motherly intuition parallels Shpakovskaya's findings on contemporary middle-class mothering in Russia, in which the emotional bond between mother and child is emphasised (Shpakovskaya, 2015). This discourse exists alongside and intertwines with the need for professional, modern advice.

Another way the parents establish their authority is by highlighting the different roles grandparents and parents play in the child's life. Anzhelika, who migrated to Finland together with her husband and school-aged son, explained that she does not discuss parenting with her mother because she is unwilling to be strict with her grandson:

> Because with my mother, for example, I remember that with me she was quite strict, but with [my son] … she just does everything and anything to make him happy. I mean, she gives him everything he asks for, no limits because this is her grandson. And the only advice is just to make sure he doesn't cry, but is happy. … It's impossible, you must still restrict the child in some things, in which he cannot limit himself due to age. And his grandmother doesn't restrict anything.
>
> [Anzhelika, Russia, 35-40, married, one child, in Russian]

In contrast to authoritarian 'Russian' parenting style, the problem with grandparents as co-actors of parenting in this case is not overt strictness but rather their 'soft approach'. This reflects the existence of multiple parenting discourses in the Russian-speaking space discussed in the previous chapter. Rather than adopting the traditional role of an educator instilling the values of *vospitanie* into their grandchildren, grandparents can draw from discourses in which their own role is about recreation and enjoyment. These grandparenting discourses are more common in contemporary Western countries with the expansion of childcare services and the longer life span of grandparents(Arber & Timonen, 2012; Fogiel-Bijaoui, 2013). In Anzhelika's example, the role of a parent and grandparent are completely different. Consequently, scripts of good

parenting and good grandparenting are completely different. Holding these two scripts separate can be a way to avoid conflict. Nina who has a toddler with her Finnish spouse, depicts why she and her husband decided not to place restrictions on their son's grandparents:

> We pretty quickly decided that he's allowed to do whatever he wants when he's visiting his grandparents, grandparents decide what goes. Even if grandparents sometimes… Grandparents are allowed to give them as much ice cream and chocolate and everything else as they want, they can buy the kid whatever they want, I think kids realise pretty quickly what he's allowed to do depending on who he's with. And that has more to do with the person rather than culture.
>
> [Nina, Russia, 40-45, married, one child, in Finnish]

In Nina's example, good grandparenting offers the child a break from the established rules that are central to good parenting. Therefore, the script of good parenting and good grandparenting is markedly different. Notably, however, the variations of good grandparenting scripts have one thing in common: grandparents are not an authority on parenting.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the different co-actors within the extended family and their influence on how the interviewees construct their parenting scripts. The first part identified two important co-actors from whom the parents seek advice and support. The key co-actor the parents discuss parenting with is their partner (or ex-partner). The interviewees build their parenting script around an ideal of active co-parenting. However, the model of co-parenting the interviewees use is highly gendered. In this model women are considered the natural care giver, who can even educate men on parenting, provided that at the same time they preserve his role as the head of the household. When it comes to gendered parenting roles, therefore, migration does not seem to have a transformative effect. Rather, the way in which the interviewed parents construct gender roles is in keeping with existing research on gendered parenting within Russia. Notably, while most of the interviewees construct parenting scripts that are more gendered than research has shown Finnish parents generally do, the role of

the mother as the natural care giver connects the two cultural scripts of parenting.

The second most important co-actor the interviewees discussed were the grandparents. Following the gendered co-parenting script analysed in the first section, the interviewees present the grandmother as the primary source of support. While the interviewees note that their fathers are more involved as grandfathers than they were as fathers, they are not a source of childcare assistance in the same way as grandmothers. Although transnationally active grandmothers can be central to the running of family life especially for single mothers, they are not viewed as a source of reliable advice. Rather, the relationship is characterised by conflict and tension. In contrast to existing research on transitional care networks, the findings in this study suggest that while grandmothers provide important help with childcare, the parents often do not view them as authority figures when it comes to parenting advice. Instead, the parents focus on the 'concept of modern parenting' to define good advice. Modern in this context implies the use of the most up to date information, and it is contrasted with outdated parenting practices, such as physical punishment. Instead of grandmothers, the parents turn to peer groups for this kind of modern advice.

The next chapter continues to analyse the significant co-actors of parenting for the interviewees' parenting scripts but turns the focus to co-actors outside of the private sphere. Public, state institutions are an essential part of modern parenting, acting both as a source of support as well as a punitive actor. The next chapter will build on the themes explored in this chapter by analysing how the same parenting values, such as modernity of childcare advice, is transferred to the parents' evaluation of state institutions as co-actors of parenting.

7 ‘It’s much harder for mothers in Russia’: state institutions as co-actors of parenting

7.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on how public institutions act as co-actors of parenting. In its normalised ubiquity in the everyday, the state can be taken for granted and appear barely noticeable (Painter, 2006, p. 753). However, on closer inspection, the state is integrally involved in modern parenting. The state is an essential source of support for example in the form childcare, schooling, and social benefits but can also act as a punitive actor able to interfere in the family’s private life to impose a set of norms on how parenting is ‘done’ (Hennum, 2014; Lind et al., 2016). In this chapter, I analyse how the interviewed parents engage with public institutions. The parents themselves might not conceptualise the state as a co-actor of parenting. However, the public institutions parents encounter bring them into contact with a set of parenting norms and values, shaping their scripts of parenting. These are the institutions which the parents’ encounter regularly and form an important part of how their images of the state are shaped and the state ‘comes into being’ (Gupta, 1995).

In this chapter, I argue that the parents’ interaction with state institutions highlights how citizenship and parenting scripts intersect. Norms and values often associated with citizenship are adopted into parenting scripts, shaping the parents’ expectations of the state as a co-actor. The focus of the analysis is everyday citizenship, how the parents construct their responsibilities and rights as members of both Finnish and Russian societies. This construction draws from everyday interactions but also images of the state formed through ‘public culture’, such as mass media (Gupta, 1995). The parents are engaged in a constant negotiation between their expectations and images of the state as a co-actor and the reality of state support. The way the parents conceptualise state institutions as co-actors of parenting is an extension of their transnational imaginings, with the same strengths and flaws that characterise Finnish and Russian parenting styles found in the state as a co-actor of parenting. Russian

institutions can be painted as harsh and forgiving, while Finnish institutions can be seen as too lenient and encouraging unresponsible parenthood. Nonetheless, with regard to the state institutions of both countries, parents are engaged in a constant negotiation over what good parenthood entails with state institutions, and what support structures are necessary for parenthood to be done successfully.

7.2 Parenting scripts and the caring state

In this chapter, I analyse how the parents situate state institutions as co-actors of parenting through the lens of everyday citizenship. Here the central question is how the parents understand and construct the rights and responsibilities linked to being a member of society how they lay claim to those rights (Isin, 2017; Yuval-Davis, 2006). In analysing the state as a co-actor of parenting, understanding the ways in which the state is 'understood, experienced, and reproduced in everyday encounters' (Thelen, Vetters, and Benda-Beckmann 2014, 9) is vital. There are two different elements of the state which are central in determining how the parents position the state as a co-actor of parenting. The first element consists of the images of the state which the parents have. The discourses concerning what the state should be and do in 'public culture', such as mass media, form an important basis which the parents draw from in order to fit the state into their scripts of parenting. At the same time, however, everyday experiences with state institutions shape the way the parents view the state as a co-actor of parenting (Gupta, 1995; Gupta & Sharma, 2006). Therefore, street level bureaucrats, and officials in various state institutions who are responsible for the everyday running of the state (Lipsky, 1980), play important roles in shaping how the parents experience the state.

In constructing the state as a co-actor within their parenting scripts, the parents must navigate multiple discourses, some of which contradict one another. The 'caring' side of the state, services such as healthcare, childcare, and social assistance have a central position in how the state is experienced and imagined. Historically, these services have also acted as a justification for state power (Lister, 2009). In the post-Soviet context, scholars have noted how the fall of the

state socialist system transformed the welfare system which had acted as a key justification for state power within the Soviet system (Read & Thelen, 2007). However, previous research has also pointed to the survival of key discourses which determine who is deserving of state support, motherhood being a particularly salient one (Rivkin-Fish, 2010). In the Finnish context, social support and healthcare form an integral part of what Lister calls the 'Nordic Nirvana' (Lister, 2009, p. 243). The idea of a fair, caring state is one of the central discourses which are used to justify state action by outside commentators as well as actors within the Nordic welfare societies. (Lister, 2009). Finnish discourses on the state align with the focus placed on supporting mothers. The well-being of mothers and children is an important symbol of the realisation of the idealised Nordic welfare state model (May, 2011). Nonetheless, the caring responsibilities the state has undertaken also give justification for the state to act in a punitive manner, to step in when a parent falls short of the expected level (Lind et al., 2016). As a co-actor, the state, therefore, is always not only an essential source of help but also a potential threat, an intruder in the relationships between parents and children.

Within both contexts there are several discourses related to who is considered a good, deserving parent or indeed a good and deserving citizen. In particular, scholars have noted the effect of neoliberal policies, which have aimed to reduce the size of the state welfare system and shift responsibility onto the individual (Chernova, 2012). This has not only affected parenting by reducing state services especially in Russia, but also in Finland. The neoliberal ideology has also influenced the idea of 'responsible parenting' discussed in previous chapters. Responsible parenting emphasises the role of the individual parent to provide optimal care for their child as well as their responsibility to keep up to date on the most modern childcare advice. Existing research in the Russian context argues that the responsible parenting -discourse can set unrealistic expectations on what an individual parent can do, but at the same time the discourse challenges the state's authority as a co-actor of parenting (Chernova, 2012; Shpakovskaya, 2015). Especially in the Russian context, researchers have found that for middle class parents with resources enact the idea of responsibility within their scripts of parenting through a consumer-like logic. The

parents, particularly the mothers, choose what they see as the best options to support their child's development in a vast marketplace of different services, including children's healthcare and early childhood education (Shpakovskaya, 2015; Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2018).

Against this background, I focus on two different areas of state support in the following analysis. The first part of the chapter concentrates on different forms of social support such as the welfare system and social services. The second part in turn focuses on healthcare as a part of state institutions.

7.3 Duties of the state and parent-citizens

While citizenship in Western European states is often framed as ethnically neutral, existing research has shown how potential migrants are treated differently based on ethnicity and country of origin. In practice, different groups of migrants are not equal when seeking membership in the national polity (Kymlicka & Opalski, 2001; van Riemsdijk, 2010). As discussed in detail in chapter 3, Russian-speaking migrants in Finland face additional barriers to be accepted as a member of Finnish society due to the anti-Russian tropes that are built into the construction of Finnish national identity (Puuronen, 2011). Rather than viewing citizenship as a purely legal category, I employ the lens of everyday citizenship. This framework focuses on the performative aspects of citizenship and how citizenship is understood in everyday interactions with public institutions and other citizens (Isin, 2017). Citizenship is understood as an ongoing process in which individuals and groups create themselves as citizens within the norms set by the wider social context (Elmersjö et al., 2020). Often the performative aspects of citizenship are connected to the role of the citizen as a worker, fully employed and financially independent. Julkunen discusses the link between good citizenship and paid employment in the Finnish context. She notes that paid employment is regarded as an undeniable moral and economic good in public discourses. This in turn places increasing employment levels at the heart of political programs for both the political right and the left (Julkunen, 2017, pp. 330-331). Civic participation through reproduction and nurturing roles, while less valued, remains a potent way to show 'deservingness' of the rights of

a citizen, including social support. This especially true for mothers (Elmersjö et al., 2020; Lister, 2007). Migration adds another layer of complexity to the everyday performative aspects of citizenship as the parent-citizens are required to display good migrant parenting. They must show their own value to their new home country, but also make sure their children are seen as good citizens (van Beurden & de Haan, 2020). In the following section, I discuss the ways in which everyday citizenship and parenting scripts intersect. First, I analyse what duties the parents give the state as a co-actor of parenting. Second, I analyse the way parenting scripts and everyday citizenship intersects, and how the parents construct their scripts of parenting in such a way that they can claim the identity of a good parent and a good citizen simultaneously.

7.3.1 'The Russian state doesn't help mothers': defining parenting duties of the state

As discussed in chapter 4, the interviewed parents often adopt the idea of Finland as a caring and secure state into their parenting scripts. Galina, who was a single parent in Russia for many years before migrating to Finland, marrying, and having two more children, explained how parenting in Russia was different from her current situation in Finland:

> The difference is that the Russian state doesn't help mothers. ... No money, nothing, it's much harder for mothers in Russia, you can't use public transport if you've got a stroller. There's a lot of problems. When I had a daughter, I couldn't get on public transport with a stroller, the situation might've changed since I moved, but at the time I had difficulties with money, and my state didn't help me in any way, only my parents helped.
>
> [Galina, Russia, 35-40, married, 3 children, in Russian]

Support for mothers is particularly viewed as one of the duties of the state and is one of the main ways Russia and Finland are compared to one another in the interviewees' narratives. In discussing the state in this way, the parents draw from discourses which underline the inherent right of parents, especially mothers, to state support. This discourse is a norm in both countries, but the parents' contrasting experiences in Finland and in Russia bring it to the forefront of their parenting scripts. Like Galina, the parents understand the state's

responsibility to help mothers in broad terms. Galina mentions lack of monetary assistance as one of the ways the Russian state has failed mothers as a co-actor, but she also refers to less direct forms of how the state helps mothers. Design of public transport and other public spaces such as playgrounds are presented as evidence of the caring nature of the Finnish state as a co-actor.

For parents like Galina, who view the Finnish state as a positive co-actor, the easiness of accessing essential services in comparison to their country of origin, is an essential feature. Ease of access was most salient in discussions on finding a suitable kindergarten or school. Zoya, who migrated to Finland with her husband and their three young children, compared applying for day care in Finland to her experience in Russia, and said it was a 'big deal' that she only had to submit an application online rather than going in person to the regional department of education as she had been obliged to in Russia:

> So I went and spoke to them, I had a three year old daughter and was pregnant. I said I need some help; my child needs to go to day care. ... They look me up and down … and reply 'yes, yes, but what about your family income?' I reply: 'my husband works, he has an income ... we live normally'. 'Do you drink alcohol? 'Of course not' … We're spared of this here.
>
> [Zoya, Russia, 35-40, married, three children, in Russian]

Zoya and Galina's examples highlight what kind of state co-actor they are most comfortable with. In the parents' scripts the ideal state co-actor often takes the form of an unobtrusive service provider. Although in Finland Zoya has moved to a parenting environment which has exposed her to new norms, ideas, and practices, she found it more difficult to display deservingness as a parent in need of state support in Russia. While as migrants the parents' deservingness of social support might be put under scrutiny, as a parent they do not have to prove their deservingness. The nature of the Finnish state as an unobtrusive co-actor also echoes the dichotomy between Finnish and Russian parenting styles, discussed in chapter 5. The Finnish parenting style is seen as more forgiving and considerate of the individual, and in turn, the Finnish state is seen as a less demanding co-actor.

Ideally, then, state institutions are there to offer services which make everyday parenting possible, but they do not encroach on parental authority or question whether the parents are performing the script of good parenting to their standards. This aspect of the state as a co-actor of parenting is especially salient when the parents discussed child protective services. As discussed in detail in chapter 3, in recent years there have multiple disputes over foster care cases involving Russian children, which have gained wide coverage in Russian media (Heiskanen, 2016; Novosti, 2016). Despite the wide Russian media coverage accusing the Finnish child welfare services of abuse of power and prejudice against Russian parents, not many parents discuss these services in their construction of the state as a parenting co-actor. The only parent who had direct, personal experience with child welfare service is Pavel, who approached the institution with his wife after his wife's teenage daughter from a previous relationship started exhibiting behavioural problems. Pavel described the experience in the following manner:

> They really reacted appropriately to the situation. They saw that the parents were not the problem, but that the child is the problem. And the problem here was just ... Because usually, apparently, this organization only decides to take the child from the parents, because the parents are bad. And in this case the parents were good.
>
> [Pavel, Russia, 45-50, married, three children, in Russian/Finnish]

In Pavel's experience the state acted well as a co-actor of parenting because it supported him and his wife and upheld their parenting authority. The other parents who commented on child welfare services in Finland without having personal experience with the institution emphasised similar themes. Daria, who after living in Finland for several years with her eldest daughter got remarried to a Ukrainian Russian-speaker, expressed the strongest trepidation over her parenting being misinterpreted by Finns, saying: 'I still do not really understand how, for example, the Finns [would react], if I raised my voice to a child or grabbed his arm'. She also worried that children might be able to report their own parents and use the institution against them, remarking 'in Russia now, too, there are similar smart children, everyone knows where to call, where they can complain about their parents.' This is the flip side of the Finnish parenting

styles, which, as discussed in chapter 5, some parents see as too willing to erode parental authority in favour of granting children too much autonomy. As a co-actor, then, ideally the state acts in a supporting role, upholding and enforcing parental authority is a central element of the interviewees' parenting scripts. The state's primary duty, therefore, is to act as an ally to the parents rather than the child.

When discussing the state's duties as a co-actor, the parents emphasise that they are looking for concrete, tangible support from the state to do parenting successfully. Vera originally came to Finland with her son as an asylum seeker but ended up applying for vocational training to gain a residency permit after she was refused asylum. Some years later, when her son was already in school, she reached out for help when she felt her mental health was affecting her parenting. She described why she was disappointed in the support she was offered:

> They came to visit us at home, these four social workers. They couldn't help us in any way. I was depressed then, and I was unemployed. And my son had seen me in this state, in a way I didn't want him to see me. I wanted help somehow. I said that my son is always in [Tampere]. He spends all his holidays here. I can't organise him to go to a summer camp. That's what I needed, concrete help. We didn't get anything.
>
> [Vera, Russia, 40-45, single mother, one child, in Finnish]

As the only parent with an asylum seeker background, Vera's experiences with the Finnish state were more direct and her need for help more pronounced than was the case for the other parents. Nonetheless, her experiences reflect a wider pattern among the interviewees' parenting scripts. Those parents, who had sought out social support services often emphasise how they had wished for help to pay for something concrete like hobbies or summer camp which would improve their children's wellbeing. Moreover, parents who had not sought assistance would also identify this as a 'deserving' cause of social support. For example, the Russian speaking association for mothers, where I conducted participant observation, offered multiple seminars focused on different aspect of state services alongside their normal weekly meetings. One seminar which I

attended focused particularly on child welfare and how Finnish state institutions can help families in difficult situations. In this conversation, the attending mothers brought up how Finnish parents do not place as much value on children having multiple hobbies and they highlighted the right of children to play. These examples show how the themes discussed in chapter 5 regarding *vospitanie* influence the parents' expectations of the state as a parenting co-actor. One of the central ideas of *vospitanie* is to raise well-rounded, well-adjusted citizens, making extra-curricular activities vital, rather than an added benefit. Hence, making sure financially underprivileged families can raise good citizens is one of the duties of the state.

7.3.2 Bad parents and bad citizens: employment and deservingness in parenting scripts

Within the interviewees' parenting scripts, the connection between good citizenship and good parenting is most apparent in how the parents tie deservingness of state support to the recipients' perceived willingness to find employment alongside their parenting duties. Nadia who gave birth to all her three children after migrating to Finland, explained that in her view the reason why more and more teenagers have no future aspirations is that they feel it is normal to rely on benefits:

> Maybe the parents didn't show them a good example, maybe they didn't say that you should actually earn money for yourself. Maybe they are hoping for government support. But in order for the state to support people, someone has to pay taxes, meaning someone has to work.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, three children, in Russian]

In the parenting scripts the interviewees construct, good parenting and good citizenship stand side-by-side. The emphasis on employment as a mark of a good citizen-parent can be seen as a centre piece of neoliberal thought, but at the same time, it is reminiscent of state socialism, too (Read & Thelen, 2007). In Nadia's parenting script, for example, good citizenship and good parenting have a symbiotic relationship. This idea is supported by previous research, which has found that migrant parents themselves frame good parenting as a mark of good

citizenship. A similar idea is expressed, for example by van Beurden et all.'s study on Muslim migrants' parenting identities in the Netherlands. The authors argue that one of the ways the parents affirm their civic contribution is to highlight their competency and responsibility as a parent, making sure their children do not behave 'badly'(van Beurden & de Haan, 2020). Analysing how Polish migrant mothers perform citizenship and establish belonging in the UK, Erel argues that the mothers assert their position as a good citizen through referring to their competency as a mother (Erel, 2011).

The worker citizen and the connection between paid employment and the right to welfare is especially prominent when the parents discuss Kela, the Finnish social insurance system. Kela is one of the most well-known state institutions and controls the majority of different types of welfare for residents of Finland. Kela controls financial assistance for varied circumstances, including child support, unemployment, student, and housing benefits as well as coverage for sickness related costs. An average resident of Finland is likely to encounter Kela in some form in their lifetime regardless of their class background as up to 80% of Finnish residents receive some type of financial assistance from Kela (Takala & Zaki, 2021). When asked about her experience with Kela, Oksana, who moved to Finland with her two sons, remarked that 'if you will think that I will complain about Kela, I wouldn't because I see it as your own responsibility'. She further explains:

> It is not the state's problem. It is your problem that the family is poor. Because I know Russians who are coming here with these 3 children and they live for very limited money, only this *lapsus* [sic. Finnish: child] money[4]. And they are not working. And they are suffering. ... I am sorry, can you change your brain to do something here in your head and can you just go and work? Maybe you can try that?
>
> [Oksana, Russia, 50+, single parent, two children, in English]

Oksana's script of parenting reveals a common way of conceptualising the state's responsibilities as a co-actor of parenting. While Oksana draws from discourses which emphasise the connection between employment and good

4 This is a reference to the Finnish child benefit (lapsilisä), which is paid monthly until the child turns 17.

citizenship, she simultaneously remarks that ‘the best thing raising children in Finland is state support by which I mean both schooling and social system’. While the state has duties as a co-actor, particularly providing education and financial security in times of crisis, part of being a good parent is self-sufficiency. The context of migration heightens the need to display deservingness through not relying on state support, as it is the most important mark of a ‘good migrant’ in public discourse (Anthias et al., 2013). This facet of the interviewees’ parenting scripts is connected to the importance placed on providing material security, and ‘better life’ discussed in chapter 4. However, in addition, the idea of responsible parenting is expanded to include employment outside of the home, and the state as a co-actor is placed in the background. The modified breadwinner model is present here as well, as mothers are not absolved from this responsibility either.

For the parents, the state’s biggest failure as a co-actor of parenting is not correcting bad parenting practices. Here, yet again, the extension of the permissive Finnish parenting styles into state practices is seen as a negative. The issue of undeserving, unemployed parents receiving the main share of state resources is a consistent theme in the parents’ narratives of their relationship to the Finnish state. This condemnation at the same time serves to highlight the parents’ own status as a ‘good migrant’ who in contrast contribute to society and take little from the state. Alisa who migrated with her daughter already in the 1990s, states that she understands that single mothers would need monetary assistance to pay for things like children’s hobbies, but she does not understand ‘how both parents in a family can be unemployed’. Alla, whose first son was born in Russia and second in Finland, stated that ‘I don’t like the fact that since I earn money, I am denied many things.’ She resented the fact that the state does not offer a form of support for parents like her: employed but lacking a support circle of friends and family in Finland:

> There were different occasions when we needed help. I went to the social services’ office that deals with children and youth. I went to ask if they could help us somehow. But I realized that because I work, and secondly, because we are not a problem family, no one drinks, no one does drugs, nothing like that, so because of that they said that we’d have to wait for a long time before they could help us in any

> way. So, in the end they put me on the waiting list twice, but I' d already waited a year, nothing came of it.
>
> [Alla, Russia, 35-40, single mother/joint custody, two children, in Russian]

In Alla's experience, the way she has been denied state support goes against both her script of good parenting and good citizenship. Instead of her receiving the support she, a good working citizen-parent, craved, the parents who have failed as both parents and citizens receive state support.

The deservingness of working parents is, however, situational. The state can as a co-actor actively encourage the idea of mothers as natural carers. Here, neoliberal welfare ideology is a central influence. When state welfare services are rolled back, women are tasked with more unpaid domestic labour which can in turn be justified by equating maintaining gendered parenting roles with good parenting (Kingfisher, 2002, pp. 7-11). Dominika, who moved with her husband and two children after he received a job offer in Finland, reflected on how the social system in Russia normalises how long mothers spend at home after giving birth:

> Women [in Finland] leave home to work after one year, and that's the norm. It's not the norm in Russia. Actually, everyone tries to stay with the child until the age of three. And there is such an internal trend of such intensive motherhood, it's called intensive parenting. And you feel some kind of inner obligation that for these three years you should be with your child.
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 30-35, married, two children, in Russian]

Here the state as a co-actor acts and is expected to act very differently from when it comes to 'bad parents' and 'regular' unemployment benefits. The approach echoes gendered citizenship, in which women's contribution to citizenship is childcare and raising new upstanding citizens. As Dominika pointed out, it also connects to the ideal of intensive parenting at the heart of the interviewees' parenting scripts, as discussed in chapter 5. Overall, many of the interviewed mothers, especially those with small children, struggled with conflicting emotions regarding returning to work. On the one hand, they missed

having a job outside of the house, but on the other, felt it would be best for their children if they stayed at home longer. While the discourses on women as natural nurturers is present in both countries, many of the interviewed mothers felt the demands of intensive motherhood less in Finland and had adjusted their parenting scripts accordingly to align with the Finnish parenting style and forms of state support. The form state provision takes in Russia draws on the ideal of intensive parenting but also feeds into it, making the relationship between the state as a co-actor and parenting scripts multidirectional. Following the norm of intensive parenting caused distress to many of the interviewed mothers because they felt they could not fulfil this norm.

Moreover, while the working, self-supporting parent ideal is strongly present in the interviewees' parenting scripts, in certain instances the parents themselves can use the mother's role as the 'natural' carer to prove that they are good parent-citizens. Ludmila, who after migrating from Ukraine with her husband was treated for infertility and became pregnant with her now four-year-old son, described how she has had to stay at home with her son because she is looking for a day care that can accommodate his diagnosis as autistic. At the same time, however, Ludmila felt she needed to explain that they did not move to Finland to seek benefits but for 'the safety and chance to find a job':

> My husband now works, receives a salary, I'm unemployed - I get... as in, I'm registered for unemployment benefits. If I need to go to work or take classes, then I'll have to look for somewhere to take [my son]. At the moment, of course, I go through the job adverts, classes, I go through everything that's available. But in this situation, the most important thing for me now is [my son] and his health.
>
> [Ludmila, Ukraine, 35-40, married, one child, in Russian]

Ludmila clearly feels the pressure to act like a good migrant and a good worker citizen, but in her current situation those norms go against her script of good mothering. This dilemma is specifically connected to scripts of motherhood uncovered in this study. Being 'a good migrant' is closely tied to fulfilling the paradigm of a worker citizen and the mothers feel pressure show their worth to their new country through finding paid employment. However, the script of good mothering contains a strong emphasis on mothers' nurturing role within the

home. If the two norms are in conflict, being a good mother is deemed the more important one.

7.4 The state as an authority on parenting: parenting scripts and healthcare institutions

This section focuses on healthcare institutions as co-actors of parenting. Research has long recognised healthcare experts to be an integral element in the formation of the norms that govern good parenting. As experts, doctors, and nurses regularly advise parents on topics ranging from diet and exercise to hygiene and sleep, producing norms of child development and the role of parents in aiding this development (Chernyaeva, 2013; Shpakovskaya, 2015). Existing research has also noted that the healthcare policies of many Western countries focus on delivering support during the transition to parenthood (Armstrong & Hill, 2001; Homanen, 2017). While the emphasis of modern healthcare policies is increasingly self-responsibility and autonomy, healthcare services still transmit normative notions of good citizenship and good parenting (Sulkunen & ProQuest, 2009). Homanen (2017) characterises particularly Nordic welfare services as engaged in an everyday struggle to balance pressures of collective notions of good parental citizenship against market demands for greater choice and autonomy (Homanen, 2017, p. 444).

In the following section, I analyse what expectations parents have of healthcare institutions as co-actors of parenting, how they conceptualise the differences between healthcare in Finland and in Russia and whether the state's place as a co-actor of parenting also gives it a position as an authority on parenting. First, I analyse how the parents' transnational healthcare practices increase their possibilities of picking and choosing a healthcare option that agrees with their parenting approach. Second, I analyse how the parents view the state as a source of expert advice through exploring their experiences with Neuvola system, the Finnish free public maternity clinics. Third, I analyse how the parents' experiences with Finnish healthcare can potentially modify their parenting scripts and introduce a new element of self-care into their script of good parenting. Throughout, I argue that the parents utilise not only different discourses on what the state ought to be in their construction of the state as a

parenting co-actor but also the dichotomous understanding of 'Finnish' and 'Russian' parenting styles discussed in previous chapters.

7.4.1 Healthcare as a transnational parenting practice

In many of the interviewed parents' accounts, healthcare stands out as one of the most tangibly transnational parenting practices, in which the parents choose the experts and services that fit best to their script of good parenting. The reasoning for seeking transnational healthcare is driven by the difficulties of navigating the healthcare system after migration. The first element is the inability to gain prior knowledge of the individual doctor. Here the parents place the emphasis on information they receive from their social networks, particularly other mothers. Often, the mothers lack this kind of a network in their new home country. The reliance on networks highlights the role of peer-groups who can combine personal experience and expert knowledge as a co-actor in the interviewees' parenting scripts. Previous research on parenting and health in post-Soviet states, largely focused on Russian middle-class mothers, has found that mothers are increasingly demanding, knowledgeable, and methodical in finding different healthcare options in the field of reproductive and paediatric health (Shpakovskaya, 2015; Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2008).

In this study, too, mothers in particular acted as driving forces in the family seeking out medical care in their country of origin. The interviewed mothers report that the loss of their social networks hinders their ability to make a conscious choice on which doctor to choose for their child. The parents tend to refer to their own networks in Russia to determine the quality of different healthcare services. Dominika, who migrated from Moscow with her husband and two children and after he received a job offer in Finland, reflected on how much easier it is for her to find a doctor she approves of in Moscow:

> Of course, it is easier for me to come to Moscow, ask a couple of people, they will immediately refer me to a good private doctor, and I know he'll be good, high quality. I'll pay 50 euros for this (laughs) maximum, and they'll help me on the same day.
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

Dominika's example is representative of the interviewed parents' reasons for continuing to use healthcare services in their country of origin. On the surface, Finland and Russia have somewhat similar healthcare systems. Both have free public healthcare to all residents through a compulsory state health insurance program alongside a private healthcare sector which the national insurance system does not cover. However, the public sector in both countries has been criticised for lack of state funds leading to long waiting times and poor quality of care (Expatica, 2021; Healthcare, 2021). In Russia, the parents were able to circumvent these problems due to the lower cost of private healthcare and the knowledge they gained from their social networks. In Finland, they cannot navigate the system in a similar manner.

The idea of a good mother who can navigate the healthcare system and find the best service is an integral part of the interviewed mothers' parenting scripts. Although fathers often accompany women to different doctors' appointments before and after the child is born, women take the responsibility over healthcare and plan the appointments during and after pregnancy. While some mothers are more financially constrained than others in this respect, the ideal of knowledgeable mother, who navigates the healthcare system with ease is still an important parenting orientation within their parenting scripts. Anfisa, who has two daughters with her Ingrian Finn husband, explained that she was at first shocked by how few tests Finnish doctors in general do and that she prefers to go to Russia, where she can pay for tests herself:

> … [H]ere they are trying to save money, while in Russia many analyses are done at the patients' own expense. But there it isn't as expensive as here. And very often I just go there, I pay myself, the children get all their tests done there, because it isn't so expensive there.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, two children, in Russian]

Critically for Anfisa, if she pays herself in Russia, she can get everything done faster, which is something she cannot realistically do in Finland. Her central job as a good parent is to make sure their children are given the best care as she sees it, as fast as possible, rather than passively wait and let the healthcare institutions determine the pace and content of treatment.

Utilising transnational healthcare practices to circumvent these issues is a consistent theme in the parents' accounts. However, travelling back to access healthcare is not always a viable option. Travelling back and forth requires financial resources and for parents who had migrated from further away than the immediate border region, the long distance made the trip untenable. Difficulties accessing healthcare are often a more pronounced aspect of the parents' image of the state because other institutions, particularly day cares and schools, require a doctors' certificate before making any accommodations for a child. Valentina, who moved to Finland right after her daughter was born, detailed the process of obtaining a doctors' certificate to prove to the day care centre that she had an intolerance of milk products. She first went to Estonia to obtain a diagnosis, but the day care centre requires a certificate from a Finnish doctor specifically. Valentina described how she first waited on the phone to book an appointment, and afterwards had to travel 40 minutes with her daughter by bus to the doctors' appointment:

> Firstly, we needed an allergy specialist, and this doctor is like a GP, a family doctor. "What's your problem?" I say that she has a rash. I need the day care centre not to give her this-and-this product. I said: "Maybe we should take a blood sample, check if she's for sure allergic to dairy products?" "No, no need. Don't give her these products. Here's a piece of paper, goodbye." And that's all.
>
> [Valentina, Estonia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

She remarked that this required 'so much extra effort for the sake of some piece of paper, when I could've said the same thing, and told the day care centre: "Please do not give these products."' Therefore, not only is the authority parents give to healthcare institutions as co-actor of parenting significant, but also the weight other essential institutions give to healthcare institutions as co-actors, sometimes even over the parents.

The role of healthcare institutions is even more pronounced when the child needs special support. Ludmila, who explicitly stated she and her husband wanted to move to Europe from their native Ukraine in hopes of a better life related that she thinks 'Finland is an ideal country to live in with a child' and that in the Finnish healthcare 'they have good protection of children' and 'they

have the child's best interest in mind'. However, Ludmila also acknowledged that she has an issue with how difficult it has been accessing essential healthcare. She noted how the long process of having her autistic son diagnosed has led to her having to stay at home with her son while they wait for him to be allocated a spot in a specialised day care centre:

> Of course, things are really difficult sometimes. I don't know how to say it in a different way, so I'll say it like it is: there is a lot of bureaucracy, you have to sign a lot of questionnaires, a lot of documents, so many are always needed to solve one small issue.
>
> [Ludmila, Ukraine, 35-40, married, one child, in Russian]

Despite the discourses emphasising a fair, caring state the reality of healthcare the parents face in Finland is more complicated. Navigating the system, particularly without Finnish language, can be a struggle. In laying claim to the right to access healthcare and placing demands on the state as a co-actor, the language that connects motherhood and citizenship is salient. Ludmila, for example, stressed that she is only looking for state support because of her son, she herself would want to work. She also highlights her wish that her son will be 'fully integrated into Finnish society, first that he goes to Finnish day care and second that he goes to Finnish school and Finnish hobbies … Everything just Finnish.' However, to achieve this central value in her parenting script, she needs the Finnish state as a co-actor of parenting and offer her autistic son the healthcare he needs.

7.4.2 Expert knowledge and the Neuvola system

In the Finnish context, it is important to highlight the national free child health clinic system (Neuvola), which monitors the health of pregnant women and children until they start school through regular health check-ups. Established in the 1920s, the Neuvola system is one of the symbols of Finland's status as a Nordic welfare status, and the system has been credited with lowering the infant mortality rate. Depending on the area, the local Neuvola can be its own unit or be attached to the local healthcare centre. Notably Neuvola and later school nurses cooperate with other government agencies, such as social services and child protective services, strengthening healthcare's link to the state. The

check-ups for pregnant women and young children are not mandatory, yet 99 percent of expectant mothers use Neuvola services in some way (Homanen, 2017). Notably, attending Neuvola services is required for receiving certain maternity related benefits. Apart from check-ups, Neuvola offers services such as family counselling, but due to funding difficulties there are long waiting times.[5] Furthermore, Homanen argues that the Neuvola system lies in the intersection of parenting and citizenship. She argues that Neuvola is a site in which mothers are taught their responsibilities as 'mother-citizens' and how to make the 'right' choices in their parenting (Homanen, 2017).

Not all of the parents' experiences with Finnish healthcare are with Neuvola, but it has a strong presence as a co-actor in the interviewees parenting scripts. The interviewees speak of Neuvola as a coherent entity with its own agency with most parents referring to the service solely by its Finnish name, even if they did not otherwise speak Finnish fluently. The parents' views of Neuvola as a co-actor of parenting have considerable variety, ranging from positive, to negative, to indifferent. Valentina migrated to Finland shortly after her daughter was born to live together with her husband, who had already previously moved to Finland for work. She explained why she is disinterested in the service:

> We didn't go there. I know it exists. But when [my daughter] was born, all the examinations were done in Estonia. Since we lived there, everything was done there. Meaning, we didn't need it. She is developing and growing well. I know that at 4 years old an appointment is mandatory, so we'll go. But in general, I understand that Neuvola gives advice, but my daughter eats well, sleeps well. What else do I need?
>
> [Valentina, 30-35, Estonia, married, one child, in Russian]

Valentina's stance towards Neuvola is largely indifferent. Her script of parenting is built around a counter narrative to the normative power of medical professionals. Her own assessment of her daughter's wellbeing is more important, and she does not feel the need to have medical professionals scrutinize her parenting. However, she does give Neuvola an authoritative

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[5] It should be noted that in acute situations such as a fever, cough, ear infection etc. children are not taken to Neuvola but to either a healthcare centre (public sector) or a private doctor.

position as a part of the state in another way through her belief that the comprehensive check-up for four-year-olds is mandated. In reality, all of the check-ups are technically voluntary, but a condition for certain types of maternity benefits.

While Valentina is mostly uninterested in Neuvola services, others avoided the service because they perceived the quality of the advice to be poor. Yulia, who before migrating to Finland with her British husband and three children lived in the United Kingdom for a long time, saw Neuvola as an extension of problems within Finnish healthcare:

> Neuvola is rubbish. They really... because they, as in Finnish healthcare, we noticed [this thing] with children. … There are lots of beliefs and fashions. And say the UK went through that fashion several decades ago and now they realize that this is just simply not true like all this fat-free stuff.
>
> [Yulia, 35-40, Russia, married, three children, in English]

In Yulia's experience Neuvola reflects the wider reliance on 'beliefs and fashions' rather than latest scientific knowledge. Yulia is not the only one with this criticism of Neuvola. Veronica, who migrated to Finland as a child and has a Finnish husband, described her struggle to find help with problems she had with breast feeding. After the advice from Neuvola contributed to Veronica developing a breast infection, she started doing her own research, using expert knowledge from the USA and Canada:

> The official info is so outdated. This has just confirmed my internal intuition or something like that. I mean if I'd gone along with the official information, my breast feeding would've ended right there. And it would've gotten worse, I would've probably ended up in surgery. It really was that bad.
>
> [Veronica, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Finnish]

Both mothers find Neuvola an unreliable, even harmful co-actor because their advice is not based on what they view as the most modern or scientific knowledge. As explored in the previous chapter in the context of grandparents' advice, modernity and scientific merit are essential values against which the

parents measure parenting advice. Because Neuvola is often seen lacking in this respect, its authority as co-actor of parenting is also diminished. Furthermore, parents have a multitude of alternative sources of information, most notably online or peer groups, to substitute the information they deem more modern or scientific. For migrant parents, this availability of alternative information is even more pronounced because of their transnational links. Ideas associated with 'responsible parenting', in which the parents are expected to be active and use their own judgement, further place Neuvola in competition with other sources of parenting advice. However, because of the ubiquity of Neuvola in Finnish parenting discourses, parents end up regarding Neuvola appointments as a societal norm which they must fulfil to display good parenting, but do not necessarily adopt the advice they are given into their parenting scripts.

The parents who rated Neuvola services highly tended to focus on positive experience with the individual nurses and doctors instead of referring to the quality of the advice. Olga, who gave birth to both of her two children after migrating to Finland with her husband, described her first visit to Neuvola with her child:

> Neuvola, yes, it was unusual for me, I didn't know about it, I didn't even think about it, because when I got pregnant, I had no experience in Russia, but I heard rumours from girls who gave birth in Russia ... there are so many things they do there and it's so meticulous. Here the experience was very calm … It doesn't feel like you're in a hospital. There are no dressing gowns, scary offices, everything is done like that. I kind of felt at home … my kid wasn't afraid, I had only positive emotions.
>
> [Olga, 30-35, Russia, married, two children, in Russian]

In Olga's account, the focus is placed on emotions, the child not being afraid and she herself having only positive emotions, rather than the quality of advice she received. Similarly, Jelena, who migrated to Finland with her four-year-old daughter, emphasised how her post-partum depression was addressed for the first time in Finland when she brought her daughter to Neuvola:

> When I first went to Neuvola for the first meeting with a doctor, I wasn't asked questions about my child, what time she eats, sleeps,

> how many times a day she eats. Instead, they asked me how I was coping, whether I got enough sleep, they asked about me, do I have friends, how am I feeling. For the previous two years, no one asked me these questions at a children's clinic in Russia …
>
> [Jelena, 30-35, Russia, single mother, one child, in Russian]

The emphasis, therefore, is not so much on Neuvola as a co-actor that offers expert advice but rather a co-actor that offers mental support and understanding. This correlates with Homanen's research, in which she finds the nurses emphasise the emotional and psychological aspects of parenting, speaking about 'love' and 'attachment' in abstract terms but providing little concrete advice about how to achieve desirable family life (Homanen, 2017).

In evaluating Neuvola as a co-actor, therefore, the parents use two competing parenting values. The parents who criticise Neuvola as a co-actor emphasise how the service fails to act as an expert source of information promoting modern parenting orientations and practices. The parents who value Neuvola as a co-actor, on the other hand, highlight the ways Neuvola has acted as a sympathetic source of support and how the service made them feel. The parents place high value on Neuvola as a co-actor especially if they compare it favourably similar services in their home countries. For most, like for Jelena above, this means their experiences in Russia. However, 'imagined' Russia can be just an important source of comparison as tangible experiences, as is evident in Olga's case.

7.4.3 Healthcare, transnational imagination and parenting styles

Describing their experiences with healthcare institutions in Finland and their countries of origin, the interviewees paint a picture of two opposing approaches to healthcare. The contrast is particularly pronounced in Russian parents' parenting scripts. Notably, when comparing children's healthcare in Russia and in Finland, the parents utilise similar language as they would in describing differences between 'Russian' and 'Finnish' parenting styles as discussed in chapter 5. Ksenia, who had her first child in Finland, revealed that she was shocked how little attention was given to her child at the hospital and later at Neuvola:

> At first, I was shocked, it was horrible. I didn't understand. When a child is born in Russia, he must be checked by ten doctors. He's weighed and measured every day. Children are kept in the maternity hospital for two weeks; they aren't just discharged. Here its two days and then home. What you mean home? I was afraid (laughs). And here the baby isn't checked by any doctors. I went, they check on you once every six months, and that's it.
>
> [Ksenia, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

Ksenia's account can be contrasted with other parents' descriptions, which present the differences in healthcare systems in a completely different light. Galina, who migrated with her teenage daughter and later had two more children in Finland, saw Finnish healthcare as a continuation of the 'calmer' Finnish approach to parenting:

> The difference is that Finland has a simpler approach to things. I mean, people don't worry a lot as much as in Russia, in Russia they worry a lot. But in Finland … snot is normal, *yskä täällä* [Finnish; it's a cough], everything is fine. And with us: oh no it's *yskä* [Finnish; a cough] we need *lääke* [Finnish: medicine], all the *lääke*. Medicines are everywhere, and it's a bit much. I don't know. In Russia, it's normal, because people don't know anything else, and in Finland people think that what they have is normal.
>
> [Galina, Russia, 35-40, divorced, two children, in Russian]

The controlled, intensive, closely monitored Russian approach is contrasted to the calm, almost neglectful Finnish style of children's healthcare. As with parenting style, the parents can give the same practices different meanings, and choose which one to adopt as a part of their parenting scripts.

The norms presented by healthcare institutions can have a profound impact on how the parents construct their script of good parenting. This was especially apparent in the parenting scripts of those parents, who had a positive experience with Finnish healthcare. Klaudia, who at the time of the interview had lived in Finland for over ten years and had both of her children after migrating, related that while she used to take her children to Russia for doctors' visits, she has since 'calmed down'. She explained that even though in Russia children are examined more closely, monitoring the children's' health in this

way causes her undue stress. The change in her thinking was gradual and based on her own observations:

> I've lived in Finland for many years, and I've noticed that my son is healthy and everything's well … I personally think that there's no sense in worrying too much. If the parents are calm and healthy, the kids aren't ill often either.
>
> [Klaudia, Russia, joint custody, two children, in Finnish/Russian]

Klaudia's example continues the theme of a 'calmer' Finnish parenting style. Notably, she has found another way to display responsible parenting, taking care of herself. Similarly, Jelena, who at the time of the interview had only recently migrated with her young daughter, explained how visiting the various required doctors in Russia left her feeling like a bad parent:

> It seems to me that how paediatric medicine is practised in Russia causes mothers a lot of anxiety. Although I have a child who is exactly in the middle of the paediatric norms in terms of height, weight, how she's developing … doctors always found something wrong with her. I always left the doctor feeling unhappy, that I had failed, I was a bad mother, that I was doing everything wrong, my daughter was developing wrong, she was thin, didn't eat enough, I didn't feed her well enough, I put her to sleep wrong …
>
> [Jelena, Russia, 30-35, single mother, one child, in Russian]

However, in Finland her experience was the opposite. Jelena described how her image of herself improved after talking to a paediatrician in Finland:

> The first visit to the Finnish paediatrician was an amazing experience. I said "you know, she doesn't weigh a lot, doesn't eat a lot, what should I do?" and the doctor says "no, her weight is normal" (laughs), "She's eating normally, everything's okay", "Seriously?" just in the previous two years, all Russian doctors said that she was terribly thin, she eats very little, you need to feed her better … the whole idea was that I didn't feed her enough and in this sense I am a bad mother.
>
> [Jelena, Russia, 30-35, single mother, one child, in Russian]

Both examples above demonstrate a similar change in the mothers' parenting scripts. The medical norms through which they evaluate their children's development and subsequently their success as a parent have been eased.

Crucially, their script of good parenting includes a new element of self-care. Rather than the ideal of a self-sacrificing mother, good mothering now includes taking care of the mother's well-being, even if it is for the sake of their child.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored how the interviewed parents situate the state as a co-actor of parenting. I have argued that the parents' images of the state coupled with their experiences with state institutions are in central place in the parents' construction of the state as a co-actor. Particularly, the parents utilise elements drawn from discourses such as neoliberalism, state socialism, and the Nordic welfare state model to determine the state's duties as a co-actor of parenting as well as their own duties as parent-citizens. In addition, the parents reflect parts of the Finnish parenting style, which was discussed in chapter 5 to characterise the good and the bad sides of the Finnish state as a co-actor of parenting. The Finnish state is seen as a better provider of services, and less demanding of the parents. However, a central element of whether the parents trust the Finnish state as a co-actor of parenting is how they view its position towards parental authority. Parents who voiced hesitation towards the Finnish state as a co-actor of parenting expressed a fear that their parenting practices would be misinterpreted, and their children could use the state against their own parents.

The influence of the Finnish parenting style can also be seen in how the parents tie together good citizenship and good parenting. The parenting scripts the parents construct are directed towards displaying both good citizenship and good parenting and showing that the parent themselves as well as their children are good, deserving migrants is central. Discourses around work and willingness to work as a mark of good citizenship are essential in establishing deservingness as a parent-citizen. The positives and negatives of the Finnish parenting style are present in state action. The Finnish state can be seen as too relaxed, not correcting the behaviour of undeserving parents but rather allocating more resources to them. On the other hand, this same quality can be painted as a positive, something which encourages parents to adopt more forgiving scripts of

parenting for themselves, especially when it comes to fitting together mothers' roles as carers and providers.

A similar theme can be found in how the parents position healthcare institutions as co-actors of parenting. The analysis in this chapter has drawn parallels between healthcare institutions and grandparents as co-actors. Both are integral but their authority as a source of parenting information has been diminished with the emergence of new sources of information. Information from both sources can be seen as not up-to-date or in keeping with latest developments in childcare advice, leading the parents to act in accordance with the responsible parenthood discourse and trust their own judgement instead. The transnational possibilities highlight even further the parents' possibilities to pick-and-choose their healthcare co-actors. However, the strongest influence healthcare services have on parenting scripts are related to the dichotomy between the demanding Russian parenting style and the forgiving Finnish parenting style.

The next chapter turns the attention to another aspect of the interviewees' parenting scripts which relates closely to everyday citizenship and displaying deservingness: language learning. Learning the language of the new home country is one of the marks of the good migrant, and I argue that this is also reflected in how migrant parents approach their children's language learning. However, language learning is connected to many more parenting values, including cultural identity and communication within the family, making language learning a multi-layered part of the interviewees' parenting scripts.

8 Meanings of language learning in transnational parenting scripts

8.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how choices regarding language learning are intimately linked to other aspects of parenting, particularly notions of good and bad parenthood (King & Fogle, 2008). Placed in a multilingual environment, the parents juggle their own beliefs and understanding of language with ample public and private advice and practical constraints (King et al., 2008). Biculturalism, which transnational theory identifies as a central feature of the migrant experience (Grosjean, 2015) , is at the heart of parenting scripts concerning language learning. A persistent theme defining the parents' beliefs about language learning is its connection to different types of belonging, including cultural, societal, and familial. In determining which discourses and practices fit into their script of parenting, the parents' imaginings of their children's future in Finland as a Russian-speaker and the role language will play in it are paramount. The parents do not view language as a technical skill alone, but rather a key to cultural competency (Grosjean, 2015).

This way of analysing language learning as an element of parenting scripts adds nuance to how transnationalism functions in migrants' everyday lives. While this chapter identifies dominant language learning discourses and language practices, I also argue that there is a variety of possible ways to construct a coherent script from the same elements. This chapter, therefore, adds to the understanding of what kind of variations exist within transnational belonging and social fields, as transnational theory has been accused of a lack of understanding difference between transnational experiences (Levitt, 2015).

8.2 Language learning as an element of cultural scripts of parenting

Migration places parents into a multilingual environment in which they face questions they would not otherwise. Language carries many different meanings

which pertain to not only individual identity but also group identities and establishing a sense of belonging (Leeman, 2015). Scholars analysing language use systems within migrant communities and maintenance of the migrants native, heritage languages have increasingly began emphasising the multiple meanings of language. Instead of assuming a simple connection between a desire to reclaim a set ethnic or cultural identity to be the only motivation for heritage language learners, researchers have turned to more nuanced analysis of the interplay between language learning and how migrant families construct and negotiate their identities in various social contexts (Ivashinenko, 2018, pp. 19-20; Leeman, 2015) Scholars like Grosjean have pointed out how bilingualism and biculturalism are not connected in a simple manner. While some acquire understanding of language and cultural schemas governing behaviour simultaneously, this is not necessarily the case. A person can become bilingual first and only later bicultural, the other way around, or even acquire linguistic skills without forming a corresponding cultural schema at all (Grosjean, 2015).

Scholars have recognised the multiple discourses which surround language learning, including the commodity value of language skills in the job market but also what specific meanings their native language has in their new home country, such as national security or international competitiveness (Leeman, 2015). Language is indisputably part of official, state-controlled aspects of citizenship. Language has been one of the main instruments through which both a sense of homogeneity and boundaries have been created in nation states, and how exclusion from citizenship has been justified, with language requirements the mainstay of citizenship tests (Duchêne & Heller, 2012). Consequently, language learning is connected to discourses surrounding the 'good migrant', a set of behaviours migrants need to engage in to prove their commitment to their new home country. In Finland, language proficiency is a requirement for citizenship and even more fundamentally the Finnish language is a corner stone of Finnish national identity (Prindiville & Hjelm, 2018, pp. 1580-1581). Learning the language of the new home country is seen as one of the duties of the 'good migrant', whereas actively maintaining a heritage language can be perceived as problematic (Anthias et al., 2013). On the other hand, language holds meanings

completely irrespective of the state, such as emotion and belonging in local community or even more simply a family (Pavlenko, 2006).

This chapter analyses what role language learning plays in the construction of transnational parenting scripts. Among the parents interviewed for this study, language learning, Russian, Finnish or otherwise, arises as one of the significant elements of their scripts of parenting. Language learning is an element of the script of good parenting which occupies much of the parents' everyday parenting and requires deliberate planning. Often, planning language learning revolves around how to balance their native Russian language against the dominant Finnish language. The picture is complicated for migrants from countries such as Estonia who speak an additional language which is relevant to their identity and personal history. Even further, parents are increasingly aware of the skills needed to be successful in a globalising world, which increases pressure to add another language such as English into the child's repertoire from an early age. Especially pertinent in this chapter is how parents manage their children's language learning, what parenting practices they adopt, and upon which discourses and beliefs they ground these everyday actions. Following the script of language learning, managing language learning in 'the correct way', pertains to what it means to be a 'migrant parent' or 'Russian-speaking parent' but also crucially a 'good parent' in the eyes of oneself and others.

The following sections analyse more closely the varied ways in which orientations and practices are linked to create a coherent parenting script. How language learning plays out in the everyday interaction within the family is varied and reflects the different language dynamics within the family (King et al., 2008; Pérez Báez, 2013). Language use among the adults of the family, between parent and child and among siblings can differ considerably (Pérez Báez, 2013). Even within monolingual Russian-speaking families language abilities may vary between family members depending on factors such as age at migration, access to language classes and Finnish social contacts. One aspect which all the script variations have in common is a strong impact belief. Here, the influence of *vospitanie* and the ideal of intensive parenting, discussed in previous chapters, on the scripts the parents construct is evident. De Houwer

defines impact belief as ‘the parental belief that parents can exercise some sort of control over their children’s linguistic functioning’ (De Houwer, 1999, p. 83). The effect of a strong impact belief on scripts of parenting is that the children’s language learning needs to be actively managed. Ideally, the parents themselves should take an active role in managing the children’s language learning and guide it. However, as seen in the narratives of the interviewed parents, it is challenging to live up to this script of good parenting in a transnational parenting environment. This forms the central internal conflict and source of uneasiness within the parents’ cultural scripts of parenting.

Because language learning can differ within the family, similarly a parent can and often must utilise a different parenting script in a case-by-case basis. Similarly, as the factors governing the family members’ language learning are subject to change over time, the scripts of parenting concerning language learning also evolve, too. With the language environment in the family constantly developing, parents can over time switch between scripts completely. Therefore, the variations formulated in the following sections should not be taken as rigid, unmovable categories but rather akin to alternate strategies, with parents switching between scripts and even adopting parts of different scripts simultaneously in order to react to their parenting environment, including institutional context and socio-economic conditions.

8.3 Variations of parenting scripts and language learning

In the following sections, I explore different variations of parenting scripts and language learning the interviewees construct. The table below illustrates the key differences between the three scripts. The scripts differ in terms of which languages they emphasise as well and this is reflected into the role of school, day care centres, and hobbies as co-actors of parenting. I argue that a key difference between the scripts is the parents’ transnational imagination. Particularly significant is which space the parents find the most important for the child’s future and present opportunities and development. As will be explored in more depth below, this aspect is not fixed or without nuance. Just because at the moment a parent is more concerned about making sure their

child maintains a connection to Russia and Russian language, does not mean they do not value their child's integration to Finnish society. Rather, language learning scripts shift to reflect the wider social world of the child, and the opportunities of language learning available. Furthermore, the variations presented below describe an idealised model. In practice many of the parents' scripts will fall somewhere between these abstract categories used to analyse and group parenting scripts.

	Finnish first	Russian needs support	Beyond Russian and Finnish
Language(s)	Finnish	Russian	Finnish/Russian/ English
Transnational Imagination	Finnish society	Russian culture	Cosmopolitan
School/ day care	Finnish	Finnish	Finnish/English
Hobbies	Finnish	Russian	English/Russian

Table 2: Script Variations

8.3.1 Script 1 – Finnish first

The basis of this script variation is the perceived necessity of Finnish language learning and anxiety over the lack of opportunity for it. In this variation, Finnish has a high perceived necessity, but the parents are not confident in their own Finnish language capacity. For this reason, they are not able to act according to the strong impact belief they have adopted as a part of their parenting scripts. Often the parents' frustration over the lack of additional opportunity for Finnish language learning stems from lack of Finnish speaking contacts in their daily life. Specifically, lack of contacts who interact with the whole family rather than colleagues or casual acquaintances. Typically, the parents who adopt this variation have younger children, who have not started building peer-centred social contacts independent of their parents (Pérez Báez, 2013). The young age of the children also strengthens the impact belief and accentuates the responsibility the parent has over the children's language learning. Adolescents, in contrast, are to some extent responsible for their own language learning. Daria is married to a fellow Russian-speaker and feels her own Finnish language

skills are inadequate despite having lived in Finland for several years. Her eldest daughter, with whom she migrated, is already in her twenties and with her current husband Daria has a toddler-aged daughter and is expecting a son. Apart from her family, she described her social contacts:

> I have one Russian-speaking friend, our families communicate very closely. There are a lot of acquaintances, almost all of my husbands' acquaintances speak Finnish.
>
> [Daria, Russia, 40-45, married, three children, in Russian]

While Daria's husband has Finnish speaking acquaintances, they lack social contacts who would interact with the whole family, such as Finnish speaking families with children of the same age. For Daria, learning Finnish is not only an advantage for her children but rather mandatory. She explained that 'the children need to live in Finland. And I believe that they should be aware of what is going on in Finland.' When it comes to Russian language, Daria sees it as potentially advantageous, especially as a commodity in the job market, 'but the Finnish language is equally important. They are on the same line. Finnish is a must - my child has to live in this country'.

Typically, the parents who have adopted this type of parenting script see themselves as detached from Finnish society. When asked whether he feels different from Finnish parents, Ivan, a Russian speaker from Bulgaria married to a Russian woman described his feelings by stating that 'Finnish people, they are different, 100 percent'. He maintained that after living in Finland he has not integrated to 'Finnish society' and all his social contacts are other migrants. Ivan underlined how for him personally Finnish has not been a necessary precondition to have a life in Finland:

> For 15 years, I have never needed Finnish. I already have Finnish citizenship and all that, but I don't speak Finnish at all.
>
> [Ivan, Bulgaria, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

Despite claiming he does not speak Finnish, Ivan also mentioned he has Finnish citizenship, which means he has passed the mandatory language portion of the

exam. However, rather than his ability to speak Finnish, Ivan is stressing the lack of necessity of Finnish language in his daily life. Therefore, at first it seems contradictory that when discussing his toddler aged daughters' language learning, he retorted that '100 percent' wants his children to speak Finnish:

> I want my children to be like Finns. Finnish language, of course, and everything else. That is, for me it is more important than knowing your own language.
>
> [Ivan, Bulgaria, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

The parents' understanding of belonging and citizenship is at the heart of the cultural scripts of migrant parenting. Both Ivan and Daria demonstrate a discrepancy between how they view Finnish in their own lives, and how necessary they view Finnish language learning for their children. Necessity in this case, therefore, is more than just material. Language learning as a method of creating belonging arises as a key factor driving the necessity of Finnish language learning. Andrei, who has two children with a fellow Russian-speaker, explained why his children go to a Finnish speaking school and day care:

> My children communicate amazingly in Finnish, they must know Finnish culture, Finnish jokes, a sense of distance, how Finns see themselves, a lot of different things. I want my children to know the … how Finnish society behaves, because they know how they behave in Russia … They go to Finnish schools and day cares, but as a Russian parent, I also consider it obligatory, since I am Russian and I have Russian roots - my children should know Russian, a parent who does not give his children his native language is bad.
>
> [Andrei, Russia, 35-40, married, two children, in Russian]

The way Andrei conceptualises the connection between good parenting and language learning invokes a core belief many of the parents share. While Grosjean (2015) has problematised the connection between bilingualism and biculturalism, for the interviewed parents' language learning is the key to understanding how a society behaves and the best way to display belonging in that society. As migrant parents, they have an obligation to make sure their children know the language of their new home country, but they are still *Russian* parents who have an equally important obligation to make sure their children

know the Russian language. Language learning will, therefore, not only make the children bilingual but also bicultural, able to switch between two cultural schemas and feel comfortable in either (Grosjean, 2015).

Understanding Finnish society and feeling comfortable in it, 'knowing what's going on in Finland', 'being like Finns' is something the parents themselves have not achieved, but their script of parenting demands they establish for their children. Finnish language learning is characterised by society (*obshchestvo*) and feeling comfortable or at home (*chuvstvovat' sebya komfortno/doma*). Most of the parents in this study express a desire that Finnish society will accept their children as 'one of their own'. The parents also believe they can make sure this happens through their parenting practices. Finnish language learning is a key parenting practice to achieve this goal. Notably, when forming plans for the future and imagining the best possible lives for their children, the parents adopt the idea of a 'better life' discussed in chapter four as an integral part of their script of good parenting. Migration away from Finland is not considered as a viable option. Daria, for example, remarked that the children 'must live in Finland' even if their family cannot 'give them Finnish language, culture, holidays, traditions etc.' Rather their parenting script is geared toward preparing the children to live in the society they already are here and now. The parents' transnational imagination is significant here. Life in Finland is seen as overall desirable. This imagined future in Finland is connected to themes explored in chapter one, particularly a notion of 'a better life' and Finland as part of 'the West' (Krivonos & Näre, 2019).

Overwhelmingly, Finnish is discussed with the focus on the script of good *migrant* parenting. Belonging is at the centre of the parents' language orientations, but their understandings of language learning also reflects understandings of citizenship and what kind of relationship they have to the state as migrant parents and Russian-speaking parents. Scholars have called for an increased focus on experiences of 'lived citizenship' (Lister, 2007), the practices and understandings of citizenship held at grass roots level, which may or may not be connected to formal state practices (Isin, 2017; Jašina-Schäfer & Cheskin, 2019; Kallio & Mitchell, 2016; Lister, 2007). These are the politics of

belonging, everyday practices which on the surface have little to do with citizenship but are an articulation of an existing social order and as such reveal key aspects of the power dynamics within constructions of belonging and citizenship (Isin, 2017; Pols, 2006; Yuval-Davis, 2006). As such, parenting orientations concerning language learning are not only indicative of parenting scripts in isolation but also scripts of interaction with public institutions and state action. By emphasising their commitment to ensure their children become good members of Finnish society, the parents not only affirm their children's belonging in Finland, but they also perform their own citizenship and demonstrate their deservingness of state support(van Beurden & de Haan, 2020).

8.3.1.1 The role of day care centres and school as co-actors

Since opportunities for Finnish language learning within the family are limited, the parents emphasise the role of day care and school as co-actors of parenting. The role of these institutions as co-actors of parenting is a central theme in parents' discussions of their hopes for their children's future in Finland. Because the parents feel they themselves lack Finnish language capacity, they must rely on day care centres and school, to take an active role in the children's language learning. Rather than directly impacting the children's language learning, the parents are relegated to exerting indirect influence through day care and school, starting from the choice of to which day care or school send their children. Dominika's situation is much like Ivan and Daria's. At the time of the interview, she was not employed but rather at home with her two daughters and most of both her and her husband's social contacts are English speaking. Her concern was her eldest daughter who had just started school at the time of the interview:

> And I want her to feel at home here. I want her to feel good. To do this, she must go to a Finnish school, it seems to me. Because if she goes to the Russian-Finnish school, she will still strive to be friends only with Russian children. I want her to integrate.
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 30-35, married, two children, in Russian]

Like Daria and Ivan, Dominika stresses the responsibilities she has as a migrant parent in her script of good parenting. However, while Dominika has taken it

upon herself to do some Finnish language exercises with her daughter at home, she also reflects on how she thinks day care workers could have made language learning easier for her daughter:

> The difficulty, it seems to me, for the child of an immigrant is that since there are no group games, it is even more difficult for her to integrate. And day care employees, even on breaks, very few come up with situations for children to play together... And so my child, for example, who just stood at the fence for a very long time and waited for me to pick her up.
>
> [Dominika, Russia, 30-35, married, two children, in Russian]

Like Dominika, most of the parents see social contacts with Finnish speaking children as the key to language learning, and it is the basis on which the child's feelings of belonging in Finland are built. As discussed above, the parents tend to emphasise the importance of fitting in as a part of an imagined 'Finnish society' when talking about belonging in Finland. For the parents, getting to know 'regular Finns' represents 'true' belonging in Finland, which is something the parents themselves might not feel themselves. Connections to and understanding of 'regular Finns' are emphasised as 'true' belonging in Finland. To this end, the parents expect the teachers in day care and school to take an active role in facilitating social contacts between their child and their Finnish peers. In examples like Dominika's, Finnish language learning is connected to learning how to act in Finnish society. Dominika's daughter knows how to act in a Russian playground but is faced not only with a new language but new ways of interacting with peers. Therefore, rather than only becoming bilingual, the parents hope for their children to become bicultural, able to switch between two cultural schemas and adapt their behaviour depending on the context (Grosjean, 2015, p. 575), in the Finnish educational institutions through interaction with 'regular Finnish children.

Help with Finnish language learning from day care and school is not an added benefit but rather they see it as an essential part of care the two institutions should offer as co-actors of parenting. As most of the children are young the greatest expectations are on day care. Daria explained:

> We expect help from day care and believe that it is necessary to go to day care, because we will not be able to fully give the children Finnish language, culture, holidays, traditions, etc.
>
> [Daria, Russia, 40-45, married, three children, in Russian]

The role of day care institutions is to provide the children with something the parents themselves cannot. Notably, the place of Russian as the main language of communication at home is not questioned. While emphasising their desire to create a sense of belonging in Finland for their children, many of the parents constructed a sharp binary between Russians and Finns. Daria, for example described her own ambivalent belonging in Finland by stating that she 'can't accept everything in Finland with [her] heart' and that 'we [Russians and Finns] are two different peoples.' Day care centres and schools as co-actors of parenting offer a way to bridge this gap, and the parents express a willingness to work closely with educators. The scripts of parenting, therefore, contain seemingly paradoxical impulses. On the one hand, the parents strive to raise bilingual and bicultural children who feel at home in Finland. On the other, Russianness and Finnishness are constructed in an essentialised oppositional manner. In sharp contrast to the second variation, there is no fear of Finnish replacing Russian in the children's everyday lives or the children adopting a fully Finnish identity.

The role of school and day care is even more crucial in cases where learning difficulties are present. At the time of the interview, Ludmila was looking after her autistic son at home full time while they waited for a place in a day care with specialised care. This relative isolation was concerning to Ludmila, who worried over both her son's but also her own Finnish language skills withering without daily practice. As her also Ukrainian husband worked in IT from home, knowing even less Finnish, help was not coming from that direction either in terms of language acquisition. Ludmila stressed her commitment to her son's Finnish language learning:

> I want [my son] to be fully integrated into Finnish society, to go to the Finnish day care - this is the first, and the second I want it to be a Finnish school, Finnish hobbies. Everything is only Finnish. He can go

> to additional Russian … but it depends on the situation, it is absolutely not necessary, the most important thing is Finnish.
>
> [Ludmila, Ukraine, 35-40, married, one child, in Russian]

Ludmila's concern over her son's Finnish language development is heightened by his autism diagnosis, which has led him to be cared for at home without Finnish peers to learn the language from. At the time of the interview, Ludmila's son was on a waiting list for a day care with integrated groups in which children with various learning disabilities are placed in a group with other children. This long bureaucratic process had left her frustrated and she felt her son's and her own Finnish language skills had deteriorated due to the forced isolation.

Ludmila's script of parenting centres around a similar impact belief as the parents mentioned above, but their circumstances complicate her ability to live up to the belief. She takes an active interest in her son's Finnish language learning and navigates the Finnish bureaucratic system, about which she feels there is little information available. At the same time, she displays her commitment to imagined ideal integration by underlining her active approach and displays belonging in Finland, deservingness of the right help from school and day care. The script of parenting she has formed is demanding, not only in terms of her own actions but also of the educational institutions they see as key to ensuring their children's language learning.

8.3.2 Script 2: Finnish dominant, Russian needs additional support

As with the previous variation, a discrepancy between perceived necessity and actual opportunity for language learning is at the centre of this variation. Rather than Finnish, however, this variation emphasises the importance of Russian language learning and the additional support it requires. This does not mean the parents are uninterested in the children's Finnish language capacity, but rather that Finnish is already the dominant language in the children's daily life. Typically, the children are older, already in school and have a social circle of peers independent of the family and their social needs have become peer-cantered rather than parent-centred (Pérez Báez, 2013). As the power balance

shifts between the two languages, parents adapt their approach and shift between variations. Anfisa described how her language learning priorities changed between picking a day care for her eldest daughter and her starting school:

> Since we have two parents who speak Russian at home, and the child still needs to learn Finnish somewhere, that is, where – at day care. Therefore, we sent her to a Finnish day care. But then, when my child had already gone to school in the 1st grade, I realized that she was forgetting Russian. She is at school for 5 hours, then she is in after school care. Then all her friends began to speak Finnish. And she began to forget the language. I sent her to a Russian school in parallel.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, two children, in Russian]

Significantly, none of the interviewed parents wished for their children to only speak Russian. However, they emphasise Russian's place as the children's native language (*rodnoy yazyk*) and employ practices to bolster this position. Using Russian as the only language within the family is taken as natural and self-evident in all families except the ones in which the husband was Finnish speaking. Svetlana, whose preschool aged daughter was born after she and her husband migrated to Finland, gave a typical answer when asked if her family uses only Russian at home saying, 'at home we speak only Russian, because it is [my daughter's] native language so that she does not forget it and how to speak, write and read correctly.' Like Svetlana, the overwhelming majority of parents considered Russian to be the child's native language whether they were born in Russia or in Finland. Rather than native language simply referring to the language in which the child has most competency, *rodnoy yazyk* refers to the child's roots and family. Anstatt's study of second-generation adolescents from Russian-speaking migrant families in Germany finds a similar understanding of *rodnoy yazyk*. Adolescents who named Russian as their mother tongue explained the choice by referring to emotional elements of language, such as loyalty their family or country of origin. The minority who named German as their native language conversely referred to their competency in the language to explain their choice (Anstatt, 2017, pp. 204-208). Like in the first variation, the impact belief in this variation is strong, and motivates parents to find additional

resources to uphold Russian language even if the child lacks motivation for it. (De Houwer, 1999). The connection of *rodnoy yazyk* to the family heightens the parents' need to maintain the child's Russian language ability.

8.3.2.1 Russian language learning as a future advantage and a connection to the past

The parents employ two major ways of explaining why Russian language learning is important. The first theme which consistently arises as an explanation for maintaining children knowledge of Russian is an effort to ensure the children's future success, especially regarding employment. Presenting language in this way is seen as rational and neutral. This presentation reflects a particular way of thinking about language, namely language as capital, added value, a commodity (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Heller, 2010). When the interviewed parents frame language as a commodity first, the focus shifts away from the connections language learning has to cultural maintenance, therefore mitigating the risk of the parent being labelled a bad, non-integrated migrant for maintaining a heritage language (Anthias et al., 2013). In this way, parents can construct a parenting script in which heritage language is protected through reasoning not connected to troublesome nationalistic discourses. The parents are able display parenting practices which establishes them as a part of the moral community of 'good migrants', deserving of social care and membership of Finnish society.

Many of the interviewed parents adopted the language as a commodity discourse as a part of their parenting orientations. Egor, a father of three who migrated to originally from Estonia married to a fellow Russian-speaking Estonian, explained that one of the reasons he wants his children to learn Russian is its usefulness in the job market:

> … I think this may also be useful for their future careers because, firstly, an additional language is never useless. It can be useful in work, in business, and anywhere. Moreover, the Russian language, because Russia is nearby and Estonia is nearby, there are also many people who speak Russian. For the future, I think this may be useful.
>
> [Egor, Estonia, 40-45, married, three children, in Russian]

Russian is an additional skill which should not be wasted. Rather than making the parents good Russian parents, Russian language learning is presented as a mark of good parenting in more universal terms, as fulfilling the role of the provider, which central place in most of the parents' script of good parenting was also discussed in chapter one. Language learning forms a part of non-material providing, which includes cultural capital and skills needed for increased opportunities for success in the future (Krivonos & Näre, 2019). The emphasis on providing and language as a commodity represents a larger shift in the ways in which children's language learning and the responsibilities of parents within it are conceptualised, and it is not limited to families with migrant backgrounds. For example, studying families pursuing English-Spanish bilingualism for their children in the USA, King and Fogle argue that rather than only a marginal, elite practice, bilingual parenting has gained traction as a mark of a good parent even among families with both parents from non-migrant, linguistic majority backgrounds (King & Fogle, 2008). This shift is not purely a discursive one but reflects it 'changes in political economic conditions, and it materially concerns people's livelihoods, orients their activities and frames how they make sense out of and feel about things' (Duchêne & Heller, 2012, p. 8).

However, as Duchene and Heller point out, the 'new' way of thinking of language as a commodity in the global economy does not mean the old formulations connecting language to culture, the nation state and national pride are on the decline. Rather, the two are connected in varied, intricate ways (Duchêne & Heller, 2012, p. 3). In making language learning choices, the interviewed parents construct hierarchies between languages based on how they perceive different languages' position in the world. Anfisa, who is married to a Russian speaker and has two young daughters, the elder in elementary school and the younger still in day care, explained why she feels she must push especially her older daughter to learn Russian even if she sometimes resists:

> When it [Russian language] is forgotten, no one knows how life will turn out tomorrow, what will happen tomorrow. Basically, many people around the world speak Russian. And it is not known how her fate will develop, how she is, where she is, where she will work. It is possible that it will be very useful to her in life, who knows. So, I think it's important.

> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, two children, in Russian]

The value of Russian as a commodity is tied to imaginings of Russia in a global context. Russian has a long history of acting as a lingua franca in both in the Russian empire and the USSR. In the post-Soviet period, the assertive role Russia has played in the global economy has led to the revalorisation and commodification of Russian language in countries which have close economic links with Russia (Ryazanova-Clarke, 2014) . This does not only concern the post-Soviet space, but Russian is omnipresent also countries such as Finland that have service industries which rely on Russian tourism (Ryazanova-Clarke, 2014). The value of Russian as a commodity is, therefore, linked to imaginings of the role Russia plays in the wider global context, which in turn is connected to ideas such as the Russkiy Mir (Ryazanova-Clarke, 2015).

The second way parents explain the importance of Russian language learning is by explicitly connecting learning Russian language with Russian culture. Yulia, who expressed a strong dislike for the idea that her children would 'grow up Finnish or British' explains that

> Because culture … If you retain your language, then you retain culture. Otherwise, there is no chance. So, it is like the backbone.
>
> [Yulia, Russia, 35-40, married, 3 children, in English/Russian]

A prominent parenting belief the interviewed parents express is that good parents make sure their children know their roots. This trope features prominently in Estonian Russian-speakers parenting orientations, too. For example, Larisa described an ambivalent relationship with Estonia, not feeling completely at home there but not identifying herself as a 'Russian from Russia' either. Migrating to Finland has resolved some of this tension, as she now feels at home in Finland. When asked why it is important that her daughter who was born in Finland knows Russian, she replied:

> Because, probably, I was brought up in such a way that one must remember one's roots. This is how you need to know your culture. That is, we were raised that way. It seems to me, subconsciously or

> not, I pass this on to my child. And it seems to me that the more languages a person knows, the richer he is.
>
> [Larisa, 30-35, Estonia, married, one child, in Russian]

Russian language, therefore, acts as a glue to transnational imaginings of a cultural space which is both includes and supersedes Russia as a country. This space is historically constituted, drawing from the complicated history of Russian language in the Russian empire, the Soviet Union and now the post-Soviet region (Ryazanova-Clarke, 2014). The parenting practice of Russian language learning is a way to construct and confirm belonging to that space even after migration to a space where Russian language is not the dominant one. This is an important part of the parents' cultural scripts of parenting as it creates continuity in the parents' life stories and narratives of their identity as Russian speakers (Appiah, 1994; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Crucially, parents who have adopted this discourse as part of their cultural scripts of parenting see upholding this belonging through Russian language learning as a mark of a good *Russian* parent. This parenting orientation to language is, therefore, more culturally driven than instrumental in contrast to language as commodity discourse described above.

In the case of Russian, the belonging the parents construct is presented as emphatically apolitical, form of cultural citizenship (Beaman, 2015). The key words parents use in relation to Russian language learning are culture (*kul'tura*) and roots (*korni*). It is partially divorced from Russia as a state, with the focus on imaginings of a Russian-speaking culture on the one hand, and the family, 'roots' on the other. The belonging the parents hope to achieve for their children through Finnish language learning is more pronouncedly directed towards society and being recognised as a member of society, a citizen with rights but not Finnish. By differentiating the two types of citizenships in this way, the parents are able to construct a parenting script which accommodates both their roles of a good Russian parent and good migrant parent. The script demands the parent ensures both Russian and Finnish language learning but for different ends that are not mutually inclusive but rather together ensure the wellbeing of the child in the future. Finnish language learning is vital in ensuring the children can stake a claim to Finnish citizenship, be part of Finnish society

and the advantages that come with it, including engaging with the state as a deserving, good migrant. Russian language learning, on the other hand, focuses less on Russian society or Russia as a political entity but rather Russia as a cultural entity. Both the children and their parents are still able claim belonging in a cultural sense, without facing troublesome implications of split loyalties or failure to 'integrate' to Finnish society.

8.3.2.2 Russian language and extended family

Communication with extended family is an essential part of maintaining the children's connection to their roots and Russian culture. Particularly being able to talk to grandparents in Russian is seen as important and part of teaching children about their 'roots'. In many cases the grandparents talk exclusively in Russian. This was the case for Valentina, an Estonian Russian speaker with a toddler aged daughter, who stated that, 'we need Russian, because communication with the family is exclusively in Russian. Our grandparents do not speak any other language.' Valentina's family has close ties with both her and her husband's parents and language plays an important role in this relationship:

> We speak on Skype absolutely every day. First with one set of parents, then with the other. My daughter constantly asks to take her to her grandmothers … Here, I think, she misses interaction in her native language, since she loves to talk very much, and she needs to talk a lot.
>
> [Valentina, Estonia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

Interaction with grandparents in Russian, therefore, is both the goal of language learning and an important way of maintaining the children's language abilities.

Grandparents themselves also stress the role of Russian in connecting them to their grandchildren. Arina originally migrated to Finland from Estonia in the 1990's to find better employment prospects in the aftermath of the collapse of the USSR. Her daughter who was only seven at the time came with her. She expressed frustration over her daughter's Russian language capability and compares this experience with her friends' experiences:

> This is how life turned out for my generation ... All of us, five friends, who studied in the same class and all have children and grandchildren, and it happens that our children do not speak our language – Russian. My daughter, she already speaks Finnish, but she does not speak Russian, she does not develop it. When she says "I watch Russian television" … she does not understand half of it, maybe she doesn't understand the humour. Finnish is already my daughter's language and there is no getting away from it.
>
> [Arina, Estonia, 50+, single mother, one child, in Russian]

Arina sees a fragmentation in families along generational lines in which parents, their children and subsequent grandchildren speak a different language as their mother tongue. As Nadia and Eva quoted above, Arina identifies the role of the mother as crucial in maintaining this generational link through language even if she was not able to do this with her daughter. While Arina emphasises that any language learning is a 'plus' and speaking multiple languages one of the positives of migrating, she also feels strongly that her grandson grows up to be fluent in Russian. She explained what obstacles her daughter's own gaps in Russian language pose:

> Even if my daughter speaks to him in Russian, but when he doesn't have the words and she doesn't have the words, they switch to Finnish, so that he knows that this is my mother's language. … How can I not tell him that if he spoke only in Finnish or in Swedish I could not tell him what I feel, but he feels it, I can express it in my own language and he feels it, understands it.
>
> [Arina, Estonia, 50+, single mother, one child, in Russian]

For Arina, therefore, the Russian language has value as a facilitator of clear communication between her and her grandson. Not any kind of communication, however, but communication of emotions. The focus on family and emotion shows another level of belonging which language learning is supposed to foster. Language learning is not only a part of the script of good parenting because of the need to create belonging in national or transnational spaces, but it creates belonging within the family (Yuval-Davis, 2006). In some ways these two levels are intrinsically linked, as communication of emotions and precise meanings is linked not only with the language itself but cultural tropes. This aspect is highlighted in Arina's example of her daughter not being able to understand the

humour in Russian television shows. The important role Russian plays in the development of family relationships is similarly emphasised in Ivashinenko's study on Russian heritage language schools in Scotland. Ivashinenko finds that many of the parents' motivation for fostering a heritage language related to establishing common cultural ground and understanding between family members as well as connecting the children to relatives who might not speak Russian. Similarly to parents in this study, even if the parents could converse in English fluently, Russian was seen as the natural native language for the children as well as a key to conveying and sharing emotions (Ivashinenko, 2018, pp. 105-110).

8.3.2.3 Russian language learning, hobbies, and good motherhood

Typically, Russian language learning is supplemented with extra-curricular activities rather than relying on language classes offered by schools. Russian language learning practices reveal the gendered nature of parenting scripts and the concept of good parenting. While both mothers and fathers assign a high priority to Russian language learning on a discursive level, the mothers give concrete examples of what practices they have adopted to further Russian language learning. Mothers coordinate and execute the child's language learning, either by doing language exercises at home or enrolling the child to hobbies in Russian. The mothers' responsibility in this area is strengthened by the idea of Russian as one's mother tongue or native language (*rodnoy yazyk*). Nadia, whose three children with her Russian-speaking husband were all born in Finland, explained:

> In general, both languages are important and equal, Russian is the native language (*rodnoy yazyk*), it is the mother's language (*yazyk materi*), and all emotions are transmitted, and the inner state of a person is very much connected with the mother and with the native language.
>
> [Nadia, Belarus, 35-40, married, 2 children, in Russian]

Nadia is not alone in connecting mothering and native language. Eva, who has two daughters not yet in school with her Finnish speaking husband similarly asserts that 'I think a mother should speak her mother tongue with her

children'. By stressing the role of the mother in transmitting the native tongue, Nadia and Eva are invoking nationalist ideas of motherhood, in which the mother is responsible for transferring the national culture to the next generation (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Fisher & Tronto, 1990) In the Russian cultural imagery, the ideal of mothers as nurturers and care givers in the home has also considerable normative power (Ashwin & Isupova, 2018).

The significance of the care work involved in organising and executing children's language learning to conceptions of 'good mothering' is consistent with previous research, including Okita's study on Japanese mothers with English speaking spouses living in Britain. Okita characterises the mothers as doing the 'invisible work' of language learning. She details how the 'good mother' identities of her respondents were connected to success in bilingual parenting and susceptible to persistent public advice, resulting in maternal guilt, stress, and personal trauma (King et al., 2008; Okita, 2002). Similar patterns arise in the scripts of good parenting the interviewed mother in this study construct. Although there are many Russian-speaking organisations the parents can utilise especially in the capital area, additional Russian language learning remains labour intensive, and require both time, money and knowledge or the available resources. Anfisa described what it was like when she first started taking her daughter to additional Russian lessons:

> In general, all the hobbies to which I took her initially, [her father] treated this in such a way that you want to take her – take her. I was there with strollers on three buses taking her. And he had a car, and sat at home … Now he finally sees that this is really important.
>
> [Anfisa, Russia, 40-45, married, two children, in Russian]

Maternal responsibility for language learning was heightened in families in which the mother is Russian speaking and the father Finnish speaking. In these families the main language spoken at home was Finnish. The mothers still retained a strong impact belief but felt they were at a disadvantage against the dominant position Finnish has in the children's lives and felt under pressure being solely responsible for the children's Russian language learning. Eva remarked that among her Russian-speaking friends with a Finnish husband most of the children

speak Finnish or English, but she tries to make sure her two daughters will be able to speak in Russian because ‘if I don't speak in Russian with them, then who will teach him Russian?’. Eva is especially worried over her elder daughter’s Russian language. She utilises Russian-speaking activities and associations in her area to boost her elder daughter’s confidence in speaking Russian and establish Russian-speaking social contacts for her, even though she herself feels different from other mothers who come to the events because she has lived in Finland longer and has always had a more of a ‘Finnish mentality’.

Finding ways of motivating the children to learn Russian is a central part of language learning management. Many of the parents report a discrepancy between their core beliefs about Russian language learning and their children’s lack of motivation. The conflicts arise from the children questioning the relevance of Russian and not sharing the vision of cultural belonging that their parents are trying to transmit. A sense of difference from their peer group is a common trigger for this questioning. Pavel, whose youngest daughter was born in Finland, recounted how his daughter started to ask why she must go to Russian class while her friends do not. In his answer he reasserts the position of Russian as her the native language, and upholding as akin to duty, saying ‘Masha, what are you doing? This is Russian, you need to know this, your native language, you have to go’. A key aspect of motivation is, consequently, shaping the child’s language environment. Hobbies and Russian speaking associations are a vital resource for parents who want to increase the amount of Russian speaking peers in their children’s lives. In expert interviews, volunteers from Russian speaking associations were aware of this function, and even saw it as one of their main goals in offering activities for children.

On the other hand, the way the Finnish speaking environment reacts to Russian language use has a crucial impact. Alla migrated to Finland with her older son when he was just two years old. Later in Finland she had another son with her Finnish speaking ex-husband, with whom she has joint custody. Russian language learning has been problematic for her youngest son, with Alla describing how she heard him even declaring: ‘why do I need Russian? I'm a Finn. I don’t need Russian.’ However, Alla recounted how the experiences her younger son had in

day care mitigated some of the negative attitude towards Russian. In her example the day care made an active effort to accommodate the children's different backgrounds and include them in the teaching in a positive light:

> And [the day care employees] have a goal to introduce the children to different cultures and make it interesting. And then I noticed the difference, because the day care began to support this cultural difference … they tried to teach the children new words in Russian, things like that. That helped a little so that [my son] felt comfortable.
>
> [Alla, Russia, 35-40, single mother, two children, in Russian]

As described in Alla's example, not only Russian speaking peers make a difference but the messages coming from the Finnish speaking co-parents. While schools or day cares are rarely able to match the level of language teaching the parents in this variation consider sufficient, they can act as supporting co-parents in this way.

8.3.3 Script 3: Beyond Russian and Finnish

This script shares many features with the second script variation described above, but the key difference is the addition of English language learning as a priority. As with Russian, the parents explain the importance of English from two standpoints. Even more than with Russian, the parents emphasise the commodity value of English. Ksenia explained her decision to start her daughter in an English language club before she turned three:

> I just read somewhere or somehow found out that in children under three years old they perceive all languages in the same way. They just absorb like a sponge, no matter what they say. They just remember everything. I thought that she needs to start learning English before she turns three.
>
> [Ksenia, Russia, 30-35, married, one child, in Russian]

For Ksenia, it is important that her daughter learns English early, simultaneously with Russian and Finnish, rather than only at school. Her own experiences with language are important in determining the commodity value of English. Ksenia herself had studied English at university, and continued to use the language

often, for example reading parenting literature primarily in English. Learning English early would offer her daughter the same, if not even better, opportunities in the future. Personal experiences, therefore, shape the parents' language hierarchies - which language has the highest value as a commodity – and are crucial in determining which languages are adopted as part of the children's language learning. English, with its high value as a commodity can be added as a third language, but languages such as Estonian or Ukrainian are dropped because of their low commodity value. When weighed against Russian language, on the other hand, additional languages such as Estonian or Ukrainian not only have a lesser commodity value. Six Estonian parents and one Ukrainian parent were interviewed for this study and none of them actively sought to teach Estonian or Ukrainian to their children. When asked why this was the case, the parents usually referred to the multitude of other, more important languages their children were already learning. In other words, Estonian or Ukrainian have neither the commodity value or the cultural and emotional significance of Russian, Finnish, and English. As smaller number of parents are interested in maintaining low commodity languages resources for learning these languages, such as language classes, hobbies, and associations, are also scarce. In this way, discourse, and practice feed into each other, mutually reaffirming one another.

However, the value of English is not only in its position as a commodity. Alongside transnational belonging to Finland and their country of origin, a small but distinctive minority of the parents exhibit a preference for cosmopolitan citizenship. In this context cosmopolitan citizenship refers to an identity which is not defined by allegiance and responsibilities towards a nation state (Tan, 2017). Most often the cosmopolitan citizenship the parents describe is what Beck identifies as the 'Europeanized version of the cosmopolitan disposition' as the transnational space 'beyond' is conflated with imaginings of 'Europe' or 'the West' (Beck, 2000). These parents see additional languages as a gateway to an interspace beyond the countries to which they have concrete ties. Imaginings of transnational spaces, both within and beyond Russia and Finland are sites for future plans and opportunities (Zhu & Li, 2016). Subsequently, cosmopolitan parents often place any type of language learning on the same line. Nina, who

migrated to Finland with her husband and their ten-year-old son from Russia, explained how she wishes her son will approach Russian language when he is older:

> I'm afraid that Russian will become an unpleasant obligation … I'd like him to have an interest towards Russian, and that he'd know if he wants to go to university in Russia after school … that he'd have that kind of an opportunity, and I know Finnish bilinguals who have gone … to Russia to study at university.... There are so many different possibilities. If he speaks English he could even go to the University of Glasgow, that, too, is a possibility
>
> [Nina, Russia, 40-45, married, one child, in Russian]

Rather than emphasising connection to the past, roots and maintenance of a native language, Nina places Russian and English as both possible alternatives. This does not mean necessarily that connection to the past through language or cultural citizenship is meaningless to the parents. Rather, the future and cosmopolitan citizenship are on the same level. Languages have a commodity value, but notably this not emphasised. Languages open new spaces in which the children can act and better their quality of life in an immaterial sense. Nina stressed that the child's future happiness is the main goal of any language learning:

> And the fact that you don't know what language he will speak and how well he will know it, it's not the main thing. [The main thing is] that he's happy when he speaks Russian or he is happy if he speaks Finnish, happy if he speaks English, Swedish and all other languages.
>
> [Nina, Russia, 40-45, married, one child, in Russian]

Additionally, cosmopolitan parents view Finnish society differently from parents who emphasise that their children need to befriend 'regular Finnish kids'. Anzhelika, who migrated to Finland with her spouse and now ten-year-old son less than five years ago, related an everyday example of her son's improved English language, which she attributes to the Finnish education system. Anzhelika explained that he plays football weekly in a team and has many teammates from migrant backgrounds who do not speak Finnish or Russian, and he is able to fully communicate in English. Significantly, Anzhelika does not

indicate she would rather her son would have only Finnish speaking friends. In contrast to the first variation, in which parents expressed a desire for their children to acquaint ‘regular’ Finnish children, parents in this orientation define Finnish society in more inclusive terms. International friends can also represent connection and belonging in Finnish society

8.3.3.1 Parenting practices and cosmopolitan language learning

Parents who have adopted this variation place English alongside Russian and Finnish rather than treating it as secondary, and this is reflected in their parenting practices. School and day care are considered important co-actors, but often the parents feel the need to find additional sources of language learning for their children from a young age. Ksenia further described her approach to language learning:

> I thought that English would not hurt either, so that the language would be deposited somewhere in her head. That's why I took her there, away from home the age of 2, I mean, we go there with her.
>
> [Ksenia, Russia, 35-40, married, one child, in Russian]

In contrast to the second variation, which emphasised the importance of mastering one native language first, this variation highlights the importance of children learning and using multiple languages early.

Cosmopolitan parents adopt many of the same practices discussed above but juggle three languages simultaneously. This juggling act can be a source of anxiety the parents, especially if it seems their child starts to struggle with Russian. While Anzhelika talked about her pride and joy of her son’s success in learning both Finnish and English, she says that she also fears he will forget Russian as he grows up in Finland. Particularly, she worried his language skills are developing unevenly:

> There is a problem I’ve recently faced. He knows some school things only in Finnish. For example, when there are fractions like 3/4 or percentages, he only knows them in Finnish. And he’s started to ask me things like: "Mom, what is this?" And I’ll say: "Son, in Russian this is this and that."

[Anzhelika, Russia, 35-40, married, one child, in Russian]

The emerging worry over Russian highlights the strength of discourses and ideas around the importance of native language within even the cosmopolitan parents' scripts of good parenting. On the other hand, this type of reflection also points to the flexibility of parenting scripts and how parents can shift from one script variation to the other if the circumstances change. Similarly to parents moving towards script variation two once Finnish becomes dominant in their children's lives, cosmopolitan parents can change their priority to be Russian rather than treating all languages equally.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored language learning as an element of transnational parenting scripts. Language learning is closely connected to notions of good and bad parenting and carries with it many meanings. In this chapter, I have explored and analysed the most prominent meanings the interviewed parents give to language learning and how these meanings fit in the parenting scripts they construct. Language learning is a substantial part of many of the roles 'good parenting' contains, and it is a feature of a 'good parent' in a transnational environment.

Language learning is an aspect of parenting which speaks to the universal responsibility of parents to prepare their children for the future by not only providing in a material sense but providing them with the skills to succeed. The first of the three dominant discourses underpinning the parents' language learning orientations identified in this chapter, language as a commodity, speaks to this responsibility. However, the parents core beliefs about language learning are even more prominently connected to different types of belonging, cultural, societal, and familial. These aspects were explored within the two latter dominant discourses I identified, first one being language as belonging and citizenship, and the second language as emotion and family. The parents see language as not only a technical skill but intrinsically linked to understanding different cultures and societies. Significantly the parents do not necessarily view Russian and Finnish language learning or belonging as mutually exclusive. With

Russian language learning cultural belonging, the core belief of ‘knowing one’s roots’, and a connection to past generations are emphasised. In contrast, Finnish language learning is linked to society and connecting with and being accepted by the people in the here and now. Even further, some parents saw languages beyond Finnish and Russian important and the transnational space beyond Finland and Russia as potential source of belonging.

The second half of this chapter analysed how parents put together the dominant discourses and core beliefs discussed in the first half as well as what parenting practices they translate into. I argued that the variations the parents adopted responded not only to material opportunity and necessity but also the parents’ transnational imagination which in part impacted the language hierarchy they formed. The three variations were united by a strong impact belief, the idea that children’s language learning can and should be impacted either by the parents or educational institutions, namely day care and school. Additionally, these scripts were highly gendered, with the connection between mothering and language learning emphasised.

In analysing language learning as a part of cultural scripts of parenting in this manner I have argued that language learning is a vital part of creating biculturalism which scholars have argued is the hallmark or transnational individuals (Grosjean, 2015; Ralph & Staeheli, 2011). The central place of language learning within the interviewees’ cultural scripts of parenting is one of the main features that makes them transnational in nature. Furthermore, this process is not uniform, but it is subject to variations depending on which discourses, core beliefs and language practices the parents themselves, but also the educational institutions around them adopt.

Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the transnational parenting scripts of Russian-speaking migrant parents in Finland. It has provided new insight into how migrant parents adjust their parenting when they move to a new parenting environment and how transnational elements are brought together to construct coherent parenting scripts. In addition, the study has explored how the parents' relationships to different co-actors of parenting, ranging from family members to public institutions, influence their scripts of parenting. Using the framework of cultural scripts, this study makes an original contribution to migration literature by analysing the mechanics of transnational identity formation. Additionally, this study highlights the variations within transnational identities and explores how intersecting identity categories, such as national, linguistic, and gender identities impact the migration experience. The findings of this study show the durability of historically formed transnational imagination in the context of post-socialist migrations, in particular categories such as 'European' and 'Soviet'. These categories are also reflected in how the parents interact with state institutions and construct their lived citizenship. The parents tend to view Finnish and Russian citizenship in differentiated terms, with one being societal and the other cultural. At the same time, the findings of this study show the agency which migrant parents have in constructing their cultural scripts of parenting and the significance of individual circumstances. Although the parents draw from the same pool or 'tool kit' of parenting discourses, ideas and practices, the way these influences are adopted are varied and multifaceted.

Significance of 'Europe' and transnational imagination

Throughout the research, competing understandings of Europeanness were a central element in how the parents map out and conceptualise their parenting scripts in varied situations. At the heart of the parenting scripts the interviewed parents construct is the notion of Finland as a European country. In this context, Europe refers to a culturally significant imaginary to which specific ideas, norms, and expectations are attached. The Europeanness of Finland takes the position

of an essentialised truth which the parents employ within their parenting scripts to make their experiences as migrant parents understandable to others. This does not mean, however, that the meanings the parents give to Europe are uniform. Rather, they have within their disposal a variety of possible meanings, which are further shaped by their own experiences in Finland. For example, without exception the parents attached material security and improved standard as one of the positive defining features of Finland as a parenting environment. However, there is more disagreement among the parents when it comes to other defining features of 'Europeanness'. Often these relate to the role of individualism in European culture. Many see this 'respect for the individual' as a positive and beneficial to their children's development. Conversely, some see European individualism as a negative, which they need to endure to access material security. For them, Europeans lack a sense of community and raise their children too freely, making it difficult for these parents to display good parenting in their new parenting environment.

The dichotomy between' Finnishness' and 'Russianness' is a permanent feature of the parenting scripts the interviewed parents construct. The juxtaposition between 'Finnish' individualist parenting values and collectivist 'Russian' ones is at the centre of how the parents construct difference between themselves and Finnish parents. However, the parents observe many of the same differences in parenting between Russian-speakers and Finns but give them different meanings. One example the parents often use to illustrate differences in parenting is how children behave in public and how their parents react in response. While some criticise the lack of discipline Finnish children and parents exhibit as bad parenting, others see the same parenting practice as a sign of a parenting style where children are respected as individuals and treated accordingly. Two different constructions of parenting scripts emerge as a response to this difference. One construction equates 'Russianness', i.e., discipline and collectivist values such as respect to elders, and good parenting. Here national and linguistic identities are intertwined with the identity of a good parent. The second construction adopts individualist parenting values from 'Finnish' parenting and connects collectivist 'Russian' parenting to bad parenting. However, this does not mean the parents want to abandon a Russian-speaking

identity, but rather that they want to reshape what Russianness means. These two constructions reflect wider fractures within the construction of Russian identity, and the varied meanings it can be given within different groups, such as socio-economic or educational backgrounds. Parenting scripts are, therefore, not only used to create difference between Finnish and Russian parents, but within Russian-speaking parents.

In the dichotomous construction of Russian and Finnish parenting the meanings given to 'Soviet' are significant. 'Soviet' is used especially by the parents who have a high regard for 'European' and 'Finnish' parenting orientations and practices. In this context Soviet is used to denote outdated parenting, which includes elements that they deem harmful for children's development such excessive discipline and little room for considering the individual needs of the child. Furthermore, 'Sovietness' is often used to describe the parts of Russian parenting the parents in question do not accept. This is often an observation the parents have made before migrating and in some cases, it even influenced their decision to migrate. Soviet, therefore, becomes a way to communicate their parenting script to others to whom they want to display good parenting. It also becomes an important part of their life stories and a way to explain the reasons behind their decision to migrate away from their home country and the traditional support network of relatives outside of the nuclear family.

Layered discourses of good parenting

Alongside the socio-spatial transnational imagination described above, the interviewed parents use historically formed, layered discourses on good parenting to structure their parenting scripts. I have argued that particularly the historical legacies of the Soviet-Russian educational discourse, *vospitanie*, are an important part of the parents' construction of good parenting and the difference between Russian-speaking and Finnish parents. *Vospitanie* includes the emphasis on discipline and the idea of parents acting as involved managers of their child's behaviour, which many of the parents adhering to 'European' parenting values detest. However, even those parents who do not use communitarian parenting values as a way of constructing difference between themselves and Finnish

parents, adhere to many of the aspects present in the *vospitanie* discourse. Especially strong is the idea of self-sufficiency and the best possible, well-rounded development of the child. This means providing the child with multiple educational opportunities, which are not only meant to develop the child's academic or athletic skills but also develop them as a person. However, there is disagreement what the best parenting practices are to accomplish this. Some prefer the more permissive Finnish day cares and schools whereas others prefer more structured activities and supplement their children's education through hobbies and Russian school exercises.

However, *vospitanie* is not the only parenting discourse on which the interviewed parents draw. Another recognisable parenting discourse that is central in how the parents construct their scripts of good parenting, is the discourse of responsible parenthood. Previous research has identified responsible parenthood as a discourse which emerged in Western countries in the second half of the twentieth century, and is characterised by ideas of active, caring parenting by both the mother and the father (Chernova, 2012). Furthermore, responsible parenthood includes the ideal of a parent who seeks out the best expert advice to aid them in parenting. Inbuilt to this ideal is the notion of parents acting as consumers in a marketplace of information and services from which they choose the best ones (Shpakovskaya, 2015; Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2018). Researchers studying modern Russian parenting have pointed out the prevalence of responsible parenting among Russian middle-class parents, and the same prevalence is transferred to the parenting scripts the migrant parents in this study construct.

Where *vospitanie* and responsible parenthood coincide, is the constant need for parents to improve their parenting through expert information. In the scripts of good parenting the interviewees construct, 'modern' is a quality through which parenting practices and orientations are evaluated. This is also a quality which the parents look for when they require parenting advice. However, *vospitanie* and responsible parenthood diverge regarding the source of 'modern', expert advice. *Vospitanie* has a top-down structure, in which experts, including doctors, teachers and other childcare professionals act as the parents'

educators. In responsible parenting, the parents themselves are given more responsibility to shift through competing expert advice.

Citizenship, deservingness, and parenting

I have argued that conceptions of good citizenship and good parenting are fundamentally connected in the interviewees' parenting scripts. Adopting parenting practices which align with the ideas of good citizenship serve two purposes. These parenting practices affirm the parent's own position as a good citizen as well as are directed towards raising a good citizen. The normative ideal of the 'good migrant' brings an added emphasis on citizenship within the interviewees' parenting scripts. As migrants, the position of the parents as citizens is precarious, and parenting becomes a way to demonstrate their deservingness of not only state support but their belonging in Finnish society. This is achieved through emphasising their own willingness to find employment outside of the home rather than relying on benefits, and their efforts to instil the same ethic of self-sustainability in their children. However, at the same time, the parents can criticize the Finnish state for not correcting the behaviour of undeserving parents but rather allocating more resources to them. In the parenting scripts the interviewees' construct, the example set by the parent-citizen is a central factor in determining what kind of member of society their children will grow up to be. In this way, the state neglecting to correct parent-citizens behaving badly will have a broader effect on society.

Citizenship is an especially important factor in determining the different parenting practices the parents adopt when it comes to their children's language learning. Language learning reveals the parents' hopes for their children's future Language learning has an unmistakable commodity value, and language skills can be seen as a future asset in the job market. However, the importance of language learning within the interviewees' parenting scripts is based on more than its tangible commodity value. The ideas associated with 'a better future' described above influence the parents' perceptions of what language learning is most beneficial to the child and what spaces they want their child to be able to access in the future. The parents present language as a key to understanding a

given society or culture. Therefore, learning the Finnish language is essential for their children to fully become full members of Finnish society. In prioritising their children's Finnish language learning, the parents are not only following acting like a good parent bettering their children's futures, but also the are reaffirming their own status as a good citizen and a good migrant. For those parents, who themselves do not speak Finnish well, this need for Finnish language is more pronounced, making the support from day care centres and schools central to their language learning strategies.

To avoid any conflicts between their position as a good migrant and a Russian-speaking parent, the parents construct two different citizenships which are embedded into their parenting scripts. One that is explicitly about acting as a member of Finnish society, and the other is understood as a cultural citizenship, which is strongly associated with the family rather than the public arena. The more the children's social world becomes dominated by the Finnish language, the more the parents become worried about the preservation of their Russian language skills. Notably, when the parents explain why it is important for their children to learn Finnish, they mention the need to understand Finnish society, while with Russian language they refer to Russian culture and the family's roots. Furthermore, some of the parents, particularly those who strongly identify with transnational imaginaries connected to the idea of Europe, have a cosmopolitan element within their parenting orientations. In these cases, English arises as a third significant language which the parents emphasise in order to give their children the key to an international space beyond Russian and Finland.

Parents' relationships to co-actors of parenting

The findings of this study show the interactional nature of parenting and the significance of practical interactions with co-actors of parenting, whether they are individuals or institutions. Co-actors are not passive but rather hold their own notions of good parenting and hold varying levels of authority to define good parenting for others. When looking at how the parents interact with their parenting environment in both their countries of origin as well as Finland, significant co-actors of parenting can be found in both the private sphere as well

as among public institutions. Not being able to display good parenting to different co-actors can have tangible repercussions on top of the impact on psychological well-being, being or not being recognised as a 'good parent'. These range from social exclusion and loss of childcare assistance to intervention from public institutions such as child protective services.

I have argued that when describing their relationship to different co-actors of parenting, the parents employ the same transnational imaginaries to distinguish between Russian and Finnish co-actors as explored above. When it comes to public institutions, the parents use the same construction of difference they use to define Russian and Finnish parenting styles. Finnish institutions are generally seen as less punitive and demanding towards not only the children but parents as well. This in turn can be seen as a positive or negative, as seen with the parents' general attitudes towards Finnish and Russian parenting styles. Some feel the Finnish state performs its duties as a co-actor better and presents a more caring side to the parents, with an emphasis on self-care as a part of good parenting. Others posit that the Finnish state does encourages undeserving parents to continue to behave badly because they are offered support despite not contributing to society themselves. Furthermore, parents who feel a strong sense of otherness from Finnish parents and are not sure how to display good parenting to a Finnish audience when it comes to issues such as discipline, could transfer this trepidation to state institutions such as child protective services. When discussing the state as a co-actor, the parents placed much emphasis the maintenance of parental authority. In many of interviewees' parenting scripts, the state fulfils its role as a co-actor of parenting best when it first and foremost acts together with parents and recognises them as good parents.

Across all the different co-actors of parenting, the perceived modernity of the advice the co-actor gives arises as a significant tool to evaluate co-actors one another. The parents constantly challenge traditional authorities of parenting such as grandparents or public health institutions, and instead turn to information available in the relevant literature or online. This development is driven by both responsible parenthood discourse and the increased ease of accessing information from multiple sources. There is also an added emphasis on

same-minded peer groups, who can combine their own lived experience with expert advice. This shift is visible in the interviewees' parenting scripts, in which emphasis is placed on peer groups but also the parents', particularly the mothers', 'intuition' and knowledge of the child as an authority on parenting.

The role of gender in parenting scripts

Conceptions of gender are closely weaved into other aspects of the parenting scripts the interviewees construct. The difference between Russian and European gender roles is an important theme in how the parents describe their partner as a co-actor of parenting. Here, the interviewed mothers in particular employ a mixture of elements from responsible parenthood and *vospitanie* discourses to emphasise the need for both parents to take active part in parenting. However, at the same time, the parents connect gendered parenting roles to their transnational imaginings of the differences between Europe and Russia. Many of the mothers use traditional gendered parenting roles, such as the father's place as the head of the family and the mother's position as a 'natural' carer to define their relationship to their partner as a co-actor of parenting. This, in turn, becomes a way to create difference to Finnish parents, who follow the 'European' gender roles which, in the interviewed parents' perception are more fluid. Gender roles seem to be especially resistant to change through migration. While there are multiple examples of elements of parenting scripts such as parenting styles changing because of a new parenting environment, there are not as many cases of gendered parenthood being challenged.

Gender is also present in how parents conceptualise what being a good migrant means, and how they show deservingness of social support. The interviewed mothers are placed in between two salient discourses of deservingness and good parenting. On the one hand, as migrants they feel the need to show they are one of the 'good migrants' by finding paid employment outside of the home. On the other hand, they want to fulfil their duty as a 'natural carer' within the home and place their children in first place. The interviewed mothers use both norms to display their deservingness of social support and exclude 'bad parents.' While

the idea of the mother as a 'natural carer' is present in Finnish parenting discourses, some of the interviewees felt less pressure to conform to intensive motherhood in Finland and had adjusted their parenting scripts accordingly to align with the Finnish parenting style and forms of state support. Therefore, while gendered parenting norms and ideas are relatively stable despite a new parenting environment, material circumstances such as forms of state support, can encourage gender equality in parenting scripts.

Limitations and further study

Because parenting is intrinsically bound to questions of gender, the most significant limitations of this study are related to its sample of interviewees. This study is based on an interview sample which is in most part made up of mothers. While six fathers were also interviewed alongside the 5 grandmothers and 31 mothers, direct comparisons between fathers and mothers based on this sample are not feasible. Besides increasing the number of interviewed fathers to gain a fuller understanding of parenting scripts, future studies focusing on more varied types of families would offer important insights. Most of the interviewees in this study represent a heterosexual, two-parent families (30) with a significant minority of single parent families or families with joint custody (10).

Apart from the gendered characteristics of the interview sample, questions surrounding the institutional co-actors of parenting could be expanded to include street-level bureaucrats from those institutions or focused on specific institutions. For most of the interviewees within this study, institutions such as child protective services were not relevant to their everyday lives. This highlights another limitation which has been identified in the context of existing research on Russian-speaking migrants in Finland; the studies do not reach those who are in the most vulnerable socio-economic position (Cultura Foundation, 2019). While this study sought to remedy this by adding the recruitment methods of Russian-speaking associations and social media, the interviewee sample does not have families in which both the parents are unemployed for example.

Additionally, the interviews for this study were conducted a mere year before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. With the changes to international travel,

the tangibly transnational aspects of parenting, such as the reliance on grandmothers for childcare support, would have had to have been adapted. The effect of the pandemic on the parents' relationship to institutional co-actors of parenting is also salient. Did the acute health crisis strengthen the role of traditional parenting authorities such as healthcare professionals, or did the influence of peer groups increase? How does a good parent fill the gap left by hobbies and in-person learning is school in their children's education? This process of adapting parenting scripts for a new situation provide avenues for future research.

Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Participant in Semi-Structured Interviews

Pseudonym	Age	Country of Birth	Gender	Civil Status	Partner language	Children	Single parent	City	Education	Interview Language
N/A	50+	Estonia	F	Married	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Secondary	Russian
N/A	50+	Russia	F	Widowed	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
N/A	50+	Russia	F	Married	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
N/A	50+	Russia	F	Single	Russian	1	No	Capital area	College	Russian
Alina	30-35	Estonia	F	Married	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Alisa	50+	Estonia	F	Divorced	Estonian	1	Yes	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Alla	35-40	Russia	F	Divorced	Finnish	2	Joint	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Andrei	35-40	Russia	M	Married	Russian	2	Yes formerly	Capital area	Secondary	Russian

Anfisa	40-45	Russia	F	Married	Russian and Finnish	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Anna	40-45	Estonia	F	Married	Russian	3	No	Capital area	College	Russian
Anzhelika	35-40	Russia	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	PhD	Russian
Daria	40-45	Russia	F	Married	Russian	3	No	Other, East	Higher	Russian
Dominika	35-40	Russia	F	Married	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Egor	40-45	Estonia	M	Married	Russian	3	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Eva	30-35	Russia	F	Married	Finnish	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Finnish
Galina	35-40	Russia	F	Married	Russian	3	Yes formerly	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Irina	35-40	Russia	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Ivan	35-40	Bulgaria	M	Married	Russian	2	No	Other, West	PhD	Russian
Jelena	30-35	Russia	F	Divorced	Russian	1	Yes	Capital area	PhD	Russian
Karolina	30-35	Russia	F	Single	Other	1	Yes	Capital area	PhD	Russian

Klaudia	30-35	Russia	F	Divorced	Russian	2	Joint	Capital area	(Office work)	Finnish
Ksenia	30-35	Russia	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Larisa	30-35	Estonia	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Ludmila	35-40	Ukraine	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Maria	35-40	Russia	F	Single	Other	1	Yes	Capital area	PhD	Russian
Marta	50+	Russia	F	Widowed	Russian	2	No	Tampere	(Accountant)	Russian
Nadia	35-40	Belarus	F	Married	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Natasha	30-35	Ukraine/Russia	F	Married	Finnish	1	No	Capital area	Higher	English
Nina	40-45	Russia	F	Married	Finnish	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Finnish
Oksana	50+	Russia	F	Divorced	Russian	2	Yes	Other, East	PhD	English
Olga	30-35	Russia	F	Married	Russian	2	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Pavel	45-50	Russia	M	Married	Russian	3	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Polina	40-45	Russia	F	Divorced	Russian	2	Joint	Capital area	Higher	Russian

Svetlana	30-35	Russia	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Other, Central	Higher	Russian
Valentina	30-35	Estonia	F	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Vera	40-45	Russia	F	Divorced	Russian	1	Yes	Tampere	Higher	Finnish
Veronica	30-35	Russia	F	Married	Finnish	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Finnish
Viktor	35-40	Russia	M	Married	Russian	1	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian
Yulia	35-40	Russia	F	Married	English	3	No	Capital area	PhD	English
Zoya	35-40	Russia	F	Married	Russian	3	No	Capital area	Higher	Russian

Appendix 2: Organisations and Associations Involved in the Study

Associations attended by Russian-speaking parents

There were five 'grass-roots' associations that were contacted in the course of the study. Three of them were Russian speaking in particular, one in Tampere, two in the Capital Area. The remaining two were largely Finnish-speaking, one in the Capital Area, one in Tampere. These five associations have been anonymised to protect the identity of expert volunteer interviewees as well as semi-structured interview respondents contacted through these associations.

The two 'grass-roots' organisations contacted in Tampere were very different in nature. The association contacted in Tampere was a large Russian-speaking association, which offers a range of family orientated recreational activities as well as advice and support to Russian-speakers aimed to support successful integration into Finnish society. With this organisation, two volunteers were interviewed as expert interviewees. Additionally, two participant observation occasions were with this association: a Russian-speaking summer camp held in a school building as well as a New Year's event for families held in the same school. However, finding interviewees for semi-structured interviewees through this organisation proved difficult. There were probably multiple reasons for this. For example, the large size of the association made making personal connections more difficult. Additionally, this association was one of the first I contacted in the course of the study, meaning my way of approaching associations had not been solidified yet. The other organisation in Tampere was an offshoot of the local Lutheran church especially set up for migrants. However, unfortunately the Russian-speaking membership of this association was very low. Nonetheless, one semi-structured interview was the result of contact with this association.

In the Capital Area, three associations were contacted. In the pilot study phase, during which the focus was still on single parents, an association for single parents in the capital area was contacted for an interview. While the organisation conducts its activities in Finnish or in English, I was interested in

their Russian-speaking participants, which at the time of the interview made up a little over 10 percent of the association's membership. Unfortunately, while the expert interview with the association's coordinator of peer support activities offered important information from the point of view of largely Finnish-speaking organisation, participant observation opportunities did not appear. This was due to one of the organisations venues closing for renovations. This venue happened to be the one that most Russian-speaking mothers used, and their participation plummeted with the closure.

The two more successful contacts in the Capital Area were with two Russian-speaking associations. The first was with an association aimed at Russian-speaking mothers in the Capital Area. The core activity of this association are weekly or biweekly get-togethers for mothers and children under seven held in several locations around the Capital Area. In addition, the association puts together lectures, often with guest speakers, on topics related to parenthood as well as arranges hobbies for children. The association makes good use of public space and most of the events are held in buildings which are near public playgrounds. This association offered five different opportunities for participant observation: four get-togethers and two lectures. One lecture was on sexual education in Finnish schools and the other on children's rights in Finland. Additionally, alongside social media, this organisation was the source of the greatest number of semi-structured interviews alongside an expert interview with the founder of this association. The second association in the Capital Area was an association for elderly Russian-speakers in Finland which was the main avenue of recruitment of grandmothers for semi-structured interviews. This association puts together various weekly groups for Russian-speaking pensioners, such as dance, handicrafts and Finnish language learning.

Experts from national level NGOs

Four national NGOs were contacted throughout the study, and I conducted expert interviews in three of these organisations. The three NGOs from which expert interviews were collected were The Family Federation of Finland

(Väestöliitto), Central Union for Child Welfare (Lastensuojelun Keskusliitto) and Monika Multicultural Association for Women (Monika-Naiset liitto).

The Family Federation of Finland is an umbrella welfare organisation working in the social and healthcare sector. It is a non-profit NGO which provides services, produces research and acts as an advocate, influencing social policy. Within the Family Federation, an expert interview was conducted with Anita Novitsky from multiculturalism team within the Family Federation. Novitsky works with migrant parents directly as an advisor but is also involved in producing informational material and advocacy work in the multi-culturalism team of the Family Federation. In consultation work, she encounters Russian-speaking families, whose needs in a time of crisis, such as a divorce or children taken into custody, are not being met by the Finnish welfare system.

The Central Union for Child Welfare is an NGO promoting the improvement of child welfare services. Advocacy work forms a major part of the organisation's work, but they also run a phone line which people can call for advice in dealing with contacting or working with child welfare services. Julia Kuokkanen, senior expert in CUCW in charge of neighbour country policy and cooperation, was interviewed. Most of Kuokkanen's work centres around enhancing cooperation between Russian and Finnish authorities through different projects and joint seminars. In addition, she advises Russian-speaking callers on the CUCW's helpline.

Monika-women is an organisation that offers support for migrant women who have experienced violence. This support can include meetings with an advisor in the women's own language face-to-face or online or even offering a support person for divorce proceedings, court hearings, meetings with child welfare authorities. They offer a 'low-threshold' service meaning they do not ask for personal details if the customer does not wish to give them other forms of support include a shelter for migrant women and children as well as classes and groups designed to give migrant women skills they need to integrate into Finnish society. The organisation was originally founded by Russian-speaking women,

and for a long time Russian woman remained their main customers. An expert interview was conducted with two people together. Natalia Gerbert who is the current director of the organisation and one of the founders, and Nadja Anttonen who is one of their Russian-speaking advisors.

Additionally, during the study the Cultura Foundation was contacted. The foundation supports research into the position of Russian-speaking migrants in Finland and engages in public discussion on topics concerning the Russian-speaking population in Finland. Formal expert interview was not conducted within Cultura Foundation, but the foundation offered contacts which helped to secure with Novitsky and Gerbert as well as several semi-structured interviews.

Expert Interview at the Migration Info Centre

The Migration Info Centre is a part of the services provided by the city of Tampere. The centre has been operating for ten years, but recently it has been moved under employment services. The change has come with increased work force and increased awareness of the service with authorities. Overall, the Centre had three full-time permanent staff with five part time employees not employed by the city directly. The centre had also moved recently to a new location in the centre of Tampere. The new location is within Cultural Centre Laikku, a grand old library building, which also houses the Russian Club of Tampere, who similarly moved there recently. The centre provides one-on-one advice without the need to book in advance. The languages, Arabic, Persian Farsi, Somali and Russian, were chosen due to their high demand.

The advice customers come for ranges from help with government organisations or other official circumstances such as opening a bank account to finding hobbies for children. Because the centre does not collect information on nationality or gender of its customers, it’s difficult to establish exact numbers of different groups. However, in total 4500 people used the service in 2017 and this year they were expecting to top that number by at least 500 people. The interviewed adviser estimated that from Russian-speakers, the biggest groups were return

migrants[6], Ukrainians and in general Russian-speaking women moving to Finland with a Finnish husband. When it comes to Russian-speaking single parents, she had only had women as customers. The centre has a Facebook account to connect with migrants, and I used the Facebook account to contact the Centre. The centre also produced a hand-out with a schedule of the different language advisors are phone numbers for the advisors who can be also contacted through WhatsApp. In addition, authorities, health care officials etc. refer customers to the centre and the centre cooperates with providers of Finnish language courses as well as universities.

[6] This refers the 'Ingrian Finns', see chapter 3.

Appendix 3: Interview Guides

Interview structure

Explain: I would like to hear about your personal parenting experiences before and after migration. There are no right or wrong answers.

A. Before migration

- Where are you from? What was your family like?

- Where did you live before moving to Finland? Who was a part of your family, e.g. did you live alone, did you already have kids?

- Why did you move to Finland? What did you think living in Finland was going to be like?

B. After immigration

- What big changes have taken place in your life since you moved to Finland? Who is part of your family now?

- Who do you talk to about parenting, where do you look for parenting advice? What kind of things do you talk about / would you like to talk about? What kind of parenting advice you look for / would like to have?

- Who / what is your main model for parenting? What about your (ex-)spouse?

- Do you feel different from Finnish parents? Why (not), when (not)?

- Where does your child go to school / day care centre? Have you been in touch with their school/day care centre? Would you like to be more connected with their school / day care centre? What about hobbies? How do they compare to school, day care centre?

- How important is it to you that your children know Russian? Is language the most important thing or are there any other things from Russian culture, you would like your child to know?

- - Have you applied social benefits? What do you think of them in their application process? How, because you found these?

- What do you think about Finnish healthcare for children, e.g. Neuvola?

- - What has been the best / worst about raising a child in Finland? How is Finland different from Russia? Would you like to move back? Why not)?

Структура интервью

- Хочу услышать ваши переживания, ваш опыт будучи родителем до и после того как вы переехали в Финляндию. Не существует неправильных или неинтересных ответов.

- А. До миграции

- - Откуда вы? Какая была ваша семья, когда вы были маленькие/маленькими?

- - Где Вы жили до того, как вы переехали в Финляндию? Кто была ваша семья?

- Вы жили с родителями или одни (самостоятельно)? были ли у Вас уже дети?

- - Почему вы переехали в Финляндию? что вы думали о жизни в Финляндии, какой она будет?

- Б. После миграции

- - Что изменилось в вашей жизни после того, как вы переехали? Кто сейчас является вашей семьёй?/из кого состоит ваша семья?

- Какой у вас типичний день?

- - С кем Вы говорите о воспитании детей, куда обращаетесь за советом? О каких темах говорите/ хотите поговорить? В каких вопросах Вы обращаетесь за советом?

- - Кто/что ваш самый важный /главный прообраз/модель воспитания детей? /в воспитании детей? От куда бралась модель?

- -Чувствуете ли вы, что отличаетесь от финских родителей? Почему (нет), когда (нет)?

- - ваши дети ходят в школу/детский сад? В какую школу они ходят? В какой детский сад они ходят?

- Вы поддерживаете контакт со школой/детским садом? Хотите поддерживать контакт? А ваши дети ходят на кружки или секции? Вы интересуетесь результатами занятий?

- Как важно для вас, чтобы дети говорили по-русски? Русский язык самый важный или есть какие-то другие культурные вещи?

- - Вы интересовались социальными пособиями? Вы подавали на социальные пособия? Каких? что вы думаете о процессе подаче ходайства/заявления на получение социальных пособий? Как и когда вы узнали об этих пособиях?

- Что вы думаете осистема детского медицины в Финляндии? Например, Neuvola.

- Что самое лучшее/худшее в воспитании детей в Финляндии для вас? Чем отличается Финляндия от России? Хотите вернуться в Россию? Почему (нет)?

Haastattelurunko

Selitä: Haluan kuulla omia kokemuksiasi vanhemmuudesta ennen ja jälkeen maahanmuuttoa. Ei ole mitään vääriä tai ei-kiinnostavia vastauksia.

A. Ennen maahan/maastamuuttoa

- Mistä olet kotoisin? Millainen sinun perheesi oli?

- Missä asuit ennen muuttoasi Suomeen? Ketkä olivat osa perhettäsi silloin, esim. asuitko yksin, oliko sinulla jo lapsia jne.?

- Miksi muutit Suomeen? Millaista ajattelit Suomessa asumisen olevan?

B. Maahanmuuton jälkeen

- Mitä isoja muutoksia elämässäsi on tapahtunut sen jälkeen kun muutit Suomeen? Kuka on osa perhettäsi nyt?

- Kenelle puhut vanhemmuudesta, mistä etsit neuvoja vanhemmuuteen? Millaisista asioista puhut/haluaisit puhua tai etsit tietoja/haluaisit vanhemmuuteen?

- Kuka/ mikä on tärkein mallisi vanhemmuuteen? Entä ex-puolisollesi?

- Tunnetko olevasi erilainen suomalaisista vanhemmista? Miksi (ei), milloin (et)?

- Missä lapsesi käy koulussa/päiväkodissa? Oletko ollut yhteydessä heihin? Haluaisitko olla enemmän yhteydessä kouluun/päiväkotiin? Entä harrastukset? Miten ne vertautuvat kouluun, päiväkotiin?

- Kuinka tärkeää sinulle on, että lapsesi osaa venäjää? Onko kieli kaikken tärkein asia, vai onko muita asioita venäläisestä kulttuurista, jotka haluaisit lapsesi tietävän?

- Oletko hakenut sosiaalietuja? Mitä mieltä olet niistä niiden hakuprosessista? Miten, koska löysit nämä?

- Mitä mieltä olet suomalaisesta terveydenhuollosta, esim. Neuvola?

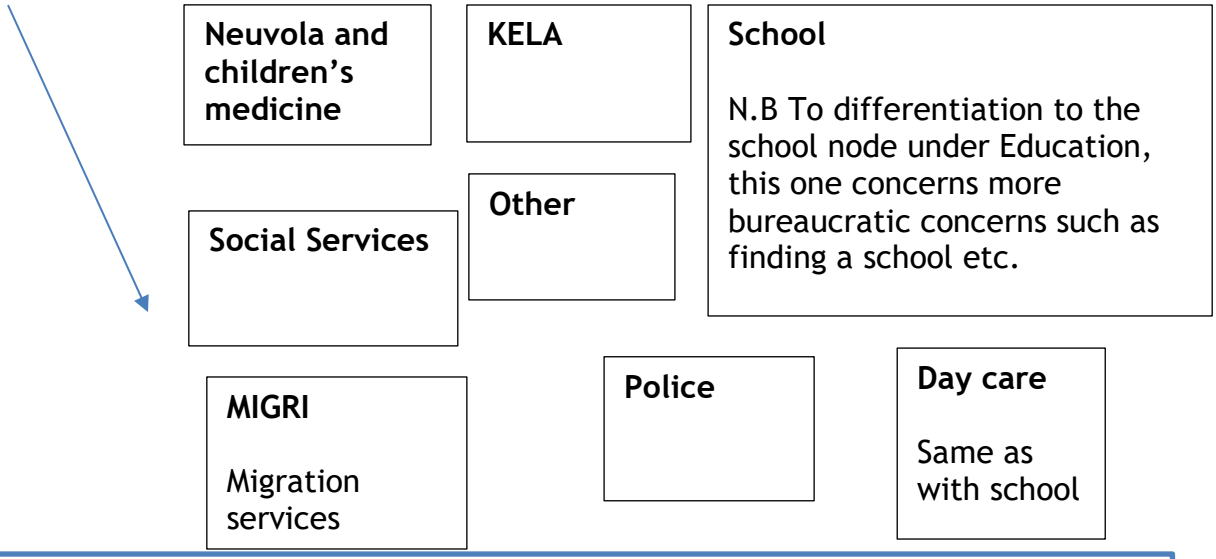
- Mikä on ollut parasta/pahinta lapsen kasvattamisessa Suomessa? Kuinka Suomi on erilainen Venäjään verrattuna? Haluaisitko muuttaa takaisin? Miksi (ei)?

Appendix 4: Coding Structure

Theme 1: The State

1.1 Institutions and Services in Finland

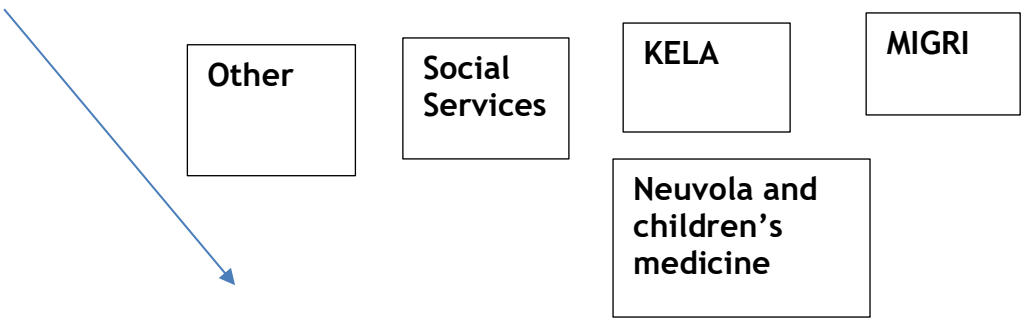
This node addresses direct **experiences** with state institutions and services named in the sub nodes.



1.2 Encounters with street level bureaucrats

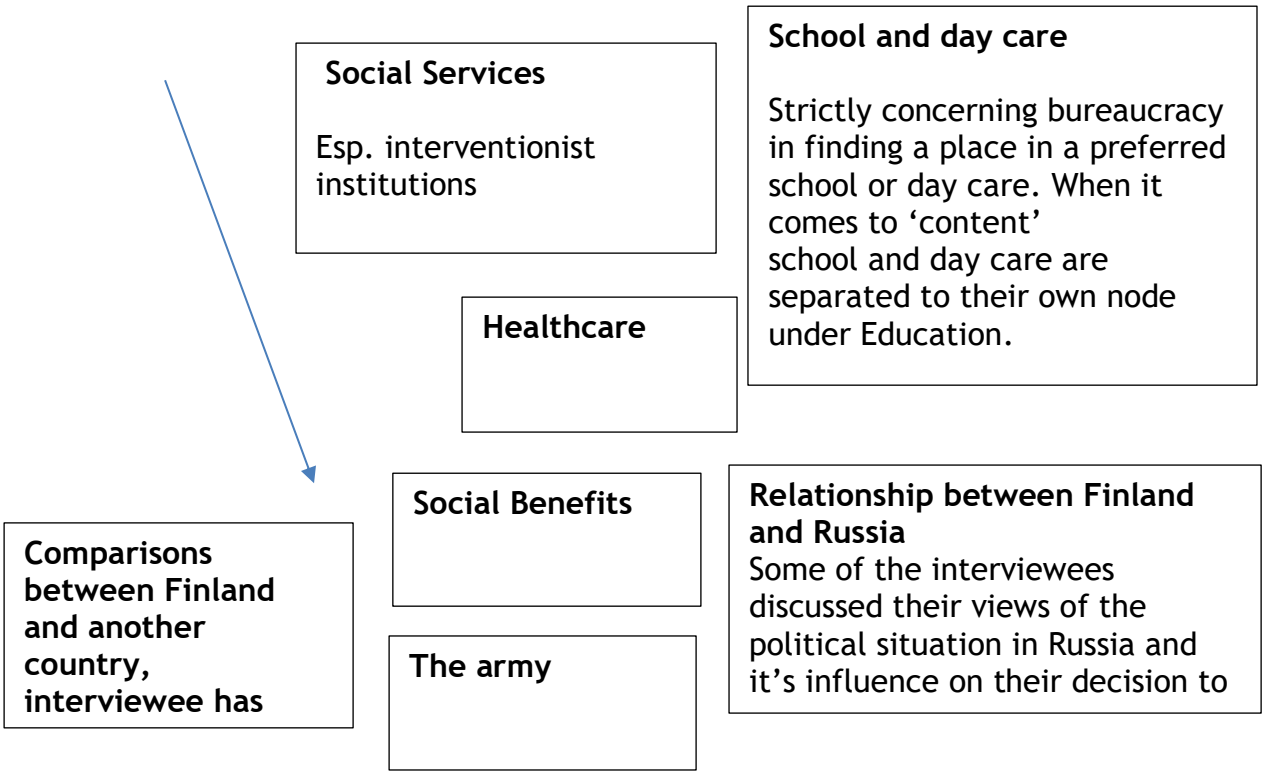
Unlike the previous node, this one focuses on **personal interactions** in said institutions. Often in the interview accounts institutions take on a life of their own and act as an agent themselves, but this node captures the moments when institutions are discussed in terms of personal interactions.

N.B For the sake of clarity, interactions with teachers or day care employees are separated into the Education theme



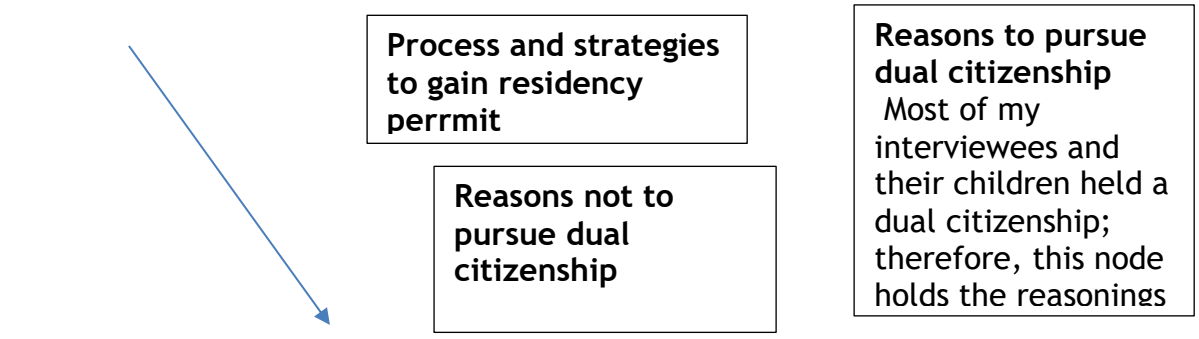
1.3 Comparisons between Russia (or other country of origin) and Finland as states

This node includes comparisons between institutions and services the Russian and Finnish states offer. Many of the institutions in Finland and Russia/Ukraine/Estonia are not directly comparable, but I have tried to differentiate some of the areas of comparison that have come up.



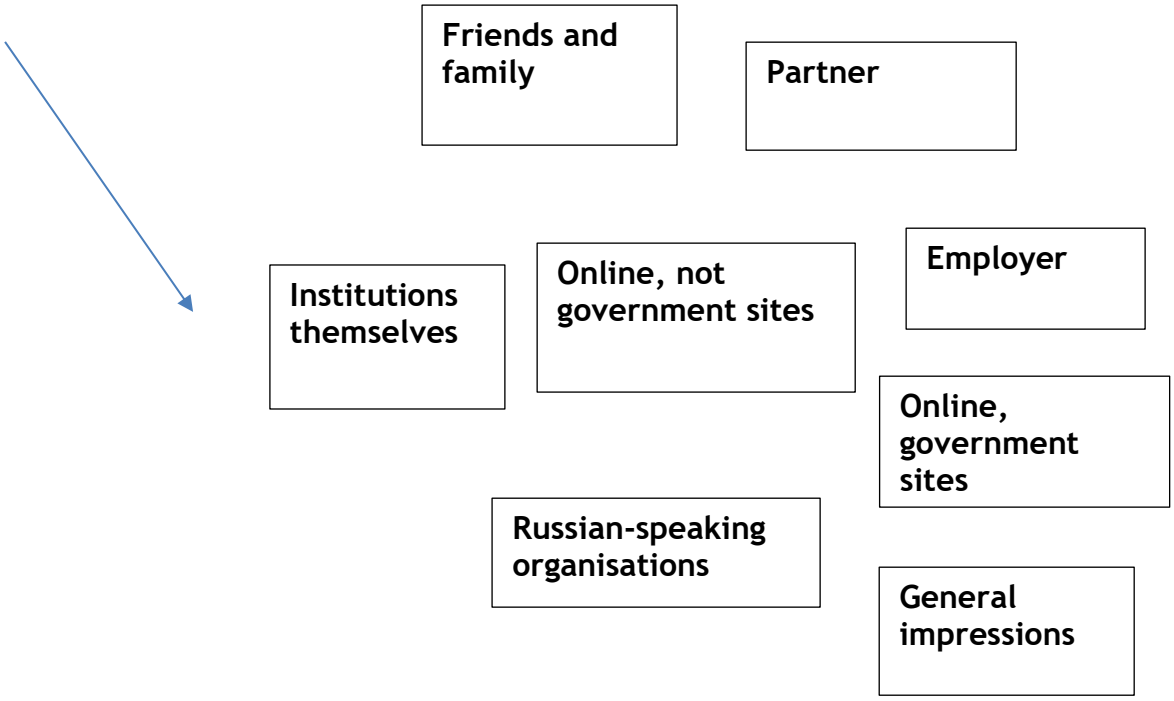
1.4 Formal citizenship and residency permits

This node includes both accounts of the process of being given/denied a residency permit as well as reasons why and how interviewees have chosen to pursue certain kinds of residency permits or dual citizenship.



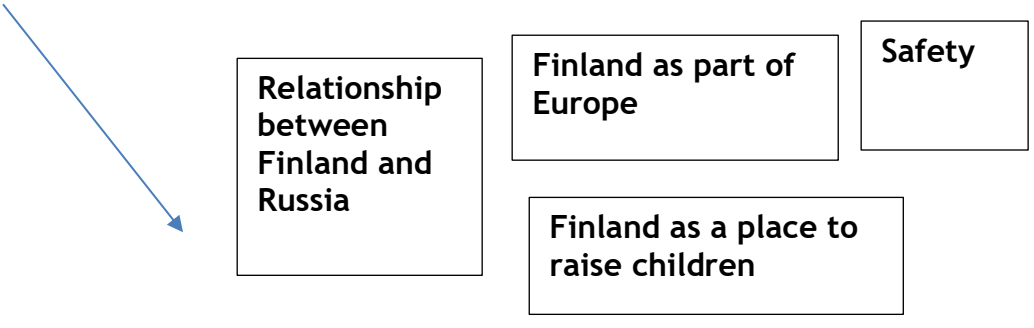
1.5 Information gathering

This node includes ways in which the interviewees have gathered information on the workings of the Finnish state institutions



1.6 Images of Finland

The interviewees talked extensively about their general impressions of Finland as a country, and what living in Finland represents for them. This node holds these kinds of accounts.



1.7 Public spaces in Finland

Includes accounts on things like public transport, playgrounds and libraries that frequently came up as positives in raising children in Finland.

1.8 Comparisons between cities

Many of the interviewees have lived in multiple places in Finland and offered some comparisons. Includes all place specific reflections on services/institutions etc.

Theme 2: Education

2.1 School

This node includes the 'content' of education in school as opposed to bureaucracy involved in enrolling in school etc.

Comparisons between Russian and Finnish schools

Schools' role in raising children

What sort of duties schools should perform, what kind of influence does school have on my child currently?

Reasons for choosing a particular school

Communication with teachers

What/When

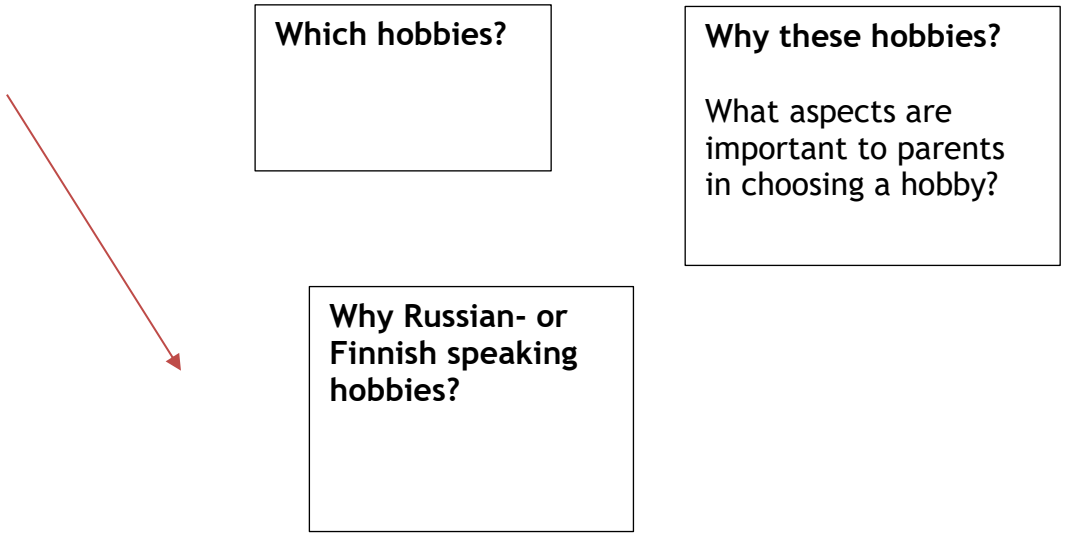
Communication with other professionals at

2.2 Day care

Essentially mirrors the structure of the school node, with same sub nodes and exclusion of bureaucracy.

2.3 Hobbies

Hobbies hold a special importance to Russian-speaking parents. This node holds reasons for choosing certain hobbies and the overall importance attributed to them.



2.4 Activities at home

This node holds any educational activities the parents undertake outside of school, day care and formal hobbies, and the reasoning for these activities.

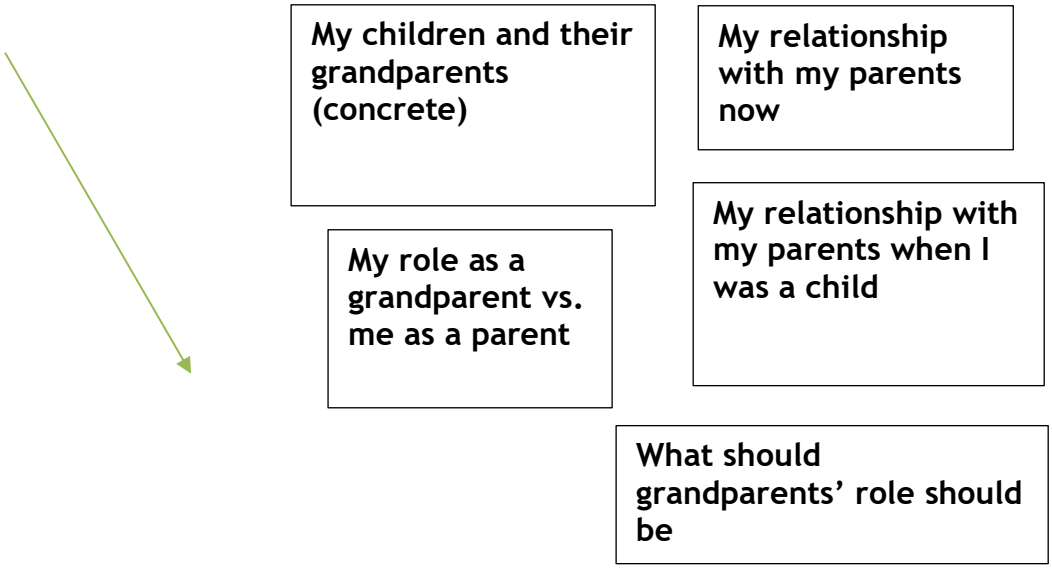
2.5 The interviewees experience with school and/or hobbies

Some interviewees reflected on their own experiences and this node holds those reflections

Theme 3: Family relationships

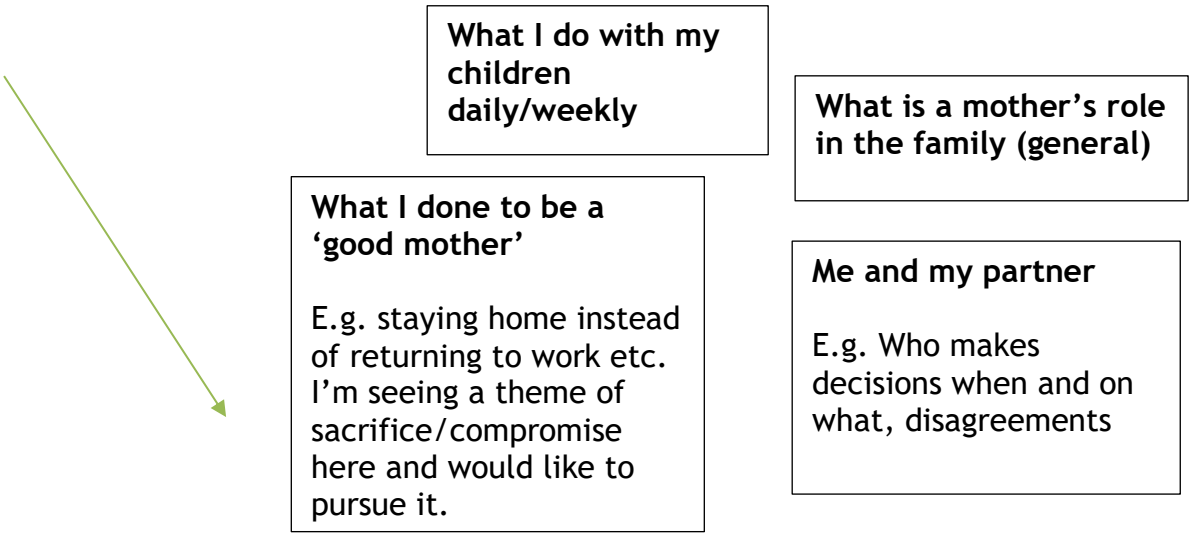
3.1 Relationship with grandparents

This node includes reflections of the interviewee's own parents as grandparents as well as their parents. Additionally, for my interviewees who themselves are grandparents, this node holds their thoughts of their role as a grandparent.



3.2 My role as a mother/wife

This node specifically holds what mothers say about being mothers. This includes concrete things they do as well as images. I have included both the roles of mother/wife since they get easily conflated.

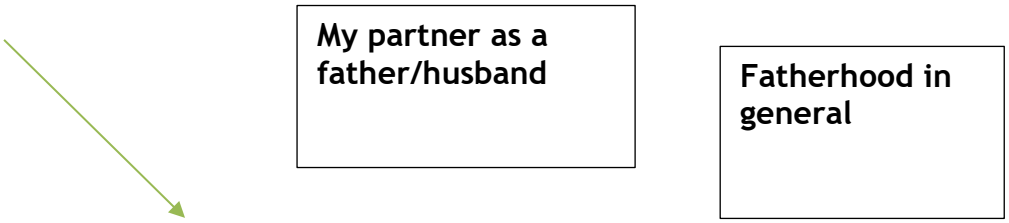


3.3 My role as a father/husband

Same as above but concentrating on the fathers I have interviewed.

3.4 Mothers speaking about fathers

Inverses the above and focuses on what mothers say about their partners as fathers and fatherhood in general.



3.5 Fathers speaking about mothers

Same as above.

3.6 Extended family relationships

Any important family relationships that are not captured in the previous ones.

Theme 4: Cultural parenting identity

4.1 Transmitting Russian language and culture

Especially Russian language arose as something important the parents wanted to pass on to their children. This node explores aspects of transmitting Russian(speaking) culture to children.

Other aspects of Russian(speaking) culture I would like my child to adopt

Why is Russian language important?

Strategies of preserving Russian language

Problems with teaching children Russian

Also includes fears for the preservation of the language in the future

4.2 Different parenting practices

This node includes parenting practices that the interviewees identified as different between Finnish and Russian parenting practices.

How do Russian(speaker)s raise children?

This includes concrete examples as well as general observations.

How do Finns raise children?

Again, this includes concrete examples as well as general observations. Teachers were also used as examples of a Finnish way of raising children, which makes this node tricky.

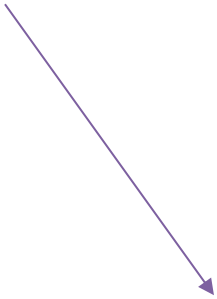
How does my parenting differ from other Russian(speakers) and/or Finns?

Often the interviewees did not feel they belonged to either group fully and this node captures those reflections

Individual differences more important than culture

4.3 Difference in children's behaviour

As an effect of parenting, directly related to the previous node, but in my opinion large enough to be a standalone node.



How do Russian(speaking) children behave?

What are the hallmarks of a Russian(speaking) child?

Which group does my child/grandchild belong to and why?

How do Finnish children behave?

4.4 Differences between Finnish and Russian single parents

This theme came up often in conversations with interviewees, who were single parents.

Theme 5: Transnational parenting

5.1 Visiting Russia (or other country of origin) with children

This is the most obvious manifestation of transnational ties, but an important one.

- **Grandparents and other relatives**
- **Other: where and why**

  Includes things like schools, museums, theatre etc.
- **How often?**
- **Other forms of communication**

5.2 Sources of advice/resources

I was struck by the multitude of sources the parents used to gain advice on parenting, and this node holds this theme. It includes from where they seek advice and why/why not and what sort of themes parents seek advice from this source

- **Children's medical services in Russia**
- **Children's medical services in Finland (Neuvola)**
- **My parents or partner's parents**
- **Friends or relatives of same age (Russian-speaking)**
- **English-language sources**
- **Partner**
- **Friends or relatives of same age (Finnish-speaking)**
- **Russian-language sources**
- **Finnish-language sources**

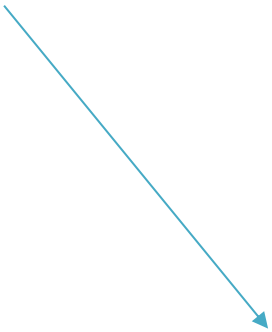
Friends or relatives of same age (international)

I decide myself/know intuitively

Grandparents on giving advice

5.3 Changes in parenting after migration

I am approaching this topic by dividing the responses into three rough groups by the level of change in the sub nodes. The concrete parenting practices that have changed will also be present in the sub nodes but not as their own sub nodes.



Feels parenting practices were already more like 'Finnish' parenting than country of origin before migration

Feels parenting practices have changed somewhat; sort of a hybrid form of parenting

Feels 'Russian' parenting practices are more important to hold on to after migration

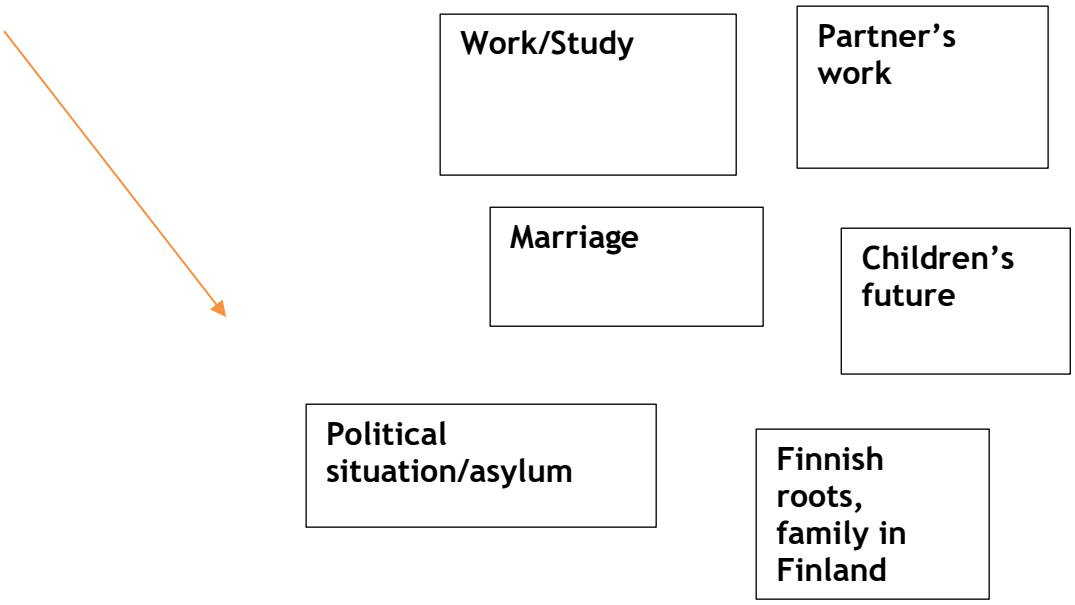
5.4 Raising transnational actors

Overall the parents felt that knowledge of two or more cultures was a benefit to their children's future. This node focuses on how parents reflected on how to make sure their children can take full advantage on their migrant status.

Theme 6: Migration and being 'a good migrant'

6.1 Reasons for migrating and reasons for staying

This is undoubtedly a big theme and perhaps needs to be broken down a bit more. Mostly I would like to catalogue why my interviewees have decided to migrate and whether that original reason has changed over time. In the sub nodes I have gathered some of the common reasons for migrating.

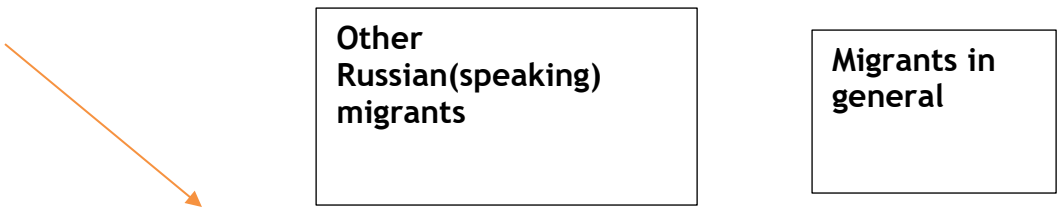


6.2 My family and I as migrants

This node focuses on reasons interviewees gave for whether they fit in Finnish society or not. These can include for example personality traits or reasons for migrating. This node also includes situations where one partner feels at home in Finland and the other does not.

6.2 Other migrants

This node focuses on interviewees' reflections how they differed from other migrants.

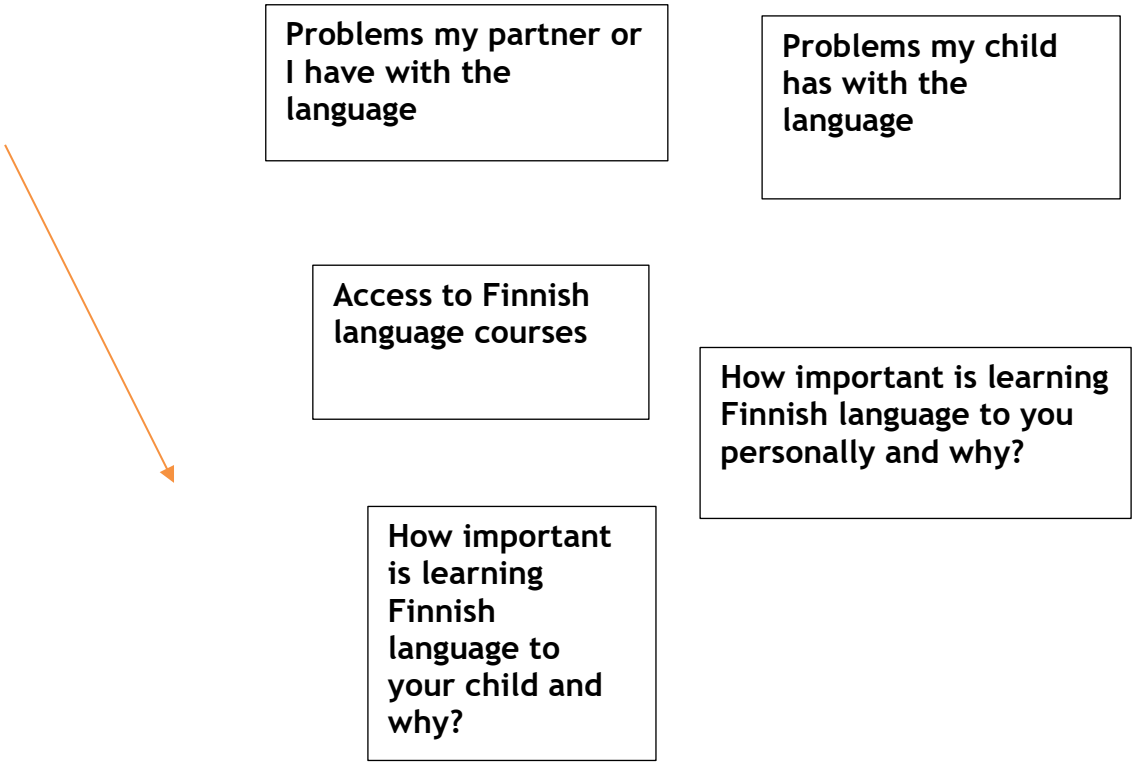


6.3 Social contacts

This node focuses on what kind of social contacts the interviewees had and where they formed those connections, especially right after migrating.

6.4 Finnish language

A difficult but crucial part of the migrant experience is learning the Finnish language. This node holds problems interviewees experienced with the language, how important they found learning the language for themselves and their children as well as places they had studied the language.



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