

Third-Country Nationals and Stateless Persons Learn The Language Of Host Country: What Possibilities Are Available In Lithuania?



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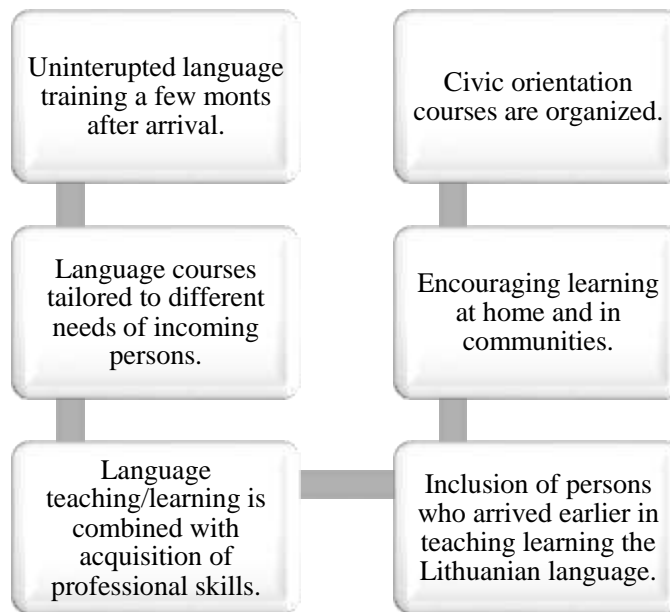
ABSTRACT: Learning and mastering the language of host country is considered to be an essential prerequisite for successful integration of third-country nationals and stateless persons that preconditions their successful position in the labour market, social relations, even strengthening of their self-confidence. The empirical research allowed stating that there is a huge demand for virtual learning needs and following the theoretical insights of this article, it is possible to emphasise that virtual aids that are oriented towards the development of social links with local residents or already established migrants and formation of positive personal qualities and positive feelings are particularly needed.

KEYWORDS: third-country nationals and stateless persons, learning the state language, interactive applications, resources of learning Lithuanian, integration into society.

INTRODUCTION

Recently various countries have been encountering migration flows (Kiselev et al., 2020; Barbosa, et al., 2021). Lithuania is not an exception and in the second half of 2021 experiencing considerable migration flows and being a member of the European Union it has to fulfil its obligations related to the integration of third-country nationals and stateless persons into society. As provided in European Commission *Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027* (2020), the host society participates in the process of integration and it has to establish conditions for full economic, social, cultural and political participation. *The Lithuania's Action Plan 2018–2020 on the Integration of Foreigners into Society* of the Republic of Lithuania calls for improving the implementation of foreigners' integration and ensuring their successful integration into society. *The Strategy for Demography, Migration and Integration 2018-2030* (20 September 2018, No. XIII-1484) outlines the necessity to ensure the integration of persons arriving in Lithuania and their families in the country. Providing different measures that facilitate foreign citizens' integration into the labour market, educational system, society, culture of the country, a significant attention is allocated to increasing accessibility of Lithuanian language courses. Such focus on strengthening learning of the Lithuanian language among incoming foreign nationals is actualised in *The Guidelines of Lithuanian Migration Policy* (26 February 2020; Resolution No. 166). Its sub-article 6.5.6. states that foreigners seeking permanent residence in Lithuania have a poor command of the Lithuanian language. And the indicated reasons for such a situation are that too little time is allocated to learning it as well as inadequate teaching programmes. The aforesaid *European Commission Action Plan* (2020) emphasises that in seeking successful integration, it is important to learn the language of receiving country. Moreover, it is also necessary to implement other measures related to more successful consolidation of language skills. The measures of language learning are presented in Picture 1.

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Picture 1. Guidelines for learning the state language of host country by foreign nationals

Teaching and learning languages are necessary seeking to increase the resistance of incoming persons, to encourage their social engagement and enable them to use services provided by the host country. *The European Commission Action Plan (2020)* acknowledges the necessity to combine language learning with acquiring professional skills at the same time emphasising that it is important to organize and provide conditions for incoming persons to attend courses of political orientation, which introduce issues of legislation, culture and values of the host society. The research conducted by Miltenburg & Dagevos (2020) allows stating that it is important to combine or join two forms of refugees' participation in the receiving state: firstly, language lessons that are considered to be a prevailing form of participation in society and can be combined with volunteering; secondly, it is particularly important to focus on employment in a much broader way. Miltenburg & Dagevos (2020) also state that a considerable attention should be allocated to learning the language of host country and, for example, in the Netherlands this lasts even several years after refugees arrive in the country because a civic integration diploma, which gives the bigger part of the attention to the state language, is obligatory in the Netherlands or other Western European countries. Emphasising learning of the state language of the host country, the researchers (Thuesen, 2017; Čatibušića et al., 2021) also stress the negative consequences that derive from not being able to communicate in the state language of receiving country. According to Čatibušića et al. (2021), lack of English skills (*as the state language of receiving country*) significantly affects refugees' communication, search for and receiving information, establishing meaningful relations with local people, future expectations and playing a productive role in society. For example, Court (2017) states that knowledge of English is the main factor that predetermines a positive sense of integration when refugees have conditions to communicate, receive services and pursue personal goals. According to Thuesen (2017), significant differences in linguistic competence of working refugees result in linguistic barriers, which weaken already low self-esteem of refugees and result in low self-confidence. For example, Brooker et al. (2017) note that English language skills of Australian refugees is linked with educational as well as occupational success. For this reason, under the Australian humanitarian program, refugees are provided with 510 hours of English language lessons with the possibility of 400 additional hours. Čatibušića et al. (2021) point out that learning the language of host community is an essential factor in being satisfied with arrival in the country among refugees. However, it was also established that senior refugees, including women, with lower level or literacy encounter the most considerable challenges. Thus, without providing favourable conditions for language teaching and learning, long-term possibilities for incoming persons are limited. For this reason, it is not only relevant to create conditions for fragmentary or rather minimal learning of state language of host country but, as it is shown in Figure 1, it is also vital to retain the continuity of language learning without interrupting it several months after arrival in the country. Perhaps engagement of earlier arrived refugees into the process of learning together with newly arrived persons may be an appropriate measure, whereas striving for reduction of social exclusion, teaching/learning at home is promoted. This measure is assigned to the most successful methods that contribute to foreign citizens' integration in *The European Commission Action Plan (2020)*. The majority of people gain a good command of language only when the language is used in their communities but most frequently lower language skills are characteristic of persons who have lower educational background prior to their arrival in a host country. The European Commission (2016) also state that language integration programmes should be provided at the earliest stage possible after arrival, also it must be adapted to each person's linguistic competence needs, combining language learning with learning of other skills, competences, work experiences. *EUA for Fundamental Rights (2017)* outlines that

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the challenges encountered by third-country nationals and stateless persons are related to the language barrier, the high turnover, the lack of well-trained teachers and unmotivated students. Epp (2016) points out that language learning challenges that emerge among refugees are connected to ability to communicate; ability to understand various registers, language accents and dialects; receiving social-emotional support. The importance of technology-supported language learning when refugees are able to delve into the meaning of language and knowledge acquisition has also been investigated. At the same time language learning, which is based on promotion and development of social links, is also relevant. However, Epp (2016) notes that tools are necessary with the help of which new language skills are maintained and developed, individual progress of language learning is observed creating possibilities for refugees to independently plan their own language learning. For example, Kaufmann (2018) states that networked technologies are seen as the main measure among refugees these days, which is relevant to them while travelling or already being in the host country. Using their smart devices, third-country nationals or stateless persons gain possibilities of not only identifying places/locations but also getting access to information and learning a language. For example, Andrade & Doolin 2016; Gillespie et al. 2018 state that the German government created the *Ankommen* program, which connects incoming refugees to German-speaking volunteers. Another application is *Refugee Phrasebook Interactive 2*, which is important because it generates a thousand main phrases that are necessary in daily life of refugees. Refugees use different language learning methods and it depends on their location, resources (attending language classes and using dictionaries) available to refugees. Also, a large number of refugees use smartphones with which they have access to mobile language learning tools (Andrade and Doolin 2016; Gillespie et al. 2018). For example, Finland has a *Funzi* mobile language learning application for refugees in Europe and migrants in countries in the Global South in their own languages (*Free Digital Learning Opportunities for Migrants and Refugees*, 2017). Ngan et al. (2016) emphasise the significance of mobile language learning applications and in particular that of games based on real situations. Such applications provide for a possibility of communicating with local residents and other migrants. At the same time the importance of physical meetings of local citizens and migrants and social events to practice is distinguished. Bradley et al. (2020) point out that migrants speaking Arabian, who employ their mobile devices for language learning, most frequently apply them for word translation and watching YouTube films. Further, analysing how to improve mobile language learning applications, Bradley et al. (2020) state that social functions, including games, have to be included as a means of enhancing learners' motivation. Bradley et al. (2020) emphasise that a big number of new applications have been launched recently, which target at Arabian speaking migrants and help them to learn the Swedish language mainly focusing on learning vocabulary and phrases. Another important measure, which promotes linguistic improvement of third-country nationals and stateless persons, is related to creating communication channels for Arabian-speaking migrants to speak with Swedish people. Thus, promotion of social interaction even through interactive applications can strengthen migrants' interest. It should be noted that it is necessary to provide the possibility of downloading and using applications for language learning without internet because the fact that migrants may not have access to internet being in the camp or due to other reasons has to be considered.

Being aware of the importance of language to successful integration of foreign citizens into society and significance of resources provided for language learning, it can be assumed that assurance of high-quality services of teaching the Lithuanian language results in successful integration of third-country nationals and stateless persons as well as formation of positive attitude from the perspective of their host country. Taking into account the presented arguments of learning a language, it is important to investigate the situation of teaching/learning the Lithuanian language from the perspective of third-country nationals and stateless persons. Therefore, *the problem in this research is specified through the following question* – what conditions are established to third-country nationals and stateless persons to learn the Lithuanian language?

The goal of the research: following the experience of teachers, who teach the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons, to identify conditions established for third-country nationals and stateless persons to learn Lithuanian.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is based on the strategy of qualitative research employing the strategy of phenomenological research, which empowers investigation of human experience (Žydzūnaitė & Sabaliauskas, 2017). It is important to note that phenomenographic research provides the possibility of holistic approach to collective experience in human phenomena despite the fact that the same phenomena can be understood differently under different circumstances (Akerlind, 2005). Thus, every participant in the research is approached as an integral part of the whole group, whereas individual experiences may be regarded as experience of the whole group. The research sample was formulated applying the *typical cases sampling*, when persons, who have taught or are currently teaching Lithuanian to third-country nationals and stateless persons, are invited to participate in the research. The typical cases sampling is applied, when attempts are made to provide a comprehensive description of what is typical and normal, what is considered to be “average” in the group, which is of interest to the researcher (Rupšienė, 2007, p. 27). The research included 15 lecturers, who teach the official Lithuanian language to third-country nationals or stateless persons. During the research the

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ethical principles were observed and research participants had a free choice to decide regarding participation in the interview and the right to answer the questions in a free and unrestricted manner.

Data collection. The semi-structured interview was applied to collect data and this method allows disclosing individual and authentic experiences of research participants and enables the researcher to expand the field of research questions. Various authors (Dieliutas, 2000; Polat, 2013) refer to a semi-structured interview as the main way of gathering data in phenomenographic research because “experiences, perceptions are constructed by the researcher and the interviewee <...>” (Žydzūnaitė and Jonušaitė, 2007, p. 77).

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH DATA

Conditions for teaching the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons. During the research attempts were made to disclose conditions for third-country nationals and stateless persons to learn Lithuanian. The identification of such conditions also allows stating the quality of teaching/learning Lithuanian to some extent (Figure 2).

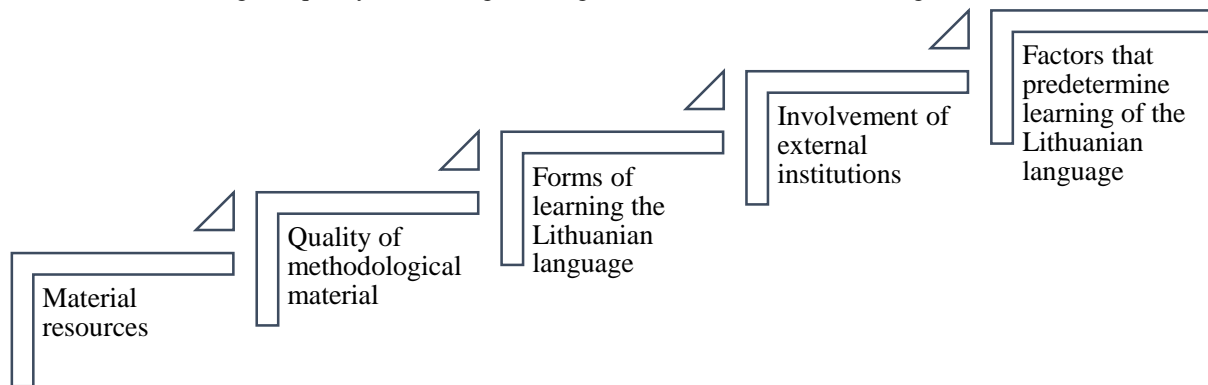


Figure 2. The themes that disclose possibilities for teaching/learning the Lithuanian language among third-country nationals and stateless persons

Learning conditions is a broad area that embraces support provided by external institutions and organisations, material resources and their suitability, variety of methodological material and its accessibility, forms of teaching/learning and other organisational aspects. The factors that predetermine learning of Lithuanians are also assigned to teaching/learning conditions (Figure 2).

The distinguished theme “**Material resources**”, which is linked to learning of Lithuanian by third-country nationals and stateless persons, consists of the subthemes presented in Figure 3.

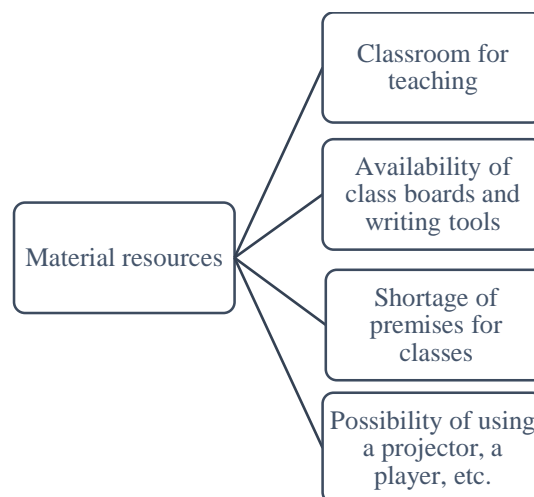


Figure 3. Experiences of research participants in relation to material resources for teaching Lithuanian to third-country nationals and stateless persons

Accessibility of physical space for learning is a relevant aspect. Therefore, while discussing conditions for learning Lithuanian, a number of research participants distinguished the subtheme “**Classroom for teaching**” laying emphasis on the fact that teachers have a space for teaching and they do not have to go to learners’ home: “*I have a place to teach so I don’t need to go to learners’ home and they do not need to come to my home. Integration Centre for Foreigners is available <...>. The premises there are suitable for teaching. One classroom is smaller and the other is bigger*” (No.1). However, contradictory experience was also highlighted

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and another subtheme *“Shortage of premises for classes”* shows that some participants in the research point to the shortage of premises where classes can be held. The informants state that: *“Maybe it is difficult because employees in the centre do not have a specific room or classroom for teaching. There are premises - like a mini conference hall and you do not know if this hall will be free or if you will have to find another place. A slight lack of space”* (No. 3). As it can be seen from the research data, the issue of availability of physical space is ambiguous because some teachers participating in the research experience lack of premises, whereas the others do not feel it at all. Further elaborating on the issue of material resources, the subtheme *“Availability of class boards and writing tools”* was distinguished, which discloses possibilities for teachers to use teaching aids or tools needed for lessons. The research participants stressed that: *“Boards and writing tools for the board are available. Everything is all right but being rather new in this activity I’m still searching for these optimal variants, I’m still thinking about what I need”* (No. 1). The analysis of infrastructure allowed distinguishing the subtheme *“Possibility of using a projector, a player”*, when the participants in the research stated that: *“We have what I like a lot, that is a projector. We can use it a lot because if a group comes, I often use it and now in particular, when we need to keep distance. We have a player for audio files as well”* (No. 3).

Methodological-teaching material for teaching Lithuanian to foreigners is a relevant issue, which receives considerable attention from the research participants. On the basis of participants’ experiences one more theme **“Quality of methodological material”** was determined. The subthemes that comprise the aforesaid theme are visualised in Figure 4.

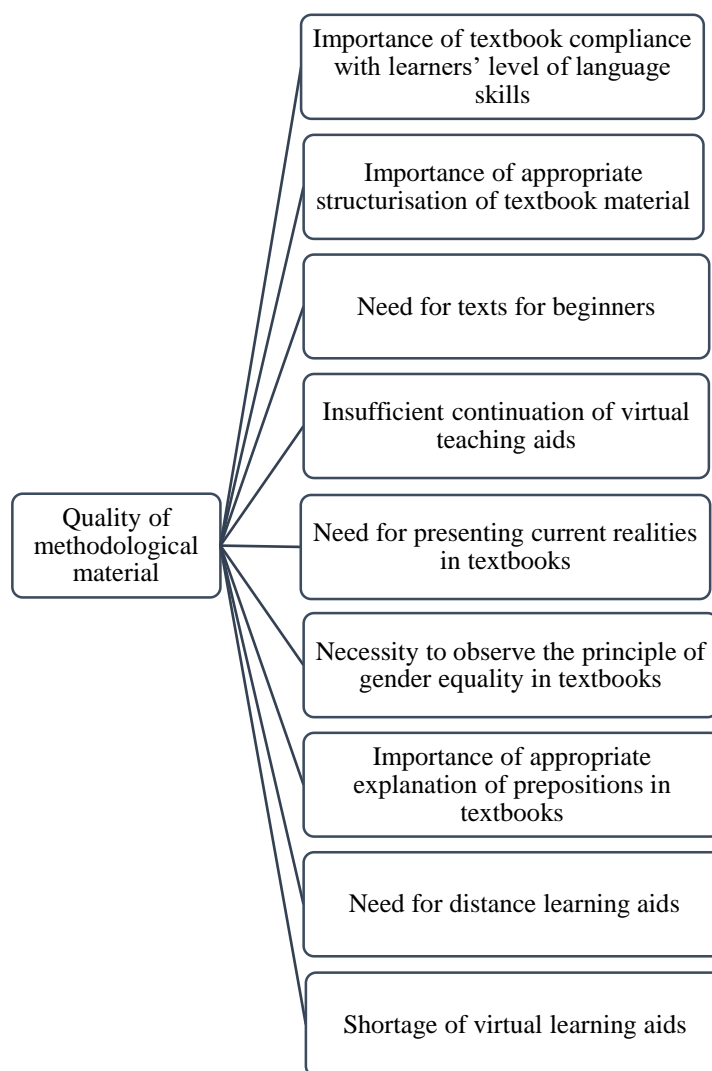


Figure 4. Experiences of research participants in relation to the quality of methodological material for teaching the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons

On the basis of informants’ thoughts, the subtheme *“Importance of textbook compliance with learners’ level of language skills”* shows that the research participants face the problem of compliance between the learners’ language level and the content of used textbooks. It is stated that: *“I started working not long time ago, so I’m still in search of a suitable textbook. At the moment, I’m working with textbook X and I like it. For any elementary level the beginning is suitable but then it becomes too complicated because there is a considerable increase in the difficulty of textbook and it becomes too difficult”* (No. 1). According to the informants, the

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available methodological material is not always in line with the level of learners' language and is too complicated. *"The textbook should be for beginners but assignments are far too difficult for them there"* (No. 3). *"From time to time I check new books and get very disappointed that they are not suitable at all because it is written that this is A1 but it is not A1 according to the selected material. Sometimes you take this new book and fail to find a system and you cannot use anything from it"* (No. 6).

Another subtheme **"Importance of appropriate structuring of textbook material"** shows that the logic of presenting learning material is not acceptable: *"I have a textbook that we are learning from and I don't like its structure: first, vocabulary is presented – several pages of it, then a few pages of grammar and exercises. As a learner, I think, it would be easier if I saw some grammar explanation and related exercises immediately but not several pages further. I also have to create additional assignments because only one exercise is really dedicated to a grammar topic in this textbook"* (No. 3). As it can be stated, the research participants would prefer the principle of integrating vocabulary, grammar and practical assignments. The informants emphasise **"Need for presenting current realities in textbooks"** pointing out that *"A lot of things are outdated. For example, the theme "Place, time", which aims to teach to tell the direction and to ask how to get somewhere. I think this has lost its relevance now because there is Google. Take navigation and go where you want and nobody will bother to ask for directions in Lithuanian. In the latest book of 2020 I see the same things – how to get to a place. I think that nobody will ask this anymore"* (No. 8). On the basis of the conducted research, the subtheme **"Insufficient continuation of virtual teaching aids"** was revealed, when the research participants emphasise that: *"A good programme was created by the Public Service Language Centre, but now it is not functioning anymore because the project is over. When the project is over, material disappears from the internet, although the material with pictures and pronunciation at once was quite good there"* (No. 4).

The subtheme **"Need for texts for beginners"** shows that: *"There is always a shortage of various texts because language teaching is mainly based on texts. Courses for beginners in particular"* (No. 9).

As it can be seen from the data presented above, the participants disclosed various experiences about material resources and their quality. However, one more subtheme was distinguished, which evokes sensitive reaction of foreigners learning from Lithuanian textbooks. Following the analysis of research results, the subtheme **"Necessity to observe the principle of gender equality in textbooks"** was singled out. The informant states that: *"When I start teaching foreigners, they start seeing books of weird structure and they raise questions about strange representation of women in the textbook, why the woman is presented as a silly person in these dialogues, why she always knows or understands nothing, why she always asks for help from men. They get angry and say that they do not like this textbook"* (No. 9).

As it can be seen, the quality of teaching material and its suitability is discussed from several perspectives. The research participants take into account how the main themes of Lithuanian grammar are consolidated and disclose their experience in teaching grammar. According to them, following the teaching material during lessons it is complicated to explain specifics of using prepositions. The subtheme **"Importance of appropriate explanation of prepositions in textbooks"** was singled out. The research data allows stating that the theme of prepositions requires an extremely accurate and well-prepared explanation. However, according to the informant, textbooks lack clarity. The latter thoughts are elaborated on by the following statements: *"There were no explanations as such. The explanation of "į" and "pas" is not convincing in the textbooks. So I say that "į" is used when followed by an unanimated object and "pas" when followed by an animated one. So textbooks should also contain such simple explanations. I really miss them"* (No. 1). The research participants do not deny the importance of creating new learning aids, although they agree that there is a wide choice of methodological aids available in Lithuania. However, the research results express various arguments of research participants regarding the importance of creating and updating methodological materials. For example, the subtheme **"Need for distance learning aids"** directly refers to the situation caused by the pandemic, when the Lithuanian language was taught online. Striving for further systemic learning of Lithuanian by third-country nationals and stateless persons, a need for creating a distance learning platform emerges. The subtheme **"Need for virtual learning aids"** reveals the need for assignments of Lithuanian designed with help of digital programs: *"I would ask for help from IT specialists. We have been using Kahoot and it is efficient and liked it a lot. It works very well teaching in a group in particular."* (No. 3).

Referring to individual experiences in learning the Lithuanian language, the theme **"Forms of teaching/learning the Lithuanian language"** was determined, which is represented by the following subthemes (Fig. 5).

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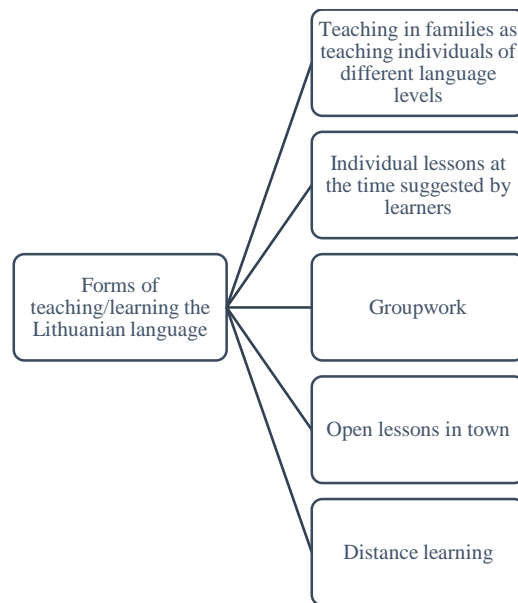


Figure 5. Experiences of research participants in relation to the forms of teaching/learning the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons

The subtheme *“Teaching in families as teaching individuals of different language levels”* explain the situation as follows: *“I have nine students and they really are of very different language levels. And there are two families among these nine people. In the Turkish family the husband is more advanced compared to his wife. As it is a family, everything is not that bad. But I wouldn’t like to put two strangers of such different levels together during lessons”* (No. 1). However, another opinion about learning in families is also heard. Teaching according to this form, teachers feel that they work with students of different levels at the same time. One more subtheme *“Individual lessons at the time suggested by learners”* shows that *“Individual lessons are most frequent but the learners is allowed to choose how he/she wants to learn. They come after eight hours of physical work and do not want anything”* (No. 3). As it can be stated following the subtheme *“Groupwork”*, the research participants organize work in groups emphasizing that: *“Groups are not big”* (No. 6). The responses of research participants allowed distinguishing the subtheme *“Open lessons in town”*, which shows that teachers tend to organize lessons in other educational environments considering the studied topics: *“We sometimes go to town if it suits the topic. For example, we go to the shop selling Lithuanian food products, or the Amber Gallery – just to make lessons more interesting”* (No. 6). The conducted analysis of research data resulted in one more subtheme *“Distance learning”*, which shows that the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons is also taught online. The informants point out that: *“For example, a Turkish family – very intelligent people. They both learn online”* (No. 1); *“Now we are working online employing certain programs”* (No. 7).

Referring to establishment of conditions for teaching/learning, it is also important to disclose involvement of external institutions providing different support regarding issues of teaching the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons. The subtheme *“Involvement of external institutions”* was singled out and it embraces the subthemes presented in Figure 6.

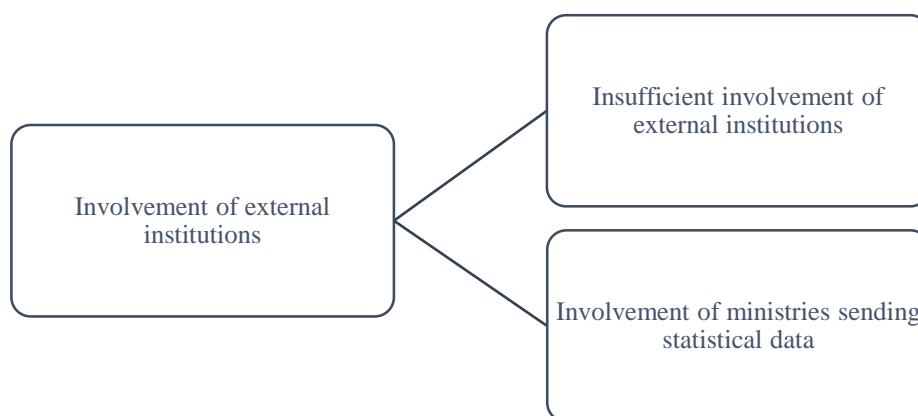


Figure 6. Experiences of research participants in involvement of external institutions related to teaching the Lithuanian language to third-country national and stateless persons

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The research disclosed that according to the research informants, external institutions insufficiently involve in the process of teaching Lithuanian. Thus, the subtheme **“Insufficient involvement of external institutions”** is reflected in the thoughts of the informant: *“It is really insufficient. We had one or two seminars held by Language Teachers' Association of Lithuania. We shared our experience”* (No. 4). The analysis of research results allowed distinguishing the subtheme **“Involvement of ministries sending statistical data”**, which is elaborated on in the following way: *“The only thing that I feel from ministries is related to statistics because they send documents to fill in regarding our qualifications.”* (No. 4). The research participants expressed dissatisfaction with the absence of a unified system – too many various organisations seeking to teach third-country nationals and leadership of responsible institutions is not clear visible.

Analysing the nature of conditions established for third-country nationals and stateless persons to learn Lithuanian, it is inevitable to discuss ways of enhancing their motivation. The collected data allowed distinguishing the theme **“Factors that contribute to learning Lithuanian”**, which is divided into subthemes (Fig. 7).

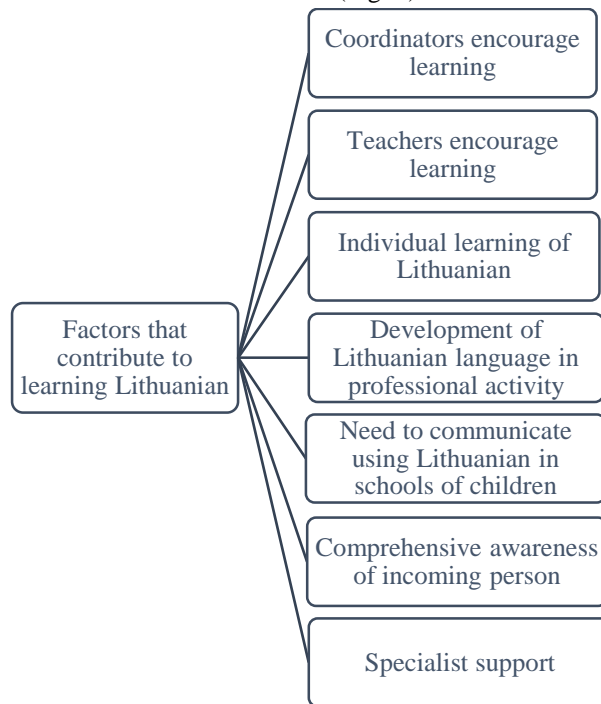


Figure 7. Experiences of research participants in relation to factors that contribute to successful learning of Lithuanian by third-country nationals and stateless persons

As it can be seen from the figure above, the subtheme **“Coordinators encourage learning”** was distinguished because the informant stated that: *“Every learner of Lithuanian has a coordinator, who arranges lessons and encourages learners”* (No. 3). This comment shows that in certain centres coordinators are assigned to foreign citizens. The research participants also see their own role through constant communication, maintaining relation with learners and, thus, possibly contributing to strengthening learners’ motivation. One more subtheme **“Teachers encourage learning”** was resulted in by the following statement of informant: *“I make attempts to do this as well because I frequently communicate with my students, write to them and ask if they come. I also have to agree time with them. They have to be encouraged because there are some people, who want to stay here, so they have to pass an exam”* (No. 3). Another subcategory is linked to inner motivation of refugees, when research participants provide particularly positive examples about the Lithuanian language learning of the aforesaid persons. For example, the distinguished subtheme **“Individual learning of Lithuanian”** shows that *“One learner from Turkey used to learn a hundred Lithuanian words per day. Well, this is a big number for me and she used to do all that and now she speaks Lithuanian”* (No. 3). The subtheme **“Development of Lithuanian language in professional activity”** discloses that *“She left her job because she used to work on her own. She wanted another job, where she could speak Lithuanian more. There are learners who are really motivated, who want to learn and they do their best”* (No. 3). Another example can be presented: *“My first learners were a Tajik family. The wife from that family was an elderly woman over 50 years of age. She was also a teacher in Tajikistan. When she arrived in Lithuania, she started working and has been working as a teacher assistant now. She really wants to work and she is eager to pass an examination”* (No. 1). One more subtheme **“Need to communicate using Lithuanian in schools of children”** demonstrates that it is vital for third-country nationals and stateless persons to be able to communicate in Lithuanian to ensure collaboration with educational institutions attended by their children. The participant in the research stated that: *“The children of the majority of them attend Lithuanian kindergartens, schools and they have to communicate with teachers. They are sometimes sad being unable to help their child”* (No. 3). Another subtheme is also linked

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with the model of state institution involvement when “*Comprehensive awareness of incoming person*” is also of importance. It is stated that: “*It is important to identify what kind of person has arrived. A serious analysis of situation is needed and grouping is important as well. You have to know if the person has experience in learning languages or not. A person may have difficulties in reading his mother tongue. Then you start searching for methods how you are going to teach and what kind of language is going to prevail*” (No.3). In this context the research participant emphasises that there are stateless people who are unable to properly read in their own language. The obtained results also allowed distinguishing the subtheme “*Specialist support*”, which refers to the provided specialist support, when safe social environment is created to third-country nationals and stateless persons. “*Firstly, that person has to be motivated himself or herself. However, motivation may be absent if a person is going through a psychological trauma. In Norway and other countries psychologists work with such people first. A safe social environment should be created for such a person and here we refer to social relations and communication and only then we can start teaching the language*” (No. 3). Thus, informants tended to emphasise a systemic model, when teaching of language should not be considered as a primary process: firstly it is necessary to identify a situation of an incoming person and provide support accordingly.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of theoretical literature disclosed that in the countries that have been facing migration flows of third-country nationals and stateless persons, learning of the state language is an essential factor for integration in society and Lithuania is not an exception. However, learning the language of host country is not an easy process, especially taking into consideration the fact that the aforesaid persons are characterised by low literacy levels and insufficient educational background. The conducted research (Thuesen, 2017) shows that refugees’ learning of the language of their host country is frequently accompanied by fear, frustration and anxiety and this leads to the enhancement of personal inferiority. Thus, learning a language is a particularly responsible process when attempts have to be made not only to convey the content of language, as a study subject, but also to strengthen learners’ self-confidence, to reduce their negative emotions, senses of shame and fear.

It should be noted that scientific studies allocate significant attention to the diversity of content of smart applications for learning languages and their compliance with the learners’ needs (Andrade & Doolin 2016; Gillespie et al. 2018; Kaufmann, 2018;). This shows that learning the language of host country has to be innovative, responding to modern realities, based on interactive content and linked to other important needs of learners (maintenance of social ties) in a targeted way. Research papers discuss issues related to attractiveness of smart applications, including mobile ones, to learners. For example, the research conducted by Al-Sabbagh et al. (2019) shows that the usefulness of application for learning languages is measured according to migrants’ interest in them, which in its own turn is disclosed through clarity of created assignments and their efficiency that become obvious during the first fifteen minutes. Following the results of empirical inquiry presented namely in this article, it was established that the participants in the research disclosed various experiences discussing the problem of material resources. It can be stated that the informants have conditions to use physical spaces that are necessary for conducting classes. They also have access to various technical aids (projectors, printers, players, class boards, etc.). However, taking into consideration insights of numerous authors (Kaufmann, 2018) in applying smart technologies for learning the language of a host country, it is thought that the qualitative data on issues of physical space for classes, players, printers and others, show that more intensive orientation to interactive, IT-based language learning is necessary in Lithuania when migrants are provided with conditions to learn language using their personal smart devices. Thus, the results of the research presented in this article confirm that there is a shortage of interactive programs, learning content for virtual or online learning of language in Lithuania. At the same time, it is shown that Lithuanian teachers understand and experience the need for such smart applications.

Rather important and necessary results of this research are related to the quality of methodological material because it is related to content of learning a language. The participants in this research agree that a wide choice of methodological literature is available at present but it should be more responsive to the needs of all learners and their language level. The teachers who took part in the study also stress that the methodological material needs to be even more oriented towards contemporary realities or learners’ needs and gender equality. This shows that the research participants formulate extremely high requirements for learning material. For example, similar tendencies were highlighted in the research conducted by Ngan et al. (2016), which outlined the importance of programs, games that are based on realities and contemporary situations.

Another important aspect of striving for successful integration of third-country nationals and stateless persons into society on the basis of language, according to Bradley & Bartram (2019), is related to maintaining social links with local residents of host country or already established third-country nationals or stateless persons and promotion of such links. At the same time it is recommended to integrate possibilities for social relations into interactive applications as well (Al-Sabbagh et al., 2019). The importance of communication is maintained speaking and organising meetings and joint activities with local residents (Ngan et al., 2016). Discussing the empirical research presented in this article, it should be mentioned that no specific data on Lithuanian language resources were identified, which could be also purposefully linked to maintenance of social links with exception of the fact that the teachers who teach the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons confirm that a good command of a state

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language opens up opportunities for such people to communicate in educational institutions of their children and, thus, to maintain relations with teachers there.

Another aspect highlighted in scholarly literature and disclosed in the presented empiric research shows that learning Lithuanian is important in professional activities as well. The results show that third-country nationals and stateless persons develop their Lithuanian language skills in professional activities. Therefore, such people find their place in the labour market and learn the state language. The synergy of learning the language of host country and professional activities is also acknowledged in the *Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027* (2020), where learning a language has to be combined with acquiring professional skills and the research conducted by Miltenburg & Dagevos (2020) established that orientation towards employment as well.

Discussing the results, it is necessary to draw attention to a significant fact: the emphasis is laid on the importance of establishing person's social relations, enhancing courage and self-confidence. On the other hand, evaluating the significance of learning a state language, the statement that learning a state language is linked with professional establishment in the host society is substantiated theoretically. The research conclusions confirm the importance of innovative learning material that addresses contemporary realities as well as learner needs.

A limitation of this study is that only a small proportion of participants in the research working with third-country nationals and stateless persons were surveyed. A larger number of participants would allow for more diverse data. Developing this research is particularly relevant for the future. It is recommended that a qualitative study be carried out on a broader scale, while at the same time a quantitative study would also be important and informative data.

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