Swedish and Greek Teachers' Perceptions of their Role in Heritage Language Education

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Abstract

Migration flows have created various educational needs worldwide. One such is Heritage Language Education as people claim their right to connect with their cultural, traditional, religious and linguistic background while they reside abroad. Ethnic communities have established settings in which they aim to sustain their ethnolinguistic capital. The present thesis explores how heritage language teachers perceive their role in two Heritage Language Community Schools, in Athens and in Stockholm. Based on a qualitative design, the research focuses on sociolinguistic phenomena such as language use and maintenance, and ethnic identity creation. Data were collected in Athens and Stockholm through semi-structured interviews with nine teachers. The analysis of findings reveals self-perceptions of teacher role that include cultural and linguistic connotations. Teachers contribute to language use and maintenance and to some extend to ethnic identity formation. Teacher practices and experiences strive not only for linguistic development but for group's ethnolinguistic vitality as well. The study concludes that there is a need for further research on teachers of Heritage Language Education since the topic has not gotten the attention it deserves.

Keywords: Heritage language, heritage language education, heritage language teachers, language maintenance, ethnic identity, ethnolinguistic vitality, sociolinguistics, Greek, Swedish.

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List of Abbreviations

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

COD: Capacity Development, Opportunity Creation and Desire

EV: Ethnolinguistic Vitality

GDPR: General Data Protection Regulation

GR: Greek language

HL: Heritage Language

HLE: Heritage Language Education

ICE: International and Comparative Education

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

SE: Swedish language

SU: Stockholm University

TISUS: Test in Swedish for University Studies

US: United States (of America)

Acknowledgments

Chapter One:
Background of the study

"A person leaving his motherland takes his language with him. It is his in his suitcase by default…"

(Gergova et al., 2018, p.104).

1.1   Introduction

The modern era is characterized by human mobility all around the world, as globalization permits to migrate generously and massively from country to country (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016). In most European countries, the stereotype of a linguistically homogenous state is not the case anymore (Schmidt, 2008). Migration movements include not only people but also cultures, languages and knowledge, which can be understood as a potential of plentiful resources to the host country (Cummins, 2014). Thus, various educational needs have been created all around the globe, since people claim their right to connect with their cultural, traditional, religious and linguistic background while they reside abroad (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019).

Throughout human history, the ability to speak several languages was always considered a strong asset and an indication of intelligence (Cummins & Danesi, 1990). Indeed, in multiethnic societies participatory opportunities are higher for people who can communicate in more than one language. Given the opportunity through education to master one additional language, empowers ethnic communities' members (Mohammed, 2011) and contributes to their language and cultural maintenance (Schmidt, 2008). Hence, ethnic communities that live in diaspora seek institutional opportunities to learn, practice and strengthen their heritage languages (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019; Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014).

Languages are classified into categories with the companion of different identification-terms, for example: minority language, mother tongue, heritage language, or foreign language. Languages are considered as major markers of identity belonging to an ethnic or linguistic group (Schmidt, 2008). Naturally, the relationship between language and identity efforts is dynamic (Fishman & García, 2011). The topic of this study is heritage language (HL), a phenomenon that it is often observable in migration contexts as well as in some minority cases. Heritage Language is[1] a language that immigrants associate with as a result of family connection. It might contain the term 'mother tongue' concerning identification either by the learner or the society (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Cummins, 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988). This thesis focuses on the interplay between HL and ethnic identity formation, the contributions of the ethnic community, teachers and expatriates to attain ethnolinguistic continuity. Additionally,

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[1] This definition is created by the author of this thesis and it is based on different authors from the field of HLE. In Chapter Two: Theoretical framework, section 2.1.1: Heritage Language (HL), I present how this definition developed based on relevant sociolinguistic literature.

heritage language is classified in the field of sociolinguistics (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019; Schmidt, 2008; Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014) as well as the phenomenon of language maintenance (MacDuling & Barnes, 2016). Also, it is a legitimate subfield in the discipline of foreign language education since more and more immigrant students enroll to HL instruction settings, in order to study the language of their ancestors (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003).

Nevertheless, HL and cultural preservation while in diaspora have not gotten the attention they deserve (Gergova et al., 2018). Scholars in the field state that it is an under-researched subject in language education which demands further exploration (Gergova et al., 2018; Kim, 2017). One cause is the plethora of key-terms that are associated with it and authors' different points of view when referring to them. Another reason is that the combination of the components ethnic identity, heritage language teaching and language maintenance that are explored in this thesis, which is not so common (Gergova et al., 2018).

HL should be valued not only because it enriches a person's skills and knowledge on an individual level (Moyer & Martín Rojo, 2015), but also for the reason that it is a means to transmit cultural heritage from generation to generation (Gergova et al., 2018). When a setting values linguistic resources, it is reflected upon power relations and migrants' positioning in the overall society (Moyer & Martín Rojo, 2015). Consequently, the importance of learning HL should not be ignored since it is tied with psychological and social benefits (Nagra, 2010). Fishman (1979) states:

> "The [ethnic mother tongue][2] is a dynamo that generates sensitivities, skills, abilities and understandings unique to its community of speakers. It has a force, a rhythm, a character, a taste, a sensitivity, a quality of beauty, humanness and greatness of soul that fosters the same characteristics within the community of those who speak it natively, consistently and zealously." (Fishman, 1979, p.42).

Not every host country is aware of its linguistic richness and usually educational systems do not incorporate heritage language teaching in their curricula and policies (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016). Languages are a national treasure, which once lost, is difficult to restore (Fishman, 1980a). People who have migrated feel the need to use their language because it is an element of everyday life that they miss a lot (Gergova et al., 2018). Also, ethnolinguistic minorities face challenges of losing their HL as a result of realizing the limited use of it or its limited value concerning educational/ career opportunities (Kirsch, 2019). Each ethnic migrant group is responsible for maintaining and teaching their HL to the youngest generations (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016). Youth participation in such initiatives is considered as a force that aids the community to sustain itself (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Therefore, ethnic communities

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[2] The ethnic mother tongue is in square brackets because in the present research I am not using this wording for it. Instead I have selected the term 'heritage language' and the justification and definition of it are going to be presented in the following chapter.

are in charge of promoting their ethnolinguistic vitality (Fishman, 2001) by strengthening their language and keeping it alive in diaspora. Ethnolinguistic vitality[3] is a group's capacity to survive as an entity in an intergroup context (Fishman & García, 2011) based on their dynamic relationship with their language (Reid & Gills, 2010).

Schools are frequently characterized as social microcosms where children learn to socialize with each other (Fishman, 1980). Also, the role of schools in language and identity efforts is considered extremely important (Fishman & García, 2011). Ethnic communities that live abroad have created and support (either financially or administratively) HL schools which facilitate children to learn, maintain and foster their HL and culture (Kirsch, 2019). Doing so, students gain cognitive, social and linguistic skills that relate to culture maintenance, identity formation, cognitive development and generational interaction. Community-based HL schools are not mandatory (Kirsch, 2019) and they play a crucial role in sustaining ethnic minority groups' heritage languages and values. Although, their existence is ignored by society and national education (Pu, 2012). Nevertheless, their role in maintaining HL is vital as they provide a place where students enjoy a wealth of HL resources and interaction (Pauwels, 2016).

Regardless of the importance of community schools and their contribution to students' identity formation, little research has been conducted about them (Gergova et al., 2018; Otcu, 2010). Researchers consider such schools as *par excellence* spaces of identity negotiation because of their linguistic and cultural wealth (Chatzidaki, 2019). By going to such schools, students gain awareness that there are others like them and that they belong to another ethnic community besides that of the host country (Creese et al., 2006). Moreover, this kind of school provides a safe space for young people to position themselves and create their own narratives (ibid).

My study on HL teacher perceptions is conducted within the context of 'Heritage Language Community Schools', a concept that is going to be presented later in detail. The focus is on HL teachers, their commitment to HL teaching, and their self-perceptions upon their role in the abovementioned context. Ethnolinguistic Vitality (Giles et al., 1985) is the corresponding theory that it is employed to present HL teacher perceived attempts to cultivate a sort of belonging in their students. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 9 (nine) HL tutors from two research sites: the Greek School of Stockholm and the Swedish School of Athens. Teachers were asked questions about their perceptions on practices that support language maintenance, ethnic identity formation and implications concerning HL teaching in such schools. Their interesting stories and perceptions are presented in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five the similarities and differences between their perceptions are analyzed and discussed.

1.2 Aim and objectives

The central aim of this research is to explore how HL teachers perceive their role in the context of two Heritage Language Community Schools. I would like give voice to

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[3] A detailed definition of EV theory is following in 2.2.1 section in Chapter Two.

teachers in order to present their understandings of what they contribute to through their role. Their role is constructed of practices that encompass language maintenance and use, ethnic identity creation, and cultural continuity abroad. All these are components of the Ethnolinguistic Vitality (Giles et al., 1985) theory which is used as the theoretical backbone of the research. The objectives that guide the study are to:

- Explore how HL teachers perceive the purposes of HL instruction.
- Explore how HL teachers perceive their efforts of HL teaching to linguistic and cultural maintenance.
- Examine how HL teachers view their contribution to ethnic identity creation in diaspora.
- Examine the similarities and differences between HL teachers' perceptions of Greek and Swedish languages.

Research questions drive and determine how each research is carried out (Bryman, 2016). Taking into consideration the aforementioned aim and objectives, a range of five research questions developed, which are going to be addressed and answered through the discourse of Ethnolinguistic Vitality:

1. How do Heritage Language teachers perceive their role through teaching in Heritage Language Community Schools in Stockholm and Athens?
2. How do HL teachers in Stockholm and Athens perceive the purposes of Greek and Swedish instruction as HL?
3. How do HL teachers in Stockholm and Athens view their contribution to language maintenance and language use in diaspora?
4. How do HL teachers in Stockholm and Athens view their contribution to ethnic identity formation in diaspora?
5. How do the answers to research questions 1-4 compare between HL teachers in Stockholm and Athens?

1.3 Previous research

This section includes what has been written about HL teachers worldwide, and then I focus on the Greek (1.3.1 sub-section) and Swedish (1.3.2) teacher cases. A narrative literature review is chosen to present first some general findings of HL teachers and then specifically about the Greek and the Swedish language contexts. Narrative literature review is selected because it stresses the importance of bringing together, understanding and locating findings (Bryman, 2016). In the field of Heritage Language Education besides having so detailed-researched concepts and definitions about HL learners and schools, there is not much written about HL teaching methods and teachers themselves (Kim, 2017). This study was principally inspired by the lack of adequate literature on HL teachers, as well as by the combination of key-concepts (Gergova et al., 2018) such as ethnic identity, language maintenance and use, with teachers' self-perceptions upon their role.

Otcu (2010) investigates the role of the Turkish Saturday School in New York in terms of how the students preserve Turkish language and cultural identity. This case-study includes administrators', teachers', parents' and students' beliefs and practices on language maintenance or shift, language ideologies, and linguistic identity. Findings demonstrate that Turkish as a HL is believed to be the main component of ethnic identity formation. Teacher, parent and administrator opinions are summarized in beliefs that the existence of such a school is tied with a strong connection with the homeland. Specific cultural values, morals and customs that are attached in Turkishness are handed on to students with the potential to create Turkish cultural identity through school's instruction (Otcu, 2010).

Sakamoto and Matsubara Morales (2016) explore ethnolinguistic vitality among Japanese Brazilians using a mix-method design. A questionnaire was distributed to people that attended a bilingual studies seminar in Brazil and two bilingual (in Japanese and Portuguese) HL teachers were interviewed as a follow-up technique. The study proves the significance of parental participation as well as various social arrangements that enlarge quality teacher training and ethnic group establishment. From teacher narratives, it is acknowledged that society still powerfully reinforces views that HL teaching should be delivered by native speakers. This kind of native speaker superiority is delaying teacher training and hiring in that context. Also, teachers believe that it is important to create Brazilian-Japanese governmental relationships to ensure effective Japanese language education in Brazil. Last, further collecting and distributing of HL teachers' voices is proposed in order to confront the hegemonic discourse in language teaching today (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016).

Kim (2017) examines two Korean HL teachers' motivational methods in relation to identity positioning as HL teachers. Continual comparative analyses of teacher interviews and classroom procedures indicate that teachers' identity positioning as HL teachers is to some extent shaped by former teaching experiences in certain cultural settings. Also, it is shaped by the degree to which they understood their students as a result of previous interactions. Teachers' and students' identity positioning and their relationships are densely tied to the teacher initiative of using various classroom motivational discourses and practices. The study concludes that HL teachers should reflect on their imbedded positioning and practices to accommodate the needs and understand the perspectives of students in language-teaching environments, where sociocultural complications are constantly growing (Kim, 2017).

1.3.1 Previous research on Greek HL teachers

One study that specifically concerns Greek HL teachers and the language retention among second generation students in the Greek School of Stockholm was conducted in 1990 (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1990). The study is a Master Thesis that deals with language maintenance or shift among second generation Greek immigrant students that attended the Greek Saturday School in Stockholm. It presents patterns of language use in socialization contexts, language attitudes and ethnolinguistic identification of those

students. Also, it uses the theory of Ethnolinguistic Vitality as its theoretical framework and it concludes that the language maintenance is favored in this case (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1990). Although having read this thesis, I do not reproduce its findings in my research since it was conducted many years ago and it applies terminology that is considered outdated in the modern enquiry of HLE. One example is the use of the term 'mother tongue' which has been replaced the recent decades from other terms that better describe the nature and dynamics of heritage language.

Also, the same author completed a PhD in 1995 on a similar topic titled "Language Maintenance or Shift? A Study of Greek Background Students in Sweden" (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). This research explores the process of language maintenance or shift among Greek background students in Sweden. The investigation concerns students that were attending Greek language instruction settings. Additional data was collected from interviews with language teachers. Findings demonstrate that student attitudes towards Greek were positive and had sentimental value as well as group identification. Greek language maintenance was achieved through communication with family and between peers/ friends. Teachers in interviews stated that heterogeneity circumstances in student proficiency make them have different skills in Greek (writing, speaking etc.). Generally, results show that language maintenance was favored in that context, but language shift was gradually happening as well (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995).

Additionally, an inspiration for this thesis is the book titled 'New Migration of Families From Greece to Europe and Canada: A 'New' Challenge for Education?' (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019), which has a very broad scope researching motivation, qualification, perceptions, challenges of Greek language tutors who teach abroad, as well as Greek families' setup, individual stories, and motives of choosing this kind of additional form of education for their children. In Part III of the book "Professionals' Perspectives on Home Language Teaching in Different Migrational Societies-New Challenges for Greek Language Education Abroad?", there are some chapters that give interesting insights to this thesis' topic.

Chatzidaki (2019) examines Greek-language education in Germany studying two schools' missions and operational conditions. Teachers in those schools reflect that their role is unique as they contribute to Greek identity maintenance among immigrant students. Also, they view themselves as part of an institution that meets the needs of newly arrived Greek children. They support them both educationally and psychologically to adapt into the new setting. Also, in teachers' eyes the institutional setting is considered more effective than home in maintaining students' Greekness and preserving cultural values (Chatzidaki, 2019). Last of all, the teachers view HL schools as "irreplaceable institutions" for student language development (Chatzidaki, 2019, p.171).

Stylou (2019) analyses aspects of Greek language education in a German state before and after the Greek economic crisis in terms of how teaching staff cope with the newcomers. The study uses statistical data regarding school enrolments and legislative documents to examine the impact of the new migration from Greece. Interviews with teachers enriched the information concerning the overall situation. They conclude that the

new migration intensely affected many aspects of Greek language education (for example, education policies) in this state and the administrative implications are many. Teachers articulate their concerns for what they perceive to be perplexing in this situation such as cutbacks of teaching staff and the absence of an educational coordinator. Nonetheless, they do not seem to transform their teaching style and practices. To sum up, the Greek educational setting and the presence of the Greek language support newcomers to easily adapt in their new life (Stylou, 2019).

Kirsch (2019) argues that one powerful tactic to maintain a HL is to attend complementary schools. She examines several perspectives of teaching Greek combining data gathered from teachers, parents and students that live in Luxembourg. Findings show that the purpose of attending this type of education is perceived differently by children and is tied with factors like socialization and age. Teachers observe different levels of student motivation which are linked to language proficiency and social opportunities. Regarding parents, Greek acquisition is an important goal for their children to learn about their origin but they do not view it as an educational priority (Kirsch, 2019).

Panagiotopoulou and Rosen (2019) examine teacher views on migration-associated multilingualism in the Greek language schools of Montreal. Their research is part of a study that internationally compares teachers in Canada, Germany and Greece. Those teachers were newly arrived migrants from Greece due to the economic crisis. Findings, that are confirmed by grounded theory, demonstrate that teachers tend to support monoglossic practices and hold insufficient views concerning their students' multilingualism. Moreover, they consider themselves as protectors of the Greek language and culture thus they implement 'Greek-only' speaking rules in their lessons. Their perspectives over these complementary schools though are different than second-generation migrant teachers. They believe that Canada's multilingual reality does not help students to acquire any language (Greek, French or English) at a good level so they must use monolingual practices in order to reach a good level of Greek. On the other hand, second-generation teachers of Greek acknowledge the multilingualism of their students and see translanguaging as an everyday practice and pedagogy (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019).

Another book that contains a relevant article is 'Bilingual Community Education and Multilingualism, Beyond Heritage Languages in a Global City' (García et al., 2012). In part 2 which is titled 'Communities Educate their Own Bilingual Children', Hantzopoulos (2012) researches the Greek-speaking diaspora of the U.S. Because of their long history in establishing community educational settings they have manage to provide, alongside with the Orthodox Church, programs of Greek language maintenance. These programs aim to prevent language loss, to preserve Greek cultural identity and promote some sort of 'Greekness'. Such practices have special significance for Greek ethnic communities, and it justifies why Greeks insist to create language schools while in diaspora. The article contains basic information about the number of Greek HL teachers in the U.S., their relationship with the Greek community, and classroom practices assisting students with lower Greek language skills (Hantzopoulos, 2012).

1.3.2 Previous research on Swedish HL teachers

Searching for literature that entirely focus on Swedish HL teachers was a challenging task. It proved that Swedish as a HL is an under-researched phenomenon and most of the available information was rarely in English.

In a relevant study, Olsson (2012) explores the Swedish school in Beijing which targets Swedish and Nordic children that live in China. However, the school is not considered as a HL school since it replaces the mainstream Chinese school and offers instruction in Swedish, Chinese and English languages. Its setting and characteristics though resemble Heritage Language Community Schools. It is established by the Swedish state that supports education for Swedish children and young people who reside abroad. The purpose is to gain a Swedish social interest through teaching that there are different cultural environments and settling abroad. This can give students an international perspective as they see the difference between their own cultural relationships and those of others. Generally, the study focuses on student language development and use but there is some evidence about teachers since one interview with a teacher is included in the analysis. The teacher believes that the school is not that different than Swedish schools and that students should invest more to learn their native (Swedish) than any other language. Also, teacher stated that it requires work from both parents and teachers, and commitment to a Swedish language to be thoroughly developed (Olsson, 2012).

1.4 Significance of the study

HL is a significant topic which has not been the center of academic research in language education (Gergova et al., 2018). HL school significance is recognized by students, parents, teachers, but as a phenomenon it is unrecognized by mainstream education settings and society (Lytra & Martin, 2010). Also, the interplay among the key-terms: language continuity, language maintenance and ethnic identity construction, besides being meaningfully tied with HL, is not usually co-present in the literature. Most of the research in recent decades, concentrates on the link between migrant language and ethnic identity considering that language is a determining identification factor. HL as the language of migrants is predominantly studied through the lens of second language acquisition, bilingualism/ multilingualism, and language contact (Gergova et al., 2018). There is a necessity to explore the topic of "language and heritage culture in migration" (Gergova et al., 2018, p.102) from different disciplinary angles e.g., through linguistic or socio-cultural parameters. Thus, HLE is an emerging research field which requires the study of different topics, for instance; heritage language population and HL policies (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003).

Through the literature review it is known that enquiry on this topic mainly focuses on students' language development/ acquisition, proficiency (MacDuling & Barnes, 2016; Smolicz et al., 2001), beliefs on multilingualism and language skills (Pu, 2012), or on the function and goals of community-based schools (Fishman, 1979; Otcu, 2010; Pu, 2012). As it was mentioned in the previous section (1.4 Previous research) there is some information about HL teachers worldwide, enough data about Greek HL teachers and

scarce material about Swedish HL teachers. Especially for the Swedish case, this thesis is significant as there are 7,000 students worldwide that attend some form of Swedish instruction (Skolverket, 2015 cited in Rydenvald, 2016). So, this thesis has the ambition to expand the knowledge about HL teaching because there is a literature gap regarding them and their contribution to HLE field. HL teachers play a vital role in tutoring and supporting heritage languages (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Presenting their perceptions and showing their side of the story appears as worth-investigating approach in the HL phenomenon.

HL as a subject is classified as a linguistic right which is a sub-field of basic human rights. Linguistic majority speakers enjoy this right, but minority language or less-common language speakers do not always (Phillipson et al., 1995). Supporting linguistic human rights means that in individual level each person can identify confidently with their native language and this identification is valued by others (ibid). Thus, the right to learn each person's native language should be educationally respected in contexts where HL is not the country's dominant language. In a collective level, the right of linguistic minority groups is associated with the establishment and the maintenance of schools or other educational institutions, where they can teach and learn their native language (Phillipson et al., 1995). Teachers, language professionals and ethnic communities who are participating in creating conditions for native language teaching/ learning, have a special position in the HLE phenomenon (ibid). To sum up, HL as a linguistic right (Phillipson et al., 1995) is one of the factors that motivated the selection of this thesis topic. Although, it is not the study's main aim to show the interrelation between linguistic human rights and HL provision.

In addition, the topic is related to the field of International and Comparative Education (ICE), since it embodies basic aspects from Bray's and Thomas' cube (1995). Originally, it is an international educational phenomenon (teaching a HL in community-based school), the main actors (non-locational demographic groups) are ethnic groups (Greek and Swedish expatriates) which is compared in two geographical dimensions (Athens, Greece and Stockholm, Sweden). The geographical aspect is a traditional unit of comparison in the discipline of ICE, where educational happenings are taking place (Bray et al., 2014). The comparative element facilitates a better understanding of two cases employing duplicate methods, and one of the most common forms of it is the cross-cultural research (Bryman, 2016).

1.5 Limitations

During the literature review, a rich terminology emerged concerning the concept of heritage language. Due to time restrictions it was not possible to synthesize a definition that impressively includes everything that has been written about HL or demonstrate how it is described in each context worldwide. This is also the case for the concept Heritage Language Community Schools and all the others. Term selection and use for each key-concept in this thesis is done based on criteria that suited the character and the objectives of the study according to researcher's preferences. In this study I explain and motivate

that attention is drawn to the theory of ethnolinguistic vitality. This theory comprehends each key-concept as tied to a more ethnolinguistic and sociolinguistic standpoint and not barely language-centered. Having the theory in mind I have selected the most applicable terms to support the aim. Under the section 2.1 (Main Concepts) that follows, it is explained how the specific terms that are used were selected and combined to create each concept.

An essential source of data in this research is teachers' interviews. The data were gathered and analyzed with qualitative research practices. One should be cautious about the generalizability of such outcomes since perceptions emerge from the subjective realities that these teachers have created as social actors. This notion is affirmed by Bryman (2016) who argued that interviewees in qualitative research do not characterize the entire population (Bryman, 2016). Also, the sample size is considered small in terms of generalizing the findings into the wider group of HL teachers. Some general conclusions are going to be drawn for the Greek and Swedish HL teacher self-perceived roles in relation to HL instruction, but the findings should by no means be transferred or assumed that they represent whole picture of teaching the same HL in different contexts worldwide. Mainly, this research aspires to add to the existing corpus of studies on HLE and HL teachers. However, for the Swedish school in Athens, I interviewed almost all the teaching staff so it can be generalizable only for this specific school case.

Furthermore, the author of this paper is of Greek origin, hence a native speaker of Greek and has experience of Greek language instruction abroad. This may influence the analysis and interpretation of research findings especially regarding the ones that are derived from the interviews with the Greek HL teachers. Biases in social research can occur as it is situated in social contexts/ settings where social actors shape each reality (Bryman, 2016). As much as possible, biases should be eliminated to minimum and this can be done in several ways, for example by having random-selected sample or maintaining an interview design that does not bias interviewees' responses (ibid).

1.6 Structure of the study

This research is organized in six (6) chapters that supplement each other in order to comparatively present the role perceptions of nine HL teachers from the Greek School of Stockholm and the Swedish School of Athens. The present chapter, number one, contains the background of the study as well as its aim. Chapter two includes the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study which consists of the key concepts (such as HL) and a presentation of theoretical considerations that are employed in this study. Chapter three introduces the methodology of this comparative topic, and chapter four consists of data analysis and findings. Chapter five presents and discusses the findings comparing teachers' interviews from the two schools. Last, chapter six is the conclusion of the present research which is divided into three sections; a conclusion, reflections and recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two
Conceptual & Theoretical framework

The present chapter consists of the concepts and theories of this thesis. It is divided into two sections. The first section includes the main concepts that frame this study and it is divided into four sub-sections. Section 2.2 is about the theoretical framework which is illustrated in two sub-sections that present one theory each.

2.1 Main Concepts

Starting from the central phenomenon of Heritage Language, I give some of the history, definitions, aspects/ categories of it and in the end how they definition that I use emerged. Then, I provide information about the scientific field of Heritage Language Education where the topic is situated. HL teachers is the sub-section that follows, and includes data about the profession, teacher role and positioning. Subsequently, the dynamic nature of ethnic identity, its definition and its relationship with heritage language is given. As a last point, language maintenance, a goal of each ethnolinguistic group, is portrayed. All these concepts have interrelationships, interdependence and altogether they construct lieu where the thesis topic is located. Section 2.2 includes the theoretical framework which is illustrated in two sub-sections.

2.1.1 Heritage Language (HL)

Fishman ranks Heritage Language (HL) into three main categories: a) colonial, b) immigrant and c) indigenous languages (Fishman, 2001 cited in Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003, p.212). This thesis focuses on immigrant languages. They include languages from multiple parts of the world that are spoken in a host country by immigrants. Immigrant languages have no minority status, so they are often difficult to locate and maintain. Countries therefore do not have specific educational policies concerning the preservation of such languages. There are numerous reasons for this; a political explanation is that they are seen as an impediment to immigrant integration into the host society (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018).

At the beginning of the millennium, enrollment rates of HL learners increased in the United States (US), legitimizing Heritage Language Education as a subfield of the discipline of foreign language education (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). HL is a term that generally describes less-commonly-taught languages in an educational system so that means not traditionally taught foreign languages like English and French. HL, by definition, is neither a second nor a foreign language, but a medium to transmit nation's cultural commemoration through place, time and generation. Generally, HL is a language that is different from the one that is dominant in a given social context (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018). In the modern era, in which so many 'multi-'terms appear in education (e.g., multilingualism), HL holds an important position since it keeps the societal balance between pluralism and consistency. More and more societies have started to accept that diversity is an advantage for social, cultural and economic reasons (Trifonas

& Aravossitas, 2014). Thus, most educators agree on the activation of HL knowledge, as it contributes both to the person (e.g., in cognitive growth) and the community by strengthening social cohesion through diversity (Cummins, 2014).

In research, HL first developed in fields like multilingualism and second language education in Canada around 1977, when the country decided to integrate multiculturalism as an asset to democratic and societal values, by establishing "Heritage Languages Programs" (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014). The Canadian government is considered as great contributor as it has greatly supported, compared to other countries, the provision of heritage language education at schools (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019). Nowadays, theories and practices of HL have been expanded in the bibliography of bilingualism and other relevant fields (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018), worldwide and the field has been set as an autonomous discipline (Heritage Language Education- HLE) that differs from context to context (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014). It is crucial to mention, that from the literature used in this thesis, a wide range of visions about HL definition has been detected. However, in the next paragraphs I present some general definitions and criticisms on them, that are consider relevant to the two case studies compared.

Some argue that the concept HL is problematic as it seems weak compared to the dominant language, or/ and as something that is outdated as it does not correspond with contemporary societal reality which demands more modern values and skills (Baker and Jones 1998, cited in Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). García noted that it carries controversial connotations to a remote past and previous generations (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2000 cited in Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). However, in 2014, Cummins highlighted the heritage value of those languages as an economic and cultural advantage in the modern globalized world (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018). Additionally, the personal linkage of HL learner to family and cultural background is tied with sentimental and psychological importance (Carreira & Kagan, 2011).

A variety of terms has been used in different contexts and eras to describe HL, e.g.: 'ancestral', 'ethnic', 'immigrant', 'minority' and 'community' languages (Cummins, 2014). The selection of each term is highly associated with political motives (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018). In addition, some researchers use the term 'mother tongue' instead. Recently it has been characterized a challenging label to use in order to define in such an internationalized world what a mother tongue is (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). However, three interesting theses for the definition of mother tongue have been distinguished by Skutnabb-Kangas (1988). These theses focus on criteria including origin: which language was learned first, competence: which language is known best, function: which language is used the most, and identification: which language is used to identify the person either by themselves or the society. First, a person may have several mother tongues, depending on their context or background. Secondly, mother tongue may change several times during life considering different factors, for example migration (the only exception is for the language that is defined by origin). Last, mother tongue can be hierarchically situated based on the linguistic human right awareness of each societal setting (Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988).

The discussions and arguments on the terminology and the profiles of HL are continuing (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018). In order to provide an adequate definition (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003) I have combined three authors' statements: Cummins, Skutnabb-Kangas and Carreira (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Cummins, 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988). Thus, HL is a language of immigrant status, that a person associates with because of family background. HL can include the term 'mother tongue' regarding identification either by the learner or the community/ society.

2.1.2 Heritage Language Education (HLE)

Heritage Language Education (HLE) is a multidimensional field which is not only situated in linguistic and pedagogical sciences. It is also linked to identity construction and cultural inheritance through HL instruction. HLE facilitates language to survive from generation to generation, as a bond to the past and a benefit for the future. (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014). HLE has different objectives and functions; in some cases, it positions literacy as the main goal of HL teaching (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). In some others it seeks academic profits for the learner, or it supports individual purposes, for example, the students' ability to communicate with their family/ relatives (ibid). Also, HLE is known for addressing student educational, psychological, and cultural needs (Nagra, 2010). Certainly, HLE is a separate pedagogical domain and should not be conjoined with terms like 'foreign language' or 'second language education' (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014).

HL schools serve different purposes depending on what each ethnic group is striving for. A common aim is to promote the link between HL and ethnicity for a long period of time, hopefully forever (Fishman, 1979). Other aims are connection, identity and collectivity building with the cultural heritage (Otcu, 2010). Heritage Language Schools play a vital role in immigrant students' language development and they are great cultural, linguistic, and literacy resources (Pu, 2012). Furthermore, HL schools facilitate student transition for families who might eventually return to their homeland (Chatzidaki, 2019). These schools are often established by ethnic communities and assist HL learners cultivate cultural knowledge and linguistic capacities associated with their HL (Compton 2001 cited in Pu, 2012). Among others, HLE modulates ethnic uniqueness (Fishman, 1980 cited in Otcu, 2010) in a natural environment in which students can connect with their roots (Otcu, 2010). Parents argue in favor of the existence of such schools as they consist an exclusive form of educational institution in which children could sustain HL and cultural capital (Chatzidaki, 2019).

HLE programs vary from setting to setting worldwide. 'Ethnic Community Mother Tongue Schools' is a term that was adopted by Fishman (1980b) to describe such schools in the US, while other researchers use terms like 'Heritage Language Schools'. It is a concept though, that remains defined with a plethora of interpretations in each context (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003), for instance 'Complementary Schools' (Creese et al., 2006; Kirsch, 2019) or 'Community Language Schools' (Chatzidaki, 2019). Typical contexts where they could be found nowadays are public or mainstream, private or independent, and community-established schools which are out-of-school programs (Cummins, 2014).

The present thesis focuses on the community school setting[4], parallel to (the) mainstream school(s). It aspires to strengthen the connection between an ethnic group and their language, and potentially their roots. This intention is called heritage language motivation and it may refer either to HL learners, parents or even to schools (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003).

HL Schools usually meet on weekends or afternoons in facilities offered or rented from the host community, religious spaces (e.g., churches), or public or private schools (Pu, 2012). Sometimes they receive support from the host country's government, but it is not always the case (Creese et al., 2006). In some countries they are financially supported by parental contributions (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Also, there are types of HL schools that in some countries, for example in Germany (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019) or the US, they are all-day schools offering bilingual instruction in both heritage and standard language of the host country (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964). In other country-cases, they operate during weekday afternoons, supplementary to general public schools (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964) or they could be incorporated in the mainstream school (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014).

Generally, curriculum not only focuses on learning the language and culture but it is also tied with tradition, food and holiday celebrations (Pu, 2012). Students' language proficiency can be measured through participation in national examinations, which gives the opportunity to even continue academically with the HL (Creese et al., 2006). In some occasions HL school functions like a 'hub' for community and a common space to meet compatriots. Students begin attending HL schools or classes at varying age levels and with different attitudes and motivations toward becoming skilled in HL (Pu, 2012). Students are grouped either by age or language proficiency criteria and usually class sizes are small (Creese et al., 2006).

To sum up, this type of schools is a site that promotes language maintenance and at the same time replicates societal values (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). The terminology which I use in this thesis to refer to those settings is 'Heritage Language Community Schools'. This term correlates with the key-concept of my study and their language-centered character (Fishman & Nahirny, 1964), which is HL, and with a basic feature, which is the community connection. Also, it relates to a recent term which is used for these settings; 'Heritage Language Schools' (Otcu, 2010). Heritage Language Community Schools, are a suitable context for identity exploration, that include linguistic repertoires as a part of their mission statements (Creese et al., 2006). Therefore, they are often considered as 'safe spaces' from the actors (teachers, parents etc.) involved in this phenomenon (Creese et al., 2006; Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019) as they aim to fill a cultural gap through acquiring their parents language (Nagra, 2010).

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[4] Still within this category, school settings vary (Creese et al., 2006).

2.1.3 Heritage Language Teachers

School teachers are important advocates for immigrant students (Pu, 2012). They connect students with HL and teach them basic aspects of their own culture and tradition (ibid). According to existing research, HL teachers in such settings have an important role since they contribute to culturally responsive instruction which consists of literacy, language and cultural factors and stimulates high achievement skills in culturally and linguistically diverse children (Pu, 2012). Also, the existence of HL teachers is directly related to the presence of HL programs or schools (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014), since without them the operation of such settings would be impossible.

Culturally responsive instruction is a concept that describes the key-role and responsibilities of a teacher. Diamond & Moore (2000) have distinguished three wider categories of teacher role: 'cultural organizers', 'cultural mediators', and 'orchestrators of social contexts of learning'. As 'cultural organizers', teachers offer in their classroom a space where culture's dynamic is promoted. Regarding 'cultural mediators', they help students to understand, empower and explore their identities. The last term, 'orchestrators of social contexts of learning', refers to teachers who aware of the positive influence that learning a culture has in the learning process (Diamond & Moore, 2000). In order to provide culturally responsive teaching, it is needed to seek for HL and cultural resources and incorporate them into teaching practices (Pu, 2012).

How teachers perceive and position themselves, is a central issue in HLE research. This is because it comprises sociocultural and linguistic complexities that are reflected upon teaching. Their self-perceptions of their role are also linked to their motivational practices and classroom dynamics (Kim, 2017). Furthermore, HL teachers with the assistance of parents, ethnic community and HL learners, are the most important allies to keep HL and HL schooling alive (Fishman, 1979).

HL teachers are either paid by the hosting country or their homeland, or in some cases they are volunteers (Nagra, 2010), but may be inadequate in formal in-service training for such a job (Pu, 2012). Their qualification level varies with some of them being professionally trained while others not. It depends first on the way that HLE is operating in a country and secondly on how they have been hired to do this kind of job. Some have been selected and placed by the governments of the country of origin, while others have been hired directly from the community school and are paid from parental contributions (Creese et al., 2006). In cases where HLE is integrated in mainstream school settings, teachers do have teaching qualifications and are formally trained.

2.1.4 Heritage Language and Ethnic Identity

Identity formation is the interplay between several powers (Fishman & García, 2011). Contemporary conceptualizations about identity show that it is fluid and dynamic, not motionless. This happens as identity is socially situated and regularly negotiated as a consequence of interaction practices (Chatzidaki, 2019). Identity usually refers to the conceptualization of who we believe we are and consists of ethnic, linguistic and cultural identities (Oriyama, 2010). All these are elements of 'social identity' which is developed

by people as they interact and observe the world (Norton, 2000 cited in Oriyama, 2010). Identities might develop, change and reconstruct when people become aware that they differ from the people around them (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2004). Through language and ethnicity people perform their identity (García, 2010; Mohammed, 2011).

Most people view language as a part of their identity, a connection with their heritage, a link with an ethnic community group in which they identify themselves (Wright, 2004). The link between HL and ethnicity is often seen as the essence of identity and individuality (Fishman, 1979). Common linguistic heritage unites community members who aim to maintain their history and cultural heritage (Wright, 2004) in migration contexts. HL is a term which includes particular significance of family as it was mentioned in earlier sections[5], a basic identity shaper of human beings, as it is a language usually spoken at home, with relatives and with community members (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018). A growing amount of literature on multilingualism and language maintenance confirms that for many people HL knowledge provides them with a more nuanced sense of self, of family/ community and global citizenship (Duff & Li, 2014).

Ethnicity is the property of a group, related with ancestry, culture and language (Schmidt, 2008). Ethnic identity is a multidimensional concept that refers to peoples' sense of belonging. Usually it incorporates standard practices and behaviors such as language, culture, customs, tradition and religion as well as emotional ties with the community. Ethnic groups may differ, and some of them regard ethnicity as a basic identity component which plays an important role in their life. Generally, ethnic identity represents groups that share common ancestry and characteristics that they identify themselves with. It is strengthened through engagement in sociocultural activities (e.g., ethnic celebrations) with the group's members (Levine & Hogg, 2010).

Nowadays, while the globalized world is rapidly changing, ethnic identities are a debatable topic. So too is social identification, with the relationship between language and identity being central concern in this context. Educational and linguistic practices are interconnected with politics, social activity and with how communities perceive ethnic membership (Lytra, 2016). The reasons why considering ethnic identity interrelated to language among different ethnic groups, are many. Political power, language use and vitality attitudes do not always correlate. Also, language use, dynamics and values mean different things to different people. With the same reasoning, identity means different things to different ethnic groups (Fishman & García, 2011).

Blackledge and Pavlenko (2004) characterized languages 'markers of identity' and García (2010) highlighted that in the link between language and ethnic identity, processes that occur demonstrate 'cultural change or continuity' (Lytra, 2016). However, in the question if identity is shaped thoroughly by language, the answer is twofold. In ethnic identity self-determination research, it may happen for people who do not speak their language of origin to feel some sort of belonging to their ethnic community. The linguistic criterion though, plays an important role in both individual identification and recognition

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[5] This can be found in sections 1.1 and 2.1.1.

by others (Damanakis, 2017). Nevertheless, it is possible for identities to shift either individually or collectively (Creese et al., 2006). To sum up, language plays an important role of group-identity-creation, but it is not always considered as the sole marker of identity (Fishman & García, 2011).

2.1.5 Language Maintenance

Language maintenance is positioned in language contact situations[6] of ethnolinguistic groups that use both their HL and the host-country language for different functions (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). Language contact is an outcome of forced or voluntarily human mobility (families, groups, ethnic communities) since it implicates linguistic interaction among people who speak different languages or varieties (Pauwels, 2016).

Generally, language maintenance is summarized in the attempts of an ethnic community, to "do something about their HL issue" (Fishman, 1979, p.44). As a term in was first introduced by Fishman (1966) and it refers to either community or individual behavior of language choice (Fishman, 1966 cited in Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). Defining language maintenance in the modern era is challenging because linguistic realities and societies around the globe are dynamic and rapidly changing (Pauwels, 2016). Language maintenance has been and remains used in milieux where communities raise questions of keeping their HL in a "competition from the language(s) of the new environment and/ or of the linguistic majority" (Pauwels, 2016, p.1).

In addition, language maintenance is the degree to which a person or an ethnic group persists in using their language either in a multilingual country or among immigrant groups. Some factors that affect language maintenance are: the status of the language - meaning whether it is an official or not-, the use of the language in everyday life and activities, the amount of speakers who are actually using it (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) and attitudinal factors towards language use or value (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). Language maintenance address issues of the language usage degree as it is placed either by the speaker or the ethnic community. Migration sites consist the most investigated environment of language maintenance and shift (Pauwels, 2016) and Heritage Language Community Schools are a common research setting which is situated in those sites.

Heritage Language Community Schools are a major, positive and independent contributor to HL maintenance and use (Fishman, 1979; Pauwels, 2016). Community schools' goal is ethnolinguistic maintenance among the ethnic group's members (Fishman, 1979). Moreover, these schools support language maintenance, since they meaningfully co-prepare for literacy-contribution in all domains of life, for instance even if it considers home-and-community, or distant-from-home-and-community activities (Fishman, 1980). Also, schools as institutional aid of providing home language instruction programs, are considered factors that influence language preservation among ethnolinguistic groups (Ramirez, 1985 cited in Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). According to

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[6] Other language contact situations are phenomena like multilingualism, language loss, language revival and language endangerment (Pauwels, 2016).

Fishman (1989) education is co-responsible for sociocultural ethnic membership and ethnic consciousness (Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). Heritage Language Community Schools are cultural and identity-creating institutions that hold a prominent position in language safeguarding practices (Hansen, 1987 cited in Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995).

Language maintenance is often characterized as an attempt to avoid language shift, which is basically the loss and the replacement of a community's language (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) or the transition of an individual from one language community to another (de Vries, 1987 cited in Kostoulas-Makrakis, 1995). Moreover, language maintenance is believed to be shaped by a group's Ethnolinguistic Vitality (EV), a concept that consists the main theory which drives this thesis. The definition and presentation of EV theory follows in the next section.

2.2 Theories

The theories' section is divided into two sub-sections. The first one presents the central theory that guides the study. The theory in the second sub-section is relevant and complementary to the topic but not as crucial as EV.

2.2.1 Ethnolinguistic Vitality (EV)

Ethnolinguistic Vitality (EV) it is a term coined in 1977 to describe groups that behave as a collective entity in intergroup conditions (Giles et al., 1985). As a theoretical framework it is positioned in social and psychological approaches in the research of language and multilingualism (Pauwels, 2016). EV is synopsized as an ethnic group's dynamic relationship with its own language. Therefore, it can be applied to the group's relationship with the HL as well. This relationship affects language continuity and permits to each ethnic group to act communally in order to individually and socially position itself. Ethnolinguistic theory gives insights to phenomena such as language shifts, language attitudes, and multilingualism.

According to this theory, perceptions of group's EV are prognostic of behavior. The higher the group's objective vitality, the more possible it is for ethnic group members to acquire and maintain their HL (Reid & Giles, 2010). In EV theory two basic components of it are discerned: objective and subjective vitality (Reid & Giles, 2010) that are shaped by the same factors (Pauwels, 2016).

"Objective group vitality" (Giles et al., 1985, p.254) is linked with socio-psychological profiles of ethnic groups members as it supports them to survive as a prosperous collective entity. Moreover, it provides the socio-structural milieu for ethnolinguistic phenomena to take place (Reid & Giles, 2010). Three principal, sociocultural factors are shaping it: a) socio-political and economic position of the ethnic group, b) demography, including group concentration and population, and c) official institutional support from the host state (Giles et al., 1985). These factors contribute to the persistence of the group's distinctiveness and their long-term language maintenance (Fishman & García, 2011). Also, these three factors affect the positive minority status of

the group in a society and that contributes to language preservation attempts in multilingual settings (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019).

Subjective or perceived vitality has been calculated within cultures, usually as a single element, and has been shaped differently from context to context (Reid & Giles, 2010). It is a crucial factor to evaluate whether people uphold or lose their common language and culture. Vitality has its influence on language use like other sociocultural features that are acquired by human subjective senses. People feel the need of belongingness and are aware that togetherness positively distinguish themselves from others. This kind of identification functions in many levels of social and personal life, offering them several advantages such as high self-esteem. Subjective vitality shows its strength as in a group, identification is greater among minority members that it is among majority's (Fishman & García, 2011). It is classified as a theoretical and empirical foundation for possibly connecting the huge conceptual gulf prevailing between sociologically- and individually-oriented accounts of intergroup affairs (Giles et al., 1985).

Regarding identity, group's EV influences whether they identify with HL or with the dominant language of the host country. For this situation, research presents conflicting outcomes for instance, in some cases the ethnic group is uninfluenced by the massive input of the dominant language (Fishman & García, 2011), thus they associate their identity with HL. Certainly, identification with whichever linguistic community is highly related with EV attempts of the ethnic group to develop HL opportunities and provide social support to HL learners and speakers (Fishman & García, 2011).

Guided by these principles, EV in this thesis is going to tie together how teachers subjectively perceive their role and how they experience HL teaching. The variables that form this research are language maintenance, ethnic identity formation and language use, basic components of EV theory. I aim to highlight the EV practices that are employed by Heritage Language Community Schools, presented from the viewpoints of HL teachers in relation to the Greek and Swedish contexts. It is important to investigate the profiles, experiences and viewpoints of these individuals in relation to each ethnic community, because they influence and represent community vitality factors (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019).

2.2.2 Other theoretical positions

Other theories that are relevant to this thesis are present in the field of sociolinguistics as well. One such is Capacity Development, Opportunity Creation and Desire (COD) which is a framework that explores required conditions for language vitality among ethnolinguistic groups (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). It consists of three main considerations: the growth of the community members' linguistic capacity, the formation of opportunities to use HL, and a community effort for members to inspire the active use of the HL (Lo Bianco, 2017).

COD framework is relevant to this thesis since its main considerations are incorporated in the existence of HLE among the two ethnic groups that I am exploring.

Especially in the teacher part it is obvious that the existence of opportunities where they use HL with the active participation of the community, supports group's language vitality. One could argue that COD supports and shapes EV theory. Thus, it is taken as complementary to EV and not as the basic theoretical position.

Chapter Three
Methodology of the study

Chapter 3 includes the methodological considerations that are employed in this thesis. Methodology stands for the framework of conducting each research project (Freebody, 2003). It consists of research strategy and design, method, participants, data collection methods and analysis (Bryman, 2016).

3.1 Epistemological & ontological considerations

Research is framed by a sequence of related assumptions. A paradigm is a way of looking at the research world, an assumption that determines what is accepted knowledge and how we can understand it (Cohen et al., 2017). An initial research position is the ontological assumption, concerning the nature of the social world (Coe, 2012). This study embraces constructionism as the notion of constructing social meanings and interpretations based on the realities and interactions of social actors -teachers in this case (Cohen et al., 2017). Social categories and occurrences are shaped by social interaction and are constantly revised. Researcher's involvement portrays a specific version of this social reality and not one that can be considered ultimate (Bryman, 2016).

Epistemological preoccupations are largely addressing what is considered as acceptable knowledge within a discipline (Bryman, 2016). In this thesis, phenomenology is employed in order to interpret how persons make sense of their experiences. Phenomenology is classified as an interpretivist paradigm which is characterized by its concern for the individual lived experiences (Cohen et al., 2017). Individual realities are a key-focus in phenomenology as it tries to view the world through the eyes of the people that are studied. Furthermore, the structure of experience gives to research important insights of how people comprehend social reality and phenomena (Bryman, 2016). The complexity of human experience is linked with the interpretation of sensory information, such as social actors' perceptions. Experiences demonstrate essential aspects of consciousness (Larrabee, 1990) that are significant features to understand a phenomenon from the inside. It could be argued that phenomenology in this thesis can be considered as a theoretical consideration or framework and not epistemological. However, this research treats phenomenology on a methodological level rather than a theoretical.

I am aware that with this kind of ontological and epistemological considerations, I am going to present subjective information of teachers' perceptions on HL teaching. The focus of this research is centered on personal stories and how teachers reflect upon their contribution to the HL phenomenon positioned in Heritage Language Community Schools. It does not aim to generalize findings and present an objective reality about HL teachers that can be applied worldwide.

3.2 Research strategy and design

In social sciences, qualitative is one of the two main approaches in research methodology (Bryman, 2016). Qualitative research is interested to the individuals' point of view and is descriptive about their experiences (Freebody, 2003). It explores the world through the participants' eyes as the subject matter in social world is people. Also, it is usually associated with inductive approaches to move from results to theory testing, so theories and concepts are considered as outcomes of the research process (Bryman, 2016). In education, qualitative research comprises diverse varieties and every discipline is chosen based on the purpose of research in the direction of approaching people's experiences in each context (Freebody, 2003). Additionally, qualitative research is tied with an interpretivist and open-ended nature since it concentrates to words, theories which are developed from processes, and it distinctly shows a preference in participants stories and views (Bryman, 2016). The selection of qualitative over quantitative research, provides many insights to a context and it is going to be fruitful concerning teacher perceptions. As the purpose of this study is to examine HL teacher perceptions, a qualitative strategy is adopted as it seems more appropriate to the research aim and objectives that were presented earlier.

Critique on qualitative research brings up issues and questions of objectivity and values (Fairbrother, 2014). Qualitative research is not refusing the detachment between scholars and research subjects and is situating researchers as "instruments of data collection" (Fairbrother, 2014, p.42) as the findings are emerging through individual interaction (Guba and Lincoln, 1994 cited in Fairbrother, 2014). In social science this interaction regularly includes people and by the way of investigating their perspectives gives many insights. The employment of qualitative research methods helps researchers to get detailed understandings about participant views (Fairbrother, 2014). The findings are situated in specific time and space (Bryman, 1988 cited in Fairbrother, 2014) and do not aim to generalize to wider populations (Fairbrother, 2014). The present thesis shares the same beliefs and principles having as a central focus research subjects (teachers) who attribute to their own individual, yet complete, realities (Fairbrother, 2014).

Research design stands for the framework/ structure which guides research method and data analysis in a study. The comparative design, which can be found either in qualitative or quantitative research, seeks explanations through similarities or differences of social reality. Comparison is preferred as it benefits social phenomena understanding when they are related to two (or more) different contexts. The most common lieu to position comparative design is geographic entities (Manzon, 2014) employing cross-cultural/ cross-national comparisons (Bryman, 2016). The geographic/ locational dimension includes seven levels of analysis; world regions/ continents, countries, states/ provinces, districts, schools, classrooms and individuals (Manzon, 2014).

Therefore, comparing individuals such as teachers, is a unit of analysis which is located on the lowest level of Bray and Thomas (1995) context (Manzon, 2014). In this study comparative design is employed and examines two potentially similar or contrasting cases using the same methods (Bryman, 2016). The author of this thesis is

interested to compare HL teacher self-perceptions of their role in HLE in two different sociocultural contexts (Greece and Sweden). This type of comparison would help to gain a better understanding on the HL phenomenon (Bryman, 2016) through teachers' eyes. Also, a strength is the fact that the two comparing cases are good grounds for comparison since they are mirroring (teachers of Greek HL in Stockholm and Swedish HL in Athens).

3.3 Selection process

Sampling decisions in research are taken from the beginning of each project, as it influences the quality and appropriateness of the study (Coe et al., 2012). In qualitative research it is a commonplace strategy to distinguish two types of sampling: a) sampling of context and b) sampling of participants (Bryman, 2016). Concerning sampling of context, as it has been already mentioned, it addresses two country cases, and these are Greece and Sweden. Both countries are relevant comparative contexts as they both have community based HLE. Educational settings that offer Greek-language education can be found in more than 60 countries worldwide (Damanakis, 2007 cited in Chatzidaki, 2019). One such school in Sweden is the Greek School in Stockholm[7]. Swedish language education is offered in around 150 locations around the world (Öresjö & Andersson, 2007), and one such place is Greece where the Swedish School in Athens[8] is established. In both countries these two schools are not the only form of community-based HL setting. These two specific schools were preferred as it was easy for the researcher to go there in person and conduct the research.

The sampling of participants involves a body of nine (9) HL teachers. Four (4) teachers out of the total five from the Swedish School in Athens and five (5) out of approximately 15 from the Greek School in Stockholm[9]. Sample size in qualitative research is a main issue and concern. Generally, samples should neither be too small as to make it hard to achieve data transparency, nor should be too large that it makes it tricky to analyze (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007 cited in Bryman, 2016). However, the selection and size were not planned by the researcher. After contacting via e-mail, the principle/ the contact person in charge for each school, they informed the teaching staff and the ones who were interested in participating were the interviewees. In the Swedish case the potential interviewees were contacted by the principle whereas in the Greek case the researcher received an e-mail with the personal details of each HL teacher and contacted them. All of them have been working in each school for a significant period, but they also have individual differences that are going to be discussed in the following chapter.

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[7] Ελληνικό Σχολείο Στοκχόλμης. http://www.grekiska-skolan.se/el/default.asp (Last accessed on 2020-04-29).

[8] Svenska Språkföreningen i Aten. https://www.svenska.gr/om-oss/ (Last accessed on 2020-04-29).

[9] The number of Greek HL teachers who were interviewed is by one teacher larger than the Swedish. It was not considered as a big difference that will negatively affect the research.

3.4 Data collection methods

This study adopts a qualitative method regarding data collection. Interviews are a common instrument of data gathering in qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2017). Typically, qualitative interviewing is flexible and seeks out the views of research participants (Bryman, 2016) who are the center in this process. Interviews deal with knowledge which is generated by humans through conversation, hence it is a social, interpersonal encounter not just a data collection method (Coe et al., 2012). For this thesis, interviews of semi-structured design were conducted. Interviews were divided into three parts, starting from general and ending to more specific questions (the questions can be found in the end of this research in Appendix A). Semi-structured interviews include a list of questions which is often called interview guide. The participant has great flexibility in answering the questions. Based on interviewees' answers, the researcher is allowed to ask further questions that are not included in the guide (Bryman, 2016). This type of interviewing is employed in conducting this thesis, as the focus is on how the participant teachers understand events, and their views are fundamental in identifying patterns of behavior or opinion (Bryman, 2016).

The researcher posed the questions to the teachers and gave them the freedom to answer in the way they wished, without getting into excessively personal details or irrelevant information. The advantage of this kind of practice facilitated the teachers to express their genuine thoughts without interruption. In cases when they had difficulties to understand or answer a question, the researcher tried to ease them either by explaining or prompting. Explaining includes either rephrasing the questions with more simple words or translating the term, that was incomprehensible, to Greek or Swedish. The interviews were carried out in English in order to avoid difficulties in translating the key-concepts to Greek and Swedish, but many teachers used translanguaging[10] in order to effectively express themselves. So, besides only English there are also Greek and Swedish expressions or words in the interview transcriptions. All of them were translated to English by the author of this thesis, in accordance with the interviewees[11]. Prompting is the act of enabling the interviewer to simplify either topics or questions in cases when the interviewee needs clarification, guidance, has not understood or has misunderstood the question (Cohen et al., 2017).

Interviews were based on an interview guide which is included in the end of this research project (Appendix A) as mentioned earlier. In the first part (introductory part) of each interview, HL teachers were asked questions about their personal background and how they ended up doing this profession. The main part was mostly tied to the research objectives including questions about the perceived role, language maintenance, language

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[10] Translanguaging is a technique that has been developed in recent years as a sociolinguistic language approach (Kirsch, 2019) which includes a fluid language mix of speakers (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019).

[11] For example, when a person could not find the suitable word and used another language to express themselves, the researcher translated the word for them to English and then asked them if this what they meant. It could be seen as a form of respondent validation (Bryman, 2016) which was occurring during the interview.

use, ethnic identity. In the last part (concluding) teachers were asked to sum up their thoughts about their role and add whatever they feel like sharing. In some interviews after the concluding part some HL teachers wanted to raise other issues such as challenges that they face. They were encouraged to do so, and their additional insights are presented in separate sections or in the contextual background, in Chapter Four.

Each interview was designed to last approximately 20-25 minutes, but the data body consists of a duration range from 9 to 29 minutes. Duration differs since some teachers elaborated more than others. A basic criterion to consider an interview as adequate was if the respondents had answered sufficiently all the planned questions. If not, they were asked additional questions or to give examples. It is the researcher's responsibility to keep the conversation going and motivate the participants to discuss their thoughts (Coe et al., 2012). The interviews were recorded in order to be transcribed before the data analysis process.

The core focus was for teachers to sufficiently respond all the questions and in cases that they wished to provide more insights they could do so. Besides the character and the focus of the questions, teachers gave insights about their professional experiences, expectations, and challenges that they face. It was not possible to use all the personal information from the collected data because some would have made it possible to identify the interviewees. Four out nine interviews were conducted in the Swedish Institute of Athens, and the rest five in Stockholm either at the Greek School or in personal meetings with teachers inside and outside the School.

3.5 Data analysis

Analyzing qualitative data is a process of moving from the data to overall understanding through interpreting the studied phenomena. It is not an uncomplicated task since it requires organizing, describing, comprehending, making sense and explaining the data based on participants definitions (Coe et al., 2012). For analyzing the data gathered from teacher interviews, inductive approach was adopted. It is considered appropriate as it is connected to the nature of qualitative research to emphasize on words rather than quantification of data (Bryman, 2016). As the data consists of HL teacher self-perceptions on their role, it is beneficial to present these perceptions rather than quantify them as abstract material. Also, it embodies an interpretation of social reality as a regularly changing property of individuals' construction (Bryman, 2016). It can produce reliable and valid results in a straightforward way obtaining them from a focused context.

However, for three theme names I have chosen some concepts that have been informed from the literature, namely by Diamond & Moore[12] and their concept of culturally responsive instruction (2000). These categories were adopted since they fit into what the teachers shared in the interviews. It could be seen as a strength of highlighting similar aspects of teacher role that exist in the literature. This can contest though the

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[12] This process and term selection from Diamond & Moore (2000) is thoroughly analyzed and presented in Chapter Four.

existence of inductive approach and argue that as a researcher I ground a theoretical understanding in the context (Bryman, 2016). As this research does not aim to test a theory and/ or a hypothesis, deduction is not an applicable viewpoint. Thus, the approach is better described as abductive reasoning since it shares common foundations with induction but not with deduction (Bryman, 2016). Abduction "is broadly inductive in approach" but it grounds a theoretical explanation or understanding of the studied contexts (Bryman, 2016, p. 401).

Usually, the collection of qualitative data results in the accretion of a large volume of material (Bryman, 2016) which needs to go through some procedures in order to be presented as findings. Coding is the initial point for most types of qualitative data analysis (Bryman, 2016). In this thesis, thematic analysis is the approach that is undertaken because it thematizes and gives meanings to multifaceted and contrasting qualitative approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is a method for classifying, analyzing and conveying patterns (known also as themes) within a set of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These themes and sub-themes are generally patterns that are reoccurring motifs (Bryman, 2016). A theme captures something significant about the data in relation to research questions and denotes some level of patterned meaning within the data information provided by each interviewee. Main advantages of this method are that it organizes and illustrates the data in detail, and it is easy to conduct. Also it is appropriate for highlighting similarities and differences across a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006) so it assists the comparative element of this study. Thematic analysis targets to identify a story answering the research questions in combination with the theoretical components of the thesis. Therefore, all themes that I present are in accordance with EV theory and its basic components that were presented earlier (see section 2.2.1 Ethnolinguistic Vitality).

Practically, the process involves transcribing interviews, reading and re-reading the transcriptions and identifying themes within the coded data. That means that all the words and phrases that were articulated by the interviewees, were then put together in separate sheets and from certain themes, identified categories emerged. This process is repeated several times during the analysis in order to detect further themes and categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Some of them were overlapping and this helped to moderate the number of themes which were organized into wider categories. I analyzed the transcripts from each case separately in order to produce the themes for each case section. Then in the comparison section (Chapter Five) each case's themes are compared and discussed. More detailed information about these themes can be found in Chapter Four.

As mentioned earlier, the interviews were conducted in English but when teachers had difficulties to express themselves, they used Greek or Swedish respectively. These expressions and words were translated to English in accordance with the teachers during the interviews. In the analysis, in Chapter Four, a small number of actual quotes in which they use different language is included. In this case I translated the quote in English as it was originally articulated by the HL teacher. In a footnote I include it in its original language, and I explain what it might mean in English. To do this, I tried to find the

appropriate word or equivalent expression. This technique was adopted since I did not want to change their original sayings.

3.6 Quality criteria

In order to increase research quality, a clear research purpose and research questions, right methodology choice, representative examples, and transparent descriptions are required (Cohen et al., 2017). Qualitative researchers in education should aim for high reliability and validity results. This can be achieved through focusing on the empirical details of each interview. It is not possible to determine in advance which of the interviewees' accounting practice is the most widespread across a group (Freebody, 2003). Reliability and validity are important principles in assessing research quality however, their relevance to qualitative research has been argued by many (Bryman, 2016). Two primary, alternative criteria have been developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to evaluate quality, trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness consists of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Regarding credibility of findings, it is achieved by following the standards of good practice as it aims to submit the research findings to the interview participants (Bryman, 2016).

This research has limited transferability first because of the small size of the sample (Bryman, 2016), and since none can assume that the findings are accurate for other HL teacher in different contexts. Generally, the results from qualitative research do not aim to generalize (Bryman, 2016) and the present research has an exploratory nature on HL teacher perceptions. The uniqueness of each context is a basic characteristic in qualitative research (Bryman, 2016), however, it may generate a pattern in an ethnic group level. For example, if research findings about Greek HL teacher perceptions agree with other Greek HL teacher from a study presented in the "Previous Research" section then it might generate some sort of pattern about Greek HL teacher perceptions.

Dependability in research means keeping complete records from each phase of the process in an accessible manner (Bryman, 2016). These records include research proposal, interview guide, interview recordings, interview transcripts and consent forms which are signed by the interviewees. All of them were kept by the researcher in a safe place, recordings were uploaded on an online folder were only the student and the professor had access to, and by following the proper procedures the consent forms were saved in a secure place by the supervisor. Concerning confirmability, the researcher tried to prevent personal values and opinions to influence the research process and analysis (Bryman, 2016). Evidently, researchers are part of the social world and cannot remain entirely objective, but remaining as neutral as possible raises the research quality (Cohen et al., 2017). Nonetheless, complete objectivity is difficult to accomplish in social research (Bryman, 2016).

Furthermore, authenticity is another quality criterion that addresses the wider political impact of each research project. It includes five criteria: fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity and tactical authenticity (Bryman, 2016). Regarding fairness, the present thesis represents nine different

viewpoints among HL teachers in the social settings of two schools. However, it cannot be representative about the views of HL teachers in the whole social setting of HLE. Ontological authenticity considers whether research assists members to get a better understanding of their social environment (Bryman, 2016). I believe that my interviews helped HL teachers to reflect upon their role and their actions in terms of language maintenance, language use or identity construction because they had to recall behaviors and decisions that they are taking daily in order to achieve HL teaching goals. Educative authenticity is about enabling the HL teachers to recognize the value of different perspectives in their social setting (Bryman, 2016). I hope that if the teacher participants of the present research read it, they will reflect upon their own and their peers' insights and probably this will enable them to understand better other perspectives. Catalytic authenticity aims to raise the motivation of members to engage and change their circumstances (Bryman, 2016). I do not think that the aim of this research was that and even in cases that teachers revealed some challenges they were in a more administrative or organizational level so they cannot individually change any circumstance. Tactical authenticity refers to how research empowers members to engage in action (Bryman, 2016). It is ambitious to assume that this research could empower teachers to engage in action in their school/ educational setting but hopefully it raised their self-awareness of their role and impact in HL phenomenon.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues emerge from many aspects and stages in social research (Bryman, 2016). Research in social sciences and especially in education, involves the participation of individuals like teachers, principals, students. A central ethical issue is how researchers treat these participants. So, in qualitative research most of the times the researcher is involved in quite close relationships with people (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). Thus, some important ethical considerations, which are commonly acknowledged, have been proposed. Those contain reducing harm for the participants, valuing autonomy and decision making, defending privacy and soft data, providing reciprocity, and treating participants rightfully without discrimination (ibid).

Using interviews as a method implies that biases and values of the researcher should not be revealed. It is a process that requires to be neutral, unbiased and non-judgmental. The ethical dimensions of interviewing include informed consent, guarantee of confidentiality and kindness (Cohen et al., 2017). Before contacting each teacher, I sent an e-mail[13] to the principals/ headpersons of each school and explained my research interest, topic and intentions. Then they informed teachers about the research and based on if they were interested to participate, they arranged with whom I would conduct the interviews. For the Swedish case, the participants were contacted in this way and the researcher met them on the day of the interviews. Whereas, for the Greek case, they

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[13] The e-mail addresses are available at the website of each school.

provided me with each teacher's contact details in order to schedule on my own the meetings with them.

Before each interview, the teachers got additional insights about the study and I handed them the consent form from Stockholm University (see Appendix B) which includes both information about the thesis and their participant rights. They were informed that school's names will be revealed in the thesis and they did not raise any issues concerning that. According to research ethics, school names should have been remained confidential in order to ensure the anonymity of the participants. Revealing the school names occurred as there is only one school from each ethnic case that fits the descriptions. If the two schools have remained secret, then a remarkable aspect of the comparison would be excluded. I think that it is interesting to have this study as a part of the research body in HLE where the Greek School in Stockholm and the Swedish school in Athens, are not represented at all. That was an objective that motivated the study as well, to enrich academic knowledge on Swedish and Greek HL teachers self-perceptions and their practices.

It was also clear to the teachers that if they wish to withdraw from the research, they were free to do so at any time. Additionally, I guaranteed to them that their personal data, information and recordings will be stored in a secure place where only myself and my supervisor have access to, ensuring confidentiality of the research (Bryman, 2016). Their data protection includes also that they will not be kept longer than necessary, and they are processed for only the purposes of this study (ibid).

As mentioned earlier, it was not possible to present all the information retrieved from the teachers. The number of Greek and Swedish HL teachers in each country is rather small so it would have been probable to identify the people behind the interviews. I discussed with the teachers about this issue and the possibility to be identified from this thesis, but they accepted to participate. Anonymity and confidentiality are of utmost significance (Bryman, 2016), mainly because there is only one Swedish School in Athens and two Greek Schools in Stockholm region. Teachers were aware that their names will not be revealed, and that they would get a nickname instead. I decided to give them the code-names SE1-4 and GR1-5 so their gender could remain confidential. This arose another issue in the sub-sections in which I present their background; it was not possible to use the pronoun he or she. As a substitute the pronoun 'they' is used in its singular form, which is common in modern English for gender-neutral language (Gardiner, 2016).

This thesis is abided both to the ethical guidelines of the Swedish Research Council[14] (Swedish Research Council, 2017) which are adopted by Stockholm University, and GDPR (European Union, 2018). Publicity of research plays an important role in ethics and namely in the privacy part (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). Publishing positions the research as an available material to other researchers that might wish to use it or to research participants who might benefit from reading what the contributed to. By publishing the findings, both for the research community and the participants, "is what

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[14] Vetenskapsrådet in Swedish.

gives the knowledge claims produced their distinctive authority" (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012, p.100). Thus, besides the action that will be taken from Stockholm University (SU) in publishing student theses, I will make it as soon as it is permitted available to the teachers who participated as well.

Chapter Four
Analysis & Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis from nine teacher interviews using the method of thematic analysis. It consists of two large sections (4.1 and 4.2) which have several sub-sections each. First, some personal information about the HL teachers are displayed. Secondly, I will give some general contextual facts about the schools and their operation. After these, teacher perceptions from each Heritage Language Community School are presented based on the order of the research questions (from the interview guide which is included in Appendix A) that were posed to them. Applying thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to the data operating from the position of EV theory (Reid & Giles, 2010) yielded the following results. The comparison between the two cases, which consists of the comparative element of the thesis, are not included in this chapter, but in Chapter Five.

4.1 The Swedish HL teacher case

In the first section of Chapter Four, I have analyzed the Swedish HL teacher case. It includes six sub-sections, with the first two presenting some background facts about the teachers and some contextual information about the school. The next four sub-sections answer the research questions displaying findings that emerged through the method of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4.1.1 Swedish HL teachers' background

This sub-section exhibits the background of the HL teachers who teach Swedish as a HL in Athens, Greece. Since GDPR and research ethics do not permit to reveal their actual names and identities, I am going to refer to them as SE1, SE2, SE3 and SE4 respectively. All the included information is what they shared[15] and relates to personal background, education and professional experience.

SE1
SE1 is of Swedish origin[16] and a native speaker of Swedish. Having studied linguistics in Sweden, SE1 holds also qualification for teaching Swedish as a second language to people who live outside Sweden. After moving abroad and looking for jobs, SE1 got hired in a private school and started to teach.
SE2

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[15] The quantity of personal information varies based on what each teacher divulged. They elaborated as much as they wished and were not asked additional personal questions due to research ethical considerations. Also, some personal information that they shared is excluded from this sub-section since it would have been easy to identify them. Instead, more general wording is used for example, in describing their studies and qualification.

[16] By 'Greek origin' I mean that the person is of Greek family background. Each time that I mention 'origin' from now on, I assume the same thing.

SE2 is of Greek origin but born and raised in Sweden, thus is also a native speaker of Swedish. SE2 also studied in Sweden, Swedish, History and Civics for primary school (grundskola), and taught there for six years. When SE2 moved to Greece, they found out that the Swedish School of Athens was the only potential place where they were able to teach what they had studied. SE2 did not choose to be a HL teacher but it was possible to follow this career path because of the degree they hold.

SE3

SE3 is of Greek origin but born and raised in Sweden like SE2, hence a native speaker of Swedish as well. SE3 studied in Sweden, linguistics, Modern Greek language and literature and holds a PhD in Language Acquisition. SE3 is a qualified teacher of Swedish language and has also experience from working with adults in Swedish and Greek universities as both a teacher and a linguist. Regarding professional experience SE3 has been working with children that have Swedish as a second language and adults who wish to learn Swedish.

SE4

SE4 is of Greek and Swedish origin (one Greek and one Swedish parent), was born in Sweden and raised in Greece, and is a native speaker of both Swedish and Greek languages. SE4 holds a bachelor and master's degree in psychology but does not have a teaching degree or any other qualification for teaching Swedish but has succeeded in TISUS[17] examination. As a child, SE4 was attending Swedish classes once a week at the Swedish Institute of Athens. SE4 has professional experience in translating from Greek to Swedish and was working with Swedish customer support before entering the tutoring field, to teach both adults and children.

4.1.2 The Swedish School

In this part of Chapter 4, I am outlining some contextual information about the Swedish Heritage Language Community School that operates in Athens, Greece. The section is a summary from the four Swedish HL teachers' interviews and specifically from questions that were posed in the introductory part. Specifically, teachers were asked to generally describe the school setting they work in, stating whatever they felt that is relevant to illustrate the school.

When Swedish HL teachers were asked to present the school setting, they did not use the term 'Heritage Language Community School' or any other term that was mentioned earlier in Chapter Two. They preferred to refer to it as an organization, association and some of them as school. This HL school follows regulations laid out by Skolverket[18] concerning Swedish Schools Abroad[19]. The school staff is made up of

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[17] TISUS examination is a language test for students who are eligible for university studies in Swedish.
[18] Skolverket is the Swedish National Agency of Education and main administrative authority for the public-school system of the country.
[19] Svenska Utlandsskolor.

around 5 teachers in total. They highlighted that it is a small school, but it contains all the grades from primary to high school level. When children complete their education, they can participate in TISUS examination which is considered as a high level of Swedish language proficiency.

Students are usually children of Swedish origin who have at least one Swedish parent. Students start attending Swedish HLE when they are approximately 6 years old and typically, they already have some language skills and basic understanding of Swedish. Moreover, students have classes once, or in some cases twice, per week for two-hour sessions which usually happen on Saturdays. They form small groups from 4 minimum to 9 children maximum per class, based on their age and level of expertise in the language. Depending on age, HL teachers try to adjust teaching to student needs and help them develop their language skills. Younger children start from basic things like recognizing letters, watching videos, singing and drawing, while classes with older children might resemble more typical foreign language classrooms. Teachers have higher expectations from them; for instance, they might be asked to write short essays, to use more advanced vocabulary, to be able to read more demanding texts, to explore grammatical phenomena, and to hold advanced conversations in Swedish.

According to teachers, parental involvement is a significant factor in acquiring and developing Swedish. Teachers mentioned that they give students activities to share at home with the Swedish-speaking parent (but not like typical homework). Students also have the opportunity to borrow books from the school library. Even if they are not experienced in reading in Swedish yet, they are encouraged to do so with the help of their parents, so both -children and parent- have some more chances to practice their Swedish together. Teachers also mentioned that parents actively participate in the school community (for example, in school events) and are supportive towards their children's language development.

> "The parents are very active because they are interested in it, they want to keep the language alive, that's why they send their children to this school." (Interview with SE1).

4.1.3 Swedish teachers' self perceptions of their role

To address research question 1, in relation to teachers' perceptions of their role in the school in Athens, I conducted thematic analysis on the interview transcripts. I used the categories of Diamond & Moore (2000) to group some sub-themes under more general categories (Diamond & Moore, 2000), and I created some new ones as well. The main themes that describe their role are: 'more than mainstream foreign language teachers', 'cultural mediators' (Diamond & Moore, 2000), 'language guardians', 'orchestrators of social contexts of learning' (Diamond & Moore, 2000), 'assistants for academic achievement', 'cultural organizers' (Diamond & Moore, 2000), 'role significance', and 'positive emotions'. Figure 1 is based on a thematic map that illustrates the themes and their connection. For every Figure that follows from now on, the central circle shape

includes the topic of each research question (and topic of each findings' sub-section). If there is some contextual information that emerged from the thematic analysis, but does not directly answer the research question, it is depicted with smaller circles which are connected to the main circle (for example, in Figure 1, these are 'role significance' and 'positive emotions'). The main themes are organized within rectangular shapes and their (inter-)connection (both to the topic and the other themes) is showed with black straight lines. The (inter-)connection (black lines that connect the themes) is identified from teacher quotes that had similar associations or continuation in their speech. One example is the interconnection of 'cultural organizers', 'cultural mediators' and 'orchestrators of social context of learning'. In the interviews these three themes emerge from sequential or similar discussions and answers that have to do with cultural aspects of the teacher role. However, they had significant differences, which are going to be presented later, thus they were classified into different themes.
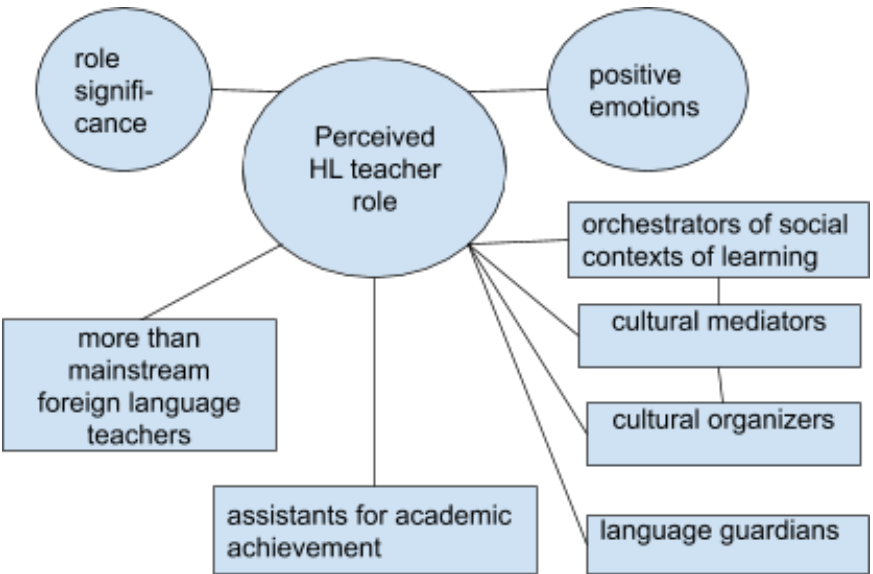
Figure 1: Perceived SE HL teacher role

The next Table gives a short presentation of the themes. In the first vertical column there is each category I am investigating through the research question, in the second the name of each theme, and in the third a brief definition of what each theme incorporates. They are classified based on the order that they appear in this sub-section. There is a corresponding Table for every Figure that appears in this chapter.

Table 1: Theme presentation for perceived SE HL teacher role		
Research questions	Theme	Definition

Perceived HL teacher role	'more than mainstream foreign language teachers'	HL teaching is not like a mainstream language-based teaching job. They have differences basically because they do not only teach a language but culture, tradition and so forth.
	'cultural mediators'	HL teachers connect their students to the Swedish culture and overall ethnic context. Also, they help them understand and explore their identities through cultural connection.
	'language guardians'	HL teachers play a role securing HL. This is achieved by offering their students a safe environment where they acquire language skills and explore their cultural identities.
	'orchestrators of social contexts of learning'	HL and culture learning have advantages for the students. Motivation provision and individual connection to the Swedish setting are two examples of these advantages.
	'assistants for academic achievement'	Part of the HL teaching profession is assisting students in academic achievement by providing them with the skills to participate in exams and have the possibility to study in Sweden.
	'cultural organizers'	In their classrooms HL teachers provide a space where culture is promoted (Diamond & Moore, 2000) through activities, events etc. In this way they contribute to community building and students feel this type of belonging.
	'role significance'	HL teachers are important individuals in HL phenomenon for both parents and students.
	'positive emotions'	HL teachers shared positive emotions about their profession mentioning appreciation for the job, pride, happiness and satisfaction.

To begin with, all Swedish HL teachers mentioned that they do not consider themselves as mainstream foreign language teachers. Assuming that they are mainstream foreign language teachers could only be the case when they teach Swedish to Greek people that plan to study or work in Sweden. Otherwise, teachers regard themselves separate entities from typical language teachers because they do not merely teach a language. They also teach culture, tradition, history, geography and social values. Moreover, they reflected upon their current role having in mind their own background and relationship with the Swedish language and Sweden.

"We try to teach them not only the language but also the culture. I think it's important when you are doing our job." (Interview with SE2).

"...It's about the connection with the culture. Our language is not only words to put into sentences. They need to know about traditions, some food, some sweets, songs… So, everything is included. And it is a nice thing for me because it is what I grew up with and what feels at home for me." (Interview with SE3).

"...But I think the biggest advantage- and as you grow up you can appreciate it- is that the teacher is having the language as a mother tongue. You know more about the culture than anybody that just has the perfect language skills and that's it! Because you have experienced from your own home and home country, traditions you know, you know not only words but also the context (...) I am also a part of the language." (Interview with SE4).

All four Swedish teachers embraced role attributes that relate to what Diamond & Moore (2000) call 'cultural mediators' (Diamond & Moore, 2000). Under this theme statements that show some sort of connection to the Swedish culture and overall ethnic context are incorporated. Swedish HL teachers facilitate the cultural context to their students through HL teaching and one of them mentioned that they feel like representatives of Sweden. With these actions students are enabled to empower and explore their identities.

"...[A]nd mainly through your own perception and experience as a native speaker and as being part of the Swedish culture, by having the Swedish origin, you can enlighten them about all these differences in the culture, about everything they need to know." (Interview with SE4).

Two out of four HL teachers perceive themselves as agents who secure HL learning. These statements are classified under the title 'language guardians' which is a role characterization that appeared also in Panagiotopoulou & Rosen (2019). Teachers offer a safe environment for their students to acquire language skills and maintain a connection with their linguistic and cultural identities. Especially the fact that Greece is generally a monoglossic context makes their role entirely connected to providing opportunities to speak and use the language.

"...[W]e preserve and keep an active relationship with the language and by extension to the culture." (Interview with SE4).

"...[I]n a Greek-speaking society if you don't have Swedish friends you don't get to speak Swedish (...) And our Swedish class is the way for the Swedish parent to actually have a little bit of time in their native language, to share things that are important for them (...) and they become important for the child as well." (Interview with SE3).

Using one other term formulated by Diamond & Moore (2000), HL teachers operate as 'orchestrators of social contexts of learning'. Students can both learn a HL from a social setting which is connected to it, and gain motivation. From SE4's perspective, HL teachers contribute by motivating their students' actions and decisions. For example, they mentioned cases in which HL teacher could motivate students to start liking Sweden or Swedish, to make life/ career decisions such as move and work in Sweden or study in Sweden.

> *"...[Y]ou can motivate young people either to start liking Sweden more or to make important decisions in their lives or their careers."* (Interview with SE4).

One Swedish HL teacher perceives an important part of their role to assist students in their academic achievement. By that they mean that HL teaching in the specific setting gives students the possibility to study in Swedish. They can do this through participating and succeeding in TISUS examination that certifies their admission to programs hosted by Swedish Universities.

> *"Since I have been working here for quite a few years, I have students that are now in Sweden, who have managed to get into Universities in Sweden, with the Swedish that they were taught here. So that means that their level of Swedish is high, otherwise they wouldn't go to University in Sweden. So, that is something that makes you feel important because you managed to help them with that."* (Interview with SE1).

Furthermore, the perception of one HL teacher falls into the theme 'cultural organizer' by Diamond & Moore (2000) where teachers are active components of community building. Through social activities and events, Swedish HL teachers provide spaces where people who have Swedish background can meet and interact. This context is beneficial for both adults and students as well, because they can practice their language skills and feel belonging to the ethnic community.

> *"Make also the students and the people here to connect with the community of other people that share the same interests and goals."* (Interview with SE4).

All Swedish HL teachers agreed that their role is essential ('role significance') for both students and their parents since teachers and the school are a clear connection to Swedish language and culture. Some teachers mentioned that they consider their role significant because they are a link to the Swedish educational system. Also, they help with ethnic and linguistic identity formation without downgrading the role of family/ parents.

> *"For the parents and the children, I think my role is considered important. Otherwise it would have been very difficult."* (Interview with SE1).

To sum up, HL teachers have positive emotions about their job and role, and specifically these include appreciation, pride, satisfaction and happiness. When asked about their role reflections and overall experiences (both positive and negative) all of them shared pleasant stories and seemed satisfied with working in this context. These positive emotions relate not only to their choice of profession but also to the teacher-teacher cooperation, school environment, ethnic community interaction, teacher-parent relationship, teacher-student interaction, and connection to personal background.

> *"I think that I am very lucky to have found this job (...) we are getting so much back from the children (...) I love my job I have to say."* (Interview with SE2).

> *"I don't have to say anything negative about my job. It's very positive (...) I am happy! (...) I chose it, I like it. I stopped working as a linguist because this was much more fun, much more interesting."* (Interview with SE3).

4.1.4 Perceived purposes of Swedish HL instruction

The present sub-section presents how Swedish HL teachers in Athens perceive the purposes of Swedish HL instruction. It includes data that answers the second research question. It is important to highlight that teachers follow recommendations and guidelines from Skolverket so, the purposes and objectives of Swedish as a HL are not determined by the teachers themselves. A general overview of the themes that were generated are: 'more than a language class', 'language maintenance', 'teacher responsibility', 'group/ social support', and 'participation in social events'. These five themes are presented generally in the following Figure and in detail in the following paragraphs.
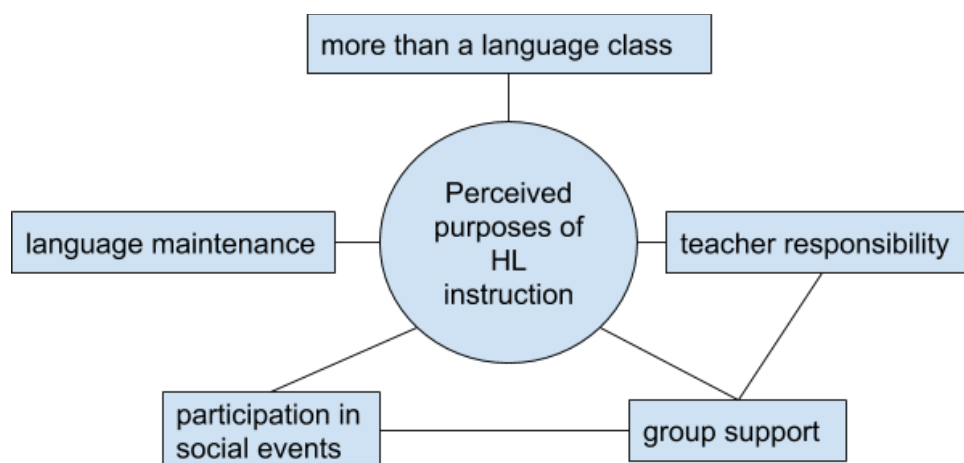
Figure 2: Perceived purposes of SE HL instruction

In Table 2 I present the themes that answer research question 2. It is arranged in the same way as the previous table. Themes are classified based on the order that they can be found in this sub-section.

Table 2: Theme presentation for perceived purposes of SE HL instruction		
Research questions	Theme	Definition
Perceived purposes of HL instruction	'more than a language class'	HL instruction is more than a typical language-focused class. It differs in terms of teaching content as teachers provide students with culture, history and geography knowledge as well.
	'language maintenance'	Language maintenance is ethnic groups' attempt to preserve their language (Fishman, 1979). Under this theme language development, language comprehension and language use practices are incorporated.
	'teacher responsibility'	Teachers are responsible to develope student skills and engagement with the HL. These skills include language development, provision of appropriate material, academic achievements etc.
	'group/ social support'	Group/ peer presence is an important factor in HL development. Teachers believe that interaction with peers helps students to ameliorate their skills and provides them with some sort of belonging to the Swedish society.
	'participation in social events'	Active participation in social events (national day celebrations etc) is an important aspect of HLE. It connects students with cultural qualities and to each other so they can experience ethnic group connection.

Firstly, all four teachers agreed that Swedish HL instruction is more than a typical language-based matter. Of course, Swedish language is the focus but teaching purposes do not only emphasize in improving linguistic skills. Teachers individually set apart four aspects of HL teaching: language, culture, history and geography. These four aspects work as tools that help students to understand the Swedish society. Culture was key aspect for all teachers. Also, they feel that they supplement a Swedish environment in which children through HL, explore and understand a part of themselves and their parents.

> *"The best thing about this job: not only that you focus on the grammar and vocabulary and more technical parts of the job, the more language-based parts of*

the job. But also, in the broader aspect of the context, the culture (...), the Swedish community" (Interview with SE4).

According to HL teachers another basic purpose of Swedish HL instruction is language maintenance. Under this theme I have classified three sub-themes that were underlined by some of the teachers: language development, language comprehension and language use. Swedish language development and comprehension are main concerns of HL teachers but without language use it is impossible to improve and cultivate linguistic skills. Language maintenance operates like the next step of this process, but the actual term was used only by one HL teacher.

"We are trying to have a good level in Swedish (...) Everything we are doing here is with the language" (Interview with SE2).

"...[T]hey come here to develop their language" (Interview with SE3).

"...[T]hey want to develop their language skills, their Swedish, to learn better Swedish (...) We maintain their language identity" (Interview with SE4).

Swedish HL teachers feel responsible for their students' development and skills. They are aware of their responsibility to help their students grow; hence they give great importance to properly planning their lectures and providing their students with material that will benefit them. By this they do not only mean developing their language but also sustaining a connection with the Swedish context. Part of their responsibility is to motivate students in order to engage more with Swedish and use it. This responsibility is also connected to enabling students to academically succeed in Swedish and enter Swedish universities.

"...[I] think that it is very important for us to think what we are going to do in the lessons, to plan. Plan[20]! Plan well!" (Interview with SE2).

"...[W]e share the responsibility of teaching the Swedish language (...) I give them extra material and put them in the context..." (Interview with SE4).

Also, teachers acknowledged the significance of the group in HLE. Group and especially peers are an advantage to the HL student because they support as a collectivity the language learning process. Group and principally peers make students feel a belonging to the ethnic group and this extends to the Swedish society.

"...[W]e make also the students (...) to connect with the community of other people that share the same interest and same goals." (Interview with SE4).

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[20] The teacher originally used the word 'planera' which is the Swedish verb that means 'to plan'.

Moreover, all Swedish HL teachers underlined participation in social events as a significant feature in HL instruction. The distinction between HLE and foreign language instruction is reaffirmed here by inclusion of social events that promote ethnic group collectivity. As a result, Swedish HL teachers pointed out that active participation in social events (such as national days, holidays, festivals, community or religious events) is tied to HLE since it connects children with the Swedish culture. In these events, children might engage in numerous roles always with teacher guidance. These roles are either more linguistic demanding like delivering speeches, or more practical things, such as the event preparation.

> *"Yes, I think if you also think about it, Lucia[21] is something that all of our children are participating. If not to sing, we have children who help with other things, to serve pepparkakor[22], glögg[23], julmust[24] this specific day.*" (Interview with SE2).

> *"…[W]e also have various activities like the holidays, various holidays. We keep them like Lucia celebration, the summer school-ending when we have these days that we go on excursion…"* (Interview with SE1).

4.1.5 Perceived contribution to SE language use and maintenance

This sub-section takes account of HL teachers perceived contribution to students' language maintenance and use. It was investigated through research question 3. Teachers agreed that they do contribute to students' HL use and maintenance. Subsequently they were asked to describe how they view their contribution in supporting HL students to sustain and use Swedish. The themes that emerged are: 'monolingual classroom practices', 'safe space', 'high expectations', 'encouragement', 'activity provision', and 'teacher as a native speaker'. Some additional factors that were mentioned by the teachers that affect language maintenance and use, follow theme presentation in order to portray the whole picture. Figure 3 which includes the themes is presented below:

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[21] Lucia is a Swedish tradition of Italian origin that is celebrated on the 13th of December every year. Children (boys and girls) wear white full-length gowns and sing traditional songs together. Lucia celebrations symbolize one of the prime cultural traditions in Sweden.
[22] Pepparkakor are well-known Swedish ginger-bread cookies which is popular to serve during Lucia celebrations and Christmas.
[23] Glögg is the Swedish version of mulled wine and it is also a traditional drink that it is served in Lucia celebrations and Christmas.
[24] Julmust is a soft drink/beverage (non-alcoholic) which is consumed in Sweden during Christmas.
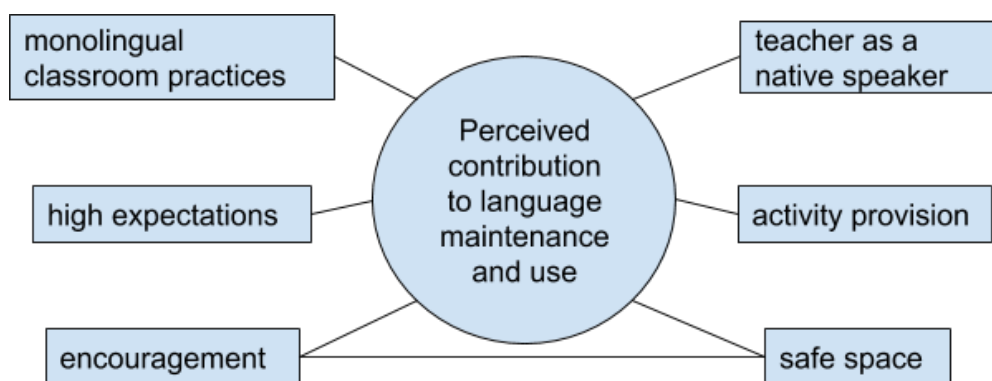
Figure 3: Perceived contribution to SE language maintenance and use

Table 3 incorporates the theme definition. Table's parts are organized similarly to the two previous tables.

Table 3: Theme presentation for perceived contribution to SE HL use and maintenance		
Research question	Theme	Definition
Perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance	'monolingual classroom practices'	Monolingual classroom practices encompass the use of only Swedish during HL courses. With this technique teachers aim to reinforce and maintain their students' HL skills.
	'safe space'	HL classrooms operate like a safe space in which students are encouraged to develop, use and successfully maintain HL. Also, students feel comfortable to ameliorate their language skills, can make mistakes, have opportunities to grow and gain motivation to use and maintain Swedish.
	'high expectations'	Teacher expectations are a technique for engaging more in HL and maintaining it. Teachers expect from students to have good oral and writing skills, advanced vocabulary and proficient understanding in the HL.
	'encouragement'	Teacher and parental encouragement is beneficial in HL use and maintenance. Encouragement includes also support in practicing Swedish with the parent/ teacher/ classroom.

	'activity provision'	Activities such as book reading gives students some additional motives to use and maintain HL.
	'teacher as a native speaker'	Having a HL teacher who is a native speaker of the HL is considered an important asset in language use and maintenance. Native speakers do not only provide students with an appropriate form of the HL but also, they connect students to the ethnic context from their experiences.

Swedish HL teachers highlighted that in order to support language maintenance and use, they employ monolingual classroom practices. That means that they try to maintain the use of Swedish language as a principle during their lessons. By using the 'Swedish-only' rule they expect their students to engage more in Swedish and even if they cannot adequately express themselves or understand something, they attempt to utilize easier words. This does not mean that students are not allowed to speak Greek at all, it means that they prioritize Swedish and are flexible switching between Greek and Swedish if necessary. Swedish HL teachers pointed out that it is challenging to maintain Swedish in a Greek-speaking context, where students have limited chances to practice their HL. Consequently, for them it is essential to keep this classroom technique as a rule.

> *"…[W]e only speak Swedish with the children. No Greek at all! So, if they don't understand something, we explain it with another word in Swedish."* (Interview with SE2).

> *"…[T]hey are only allowed to speak Swedish when they are here. I mean in the classroom we speak Swedish; they have to understand, and they have to be able to communicate."* (Interview with SE1).

All teachers stated that they create a 'safe space' at school, where children can develop, use and successfully maintain their HL. Establishing a 'safe space' comprises a milieu where HL students feel comfortable to use their HL, can make mistakes, have opportunities to develop their linguistic skills, and gain motivation to use and maintain their HL. According to HL teachers, HL classroom is one such place and it plays a big role in HL maintenance because despite the language development that takes place there, they correspondingly protect HL.

> *"They don't have to perfectly pronounce everything, so, if you create this environment where it is accepted to make mistakes, you go forward. More and more they speak Swedish and then you observe that they talk Swedish to each other, and it is fun for them!"* (Interview with SE4).

Moreover, two out of four teachers said that they have high expectations from their students concerning language use and skills. They expect them to maintain a high level in Swedish language by obtaining good oral and writing skills, advanced vocabulary and proficient comprehension. In this manner, HL students will be more likely to use their linguistic skills (either with their peers or with parents/ teachers) and preserve Swedish.

> *"...[T]hey come here to develop their language and the goal is, for those who are interested to study in Sweden, to write the TISUS test and pass it. So, the expectations are high!"* (Interview with SE3).

> *"...[W]e are trying to have a good level in Swedish..."* (Interview with SE2).

Three out of four HL teachers perceive teacher/ school encouragement as a basic pillar in language use and maintenance. This relates to the previous theme as teachers believe that encouragement to speak and practice students' linguistic skills is critical. Nonetheless, Swedish HL teachers stressed also the importance of parental involvement in encouraging students to practice their HL. According to SE3, parents in general speak Swedish to their children and the latter try to answer in Swedish but most of the times children answer back in Greek. However, SE3 believes that the HL is there, and they do understand, they just need more practice and encouragement to use it.

> *"Well, we do encourage them, and we encourage the families very much through our teaching (...) Most of the kids are bilingual so the first language is Greek. So, among them when they are outside of here, they speak Greek and sometimes they in class, but we try to encourage them to speak Swedish when they are in class. And we encourage the parents to speak Swedish to them.*" (Interview with SE1).

> *"...[S]ome try to speak Swedish, but 99% of the parents speak Swedish and they (the children) answer in Greek."* (Interview with SE4).

In addition, a HL teacher shared that their contribution to language use and maintenance is also achieved through 'activity provision'. These activities include homework, book borrowing from the school library, extra teaching material (such as videos, photos), and participation in school events. In this way teachers provide some additional material and motives to students to use and maintain Swedish.

> *"...[T]hey are given homework (...) we also have various activities."* (Interview with SE1).

As a final point, SE4 believes that being a native speaker of the HL is an advantage for students' language use, development and maintenance. Students are in contact with a person who has the HL as a native language and not only has the linguistic skills (pronunciation, language knowledge, insights), but also gives them a good example about

how the language is spoken and used. Language is naturally situated there and is produced effortlessly by the HL teacher.

> *"…It comes naturally because it's my mother tongue so I think it makes it easier as well for the students, because they can listen to the language with the correct pronunciation but also with a good flow…"* (Interview with SE4).

To conclude, besides all the presented themes some additional observed points, that were raised by the teachers, follow. Swedish HL teachers highlighted that despite their overall contribution to language use and maintenance, parents are the most important component in supporting HL. Without parental support and language use at home it is difficult to achieve these goals at school. As they mentioned, it is hard to maintain Swedish in a Greek-speaking context since the interaction with Swedish-speaking people is limited. Parents, Heritage Language Community Schools and HL teachers offer them a space where they can use and potentially maintain their HL skills. Sometimes children use Swedish to communicate with each other, some other times both languages, but generally they are more comfortable using Greek because it is their first language.

> *"… (when the students speak to each other) it's in Greek! Yes, they whisper but I can tell that it's in Greek! (…) And the parents get so sad… I say don't be sad because they are answering to me in Swedish and they do understand. Language is there. Somewhere. So, it's fine."* (Interview with SE3).

> *"…[I]n the beginning they try to speak Greek and maybe that is a way for them to feel more comfortable in a way, to express things that they cannot express in Swedish."* (Interview with SE4).

4.1.6 Perceived contribution to SE ethnic identity formation

This is the last sub-section of the Swedish HL teacher case, which is connected with research question 4. Teachers were asked to reflect upon their contribution to HL students' ethnic identities formation and give some examples from their experience. Before answering the research question, it is important to mention that teachers acknowledged the evident connection between HL and ethnic identity as it was presented in a previous sub-section (2.1.4 Heritage Language and Ethnic Identity) by several authors (Damanakis, 2017; Fishman & García, 2011; Lytra, 2016). HL is tied with ethnic identity but if teachers or parents do not try to reinforce it, students will not realize this as a part of themselves.

> *"Yes, because it may sound like a cliché, but language is the key to everything to the culture (…) They can have the key to open more possibilities, to engage with the Swedish culture and with Sweden in more ways (…) It all starts through the language and the earlier we can provide this to the students, the better the chance us that they can feel confident to open up this 'window', this possibility to be personally and*

professionally in Sweden. And also, to be in touch with their ethnic identity (...) It's the whole picture." (Interview with SE4).

From the thematic analysis employed to answer this research question, only one theme ('teacher partial contribution') was formulated and is presented in the following figure:
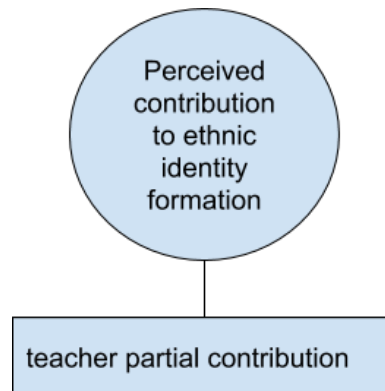
Figure 4: Perceived contribution to SE ethnic identity formation

Table 4 illustrates the theme that answers research question 4.

Table 4: Theme presentation for perceived contribution to SE ethnic identity formation		
Research question	Theme	Definition
Perceived contribution to ethnic identity formation	'teacher partial contribution'	Teachers do affect ethnic identity formation but to some extent. Their general impact is not substituting parental contribution.

Three out of four Swedish HL teachers agreed that teachers do contribute to ethnic identity formation to some extent. This is achieved through the HL provision, connection to the Swedish society and social activities (for example, national day celebration) that are offered at the school. However, their general impact is not enough to form and sustain an ethnic identity. When asked which is the most important factor in ethnic identity formation, teachers underlined the role of parents and family. According to Swedish HL teachers, sending children to Heritage Language Community Schools once a week for a couple of hours, does not compensate the entire Swedish context students are lacking in their everyday lives. Teachers and parents are both valuable factors in ethnic identity creation, but parents are more powerful in this phenomenon. SE3 believes that their classroom contribution is not enough to create and maintain an ethnic identity, and this depends fully on the interests of each family.

> *"I think the parents are having the biggest role to connect them with the belonging to the country. But when the children come her, I think we are also a connection."* (Interview with SE2).

"I don't know, but I don't think that in our class on Saturday we could change an ethnic identity. I don't think so. It's related to the parents." (Interview with SE3).

To conclude, besides ethnic identity some teachers marked other types of identity that they aim to strengthen, such as socio-cultural and linguistic. Through Heritage Language Community School's objectives, and as it was presented in the sub-section 'Perceived purposes of Swedish HL instruction', language affects several personality features. Hence, everything is interrelated and phenomena such as ethnic identity formation cannot be portrayed as they take place on their own. When teachers were asked about student ethnic identities, they mentioned that they observe correlation with community building, confidence, motivation provision, peer interaction and embracing Swedish culture. All these could create and maintain an ethnic identity, but they are not only tied with teacher contribution. Teachers, parents, siblings, family, community and peers are strong advocates of ethnic identity and this collective effort is also present in EV theory (Reid & Giles, 2010).

4.2 The Greek HL teacher case

In this section of Chapter Four the second comparative element, the Greek case, is reported. Similarly to the Swedish case, first I present some personal background of Greek HL teachers, then some data of how the school operates and afterwards in four sub-sections the findings.

4.2.1 Greek HL teachers' background

In this sub-section I present the background of HL teachers who teach Greek as a HL in Stockholm, Sweden. As mentioned earlier, it is not possible to use teachers' names so similarly I refer to them as GR1, GR2, GR3, GR4 and GR5 respectively. The following information relates to personal background, education and work experience.

GR1
GR1 is of Greek origin and native speaker of Greek. Having studied Philology in Greece, GR1 holds a Master's in Theater studies and of course a teaching degree. GR1 has attended seminars for teaching Greek abroad, and has almost 30 years of working experience. Also, GR1 is seconded[25] from Greece and was willing to move to Sweden in order to do something different in their career.

GR2
GR2 is of Greek origin, born and raised in Greece so, a native speaker of Greek. GR2 studied Early Childhood Education in Greece and that corresponds to be qualified to teach

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[25] The secondment of teachers to Greek schools abroad is part of a vacancy, organized by the Greek state, and teachers are hired after a successful application (Stylou, 2019). Secondment to abroad schools lasts between three to five years.

in pre-school education and the first grade of primary school. GR2 used to work as a language teacher in Greece, teaching Greek to immigrants, which is included in their bachelor's degree (teaching Greek as a second language). However, GR2 does not have any qualification for teaching Greek to Greeks that live abroad. Also, GR2 has a master's degree in Education from a Swedish University and a few years of teaching experience in Sweden. GR2 is not seconded from the Greek state.

GR3

GR3 was born in another European country to Greek parents but raised in Greece thus, a native speaker of Greek. GR3 has a bachelor in primary education from a Greek university and a master's degree in special education from a Bulgarian university. G3 was seeking for an abroad experience so they applied to be seconded by the Greek state in a Greek school abroad. Concerning teaching Greek abroad, GR3 has attended seminars and of course they hold a teaching degree qualification. GR3 has almost 20 years of working experience from both private and public schools of Greece.

GR4

GR4 was born and raised in Greece and is a native speaker of Greek. GR4 studied primary education in a Greek university and holds a teaching degree but no specific qualification for teaching Greek language abroad. GR4 moved with their family to Sweden and applied for a job directly to the school so, they are not seconded from Greece.

GR5

GR5 has a migrant background but is a native speaker of Greek. GR5 studied Pedagogy and Greek language in a Greek university and has working experience from Greek schools. GR5 has attended a seminar about teaching Greek as a second language. They moved to Sweden with their family many years ago and continued to work as a teacher in the Greek Heritage Language Community School of Stockholm. Besides a reasonable teaching past in Greece, GR5 is not seconded from the Greek state.

4.2.2 The Greek school

This sub-section presents some contextual information about the Greek Heritage Language Community School that operates in Stockholm, Sweden. The following information is obtained from the five Greek HL teachers' interviews and specifically from questions that were posed in the beginning. Generally, teachers were asked to describe the school setting they work in, sharing whatever they wished about the school.

Firstly, teachers highlighted that the school is not an obligatory one and they referred to it as a 'school of free-time'. It has all the grades from one grade of pre-primary (or preparatory grade) to high school level following the Greek education system's model. They do not follow the Greek curriculum but some guidelines from the Greek Ministry of Education regarding teaching Greek as a second language. Teacher staff comprises around 15 teachers in total with very few of them being seconded from Greece and the

majority being hired directly from the school. Courses take place every Saturday morning or on some weekday afternoons in different locations in Stockholm. Classes last between 2 and 3 hours.

Students are predominantly children of Greek origin who have at least one Greek parent and have either migrated or were born in Sweden. They start attending Greek HLE when they are approximately 6 years old. They form rather big groups from 10-12 minimum to 28 children maximum per class, based on their age. Depending on the age and language skills, Greek HL teachers seek to adjust teaching to their needs and help them develop their skills. While students attend the Heritage Language Greek School, they can participate in Ellinomathia[26] examination of Greek language proficiency. Teachers stated that nowadays the school has many students as a consequence of recent migration from Greece and already existing presence of Greeks in Sweden.

Parents and teachers have a multilevel communication. Teachers are required to write an e-mail to parents every week sharing information about the course content and student progress. Also, teachers and parents have a good relationship and meet often as the majority parents drop by classrooms every time they bring their children to school and chat with teachers. Teachers value parental contribution as they support the school either financially by paying fees, or with other practicalities such as event organizing, or they facilitate community building.

> *"We feel at home and I must say that the parents really help us (...) They support, they help us (...) they come, they care!"* (Interview with GR4).

4.2.3 Greek teachers' self perceptions of their role

To answer RQ1 regarding teacher's role perceptions in the school in Stockholm, I conducted thematic analysis on the interview responses. Similarly to the Swedish case, I used some themes from Diamond & Moore (2000) to organize some sub-themes under more general categories, and also I created new ones. Some themes were the same[27] as the SE case because they include similar sub-themes based on teacher statements. The main themes that emerged concerning their role are: 'more than mainstream foreign language teachers', 'cultural mediators' (Diamond & Moore, 2000), 'language guardians', 'cultural organizers' (Diamond & Moore, 2000), 'role models', 'role significance', and 'positive' and 'negative emotions'. In Figure 5 below I display the themes[28] and their interplay:

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[26] Ellinomathia (Ελληνομάθεια in Greek) is a certification of Greek language proficiency that is organized by the Greek Ministry of Education and follows the guidelines of CEFR. It includes different levels of expertise and gives the Greek children that live abroad the chance to enter Greek universities among other opportunities.

[27] More detailed presentation about these similarities and differences is provided in Chapter Five.

[28] For every Figure in the Greek HL teacher section, the illustration follows the same pattern as in the Swedish case that was presented previously.
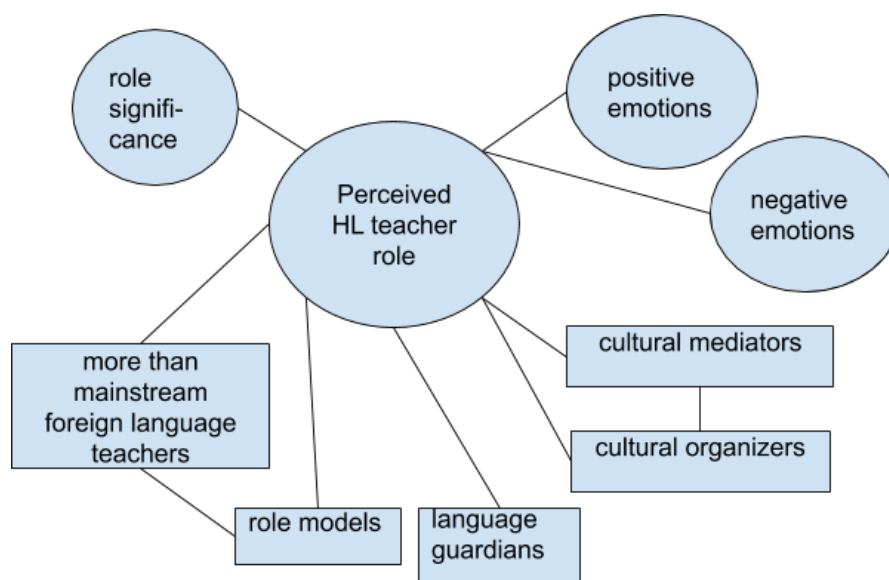
Figure 5: Perceived GR HL role

In Table 5 I give a short presentation of the themes that answer to research question 1 for the GR case. The table is organized similarly to the previous sub-sections' tables. The themes are organized based on the order that they appear in this sub-section.

Table 5: Theme presentation for perceived GR HL teacher role		
Research question	Theme	Definition
Perceived HL teacher role	'more than mainstream foreign language teachers'	HL teaching is not like a mainstream language-based teaching job. They have differences basically, because they do not only teach a language but culture, tradition and so forth.
	'cultural mediators'	HL teachers connect their students to the Greek culture and overall ethnic context. Also, they help them understand and explore their identities through cultural connection. Through culture and HL knowledge teachers provide motivation to students in order to explore this aspect of themselves.
	'language guardians'	HL teachers are advocates and supporters of HL in their classrooms. They play a role securing HL learning and assisting their students to acquire such skills. This is achieved by offering their students an environment where they acquire these skills and explore their cultural identities.

	'cultural organizers'	In their classrooms HL teachers provide a space where culture is promoted (Diamond & Moore, 2000) through activities, events etc. In this way they contribute to community building and students feel this type of belonging.
	'role models'	HL teachers are influential persons in HLE. Through their profession, they can positively influence students to learn, use, develop and explore their linguistic and cultural identities.
	'role significance'	HL teachers are important individuals in HL phenomenon for both parents and students.
	'positive emotions'	HL teachers shared positive emotions about their profession mentioning appreciation for the job, honor, pride, happiness, excitement, good relationship with colleagues and satisfaction.
	'negative emotions'	HL teachers shared also some negative emotions that have more administrative and practical character, mentioning difficulties and challenges in their profession.

To start with, two out of five Greek HL teachers regard themselves as more than mainstream foreign language teachers. According to their experience, their courses focus on HL teaching, but they also teach culture, tradition, history, geography and other aspects of Greekness. HL works like a tool to discover and get acquainted with the ethnic context. Also, they reflected upon their current profession role having in mind their own background and experiences from teaching in Greece.

> "I teach not only the language but civilization and culture and literature and whatever (...) It's not only the language. You begin with the language and 'the horizon is too broad'[29] (...) You don't only have the teaching part." (Interview with GR1).

> "I don't see it like a job. I want to be helpful to the children and I want to teach them how to feel good inside." (Interview with GR3).

Another role perception is 'cultural mediators' a term used to explain teacher contribution in understanding, exploring and empowering linguistic and cultural identities (Diamond & Moore, 2000). Greek HL teachers believe that they connect their students to the Greek culture and overall context and at the same time they feel like

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[29] Direct translation from the Greek expression 'ο ορίζοντας είναι πολύ μακρύς', used to point out something that is unexplored and has a lot of potential. The teacher meant that students have a long way to go and explore various possibilities through the HL knowledge.

representatives of Greece. Through culture and HL knowledge teachers also provide motivation to students in order to explore and embrace this aspect of themselves.

> *"[I]t's really nice to learn a new language anyway, so it could be Greek, it could be French, it could be any language (...) But also having a connection from your genes let's say, it makes you have another motive. Because maybe it's a part of yourself that you haven't explored, maybe language and culture will help you."* (Interview with GR2).

> *"I represent a country and a culture and their roots, because their family members or some of them are from Greece."* (Interview with GR4).

Furthermore, teachers perceive themselves as 'language guardians' which means that they are advocates, supporters and assistants of the HL. They think that they play an important role in securing HL learning and assisting their students to acquire linguistic skills. This is achieved by offering their students an environment where they attain these skills and explore their linguistic and cultural identities.

> *"I feel very well now, I had time to think about how I am supposed to help these children with language. How I am supposed to work with them."* (Interview with GR3).

Greek HL teachers agreed that they promote culture's dynamic nature and they operate as 'cultural organizers' (Diamond & Moore, 2000) who connect their students to the Greece through HLE. In this manner students feel a relationship and a type of belonging to the Greek community both in Sweden and in Greece. Consequently, this contributes to ethnic community building and cultural appreciation.

> *"I feel responsible for their connection to the language and the culture."* (Interview with GR4).

> *"I am the connection, I am the chain, the bond with their homeland."* (Interview with GR1).

> *"There is a connection that you make (...) I always do that (...) telling them stories from Greece, how the Greek people live, what they do, how they move… different aspects of Greeks."* (Interview with GR5).

Four out of five teachers stated that they regard themselves 'role models' for their students. That means that they are important persons who can motivate, encourage and inspire students to learn and use their HL. Also, teacher's positive and personal example of maintaining and appreciating Greek is tied to how the students view HL. Another point is the fact that some students lack motivation and attend the school because their parents

want them to do so. Teachers try to consult and inspire students to continue with HLE because such knowledge could eventually prove beneficial for them.

> *"[T]hey feel me like I am their parent[30] (...) I believe everything begins and ends to us as a teacher, as a parent as a human being (...) The most important thing for me is that I have my students' love and they understand that I love them and I want to help them. And when they write in Greek when they don't speak Greek at home, for me that's the most important. Yes. Even with the mistakes they do, for me it is still really strong."* (Interview with GR3).

> *"I think that they see me keeping my language and yeah, I am a model for them."* (Interview with GR4).

Greek HL teachers stated that in their profession they hold a 'significant role' both for students and parents. Teacher represent a direct connection with the homeland which can be characterized as beneficial in the HL development. Also, teachers' initiatives play a major role in their students' HL experience. They try their best to provide students with opportunities, positive memories and skills to use their HL when needed. Even if students and teachers meet once per week, HL teachers consider this time beneficial for students' language development and wellbeing.

> *"I think that it is a very important role, not only for the children but also for the parents because the feeling that I described before, me entering the school and feeling like being in Greece, they have the same."* (Interview with GR2).

> *"I think it's an important role because my choices make the difference. In many many ways."* (Interview with GR1).

> *"The role of the teacher is important even if students come here once per week."* (Interview with GR5).

To conclude, teachers shared their emotions about the role they hold in their profession and how they generally experience it. Greek HL teachers experience 'positive emotions' in their job. These emotions include satisfaction, honor, pride, appreciation, happiness, excitement, passion/ interest in the profession, feeling at home, and good relationship with their colleagues. They are happy both about the content of their job but also about the interaction they have through their profession (with parents, children, ethnic community).

> *"I love my job (...) because it was my dream. (...) I love this. I cannot even think of doing something different."* (Interview with GR1).

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[30] GR3 used another word which was exposing their gender. I replaced the word with *parent (*as it is the general category of what GR3 meant) because of research ethics' complications.

"[I]t has a nice feeling. It seems like home. But it's not only that! I have found my identity in this school and I think that this is important, to be connected with the identity. (...) I really love this school." (Interview with GR2).

"Well, I love it. I chose to do it. I love to see them grow, I love to see them developing (...) Only positive feelings I have (...) I haven't felt a frustration or something (...) I am very proud of them." (Interview with GR4).

On the other hand, some teachers expressed 'negative emotions' which are not actually tied with the teacher role but mostly with administrative and practical issues. So, these emotions mostly refer to practical challenges and difficulties they face for example, paperwork/ bureaucracy, not enough teaching material or not appropriate books and others.

"I want to add that my job has many challenges, but I would totally recommend it." (Interview with GR1).

"I am happy, but it is very difficult (...) because I don't have material to give them (to the students).*"* (Interview with GR5).

4.2.4 Perceived purposes of Greek HL instruction

This sub-section includes how Greek HL teachers perceive the purposes of Greek HL instruction in Stockholm. It answers research question 2. As mentioned in 4.1.4, they follow recommendations from the Greek Ministry of Education regarding teaching Greek as a second language so, the purposes of Greek as a HL are not completely decided by HL teachers. They were asked how they identify HL purposes through their practices and experiences. An overview of the themes that were created is: 'more than a language class', 'language maintenance', 'teacher responsibility', 'group/ social support', 'participation in social events', 'cultural connection', 'motivation', and 'language interdependence'. These themes are illustrated in the following Figure and in depth in the next paragraphs.
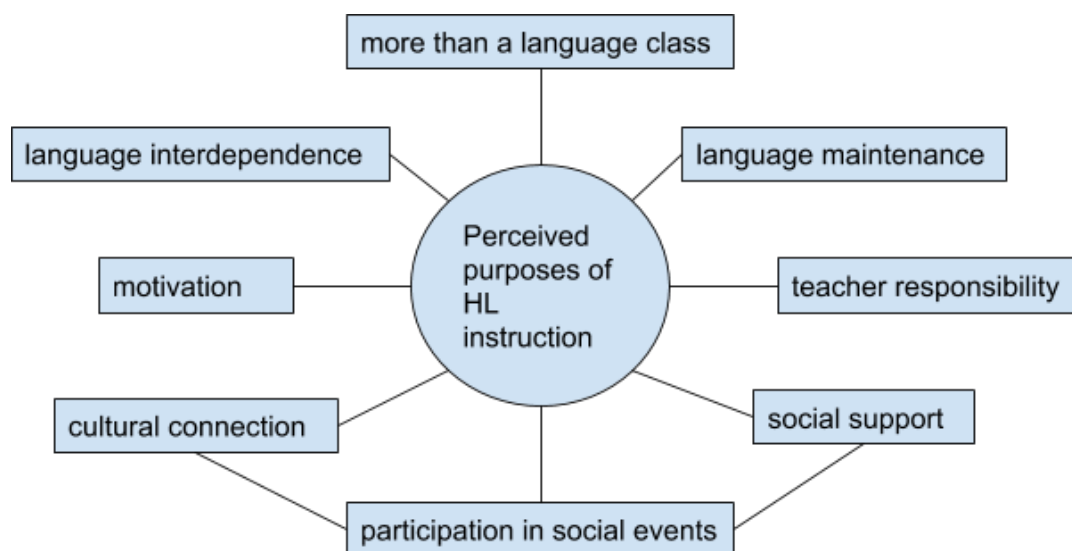
Figure 6: Perceived purposes of GR HL instruction

The following Table includes the theme definition based on Figure 6.

Research questions	Theme	Definition
Perceived purposes of HL instruction	'more than a language class'	HL instruction is more than a typical language-focused class. It differs in terms of teaching content as teachers provide students with culture, history and geography knowledge and so forth.
	'language maintenance'	Language maintenance is ethnic groups' attempt to preserve their language (Fishman, 1979). Under this theme language development, language comprehension, language use practices, and oral and writing skills are incorporated.
	'teacher responsibility'	Teachers responsibility is multilevel. This responsibility contains developing student skills and engagement with the HL. These skills include language development, provision of appropriate material, academic achievements etc. Teachers should provide opportunities to their students and use appropriate pedagogical methods to support HL.
	'social support'	Group/ peers, connection to persons in Greece, community etc. are significant factors in HL development. Possibilities of social interaction help students to improve their linguistic skills and cultivate belonging to the Greek society.

Table 6: Theme presentation for perceived purposes of GR HL instruction

	'participation in social events'	Active participation in social events (for example, national day celebrations) is an important aspect of HLE. It connects students with cultural qualities and to each other, so they experience ethnic group connection.
	'cultural connection'	Through HLE students get to know their culture and connect with it. This leads to identity formation and cultural maintenance.
	'motivation'	HLE provides students with motivation, encouragement, inspiration, and a safe space to use their HL.
	'language interdependence'	HL knowledge benefits knowledge of other languages. This phenomenon is known as language interdependence, a concept used by Cummins to illustrate the transfer of skills and knowledge across languages (Cummins, 2007).

First, three out of five HL teachers perceive Greek HL instruction as more than a typical foreign language class. Clearly, Greek instruction is the focus in this process but HLE purposes do not only emphasize on language skills. Some other aspects of Greek HLE are culture, history, Greek literature and geography, and some additional activities such as songs, films, videos and theater. These aspects work also as tools that help students to explore and understand Greek society.

> *"I teach not only the language but civilization and culture and history and literature and whatever (...) It's not like we are only teaching the language in the classroom."* (Interview with GR1).

> *"I don't teach Greek only as grammar (...) I am trying to teach them history too, we watch films, we do stuff where they can listen and train Greek with me."* (Interview with GR4).

Four out of five HL teachers highlighted that a basic purpose of Greek HL instruction is language maintenance. This theme includes four interrelating sub-themes: language development, language comprehension, language use, and writing and oral skills. Greek HL concentrates on language development and comprehension as well as language use which supports HL development. These processes have language maintenance as a goal.

> *"[I] am trying really to teach them writing because it is important for a language, so you can keep it by writing and speaking."* (Interview with GR3).

Two Greek HL teachers touched on the theme of 'teacher responsibility' which is a multilevel feature in HL phenomenon. They highlighted their responsibility towards

developing student skills and engagement with the HL. These skills include language development, provision of appropriate educational material, academic achievement/ examination success and so forth. According to their point of view, HL teachers should provide these opportunities to students and use appropriate pedagogical methods to achieve these goals. Concerning academic achievement/ examination success, GR2 mentioned that it is part of their job and something that parents specifically care for. Greek language certifications provide children with an 'open door' to study or work in Greece, so parents want their children to have this chance.

> *"First of all, you have to think about the children, their opportunities, their background, their choices (…) I transfer my choices (to the students) (…) [I] have to choose suitable pedagogical methods that children are interested in."* (Interview with GR1).

> *"So, most of the parents want their children to have a certificate because they want to have enough certificates, the certificates they need in order to have a choice when they turn 18 to go to Greece and study in Greek. Or go back to the Greek school, so they want the certificates. (…) Yes, so it's our job to prepare them. And from the inside part, from what we are discussing and what we are deciding as teachers is a top priority."* (Interview with GR2).

Moreover, four out of five HL teachers stressed the importance of 'social support' in HLE. Social support includes interaction with student peers/ group, engagement with persons/ students in Greece or Greek ethnic community. HLE courses provide this kind of interaction which is a beneficial factor in HL development according to teacher perspectives. They believe that such possibilities of social interaction help students to improve their language skills and connect to the Greek society. Also, one teacher underlined the importance of maintaining a relationship with the Swedish society so the two cultural contexts of the students interplay and benefit from each other.

> *"So, I am trying to make some connections with other students in Greece, so they can send letters."* (Interview with GR2).

> *"…[W]e have some connections with some schools that I speak with, via skype. So, two or three times per semester we speak with other students from Greece. My old classes that I had in Greece, and for me it is very important to have some contact with them."* (Interview with GR3).

> *"And the school must be open and say: 'Okay, here I am, I am from Greece, I have this culture, I have this heritage and I have to show it to the community, to the people', and invite others, even persons from the Swedish community (…) We have to connect with Swedish people."* (Interview with GR1).

Additionally to 'social support', Greek HL teachers discussed the importance of social events in HLE. Through active 'participation in social events' (for example national days, ethnic celebrations, festivals) students explore cultural aspects of Greece. Students experience these happenings as part of the ethnic group. Events like national day celebrations or Christmas gatherings are organized by the school in collaboration with the ethnic community. The most common ways for students to participate is by playing a role in theater acts, singing, dancing or presenting.

> *"First of all, the Greek National Holidays. We plan to celebrate our national holidays. So, I see the kids read fluently or sing fluently or play theater and I feel honored and happy, proud of them."* (Interview with GR4).

> *"For example, when we have some events like national days, Christmas or with culture, I think that I connect them with Greece during the events."* (Interview with GR5).

'Cultural connection' is another purpose of Greek HL instruction. In HL courses students get in contact with Greek culture in various ways and through different subjects. This directs to identity formation and cultural maintenance among students. Also, some teachers assumed that a purpose of GR instruction is to make students appreciate the contribution of Greece to global civilization. In order to achieve this, they display international happenings, phenomena or values that are of Greek origin for example, tragedy performances in theaters nowadays.

> *"And this is why the choose to come to the Greek school, because they want to make some connections with Greece."* (Interview with GR2).

> *"The parents bring their children here to take something from Greece."* (Interview with GR5).

> *"...[I] transfer the Greek culture and a picture of Greece here in Sweden (...) the global vibe of the Greek spirit is spread through the language."* (Interview with GR1).

Four out of five HL teachers mentioned that HLE supplies students with 'motivation' which includes other practices like encouragement, inspiration, and a safe space to use and explore HL. HL is a notable part of their identity and its exploration boosts student self-esteem.

> *"...[W]e want to do something and actually inspire, give motives to children and have fun, not only teach the language and the rules and the grammar."* (Interview with GR2).

Lastly, two GR HL teachers supported that HL knowledge benefits proficiency in other languages as well. This is known as language interdependence, a concept used to illustrate the transfer of skills and knowledge across languages (Cummins, 2007). GR1 and GR4 have seen from their experience and observations that the knowledge of Greek as a HL helps students acquiring better skills in Swedish. Thus, the first and the second language share the same underlying proficiency.

> *"And I also think I am helping them with the Greek language to their language here, for example Swedish. The two languages work together to improve them in their school life and studies."* (Interview with GR4).

4.2.5 Perceived contribution to GR language use and maintenance

This sub-section demonstrates HL teachers perceived contribution to students' language maintenance and use. It is connected with research question 3. Teachers agreed that they do contribute to their students' HL use and maintenance. Consequently, they were asked to describe contribution practices in supporting students to sustain and use Greek as a HL. The themes that arose are: 'significance of language maintenance and use', 'monolingual classroom practices', 'encouragement', 'activity provision', and 'social interaction in HL'. First, I present the themes and then some additional contextual factors that influence language maintenance and use. The themes are portrayed in the following Figure.

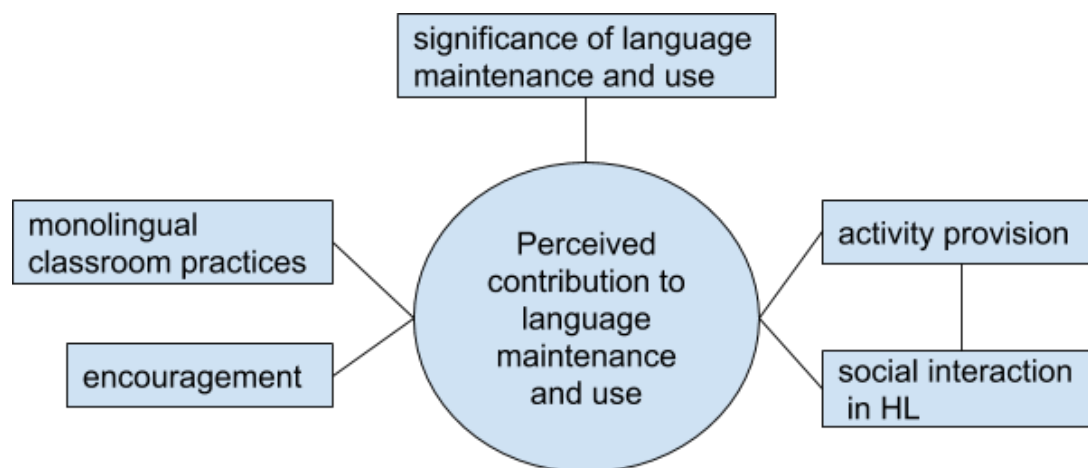Figure 7: Perceived contribution to GR language maintenance and use

In Table 7 that follows, there is information about what each theme stands for.

Table 7: Theme presentation for perceived contribution to GR HL use and maintenance		
Research question	Theme	Definition

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Perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance	'significance of language maintenance and use'	It is important to teach and preserve a HL when an ethnic community lives abroad.
	'monolingual classroom practices'	Monolingual classroom practices encompass the use of only Greek during HL courses. With this technique teachers aim to reinforce, support and maintain their students' HL skills.
	'encouragement'	Teacher encouragement is beneficial in HL use and maintenance. Encouragement includes also support in practicing Greek with the parent/ teacher/ classroom.
	'activity provision'	Activities like theater provide students with some additional motives to use and maintain HL.
	'social interaction in HL'	Teachers observe cases in which students use GR either to communicate with peers/ friends or with parents and teachers.

Primarily, all but one Greek HL teachers are aware that they contribute to students' language maintenance and use. They support that as they see students use Greek more and more. The presence of the HL teacher enables language use and contributes potentially to maintenance. On the other hand, GR2 assumed that since they use a different approach to communicate in other languages, they use translanguaging or translating as communication techniques with the students.

"*Yes. I think they speak the language more because of me.*" (Interview with GR1).

"*Because in my classroom I have many different levels (...) I was trying to make them maintain relationships with each other (...) so they keep coming. And one 'discount' that I did was to let them freely speak in any language they prefer during the class, doing translations maybe during my teaching. So, I am not affecting their language behavior.*" (Interview with GR2).

Teachers highlighted that it is important for an ethnic group to use and maintain their language abroad ('significance of language maintenance and use'). This is a key-reason why parents send their children to such schools and expect teachers to assist them in this process. HL teachers understand and appreciate this necessity. Thus, they try to do their best in order to enable students to use and maintain Greek.

"*We are in a country where we must keep our language.*" (Interview with GR3).

In order to support language maintenance and use, HL teachers employ 'monolingual classroom practices'. That means that they try to maintain the use of Greek as the only

language during courses. By using this feature, they expect students to speak and engage more in Greek. It does not mean that students are not allowed to use Swedish or any other language at all. However, two teachers shared different approaches. Even if they prioritize Greek, they are more flexible using both Greek and Swedish if necessary, especially when they try to explain something. They stated though that they would prefer implementing a monolingual approach, and it is something that they are striving for.

> *"In the classroom we are speaking only in Greek (…) I try everything to make them understand and to make them speak only Greek." (Interview with GR1).*

> *"I try to keep Greek inside and outside the classroom."* (Interview with GR4).

> *"Oh no, we are not only speaking Greek. Swedish and Greek (…) but when they are here, I tell them: 'When we are in classroom, we speak only Greek'."* (Interview with GR5).

Teacher encouragement is considered a beneficial factor of HL use and maintenance. Encouragement includes support in practicing Greek with the parent/ teacher/ classroom. Through interaction, students can practically see the benefits of learning their HL and when they use it in everyday situations it is probable for them to maintain it.

> *"[I]'m trying to give them some real motives to use the language*." (Interview with GR2).

Two GR HL teacher believe that with 'activity provision' students have additional motives to use and maintain Greek. These activities vary based on teacher initiatives but usually employ happenings like theater or more practical things such as sending letters to students in Greece. Teachers choose several activities to support students' language use with entertaining ways. Also, they help students from every level of language proficiency.

> *"Not all the students know good Greek and sometimes I employ charades, I try with the body language. Yes, with theater as well (…) it's easier for them to understand and it's fun."* (Interview with GR1).

The presence of peers and teachers is a valuable resource for students' HL use and maintenance. HL teachers shared cases in which students use GR either to communicate with peers/ friends or with parents. Sometimes, students use HL in order to prove their teachers and parents that they can do so but that does not undermine their linguistic skills. According to teachers, students do use the language to some extent and especially those who have recently moved to Sweden from Greece.

> *"Sometimes I talk with the parents and they tell me that when they are at school, they are trying to speak with me and with their classmates only in Greek."* (Interview with GR1).

"I try to keep the Greek inside and outside the classroom. I happen to have a multicultural classroom, so, many of my students are new to Sweden. These students speak to all my students that have been born here, only in Greek, so they can play, they help them. So, I think that they don't do that only because it is the Greek school and my teacher said that to me. I think that they are kind and good enough to help the others and to communicate with each other in Greek." (Interview with GR4).

To give a general picture of language use and maintenance it is critical to add some issues and challenges that GR HL teachers indicated. Four out of five teachers drew attention to the fact that there is difficulty using and maintaining Greek in such cases, when there is another dominant language in the country of residence. The answer is twofold, parents do not support enough their children's HL, and Swedish dominates students' life, so the use of Greek becomes sporadic. HL teachers believe that parental contribution to language use and maintenance is a stronger factor than their own contribution. There is noticeable difference between students who use Greek at home and those who do not. To sum up, student language skills pose challenges to the teachers.

"...[I]t is very difficult when the native language is not spoken in the country, the children are speaking it only at school or their house. But if they don't speak the language in their house, then they speak it only at school..." (Interview with GR1).

"They don't speak at all Greek at home, because they think that they should learn both the parents and the children Swedish because they live in Sweden. But this the big problem, if they don't speak the language at home with only once a week speaking the language at school, it is not possible to learn this language (...) [W]e speak Greek all day, for four or three hours. But after that, they start again to speak Swedish and that's the problem with children abroad." (Interview with GR3).

"Most of them (the students) they speak Swedish. But I have seen also the parents speaking Swedish to the children (...) What I am asking from the parents is to try in a family level and speak the language in order to help the children speak it as well." (Interview with GR5).

4.2.6 Perceived contribution to GR ethnic identity formation

This last sub-section of the GR HL teacher case answers research question 4 regarding contribution to ethnic identity formation. Teachers were asked questions concerning their contribution to HL students' ethnic identities creation and to give some examples from their personal experience. Answers revealed phenomena of HL use and maintenance, acknowledging a connection between HL and ethnic identity formation. HL is closely related to identity based on teacher perceptions and is a means to explore oneself.

*"I know that teaching Greek, and I am telling this to them, this could reveal another part of their character and identity, and of course I want to find this part." (*Interview with GR2).

Thematic analysis produced only one theme for ethnic identity formation:

Perceived contribution to ethnic identity formation

teacher partial contribution
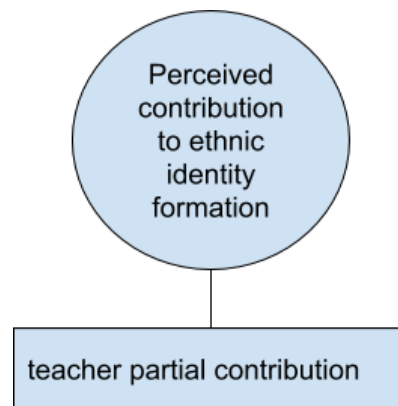
Figure 8: Perceived contribution to GR ethnic identity formation

The definition of this theme is presented in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Theme presentation for perceived contribution to GR ethnic identity formation		
Research question	Theme	Definition
Perceived contribution to ethnic identity formation	'teacher partial contribution'	Teachers do affect ethnic identity formation but only to some extent. Their general impact however is not substituting parental and family contribution.

Greek HL teachers acknowledged their contribution to ethnic identity formation but only to some extent ('teacher partial contribution'). This is achieved through HL teaching and the connection to Greek history, literature, cultural heritage and so forth. Teachers provide children with the opportunity to form a relationship with their ethnic identity by showing them different aspects of Greekness. Nonetheless, they believe that they are not the only factor that affects ethnic identity creation. Parental and family contribution is considered more influential than teachers' efforts.

"...[T]hrough my teaching, through the culture that I bring, I try to teach them the Greek culture. I think that the teacher is one of the most important ways, or person, to help the structure of the ethnic identity..." (Interview with GR4).

"Yes, because I am trying to remind them where they come from. It's important for all of us because we live abroad, and we must know our culture and language and

keep them. If they don't keep them then there is something wrong with me, with my work." (Interview with GR3).

However, teachers shared dissimilar observations concerning their students' sentiment of belonging. They divided students into two categories, those who have been born in Sweden and those who have recently migrated to Sweden from Greece. Students who have been born in Sweden do not experience a strong connection to their cultural heritage. They think that this is a part of their parents and not themselves. The latter category has a stronger feeling of Greekness and besides that, they speak and use Greek effortlessly. Analogously to these two categories are parental approaches and contribution to identity positioning and belonging.

> *"…[I] feel definitely responsible for doing my part (…) Some families don't have so much of Greek identity and they don't care that much (…) I am trying to build the motive on that. And of course, I feel responsible for their connection to the language. But it is too much to say that I am responsible for their identity (…) [T]o be honest I have children that they have no connection with Greece and their parents are not Greek anymore let's say, they don't travel, they don't speak the language (…) they don't have actual connections. So, I cannot say that in this group of students (…) I see it. I cannot say something about their identity. Of course, I am trying to show something to them -that might be interesting- but they have the right to say that it is not interesting at all because they don't see themselves in there (…) So, identity is really complicated."* (Interview with GR2).

> *"They don't feel like this. Many children say: 'No, I am not from Greece, I am from Sweden, but my parents are from Greece'. They feel like they are from Sweden, but their parents are Greek (…) They should learn Greek because it's their language. It's parents' language and it's their part (…) I speak for the children that have been born here, but children who have come from Greece and they are immigrants, are different. They want to speak in Greek, they are feeling Greek."* (Interview with GR5).

Chapter Five
Discussion on findings

This chapter examines the similarities and differences between the HL teachers' perceptions. It is divided into three sections. The first one includes a comparison of the contextual issues and the second one the comparison of the SE and GR teacher perceptions. The second section is based on research question 5 and is divided into several sub-sections in which the similarities and differences are separated based on what research questions 1-4 addressed. The third section that follows, is a general summary of the compared findings.

In some cases, existing literature justifies findings, so it is presented and discussed alongside the comparison. It points to enrich knowledge and examine the similarities or differences from previous studies. Many of the findings from both cases are in line with the book 'New Migration of Families From Greece to Europe and Canada: A 'New' Challenge for Education?' (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). The chapter is structured in the same order as findings were analyzed in Chapter Four. As mentioned previously, the results do not aim to generalize but to give some dimensional and phenomenal insights to HL teacher perceptions in HLE settings. Therefore, this comparative study aims to present some interesting insights to the overall HL phenomenon and highlight HL teacher perceptions in Stockholm and Athens.

5.1 General contextual data

In this section I compare contextual data regarding teacher background and qualification in teaching a HL. These findings were presented earlier in sub-sections 4.1.1 and 4.2.1 for each case. However, I do not include a comparison between the two schools (data in sub-sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.2) because the thesis focuses on the comparison between teachers in these schools.

Firstly, all teachers from both cases are native speakers of the language that they teach. A native speaker is someone who learns a language as a child and continues to speak it fluently throughout their life, as a dominant language (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Native speakers are known to use the language properly and fluently and to be identified with the community that has this language as a dominant/ native language as well (ibid). This does not mean that a person can have only one native language as it was obvious from SE4 who is a native speaker of both Greek and Swedish. Half of the interviewed teachers who teach Swedish as a HL, grew up in Sweden to Greek parents. On the other hand, none from the teachers who teach Greek as a HL, grew up in Greece to Swedish parents.

Concerning qualification, in the Swedish school in Athens, all but one teacher, have a pedagogical or linguistic-related background. In the Greek school of Stockholm, all HL teachers have a degree in Pedagogy, or Language and Literature studies. As far as the

language they teach, two out of four Swedish HL teachers hold a qualification for teaching Swedish as a second/ foreign language. None of Greek teachers is qualified in teaching Greek as a second /foreign language, but three out of five HL teachers have attended such seminars. It is a common phenomenon in Heritage Language Community Schools that some teachers might not have specific qualifications for teaching abroad, but usually they do have recognized qualifications in the language (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019), in those cases in Swedish and Greek. However, their experience in teaching Swedish and Greek as a second/ foreign language is unquestionable.

5.2 Comparison between SE and GR HL teachers

This section is divided into four sub-sections in which I compare the teachers from the Swedish School in Athens and the Greek School in Stockholm. The order of each sub-section follows the same pattern as findings were analyzed previously (in the sub-sections from 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 for the SE case and from 4.2.3 to 4.2.6 for the GR case).

5.2.1 Comparison of teachers' self perceptions of their role

Table 9 gives a presentation of the themes that emerged for describing teachers' self perceptions of their role in each case. The first vertical column includes all the themes regarding role perception, and in the next vertical column the reader can see the similarities and differences between the two teacher cases. The tables from now on follow the same pattern and are organized in the same way as Table 9.

Table 9: Comparison of teachers' self perceptions of their role		
Role perception (themes)	HL Teachers	
'more than mainstream foreign language teachers'	SE	GR
'cultural mediators'	SE	GR
'language guardians'	SE	GR
'orchestrators of social contexts of learning'	SE	
'assistants for academic achievement'	SE	
'cultural organizers'	SE	GR
'role models'		GR
'role significance'	SE	GR
'positive emotions'	SE	GR
'negative emotions'		GR

5.2.1.1 Similarities of teachers' self perceptions of their role

HL teachers from both cases regard themselves as 'more than mainstream foreign language teachers' since their profession is not like a common language-based teaching job. Their difference is that they do not only teach a language but culture, tradition,

literature, history, geography and others. HL teachers are important advocates of HL who connect students with many aspects of EV theory like culture and tradition (Pu, 2012).

Also, Swedish and Greek HL teachers view themselves as 'cultural mediators' (Diamond & Moore, 2000). This echoes similar findings in previous research of HL teacher role in which teachers regard themselves as "language and socio-cultural mediators" (Kirsch, 2019, p.215). Language is embodied with the culture (Dorian, 2014) and teachers are the ones who make this connection in the Heritage Language Community Schools. HL teachers connect students with the culture and with the ethnic context as well, helping them to understand and explore their identities through cultural knowledge (Diamond & Moore, 2000).

A further similarity of Swedish and Greek HL teachers' role is that they consider themselves as 'language guardians'. Similar assumptions are present in situations where teachers feel like representatives of the home country and protectors of HL (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019). HL teachers believe that they secure and support HL in their courses, giving students the possibility to acquire linguistic skills and explore their roots.

HL teachers from both cases agreed that they are 'cultural organizers', establishing spaces in their classrooms where the dynamic of culture is promoted (Diamond & Moore, 2000). This promotion is achieved through various activities and events that take place in Heritage Language Community Schools. Thus, HL teachers contribute to ethnic belonging endorsement and to community building.

Furthermore, teachers from both schools perceive their role as significant. They do contribute to the HL phenomenon with culturally responsive instruction (Pu, 2012). That means that in their teaching practices they have incorporated HL and cultural-linked resources (ibid). Their 'role significance' relates to parents, ethnic group and students.

Finally, HL teachers express 'positive emotions' towards their profession. These emotions include appreciation, honor, pride, satisfaction, happiness, excitement, good relationships with the colleagues and interest in the job. Teachers' positive feelings overthrow any challenge or difficulty that appears in their jobs. All of them shared enthusiastic stories from their teaching experience and mentioned that they are satisfied in this kind of job.

5.2.1.2 Differences of teachers' self perceptions of their role

A difference between Swedish and Greek teachers, is that Swedish HL teachers consider themselves as 'orchestrators of social contexts of learning' (Diamond & Moore, 2000). That means that they are aware of the benefits that HL and culture instruction have for their students (ibid). This process supplies the students with various advantages such as motivation and personal connection to the Swedish ethnic context.

Another difference is that Swedish teachers count as a part of their role assisting students in academic achievement in the HL. They provide children with the appropriate skills to participate and succeed in exams that give them the possibility to study in Sweden. So, the HL level of their students is high enough. This practice is not unfamiliar in HLE

since HL learners are encouraged to participate in such exams as it might increase career and educational opportunities (Creese et al., 2006; Kirsch, 2019).

Analysis on Greek HL teachers revealed an extra role description that was classified under the theme 'role models'. This is tied to the positive influence that they might have to students' lives. They perceive themselves as influential individuals who motivate students to learn, explore and further develop their ethnolinguistic identities. This theme is connected with 'role significance' but Greek HL teachers stressed it as a more personality- and background-related feature.

Lastly, Greek teachers shared some 'negative emotions' that they experience in their profession. These emotions have a more practical and administrative character and do not have to do with their students' or school's qualities. They experience challenges that include for instance, bureaucracy and lack of appropriate teaching material. Similar challenges are reported in other Greek Heritage Language Community Schools. That shows a lack of sponsorship from the Greek Ministry of Education that has stopped supporting such schools in diaspora mainly due to the state's financial crisis (Lytra, 2019 cited in Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019).

5.2.2 Comparison of perceived purposes of HL instruction

The mission of HL instruction goes beyond simply transmitting a language and culture to the next generation. It requires foreseeing Heritage Language Community Schools not only as safe spaces (Creese et al., 2006) for linguistic and cultural maintenance, identity construction and developing ethnic connection, but also as educational spaces tightly embedded within a broader multicultural society (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Table 10 illustrates the themes that describe HL instruction purposes.

Table 10: Comparison of perceived purposes of HL instruction		
Perceived purposes (themes)	HL Teachers	
'more than a language class'	SE	GR
'language maintenance'	SE	GR
'teacher responsibility'	SE	GR
'group/ social support'	SE	GR
'participation in social events'	SE	GR
'cultural connection'		GR
'motivation'		GR
'language interdependence'		GR

5.2.2.1 Similarities of perceived purposes of HL instruction

To start with, Swedish and Greek HL teachers are aware that HLE is more than a typical language-focused instruction. The content of HL instruction includes, in addition to language skills, aspects of culture, customs, history, geography knowledge and so forth.

Through these additional subjects HL students are encouraged to understand the ethnic context better. For some scholars, language has "culture-carrying capacity" and culture is embodied with language (Dorian, 2014, p.461).

A similar purpose of Swedish and Greek HL instruction is 'language maintenance' a basic pillar of EV theory (Reid & Giles, 2010). Language maintenance is usually one of the central purposes of Heritage Language Community Schools (Chatzidaki, 2019; Otcu, 2010; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). Under the theme of language maintenance, language development, language comprehension, language use practices, and oral and writing skills are incorporated. In both cases language maintenance seems to be a goal of the school, the teachers, the ethnic group and the parents (Fishman, 1979).

Moreover, SE and GR teachers highlighted 'teacher responsibility'. Teachers perceive it as their duty to provide opportunities to students and use appropriate methods to support HL learning. Responsibility is multilevel and includes development of student skills and engagement with the HL. The skills include language development, provision of appropriate educational material, academic achievements and success in examinations. Specifically, student success in examinations is seen as a prospect for children to study in the country of origin if they wish to do so. Students regularly succeed in these exams and this is viewed positively as a personal and educational achievement. However, regarding parents who wish their children to participate in such exams, they basically have in mind their right to access to higher education systems in the homeland. Damanakis coined the term "instrumentalization of ethnocultural diversity" for this occurrence (Damanakis, 2007, p. 108 cited in Chatzidaki, 2019, p.156). It indicates that members of an ethnic group take advantage of their right to diversity with the objective of achieving personal benefits (Chatzidaki, 2019).

A further similarity is the significant presence of group/ peers as a contributor to HL development. Interaction with peers benefits both students' linguistic skills and ethnic belonging. Many perceive Heritage Language Community Schools as places where children have the opportunity to meet peers who share the same background and engage in social happenings (Gaiser and Hughes, 2015 cited in Kirsch, 2019). Also, peers activate students' motivation for HL learning (Kirsch, 2019; Mohammed, 2011).

Teachers in both schools perceive 'participation in social events' as a basic purpose of HL instruction. These events include happenings such as celebration of national days, traditional/ cultural events, where students participate actively in. Ethnic groups share common past, traditions, celebrations, customs that they wish to sustain when they live abroad (Levine & Hogg, 2010). It connects them with cultural qualities and to each other so that they achieve ethnic group connection as well. Participation in social events is an essential part of HL schooling, an aspect of EV theory (Levine & Hogg, 2010), and is present in corresponding literature (Kirsch, 2019; Mohammed, 2011; Pu, 2012).

5.2.2.2 Differences of perceived purposes of HL instruction

Compared to the Swedish case, Greek teachers introduced three additional purposes of HL instruction based on their understandings. First, they mentioned 'cultural connection'

meaning that through HLE students get to know Greek culture and connect with it. According to academic research, language operates as a vehicle of culture (Dorian, 2014) and this is a statement that all Greek HL teachers made. Heritage Language Community Schools aim to stimulate HL and culture learning (Stylou, 2019). This is tied to identity formation and cultural maintenance among ethnic group members. Heritage Language Community Schools are usually the setting that immigrant communities trust to assist them keeping their language and culture alive (Kirsch, 2019; Stylou, 2019).

Moreover, Greek HL teachers believe that HLE equips students with 'motivation' which includes other practices like encouragement, inspiration, and a safe space to use and explore HL (Creese et al., 2006). HL instruction activates and values cultural identity and this empowers students (Cummins, 1966 cited in Mohammed, 2011). Also, in similar studies on HL student motivation it includes features of language proficiency and social opportunities for example, friendships and interaction with peers (Kirsch, 2019). Motivating children to learn the HL is done by clarifying why they should learn it and connecting it to the ethnic community setting for example, cultural interaction/ artifacts (ibid.).

To finish, some GR teachers acknowledged the benefits that HL offers to the development of other languages. This is known as 'language interdependence' and it supports the transfer of academic skills and knowledge across languages with no cost (Cummins, 2007). It assumes that languages share common underlying proficiency (ibid). According to teachers, Greek HL knowledge is related to Swedish language knowledge and improves student proficiency in both languages.

5.2.3 Comparison of perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance

According to existing research, multilingualism and HL maintenance provides people with an extended sense of 'self', of family, of community and global citizenship (Duff & Li, 2014). A Heritage Language Community School increases the language input and provides a context where the students practice the HL (Mohammed, 2011), but it is not enough. HL teachers from both schools are aware that their HL is not a common language in the host country, thus their efforts are numerous to achieve language maintenance. They admit that it is hard to avoid acquiring the dominant/ official language of the country but still they try their best to provide their students with opportunities to learn and practice the HL. Table 11 includes the themes which emerged to describe teacher perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance.

Table 11: Comparison of perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance		
Perceived contribution (themes)	HL Teachers	
'monolingual classroom practices'	SE	GR
'safe space'	SE	

'high expectations'	SE	
'encouragement'	SE	GR
'activity provision'	SE	GR
'teacher as a native speaker'	SE	
'social interaction in HL'		GR
'significance of language maintenance and use'		GR

5.2.3.1 Similarities of perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance

A common strategy of SE and GR teachers to support HL use and maintenance is 'monolingual classroom practices'. With this technique they encompass the singular use of HL during courses as they aim to reinforce, support and maintain students' skills. Teachers in Heritage Language Community Schools usually favor monoglossic classroom practices (Kirsch, 2019) because they believe that it is a beneficial way to encourage language use and maintenance. HL lessons are supposed to be monolingually-oriented considering that teachers and students share common linguistic roots (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019; Mohammed, 2011). However, students and teachers have been reported to use the dominant language of the host country as well, than solely the HL. Studies have also proven that bilingualism/ multilingualism is the norm in such schools and that teacher-student interaction includes a pliable language use (Kirsch, 2019). This dynamic and flexible language (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019; Mohammed, 2011) includes practices like translanguaging, and it aims to confront student linguistic challenges in various ways (Kirsch, 2019). One such challenge is that students lack vocabulary in HL so they use other languages as a means to express themselves (García, 2009 cited in Kirsch, 2019). Some argue though that monolingual ideologies and classroom practices clash with student multilingual and multicultural realities and they do not guarantee HL use outside of school (Kirsch, 2019). This institutional monolingualism can be challenged by students who might bring along dissimilar linguistic and cultural resources and experiences (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019).

A further similarity of SE and GR teachers is 'encouragement' which they consider beneficial in HL use and maintenance. Encouragement includes support in practicing the HL with the parent/ teacher/ peers/ ethnic group. There are discouraging elements (for example, children speaking the dominant language) but teachers try to explain and encourage the students to practice HL in order to maintain it.

Furthermore, HL teachers offer different kinds of activities ('activity provision'), for instance book reading, theater, that provide students with additional motives (besides structured HL teaching) to use and maintain their HL. Providing interesting activities is a strategy that is present in literature as well (Kirsch, 2019). Activities help students to practice the HL and learn more about the ethnic context. In this way, teachers stimulate student interest and boost participation in HL classroom (Kirsch, 2019).

5.2.3.2 Differences of perceived contribution to HL use and maintenance

A difference between SE and GR HL teachers, is that SE believe that they offer their students a 'safe space' where they can use and potentially maintain HL. That implies that classrooms operate like a space in which students are encouraged to develop and use their HL. Also, students feel comfortable to improve language skills, can make mistakes, have opportunities to grow, explore their identity and gain motivation. Similar assumptions, that community schools are safe spaces, exist in HLE literature (Chatzidaki, 2019; Creese et al., 2006; Lytra & Martin, 2010; Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019) and highlight the contribution of HL classrooms to the promotion of student "communicate repertoires in order to perform their identities" (Chatzidaki, 2019, p.158).

Additionally, Swedish HL teachers have 'high expectations' from their students. This is related to language use and maintenance. It is performed as a technique in order to engage more and maintain the HL. Teachers expect from students to have decent oral and writing skills, advanced vocabulary and proficient understanding of Swedish. It is interesting that HL teachers have high expectations concerning student competence as in similar studies it is the parents who seem to have this kind of anticipations (Kirsch, 2019).

Swedish HL teachers think that being a 'native speaker' is important for HL use and maintenance. According to their point of view, having a teacher who is native of the HL is considered as a benefit for successful language use and maintenance. Native speakers do not only provide students with a correct form of HL but also, they can connect students to the ethnic context through their own experience. Having native speakers as HL teachers is found in other contexts as well, and it is tied with some sort of perceived superiority in language use and delivery (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016). However, there is no scientific evidence that non-native speakers cannot be skillful HL teachers. For this unjustified belief, Holliday coined the term 'native-speakerism' (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). It is based on the assumption that native speaker teachers of English are superior to those whose mother tongue is other than English. The argument is that they represent and reflect values and ideals of the western English-speaking world (ibid).

Nonetheless, GR HL teachers added 'social interaction in HL' as an important factor in language use and maintenance. They shared occasions in which students were using the Greek language either to communicate with peers and friends or with their parents and teachers. The motivation behind this varies but still students try to use it to some extent even if they do have proficient linguistic skills. According to teachers, this is a positive sign for language maintenance.

To conclude, Greek HL teachers acknowledge the 'significance of language maintenance and use' not only for the HL learner but also for the ethnic group. Parents do agree with this notion since they choose to send their children to the Heritage Language Community school, and they expect the teachers to assist them in this process. These schools are positive providers of language opportunities and maintenance (Pauwels, 2016). HL teachers are aware and appreciate this necessity, thus they do their best in order to enable students to use and maintain their HL. Also, teachers perceive parents as the

key factor for language maintenance. Similar viewpoints were also found in the literature review (Olsson, 2012). Using the language at home is a vital practice to maintain it. If there is no input at home, then the school or the teachers themselves cannot do a lot as children go there only once a week for a few hours.

5.2.4 Comparison of perceived contribution to ethnic identity formation

Heritage Language Community Schools principally aim for HL development and a corresponding ethnic identity of migrants (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2019; Pu, 2012). The connection between ethnic identity and HL is present in both cases and is supported in literature by several authors (Damanakis, 2017; J. A. Fishman & García, 2011; Lytra, 2016; Mohammed, 2011; Otcu, 2010). Some researchers do not singularize ethnic identity but they distinguish linguistic and cultural identities among ethnic groups (Mohammed, 2011; Otcu, 2010). Teachers in these schools are aware of the multifarious identities (bicultural, bilingual and others) that their students hold (Lytra & Martin, 2010). Therefore, they convert their practices in order to accommodate their needs, putting away stereotypical assumptions of unrealistic ethnic identity demand (Lytra & Martin, 2010). They have developed some form of "intercultural competence" (Chatzidaki, 2019, p.160) because they transform teaching practices and approaches to assist student needs as much as possible through their role. HL teachers in both schools do perceive language as a major marker of ethnic identity. In Table 12 I present the comparison between the two cases concerning ethnic identity formation.

Table 12: Comparison of perceived contribution to ethnic identity formation		
Perceived contribution (themes)	HL Teachers	
'teacher partial contribution'	SE	GR

Only one theme emerged from both cases, so it is a similarity between SE and GR teachers. HL teachers believe that they do affect ethnic identity formation but only to some extent. Thus, they do not view themselves as absolute factors in creating students' identities. Their impact is not substituting parental contribution which is the most powerful component in reinforcing ethnic belonging. Teachers also claimed that group continuity (Reid & Giles, 2010), a pillar of EV theory, is either impossible or difficult without parental support in HL phenomenon.

Students in these schools have bicultural and bilingual hybrid identities that do not fit precisely into essentialized and motionless identity categories (Lytra 2014 cited in Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). For example, Greek HL teachers divided students into two categories; those who were born in Sweden and those who have recently migrated to Sweden. They mentioned that students from the latter category, have a stronger sense of belonging to Greece. Research has identified a positive correlation between HL

proficiency and ethnic identity (Oriyama, 2010). Teachers do appreciate the linguistic and cultural resources that the newly arrived students from Greece bring to the HL classroom. Therefore, they value their contribution in HL courses to a high degree (Peterson & Heywood, 2007). Certainly, in both ethnic contexts, Swedishness and Greekness go hand in hand simultaneously and challenge each other. Students are attached to an ethnic background but are influenced also from the host country (Otcu, 2010).

To sum up, ethnic identity is a debatable issue and its construction varies depending on family setting or ethnic group's objectives (Creese et al., 2006). Generally, identity in sociolinguistic studies is perceived as a dynamic and "shifting position" (Creese et al., 2006, p.25) which is shaped by both the context and individual participation (Creese et al., 2006). For sure, language and identity are socially, historically and contextually fabricated and performed (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2004). Language and identity are fluid and diverse practices (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019) and not absolute. Thus, it is difficult to reflect upon from them only from the teacher perspective.

5.3 Comparison summary

Regarding self-perceptions of teacher role, HL teachers from both schools described themselves with characterizations that include cultural and linguistic connotations. They provide their students emotional and practical assistance to achieve goals and at the same time to explore themselves. Teachers of Swedish are aware that HL has a positive impact in the overall learning process, and they stressed their contribution to academic achievement. Greek HL teachers added that they are role models for their students. Generally, HL teachers perceive their contribution to HL phenomenon as significant and have positive emotions about their job. Only Greek HL teachers shared negative emotions, but they concern administrative and practical challenges and not the job itself.

Concerning the purposes of HL instruction, it contains common objectives, for example: connection building, possibilities study at 'home', ethnic community building, identity formation, HL development, use and maintenance, teaching ethnic values/ traditions and others. Additionally, to these, GR HL teachers added three more purposes; cultural connection, motivation provision and language interdependence.

HL teachers from both schools, support language use and maintenance by adopting suitable pedagogical techniques such as activities, material and classroom practices. Also, through interaction and encouragement students use and eventually maintain their HL. Swedish HL teachers provide a safe space where language use and maintenance take place and they have high expectations from students. Moreover, they believe that being a native speaker of the HL helps children to learn the language better. On the other hand, Greek teachers consider social interaction in the HL beneficial for language maintenance.

Last, HL teachers from both cases offer a space where identity negotiation takes place, more securely than in other contexts (Creese et al., 2006). They believe that they play a role in ethnic identity formation, but it is partial since they cannot counterweight parental impact.

Chapter Six
Conclusions

The last chapter of the present thesis consists of three sections. In the first one, I highlight the key-findings that have been explored and discussed in this thesis in relation to the research questions. Then, some methodological, theoretical and personal reflections are given. In the third section, it concludes with some suggestions for future research on the HL phenomenon.

6.1 Conclusion

The present thesis has explored how teachers in two Heritage Language Community Schools in Athens and Stockholm, perceive their role. Their role relates to practices that encompass language maintenance and use, ethnic identity formation, and cultural continuity abroad. All these components-objectives of the study are tied with Ethnolinguistic Vitality (EV) theory (Giles et al., 1985; Reid & Giles, 2010; Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016). Employing a qualitative research approach, the study gave voice to nine HL teachers through the method of interviewing. It used their experiences and perceptions to answer five research questions which examine teachers' perceived contribution to the components that are mentioned above. Although the findings are not generalizable for HL teachers worldwide, they confirm data from previous research on Greek HL educational settings (Chatzidaki, 2019; Stylou, 2019) and give interesting insights correspondingly to the Swedish case.

Research question one investigated the self-perceptions of HL teachers' role in Athens and Stockholm. Teachers from both schools regard themselves as more than mainstream foreign languages tutors who teach culture, tradition, and ethnic values besides the HL. Also, they are 'cultural mediators' who connect HL students with their culture and ethnic roots. Additionally, they guard the HL and they represent the home country. As 'cultural organizers' they establish spaces in classrooms where they promote the dynamic of culture aiming to reinforce ethnic and community belonging. HL teachers are significant actors of culturally responsive instruction and they have positive emotions towards their jobs. Swedish and Greek HL teachers highlighted two additional role perceptions each. Swedish HL teachers are 'orchestrators of social contexts of learning' who provide students with skills and motivation to explore their identities in HLE settings. Also, they assist students to academically succeed in HL. HL teachers of Greek are 'role models' for their students as they positively influence students to engage and explore their ethnolinguistic identities. They shared some negative emotions that are of administrative and practical nature and not connected to the character of the job.

The second research question explored the perceived purposes of Swedish and Greek instruction as heritage languages. Teachers from both schools agreed that this kind of instruction is more than a language class, similarly to the fact that they consider themselves as 'more than a mainstream foreign language teachers'. Another purpose of

HLE is 'language maintenance' which includes language development and use by the students. Also, providing opportunities and using appropriate teaching methods is 'teacher's responsibility' in HL classrooms. Heritage Language Community Schools offer an environment in which students benefit from social support from peers and participation in community events. Greek HL teachers added three more purposes of HL instruction. They perceive 'cultural connection' as a purpose of HL instruction, which keeps the culture alive abroad. Furthermore, students gain motivation to explore their identities and use the HL. As a last point, Greek HL teachers believe that HL proficiency is beneficial for the development in other languages.

Language maintenance and use in diaspora were investigated through the third research question. Swedish and Greek HL teachers use 'monolingual classroom practices' to ensure HL use and maintenance. In addition, they encourage and support students to use HL with parents, teachers, peers and ethnic groups. Through 'activity provision' teachers provide students with additional motives to use and maintain their HL. Concerning language maintenance, Swedish HL teachers offer a 'safe space' where students are encouraged to use and develop their HL. They have 'high expectations' from students in order to make them engage more and maintain the language. A teacher who is a 'native speaker' contributes as well since students benefit linguistically and culturally. Greek HL teachers added two points in language use and maintenance efforts. 'Social interaction' in the HL advances students' skills and promote language maintenance. Also, they highly value HL not only for the students but for the parents and ethnic group as well.

The fourth research question addressed ethnic identity creation in diaspora. Both Swedish and Greek HL teachers acknowledge the relationship between language and identity formation. However, they believe that they partially shape students' ethnic identities. Parental and family contribution is more influential than teachers and the school.

6.2 Theoretical Reflections

While connecting the key-findings to the EV theory that is adopted in this thesis, some theoretical and methodological reflections arise. According to teacher perceptions, EV in these two schools is present in teachers', ethnic group's and parents' behavior. Both the Swedes in Athens and the Greeks in Stockholm, behave as a collectivity with their own intergroup circumstances (Giles et al., 1985). These two ethnic groups have dynamic relationships with their languages. Also, they do strive for language continuity. The application of EV theory in this study gives insights to phenomena such as language maintenance efforts and attitudes of the two ethnic groups. As EV has been calculated within cultures, its shape has been found to differ from context to context (Reid & Giles, 2010). For these two cases it is vital to maintain their language and culture as togetherness positively distinguishes them from others.

Regarding ethnolinguistic identity, both teacher groups identify with HL and not the dominant language of the host country. EV attempts are present by the fact that ethnic groups develop and sustain HLE opportunities and teachers are there to support HL students (Fishman & García, 2011). In this thesis EV ties together how teachers subjectively perceive their role and organize HL instruction. All the variables that form this theoretical position are present; language maintenance, ethnic identity formation and language use. Teacher practices highlight EV theory in similar ways in both contexts alongside some differences that were underlined in Chapter Five.

6.3 Methodological Reflections

Several limitations were presented earlier in this study, for instance, the small sample size and generalizability of the research. Despite these, the thesis offers insights to a sociolinguistic phenomenon which is not widely known or popular to explore. Actually, very little has been written about HL teachers. Teacher perceptions and experiences give interesting visions to the overall sociolinguistic field of HL. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method of enquiry. It generated detailed responses that allowed the researcher to engage with teachers' experiences and perceptions. The interview responses gave valuable material to address the research questions and objectives of the study.

As it has already been discussed, this thesis focuses on subjective realities and personal stories of the actors (HL teachers) that play a major role in the HL phenomenon. Of course language, identity, and values mean diverse things to different people (Fishman & García, 2011). The study affirms the importance of HLE as well as parental involvement, ethnic community interaction and mainly HL teachers' contribution. It is crucial for countries and education systems to recognize the value of HL schools as they offer numerous advantages in student development and life (Nagra, 2010; Pu, 2012). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that ethnolinguistic vitality cannot be achieved merely by the school and the teachers themselves.

6.4 Author's Reflections

Expanding the discussion and conclusion of this project, some personal reflections are given. Despite some differences, HL teachers in both schools have many similarities. Addressing the general question of why there are so many similarities, one can tell that such schools are places in which teachers experience their role in similar ways. The school settings are analogous, and they have common objectives; to attain ethnolinguistic maintenance in diaspora. The theory of EV is present in both cases and that could be also a reason why teachers have so many similarities. One interesting point is that all HL teachers are native speakers of the language that they teach. So, they have a personal and sentimental connection to the HL. This suggests that their efforts and contribution to HLE are driven from this fact. Although more research in this area could illuminate a

connection between teachers of HL who are native speakers and ethnolinguistic maintenance efforts.

As far as the differences, most of them were not about significant perceptions and observations. Their different perceptions might be a result of diverse upbringing, qualification, academic background, job experience, or teaching or pedagogical methods. Teachers highlighted different aspects of HL instruction and mostly these ideas were adding to the other teacher group's responses. A good example is the perceived purposes of HL instruction in which GR HL teachers named three more purposes to the purposes that SE HL teachers shared. It was expected to discern some differences since two schools in two significantly different countries and cultures were investigated. However, teachers in these schools have many things in common when it comes to self-perceptions of their role and HL instruction. This could be related to attempts described by EV theory, of holding on to one's culture and language while living abroad.

More interviews would have shed an additional light on this comparison, and the findings might be different affecting the similarities and differences as well. However, the existing interviews and teachers' insights are very much appreciated. I tried to code the data in a sufficient way that would help me address the research questions, theoretical framework and objectives of the study. Other researchers might have coded differently but from my viewpoint and interaction with the teachers, I decided to present the findings in this specific way. Part of the results connect with similar findings in literature and this was considered as a strength. However, the aim was not to test a hypothesis or justify previous findings but to add knowledge on the existing HLE research.

6.5 Suggestions for future research

Immigrant communities have been constantly attempted to keep their ethnic heritage alive by teaching their language, culture and values (Stylou, 2019). Heritage language is no longer a novel concept. It is an internationally acknowledged field that is separate and distinct from the long-standing foreign language education. The HL student population is recognized by institutions as well as governments to be a fundamental language-learning population today as the world confronts the effects of its linguistic infirmity in the era of globalization. HL speakers are the most capable population group of accomplishing the advanced levels of language proficiency qualifications required in professional level requests (Carreira et al., 2017). Moreover, Heritage Language Community Schools are essential sites for the flow and establishment of what counts as 'legitimate' HLE, culture and ethnic identity (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Hence, HL schools should be considered significant contexts that demand further research (Kim, 2017; Nagra, 2010).

Social realities and actors that are tied to HLE are constantly changing (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). In sociolinguistics and language education enquiry, understanding languages is not the priority any longer. Languages are considered social and ideological structures that are located in local, trans-local and transnational circumstances (Blackledge & Creese, 2010 cited in Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Language as a resource and social actors' repertoires affect these contexts and form

linguistic realities and practices (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). HL is not an isolated phenomenon in the field of language education (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003) so we need to raise awareness about it as migration flows have not stopped and this kind of ethnic group need continues to exist. Many people are unaware of the linguistic and cultural efforts of ethnic groups to maintain their identities (Reid & Giles, 2010). Language use/ instruction, teacher qualifications, family choice on HL schools and other components of the phenomenon merit further research.

Specifically, there is need for broader research through an interdisciplinary lens combining areas like culture, linguistics, sociology and psychology of all the factors (for example, students, teachers) that interplay in the HL phenomenon (Gergova et al., 2018). It would be interesting to see how students, parents and teachers perceive the purposes and experience HL instruction, as it was investigated by Kirsch in the Greek Complementary School in Luxembourg (Kirsch, 2019). This could also be done by extending the scope of the present project to student and parent perceptions of attending these two researched schools. Another point concerning parents and children, is whose choice is to attend Heritage Language Community Schools and how children's ethnolinguistic identity is shaped. Many teachers from both cases said that the parents choose to send their children to such schools. Others highlighted that children do not feel the connection to the ethnic group, but they just keep going to the school because their parents want them to. Thus, I think it is worthy to investigate it from the students' scope as students and teachers are the central actors of HLE phenomenon.

Also, further research on Greek and Swedish HL teacher self-perceptions of their role could prove how generalizable these findings are to other contexts or give valuable and general insights to these two ethnic cases. There is already a significant research body for Greek HL teachers and schools in diaspora but very little was found for the Swedish case. The present thesis had a more analytic and exploratory character on the phenomenon of HLE in two schools. Future ICE research has many possibilities to explore, for instance, to concentrate on these two HL teacher groups (of Swedish and Greek HL) and research all teachers from HL instruction settings. In both countries there are smaller settings[31] in other cities in which students attend HLE. It would be interesting to research them as this could generate some general patterns and characteristics for Greek and Swedish HL teachers in Sweden and Greece.

In most of the documented cases, HL does not survive in more than three generations but there are some instances in which they managed to live on and sustain themselves (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016). The third-generation stage is considered a crucial point (Alba et al., 2002 cited in Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019) in HL and cultural maintenance. Certainly, institutional support, HL teachers and ethnic group attempts help the preservation of language and culture (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2019). Also, even second- or third-generation children have gains from going to Heritage Language Community Schools for the reason that they build links with their community and culture

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[31] This information was retrieved from the website of each Heritage Language Community School.

(Chatzidaki, 2019). In the arena of everyday input, HL schools and teachers offer a unique place where students develop and reflect upon their linguistic and cultural capital. The promotion of research in HL acknowledges linguistic diversity and hybrid identities which are present in the great majority of the countries nowadays (Schmidt, 2008). Language and cultural heritage in diaspora (Gergova et al., 2018) are of outmost importance nowadays, in the era of massive migration (Sakamoto & Matsubara Morales, 2016).

> *"...[L]anguage is a carrier of culture. Through language people express their creations. The most important thing: a migrant takes their language with them and that is enough. Language is the most important possession[32]."* (Interview with GR1).

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[32] Direct translation from Greek: "[Η] γλώσσα είναι φορέας πολιτισμού. Με τη γλώσσα εκφράζει ένας λαός τα δημιουργήματά του. Και το πιο σημαντικό: ένας μετανάστης παίρνει μαζί του τη γλώσσα του, και αυτό φτάνει. Είναι το πιο σημαντικό πράγμα που έχει, η γλώσσα."

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide

What is included in the parentheses was not asked to teachers directly. It was only used in cases when the teachers needed explanations, examples and/ or prompts.

Introductory Part
1) Tell me a bit about your professional and personal life please. What did you study and what is your relationship with Greek/ Swedish language? a. How did you end up being a HL teacher abroad? b. Could you please describe the school setting you work in? c. How do you experience teaching in such a school?
2) Did you choose to be a HL teacher? a. Do you have a teaching degree? b. Do you have any qualification for teaching the language? (for example, mother tongue teaching degree?)
Main part
3) How would you generally describe your role as a HL teacher?
4) Do you think that you have an important role because you teach a language/ culture abroad? a. Could you give me some examples from your teaching experience? (Prompting: Feel free to use examples from many fields like history, tradition, culture not only language)
5) As a HL teacher do you think that you play a major role in your students' language maintenance? How?
6) Do you think that you are a means to connect your students with Greece/ Sweden through your teaching? a) How/ Why?
7) Would you say that you also affect forming students' ethnic identities? (Explanation for belonging: a person's sense of belonging to a state or nation). (Prompting: through teaching their native language, history etc). a) Could you provide some examples from your experience?
8) Do you affect your students' language behavior? Could you please provide an example? (Prompting: Do they speak more Greek to each other because of you?)
Concluding part
9) How do you experience or feel about your job role in general? Could you give me an example as well? (Prompting: you can describe positive or negative feelings, memories and so forth) a. Are you satisfied from your role/ position in your profession?
10) Please feel free to add whatever you think it is relevant to the topic or you forgot to mention earlier.

Appendix B: Consent form by SU
Master's Programme in International and Comparative Education (2018-2020)

Consent form

We hope you are willing to take part in the study investigating "Teaching a heritage language abroad". The study aims to investigate how heritage language teachers perceive their role through language teaching abroad, in migrant settings. The implications of the study are to the potential research of a Master Thesis project. In order to carry out the study we need to collect the interview data from language teachers who teach abroad in a migrant/community school, during the period of January 2020. We will use the results for a comparative analysis in order to present our future Thesis study. The study forms part of the compulsory program curriculum and is supervised by one of the assigned supervisors of Dept. of Education at Stockholm University, who will ensure that students adhere to all the necessary rules. The resulting assignment is assessed and graded by an examiner at the end of the course. We ask for your approval to use the data collected for the study. Participation is always voluntary. In order to collect data for the study, we need your signed consent on the second page of this form. Even in the case that you sign the form at this point, it is still possible for you to withdraw from participation at any time without giving a motivation why. During the course of the student working on the study your personal data are protected and will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons. We will store recordings and other details in a safeguarded manner. Any photographic/ video/ sound collected in the first phase will be anonymized, coded and transcribed as text. This will be done immediately upon transmission in order to disable any potential for detecting that you have participated. The consent forms will be kept in locked storage at Stockholm University so that they may not be linked to our recording. When the study is completed and the assignment has passed assessment, we will destroy the original data that has been collected (e.g. film/sound files, or digital survey). The results of the study will be published in the course assignment in a manner that will not reveal the participant's identity. The study adheres to the guidelines on research ethics and common laws. You may read more about these at the bottom of page 2. In order to complete the study, it is very valuable for us to receive your consent. Please contact us in case you need further information.

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Consent Form for Heritage Language Teacher

I have taken part of the information of the study and accept that the material is recorded and stored for use in the student's course assignment:

□ Yes

□ No

The name of the informant:…………………………....………………..

Date and signature…………………………..…….………………………