

The Discourse of Parents' Competency in Upbringing in Latvian Media Space (2004–2016)

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Abstract. *The sociopolitical situation in Latvia after joining the European Union in 2004 promoted changes in the society and, as a consequence, substantiated the necessity for the transformation of views and processes in the family as well. This situation initiated the search for and the definition of the new focus within upbringing in the family, all the while stating the dominating discourses both in theory and practice. The change of topical trends also stimulated the discussion on the implementer of the upbringing discourse – the parents – the content and form of the competency in upbringing, thus stating the relevant emphases within the actual situation. This article introduces the analysis of the parents' competency in upbringing, revealed in the printed medium Mans Mazais ("My Little One") – a significant and stable promoter of the upbringing discourse among parents and future parents in Latvia since 1994 – with the aim to identify and portray the dominant parenting approaches.*

Keywords: *parents' competency in upbringing, family, upbringing, media discourse, education.*

1. Introduction

The sociopolitical and economic situation in Latvia, since its membership in the European Union in 2004, led to a widening of

all kinds of borders, including the scope of ideas. This has promoted the introduction of different viewpoints, thoughts and ideas in the Latvian society and, as a con-

sequence, widened the framework of values, interpretation and processes within all the social institutions, including the family. This situation initiated the search for new reference points also within family upbringing, all the while stating the main discourses both in theory and practice. The broadened scope of these trends has also promoted the discussion on the implementer of the upbringing discourse – the contents and form of the parental upbringing competency, while highlighting relevant aspects within the topical social situation.

Family has been viewed as one of the basic values throughout the whole anthropogenesis process; however, following the change of the century and society, family as a social institution and as a group has undergone changes within its sociocultural component (Jansone-Ratinika, 2013). Despite the theoretically-philosophical or sociological interpretation viewing family as a particle of the community and the basis of the structural design or studying the family within such framework, the link and interrelation between family and society cannot be denied (Baacke, 1999). All the political and economic changes affect the family both as a social and subjective category. Therefore, the polemics on the family as a social group and its preservation in the transformative situation have become vitally topical (Medne, 2010). This situation is characteristic of primarily industrial, Western countries (Mollenhauer, 2003) and the post-Communist society, which are significantly affected by transformative changes (Rubene, 2004). Latvia is also affected by the polemics of this issue. Active discussions are taking place at the state level, which interpret the fam-

ily as a social institution in the first place and highlight its structure, but not the essence of upbringing (Medne, 2010). That discussion comprises the configuration of polar opinions and attitudes both defending the traditional family by highlighting it as one of the most significant values for building the moral climate in the society and placing partnership as an alternative to the traditional family by emphasizing the traditional family as a rudimentary formation, which is morally obsolete and limits a person's autonomy. The trend to search for a uniform vision on the innovative status of the modern family, based on either a protest directed toward the classical forms of cultural life or, just the opposite, on the assumption that the family undergoing different changes, is a way to survive in the transformative situation which, in its turn, helps the next generation to integrate into the relationships of the new type and quality and deal with the challenges of the future (Rubene, 2008; Schneewind, Ruppert, 1995). The relentless topicality of this discussion is confirmed by the year 2015, which marked the symbolic self-presentation code for the concrete issue in Latvia, as the discussion on the so-called “moral amendments” to the Education Law were topicalized within the whole society. On July 15th, 2015 a new norm was introduced in the Education Law, aimed at the implementation of moral education within the education system in accordance with the values included and preserved by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, especially such as marriage and family. “Moral amendments” and their development process have initiated lively discussions among specialists and the society at large. Within this discussion, family upbringing

was assigned a secondary position, despite the fact that the upbringing discourse has been topical in all the stages of the development of the society, as the issue of the strategic or ideal aim of family upbringing was significant within all the periods. The image of a “child as an actor” being the aim of upbringing is highlighted in the modern scholarly literature and daily life practice. The social assumptions of the society members are closely linked with the interpretation of the concepts of “child” and “childhood” across different time periods (Dinka, 2014). The pluralism of viewpoints and the styles of daily life characteristic of the post-modern situation has also promoted the introduction of upbringing liberalization trends and the formation of the child-centred society. Thereby, the change of the ideological focus within upbringing has been introduced: from directive to humane. Within this interpretation, the child, his/her needs are placed in the center of upbringing. However, within the modern society, one more trend has been topicalized, which also lead to challenges for family upbringing – it calls for perfect things, an ideal face, visually aesthetical bodies and this way becomes the characteristic variable of the perfect or ideal family (Parke, 2013). The situation described reveals the research problem, which substantiates the formulation of the following research questions:

- 1) What are the dominating parenting approaches outlined in the theory?
- 2) Which parenting theories and how are they presented in the printed medium *Mans Mazais* (“My Little One”)?

To accumulate the characteristic aspects of the upbringing discourse, the following research aim was put forward: identify if

and how the upbringing discourses are introduced within the pedagogical thought in Latvia in the only magazine aimed at parents *Mans Mazais* (“My Little One”) from 2004 to 2016.

2. The Research Methodology and Process

To reach the research aim, the following groups of sources published within a certain time period (2004-2016) were selected for the analysis: the magazine *Mans Mazais* (“My Little One”), pedagogical literature and secondary research (*studies done by other authors, which reflect the content related to this research*). The analysis of these sources allows for the reconstruction of family upbringing both in the social and pedagogical dimensions. The media, as communication channels, support people in constructing their cultural experience and schemes (Rubene, 2012), shaping their social views and affecting their daily behavior, building and replicating their ideas, opinions, judgements, norms values; therefore, they philosophically, didactically and ethically (Ķestere, Āķīte, 2012) regulate the social thought. Social views are shaped in the process of communication, during which new knowledge is integrated (Moscovici, 1981). Social views are interpreted as “the synergy of concepts, statements, explanations formed within the interpersonal communication in daily life, and within the modern society it is the equivalent for traditional societal myths and beliefs” (Moscovici, 1981: 181). The subjective interpretation, perception and self-assessment of the individual position are viewed in relation to culture, values, individual goals, wishes, problems, social relationships, individual

convictions and relations with the environment (Phillips, 2006). Perception and self-assessment may and do impact the objective processes in the lives of individuals (Veenhoven, 2010). Therefore, within the popularization of upbringing values, the media can be viewed as significant information translators (Medne, 2012). Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that within pedagogical literature, the way that trends are stated and analyzed, both in manners scholarly and popular-scientific, also affects the social views of parents, educators and society members on pedagogical guidelines, also affecting the practice of upbringing. The magazine *Mans Mazais* can be seen as a significant agent of the upbringing discourse. Its source type, as concerns its content and target-audience, is in accordance with and sequentially covers the specific time period within the research framework. 156 issues of the magazine and 4269 articles from the magazine published from 1994 up to present were chosen as a research sample for the analysis. Initially, the magazine was issued 4-6 times per year, but, since 1997, it has become a monthly issue. The magazine *Mans Mazais* can be viewed as a stable, requested (Jansone-Ratinika, 2013), illustrated popular-scientific issue, a significant promoter of the family pedagogical discourse. The publishing house Santa is the one issuing the magazine since the beginning of its activities. The periodicals have had a number of chief editors throughout different time periods. The price of the magazine is viewed as acceptable for families with children having average income. The source cannot be classified as the professional pedagogical periodicals; however, it can be positioned as a parents'

life style magazine if stating the parallels with the men's and women's life style magazines included into the media range in the end of the 1990s (Veinberga, 2010). The mission of the issue is to "discover the child's world starting with purely practical matters and up to psychological conversations," which is implemented through conveying the message to the potential target audience – both mothers and fathers – as "contemporary parents." Within the magazine idea proposal, the invitation to jointly "search for ways to successfully combine personal wishes and the mission of the mother" as well as the invitation to jointly interpret "the role of the reliable father" are characteristic of the 1990s period (Editor's Column, 1994).

The research was carried out in the qualitative approach by applying content analysis and discourse analysis as a method that allowed to analytically and descriptively compare the thematical plurality of the narratives in the magazine *Mans Mazais*, the pedagogical literature and other secondary sources. The basic actors initiating the primary content associations representing the nuclear composition – the family, the child, the mother, the father – were selected for the linguistic content analysis of the narratives in the magazine *Mans Mazais*. Within the secondary selection, the descriptive words for the respective actors, their activities and implemented functions having an identical or similar contextual meaning in their different grammar forms were identified (e.g., *a little one, mummy's, a newborn, grandparents, a daughter, within the upbringing, familial* etc.).

Within the first level content analysis conducted in the framework of the empirical research, the linguistic analysis of ar-

ticle titles in the magazine *Mans Mazais* was carried out by applying the qualitative data processing program *QSR NVivo 11*. The content items identified in the pedagogical literature and secondary sources were analyzed manually. The application of computer software was substantiated by numerous functional advantages: (1) it provides the opportunity to automatize the primary data analysis and, within the later analysis stages, make adjustments manually in accordance with the ideological essence. It allows to not only summarize and systematize qualitative data by implementing the content analysis, but to also identify the words with the higher frequencies, their usage contexts and meanings; (2) it provides the opportunity to automatically filter big data volumes in different cross-sections and context in a short time and in a methodologically precise manner; therefore, it significantly increases the speed and objectivity of the analysis; (3) the program sequentially retains the historical commands, thus allowing the researcher to manage the coding and analysis process in a contextually meaningful manner (Bryman 2016; Bazeley, Jackson, 2013).

Data processing and analysis were implemented at a number of levels: (1) the contents items of the article titles in the press issue were imported into the *Nvivo* program, technically edited and sequentially coded applying the open coding system. Initially, a 3000-word frequency was applied; then, in accordance with the weighted frequency proportion, 184 words were selected. Fifty basic key words (codes) were selected from 184 words describing the basic actors within the nuclear family; (2) the hierarchical coding-grouping was implemented to identify the thematically

allied key words and groups, their usage frequency and contextual meanings, which revealed the thematical essence of the research focus – “family upbringing”; based on the code structure developed within the content analysis, the content interpretation and the in-depth study of interrelations in the articles were carried out to test the validity of identified trends in the contextual meanings of the titles.

3. The Research Context – Toward the Egalitarian Relationships Model in the Family

The complexity of the upbringing objective, also after becoming a European Union member, is rooted in the hybrid identity of the state and the subject. This identity comprises the national idealism discourse, characteristic of Modernism, and democratic multiculturalism, postulated by Post-Modernism (Kļave, Zepa, 2012). The enactments of the European states define egalitarianism as one of the basic values that ensure the principle of equality as concerns human rights and opportunities. One of the most significant prerequisites for the implementation of this moral principle is the transformation of relationships in the family. Within the egalitarian family model, the distribution of power comprises equality and relative autonomy as the basis for mutual relationships. All family members equally share rights, responsibilities and authority, which is one of the basic principles for democracy. Social and political philosophy is viewed as the area of the conceptual origin of egalitarianism (Barry, 2001). The main doctrine calls for the equal treatment of each society member. The egalitarian relationships model

calls for an equal position in upbringing rather than gender confrontation and the confrontation situation as such leading to collisions (Kaufman, 2000; Zuo, 2004; Aarseth, 2009). Within the traditional family relationships model, the involvement of the father in the upbringing characterizes the patriarchal, determinative approach to upbringing, represented by the “practical daily father’s participation type” (Jansone-Ratinika, 2013). Within the transformative family relationships model, two approaches to upbringing are stated – emancipation, represented by the “increased father’s participation type,” and egalitarianism, achieved by applying the approach that highlights “equal pedagogical cooperation among all the family members and parents.” Equality refers not only to the positions of power but also affects the emotional environment in a family. The central idea of the egalitarian paradigm does not call for an identical time and a responsibility distribution between females and males within job employment and family life. This relationship model is directed toward mutual respect and trust, the respect toward and promotion of the partner’s priorities as well as equality in decision making, this way shaping a favorable and positive environment for child upbringing. Parents’ behavioral and emotional reactions are determined by the upbringing microclimate in the family and are closely linked with adults’ interpretation and ability to offer children an equal position based on the sense of responsibility – the parents’ responsibility for the child as a future member of a society (Walper, 2005). Therefore, it is crucial to consider egalitarianism in upbringing in the pedagogical perspective, putting forward the quality of

egalitarian relationships among the family members as a significant factor in the promotion of both parents’ pedagogical equality, upbringing competency and the child’s capacity for action.

Within research devoted to family studies, the difficulties in the change of attitude are stated as the key obstacle for the formation of egalitarian relationships. It is complicated for parents to change the regular schedule and principles of life organization (Tinklin, Croxford, Ducklin, Frame, 2005). Within the research framework, the problem basically reflects the change of social views and elimination of myths about family upbringing that are characteristic of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. It can partly be explained by the misinterpretation of the basic essence of egalitarianism – flexibility, naturality, openness and cooperation as the aspects of equality. If this relationship type is seen as an artificial non-action based on generally accepted canons within which the individuals themselves do not understand and accept the basic idea, the model becomes functionless. The key factor is free choice and personal motivation as the basis for egalitarian relationships. The main goal is family functioning, satisfaction and joy experienced by everyone involved in the process rather than a meeting of certain standards (Jansone-Ratinika, 2013). Faulty views link egalitarianism trends with the attempts to unify both genders. However, a priori it is an invitation to equal dialogue, cooperation (Jansone-Ratinika, 2013) and solidarity in the family (Medne, 2010).

The summary of the wide thematical research scope analyzing the aspects of each family member’s involvement reveals the upbringing/self-upbringing function of an

“egalitarian” family member’s presence, which is reflected not only in the territorial access, but also in the emotional participation. The behavioral and ideological strategy of family members as actors is an individual who is leaning, searching and willing to develop personality and capacity for action and, accordingly, is involved in self-upbringing.

4. Upbringing Discourses in the Context of the Genesis of Pedagogical Thought

The analysis of studies conducted within different scientific and scholarly areas was carried out with the aim to understand upbringing discourses topicalized in the concrete time period. The research is interdisciplinary; its theoretical focus is based on the analysis of the approaches and theories within different scientific and scholarly areas: in the framework of pedagogy, upbringing theories were studied; in the framework of history and sociology, sociopolitical changes and their impact on upbringing in the concrete historical period were explored; in the framework of sociology, the discourse, as a theoretical approach, and the methodology of critical discourse analysis were investigated; in the framework of psychology, involvement theories and the epigenetic approach were studied; in the framework of medicine, care theories were explored. Based on the analysis of approaches and theories, discourses which are either directly or intermediately related to upbringing in the family were identified.

The gender equality discourse comprises the following thematic fields:

- Gender asymmetry in the upbringing

and care discourse – it considers the father’s and mother’s responsibilities and competency spheres within child-care and upbringing (Lindsey, Caldera, Colwell, 2005; Palkovitz, 2002);

- Stereotypization, which is integrated within all the identified discourses and the included themes – the discourse macrostructures – and reveals topical stereotypes about gender roles in a society and family (Basow, 1992; Šulmane, Kruks, 2001; Ēriksens, 2010; Zepa, 2006; Neimane, 2003; Woerd, Stavenuiter, Duyendak, 2007);
- A combination of work and family life reveals the politics of family support in the country, which is assigned a very significant role in the formation of the inclusive environment, ensuring a balanced integration of both spheres in daily practice (Korpa, 2008; Chinchilla, León, 2005; Putniņa, 2005; Woerd, Stavenuiter, Duyendak, 2007).

The family model and relationships transformation discourse comprises the following thematic fields:

- Searching for the balance between the traditional and egalitarian family, which expectedly affects the changes in the relationships both within parents’ communication and child-parent communication (Kaufman, 2000; Thornton, Young-DeMarco, 2001; Isajev, 2009; Stēnsgorda, 2004; Sedlenieks, Vasiļevska, 2006; Featherstone, 2009; Miller, 2011);
- Power relationships in the family, the structure of alternative family – one parent family, same gender family, joint family (Rosenberg, Bradford, 2006);
- The role of the parents’ relationships quality in the formation of an egalitarian

ian family (Adamsons, Buehler, 2007; Fagan, Barnett, 2003; Hawelle, 2005; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007; Mollenhauer, 2003).

The parental upbringing competency discourse comprises the following thematic fields:

- Parents' competency in upbringing comprising the idea on the needs satisfaction as concerns the child's development content, self-upbringing and mutual learning (Ahrbeck, 2004; Fuss, 2006; Liegle 2006; Schneewind, Böhmert, 2008; Walper, 2005; Schäfer, 2005; Schmidt-Denter, 2005);
- The choice of the relevant upbringing goal and techniques, their link to the family model and the relationships within it (Spivakovskaja, 2000; Hawellek, 2005; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007; Mollenhauer, 2003).

The pregnancy and family childbirth discourse comprises the following thematic fields:

- A father's and mother's social views on childbirth and changes within them in practice;
- The role of a father's participation in the pregnancy and childbirth process (Putniņa, 1999; Bronte-Tinkew, Horowitz, Kennedy, Perper, 2007).

5. Findings

To identify the dominating discourses in the magazine *Mans Mazais*, the general analysis of the thematic contents was conducted by applying the program *QSR NVivo II*, which shed light upon the general trends. Initially, within the contents thematics, the most frequent words were identified, which allowed to draw conclusions on the most frequent themes the

magazine comprised. By applying the program, 50 frequently used were summarized (within the 5000-word frequency) by selecting the words and taking into account the word roots and excluding conjunctions that do not substantiate the judgements on the contextual essence. The frequency of each word was stated (the number of times the word was mentioned in the contents indicators) and its weighted percentage pointing to the word frequency in relation to the total volume of the text. The most frequent words were *child, family, pregnancy, together, health, us, grow, cultural, advice, fashion* and *childbirth*. The word *child* was selected as the key word for identifying a discourse in the text, as it is predominating concerning frequency ration (weighted percentage – 1.8; the word *pregnancy* – 0.47; the word *childbirth* – 0.36). The usage frequency of the word *child* (144) points to the strong orientation of the magazine toward the implementation of its mission, simultaneously revealing the research context. Therefore, the scheme stating the interrelation share of the most frequent words was developed by applying the program. Based on the fact that the word *child* is the most frequently used word, the child, as a central research subject, and the related words provide the evidence for the most frequent discourse scope. By applying the program, the summary was developed stating the share of the words linked to the word *child*. The word *child* in different forms as used in the table of contents (e.g., *child, child's, children, for children* etc.) as well as the synonym *baby* in its different forms (e.g., *baby, for a baby, baby's* etc.) were considered. Based on the analysis of the data gathered, the conclusion can be drawn that the fol-

lowing discourses and thematic fields are most frequently related to the word *child*:

Gender Equality Within the Discourse

Legal issues (“benefits,” “formula for maternity aid,” “unemployment allowance,” “insurance types,” “why child benefits were not increased,” “alimony (child maintenance): the matter of conscience or a legal issue,” “aware of their rights in childbirth,” “how to agree on alimony,” “allowance for single mothers,” “DNA test to establish paternity,” “benefits for families,” “through the courts,” “leave without allowance,” “birth allowance,” “sick pay,” “adjust the documents,” “who will be the legal fiduciary,” “amendments in the divorce law,” “money for infants,” “determination of paternity, amendments in Civil Code”);

Combining employment and family life (“a child and the career,” “at the workplace, during the working time,” “you work,” “parents are just to work,” “we are at work, we will be late,” “when the mummy studies,” “the opportunity to work and earn,” “there are no you, you are working,” “busy at work,” “a woman in between the work and home,” “to restart working,” “the mum is at work, the dad is at home”).

The family model and relationships transformation in the discourse

Different family models (“adoptive,” “divorced parents,” “you’ve come from a little star,” “support home for a woman,” “raising alone,” “adoption is always a risk,” “we adopted a little one,” “child with special needs,” “disabled child,” “widow, a lot stronger than I used to be,” “mom, tell me

about dad,” “suddenly single,” “fathers, who returned,” “encouragement words for single mothers”);

The position of a mother (“how a mum can regain slender legs,” “how much a firm belly costs,” “slenderize through breastfeeding,” “how to become thinner,” “exercises for pectoral muscle strengthening,” “nurture other woman’s child,” “raising alone,” “helps mum to slenderize,” “a stroll with a baby - gymnastics for the mum,” “being slim after giving birth,” “at home for more than a year,” “why women do not dream,” “mom at work,” “thinner, even thinner,” “mom, who is sitting at home,” “beautiful breasts,” “home clothes for a mum,” “to live beautifully today,” “a pregnant woman wants to be beautifully dressed,” “how to overcome fatigue,” “a mum devotes time to her baby,” “beautiful also after breastfeeding,” “want a man,” “a woman should be able to do everything,” “hair shine recovery,” “ambulance - slimmer...,” “Pilates - very feminine,” “beautiful eyes after sleepless nights,” “want beautiful legs,” “how to slenderize after childbirth,” “surplus kilograms - let’s see...,” “slim after childbirth, options from Ayurveda,” “a moment for beauty every day”);

The position of a father (“future dad wants to escape,” “what men worry about before the childbirth,” “dad’s time,” “about a father now,” “for the father to fall in love with a stranger,” “dad at home with the baby,” “dad’s unloved son,” “for the husband, hobby, but me?,” “maternity leave,” “at home only on Saturdays and Sundays,” “is there a father,” “my husband is a workaholic,” “father’s images sometimes drastically differ,” “to be away from his wife,” “dad is waiting,” “daddy

is at home,” “daddy is that good one,” “the son - a man’s dream,” “dad is also a woman”).

The Parental Upbringing Competency Discourse

Development (“the child grows from 0-1 year,” “up to three years,” “up to five years,” “the first year of life,” “girls may use tampons,” “learning to walk,” “mom watch out, started walking,” “baby’s first language,” “how are you feeling this morning,” “intellectual,” “emotional and psychological,” “social and emotional,” “mental capacity”);

Physiological and health problems (“is still bedwetting,” “sleep walking,” “sweats while falling asleep,” “suffering from pneumonia,” “nocturnal enuresis,” “wet nights to turn dry,” “when umbilical hernia should be operated on,” “breathing through the nose,” “asking about epilepsy,” “is fatty,” “premature children,” “first teeth,” “stooped back,” “almost nothing is allowed to be eaten,” “attention - purulent tonsillitis,” “allergy,” “cannot eat bread,” “how to maintain good eyesight,” “legs to protect from fungus,” “if colics are to blame,” “dislocations, fractures, head injuries,” “cunning disease pneumonia,” “disobedient little feet,” “how to repair sticking out ears,” “if the child has diarrhea,” “if a child has caught a mite,” “how to make friends with some sunshine,” “late teeth,” “the doodle hurts,” “otitis inflammation,” “the first analysis,” “antibiotics: assumptions and reality,” “questions about the urine incontinence,” “depression at the age of two months,” “mites are no joke,” “allergy,” “if a child grates the teeth,” “strabismus is not a cosmetic defect”);

Behavioural problems (“Stealing and lying,” “my child smokes,” “not a little angel,” “drama at one’s own home,” “the little bully,” “has become so aggressive,” “he does not want to potty train,” “in the parents’ bed,” “is like a dragon,” “in the sea of anger,” “nagging or neurosis,” “wean from finger suckling,” “talks rudely,” “I lie, you lie,” “fighting and crying,” “drown in aggression”);

Social problems (“teasing at school,” “teasing,” “does not want to read,” “studying abroad,” “drugs – the gateway to an alien world”);

The number of children in the family (“the second child in the family,” “losing the throne,” “but twins,” “first, oldest, middle, youngest,” “my third one,” “jealous,” “how to tell about sister’s or brother’s birth,” “second child – conscious choice,” “we still do not want another child,” “jealousy is a normal feeling,” “waiting for a brother or a sister,” “a brother or a sister in the mum’s belly,” “do not want the next one”);

The gender of a child (“a boy or a girl,” “if a boy’s testicles do not descend,” “want to be a real boy,” “a boy has it differently,” “if diapers are harmful for a boy,” “how to give birth to a baby of the preferred gender,” “do you want a girl or a boy”);

The childcare (“baby’s bottom care,” “baby’s head care,” “baby’s eye care,” “how to clean an infant’s nose,” “how to wean a baby from breastfeeding,” “how to deal with baby spitting out,” “umbilical care at home,” “the girl has some reddening there,” “also bathing is a ritual, “clumping with a baby!” “the little one is crying again,” “sleep, sleep my little one,” “confusing the day and night,” “not to

confuse the day and night,” “a newborn requires good care,” “how to put to bed a small child”);

Spending time together (“together with a child,” “Christmas miracle,” “what to do when there is nothing to do,” “TV episodes for children,” “museums, theater and books,” “watching television alone,” “it is interesting to be together,” “finger-dolls,” “we are doing it together – wind chimes,” “autumn walking trails,” “why are fairy tales so cruel,” “common time having breakfast,” “make music together,” “we will read, we will tell, we will compose something”);

The child in the world of things (“new products,” “with a magnifying glass in the toy store,” “which washing powder to choose,” “assess the toothpaste,” “a cradle for the little one,” “a baby wearing clothes,” “a set for boys and girls,” “warm booties top,” “fashion sarafan,” “discount top,” “gloves top,” “most recent items,” “new bright crawlers,” “comfortable overalls for games and training,” “a little dress and a little daughter,” “hairstyles for baptizing,” “christening costumes,” “a jacket and another bag,” “the latest toy TOP,” “a bike for each child,” “looking for a school-bag for a first grader,” “sports shoes – stylish,” “a bathroom for a little lady,” “fashion dress,” “newborn’s first suit,” “live like a princess,” “baby sleep stroll testing,” “nipples top,” “my best rattle,” “a little table and a little chair,” “first wristwatch,” “baby ball gown,” “toothpaste for children,” “friend – phone,” “cosmetics for a girl,” “Christmas present”);

The context of family relationships (“it is only our – adults – business,” “our family relationships geometry is in the child’s hands,” “we are the three,” “eve-

rything goes the same way, but...” “enjoying the child’s childhood the same as our own,” “as if after the divorce,” “when you give me the money, you will see the child,” “how to deal with stress,” “unplanned,” “unplanned child,” “grows between the dad and the mom,” “one is with his mother, the other – with the father,” “whether this child is mine or not,” “we are not afraid of talking about our relationships,” “we need some spark,” “the stepfather entering the family,” “those who love, argue,” “a dispute is not bad luck”);

The upbringing competency (“a child does not know how to hurry,” “planning romping,” “how to wean from a nipple,” “we are brought up,” “in the minds and on the shelves,” “need to praise,” “the brilliance and misery of praise,” “playing techniques,” “through the puddles with joy,” “mom, dad – what is sex,” “believe in your child,” “bring up for success,” “praising and supporting,” “talking to the child,” “support the first grader,” “parents help each other,” “feelings to be expressed in words,” “lose and win,” “reduction of negative emotions,” “not to whip or even touch in general,” “the most important feature – autonomy,” “what to do with a prodigy,” “left-handed,” “to whip or not to whip,” “start talking at the age of six months,” “we were brought up this way”);

Learning (“a computer helps to learn,” “how to prepare a child for school,” “learning is interesting,” “a child and foreign languages,” “the computer is a friend,” “teaching a little one swimming,” “learn skating,” “baby walker does not teach walking,” “potty training - when and how to teach,” “acquire table culture,” “learning how to concentrate,” “sense of balance training”);

Safety (“roller skating safely,” “burnt oneself,” “would drive safely,” “child car seats,” “seeing reflectors in the dark,” “attention - the stairs,” “on the mountain – safely,” “the ABA of skiing,” “not to be struck by electricity,” “for little skiers,” “is your child visible in the darkness,” “the safest place for a baby in the car,” “not to squeeze fingers,” “on ice,” “a healthy animal is safer for a child,” “home medical kit,” “bees attack – how to protect”);

Eating habits (“how to feed a child,” “new food from the age of 6 months,” “mushrooms against boredom in the menu,” “invigorating cuisine,” “interesting recipes for a gluten-free diet,” “menu for a three-year-old child,” “natural power food,” “does not eat eggs,” “will we offer vegetables,” “which sweets are the healthiest,” “three good things to eat”);

Intergenerational cooperation (“my granny taught me,” “summer at the granny’s,” “granny’s and grandpa’s,” “granddad lives with us”).

The Discourse of Pregnancy and Family Childbirth

Pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period (“Bellies grow so huge,” “myths about the childbirth,” “fear of childbirth,” “going to the sauna also during pregnancy,” “surrogate babies,” “questions about childbirth through caesarean section,” “expecting and eating properly,” “rhesus conflict,” “how to increase the quantity of milk,” “will ours be healthy,” “born in the water,” “born at home,” “milk, milk, milk,” “pregnancy calendar,” “breastfeed,” “philosophizing at the teat,” “mastitis,” “Apgar scale,” “if you are breastfeeding,” “emergency

contraception during pregnancy,” “before childbirth,” “childbirth requires stimulation,” “how to stop the milk river,” “a little one at the breast,” “after the caesarean section,” “tells the story of the childbirth progress,” “postpartum passions,” “restore sexual intimacy after childbirth,” “breast-feeding, do not want to give up,” “preparing for pregnancy,” “alleviating pain in childbirth,” “discharge after childbirth,” “breastfeeding - how long,” “breastfeed for comfort,” “the pregnancy state – know and recognize yourself,” “epidural anaesthesia,” “to be born as Caesar,” “sex for three,” “when the child should be weaned from the breast,” “myths about cumin tea,” “the dad in the childbirth”).

6. Discussion and Conclusions

The analysis of the research results substantiates the answers to the research questions revealing that all the discourses topicalized within theories are present in the contextual thematics of the magazine *Mans Mazais* to the wide or more narrow extent. The discourse of parents’ competency is most thoroughly revealed by mainly focusing on the physical development of a child, health maintenance and the recognition of clinical signs of disease, while paying less attention to emotional, intellectual and social development. It is crucial to highlight that the thematic field of the child physical safety is revealed; however, the discussion on the emotional safety is limited. Within the mother’s and father’s upbringing competency, the mother’s position is more strongly defined. It is possible that the common interpretation of the father’s role in the family is hindered by the differing discourses of the mother’s

role, resulting in conflicts between “the thorough or traditional mother’s” and “egalitarian-woman’s-mother’s-wife’s” image. The father’s participation and the process of the promotion of his upbringing competency is mainly affected by the man’s attitude, providing evidence for the reorientation of thinking and attitudes, personal maturity ensuring the motivation to implement egalitarian practice that strengthens equivalence and cooperation. At the same time, this process is either promoted or hindered by the mother and the society as active hegemonic discourse developers. The theoretical debates on the roles distribution in the family are topicalized – in the legal, emotional, practical and ideological aspects – highlighting the role of the father’s participation in upbringing. The changes in the interpretation of the parents’ role – especially the father’s – are viewed as one of the elements of the family crisis discourse, as a man’s participation in the family life is one of the significant prerequisites for the factual implementation of equality within daily and family pedagogy. However, within the magazine discourse, it is revealed with caution. The discourse also reveals the description of the negative father’s role, integrating it into the common positive discursive strategy rather than devoting a specific narrative to this image. Although the asymmetrical model of the parents’ responsibility and involvement of the Soviet regime still maintains a strong position, its universal topicality is lost. Therefore, it is crucial to raise awareness of the idea that the fact of participation in the childbirth process does not change the quality of the father, it should rather be seen as his participation promoting the sense of belonging and sig-

nificance. It is also crucial to understand that the individual features of family members predetermine the style of fulfilling the family roles, which is observed within the mutual relationships and cooperation, being the subjective and objective components of upbringing within the daily life of the family. Furthermore, the positive emotional climate in the family is neither pedagogical or of any other ideology. It is the social experience which either meets or does not meet the needs. In its turn, it needs satisfaction, or not meeting the needs predetermines behavioral patterns. Therefore, parental upbringing competency can be implemented within the context of self-upbringing as a skill to turn theoretical upbringing into the upbringing practice linking theories to the daily life. The result of the self-upbringing is interpreted as a person’s ability to be intellectually and emotionally resistant toward the spiritual, mental and emotional impact of the social environment and dealing with difficulties. Family relationships affect the relationship quality of the couple, social relationships network and the sense of satisfaction with professional life. The parents’ partnership is qualitative and stable if it’s properly balanced between the individual and common needs it maintains. Therefore, within the public discourses, it is crucial to highlight that if partnerships face difficulties, there is also no common stance on the upbringing issues. The child’s capacity for action is promoted by the equality within the children-parent relationships, respect toward each other’s needs, revealing it as a value in the egalitarian family. Therefore, the process of upbringing in the egalitarian family of the modern transformative society is implemented as a two-way af-

ferentiation process. Within this process, parents' self-upbringing is the basis for the choice of upbringing techniques. These techniques serve as the direction for the child's self-upbringing, which is the basis for the personal capacity for action. Within the discourse, one more thematic field was topicalized – the child in the world of things, namely, within the consumer society. Childhood research within the context of the consumer society is becoming more and more complex (Hengst, 2013). Consumption is interpreted as the central factor of modern socialization (Schrage, 2006), as the orientation system for society (Siegrist, 1998); therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that this thematic field widens the pedagogical framework and encourages to consider the processes and phenomena which were not paid attention to in earlier years, this way building the prism for the analysis of the trends within the society development and upbringing. Therefore, it is crucial to understand that consumer society is both an opportunity and experience as well as a challenge for upbringing.

Following the change of the political and economic situation in Latvia after joining the European Union in 2004, as well as the opening of all the borders, including the ideological ones, the goal of upbringing has also undergone changes. Today it comprises personalities capable of making their own and reasonable choices, thinking openly but critically, who are in harmony with themselves and the world around or, in other words, a child capable to act. Within the thematic fields, based on the theoretical positions on the socioeco-

logical evolution of the child, the general image of a "child capable of acting" is revealed. Therefore, to reach this goal of upbringing, family upbringing and child-care are directed toward the promotion of the joy of life and creativity, harmonious balance between the duties and rights, as well as the promotion of the objective and subjective quality of life and well-being through cooperation in the upbringing process.

The pregnancy and childbirth discourse reflects the phenomenon of the father's and mother's emotional catharsis describing the preparation process, experiencing new feelings linked to new life creation, parents' thoughts, unclear issues and practical experience. This discourse reveals thorough descriptive material on the topical issues for parents highlighting the medical, practical and emotional perspectives. The postnatal period, described as a crucial test of the relationships affecting the formation of the common family upbringing culture in the future, is also revealed within the discourse. Both parents' egalitarian vision is emphasized as a positive direction based on the equality (free choice) position. The discourse of sexuality is integrated into the thematic field of pregnancy and childbirth.

Assessing the future perspectives of the research on the discourse of parental upbringing competency, the conclusion drawn by the historian Victoria Harris is that historic continuity should be enriched through concentrating on the studies of concrete experience rather than discourses, as they identify the categories that were flowing and relative in the past (Harris, 2010).

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