Backstage: How the Voices Were Created

1. Aim and Framework

The voices of **Narva** are not interviews but **fictional condensations of real conversations, attitudes, and tensions**. They were created on the basis of publicly available sources about the history, society, and present of Estonia – especially concerning the tensions between the Estonian- and Russian-speaking populations.

The goal is to make **empathy and polyphony** perceptible – without claiming documentary precision.

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2. Research and Source Material

A. Types of Sources

- **News outlets** (ERR News, Euractiv, NZZ, France24) → current political and social developments
- **Academic publications** (University of Tartu, OSCE, ResearchGate, FPRI) → analyses of language, identity, integration
- **Eyewitness accounts & online forums** → linguistic nuances and lived everyday realities

B. Time Frame Material from **2022–2025**, focusing on:

- The language reform in the Estonian education system
- Labor migration of young adults
- The relationship between Narva and Tallinn, and experiences of the border
- Perceptions of the border with Russia

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3. The Process of Condensation

1. **Extraction:** Relevant quotes, terms, and situations were taken from multiple sources.

2. **Combination:** Similar statements by different people or media were **merged into a fictional composite figure**,

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representing typical attitudes rather than individuals.
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3. **Linguistic Shaping:** Vocabulary and rhythm were adjusted to sound **authentic but not documentary**.

4. **Context Check:** Each scene was – as far as possible – **reviewed in dialogue with factual information and voices from Narva/Estonia**,

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to achieve a balanced depiction.
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4. The Backgrounds as a Second Layer

Beneath each dialogue lies an **optional layer: the background**. It links brief contextual notes (data, tendencies, terminology) with interpretive reflection and forms the transition between **research** and **artistic condensation**. This allows readers to trace **where the tone of a voice originates** without breaking the flow of reading. Each section also includes a list of publicly accessible **sources from the resonance field of the respective voice**.

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5. Ethics and Responsibility

The dialogues respect the **dignity of real persons and communities**. They avoid labeling, irony, or accusations. The fiction serves **understanding, not judgment** – seeking **resonance between factual and felt truth**.

No sentence in the dialogues is a literal quote – but perhaps each one could have been **said like this**, in a certain situation.

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6. Disclaimer

“These texts are artistic interpretations of real-world themes. They are based on publicly available research but do not constitute journalistic or scientific statements. Persons and situations are fictionalized – inspired by reality, yet not identical with it.”

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kompendium:narva_quellenmatrix_2025.csv

From:
http://www.stefanbudian.de/ - **Stefan Budian**

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