

Sarah Smyth and Conny Opitz (editors)

# Negotiating Linguistic, Cultural and Social Identities in the Post-Soviet World

Peter Lang

In this volume, researchers in the fields of language in society, sociolinguistics, language politics, diaspora and identity studies explore the contacts between languages and cultures in the post-Soviet world. The book presents a range of perspectives on the effects of migration and of re-drawing of borders among groups and individuals for whom the Russian language has had an instrumental or symbolic prominence. How do recent geopolitical shifts impact on the policies and practices of newly independent states? How have communities and individuals come to redefine their own identities and core values? How does a cultural context in which the power relations between cultural and linguistic groups have been reversed or recalibrated affect the attitudes of each group? How does the potential for transnational identities impact on the interplay between diasporic and homeland communities? How does migration influence linguistic and parenting practices? This collection offers answers to these and many other questions through case studies from eleven regions in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

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We accept full responsibility for any errors or weaknesses that remain.

—SARAH SMYTH and CONNY OPITZ



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SARAH SMYTH

## Introduction

Корни тоже ... если начинать думать, откуда я и кто я – то на самом деле, корни неглубокие, так как я знаю своих бабушек и дедушек с обеих сторон, это – предел.

[I was born in a country which is no more, and in a city which is no more – in the Soviet Union, in the city of Gorkiy. When I write USSR and Gorkiy in my passport application form, I feel, sort of, well, that I'm from nowhere.

As for my roots ... if I begin to think where I am from and who I am, I realize that my roots do not go deep. I knew my grandmothers and grandfathers on both sides. And that's the limit.]

— Life story, woman in her thirties,  
‘Our Languages’ project, Dublin, 2011

I have always hated being asked who I am, where I am from or, as the Irish frame it, who my people are. These questions have always confounded me and resulted in anxiety: that I would deceive either my interlocutor or myself. One part of my brain understands that my interlocutor is making polite conversation and wants a single word answer: a singular point of origin, the name of a recognizable space or a gesturing to a people or a clan, or reference to a language which captures the spirit of a people. But the conventional categories of history, geography and language which nation states use to assign, or withhold, citizenship or other legal rights do not quite fit the bill. These categories anchor me in time and space, they make me a someone from somewhere. But a someone who does not always recognize themselves in that singular definition, and who is often not recognized as such by other.

Defining identity variously and simultaneously in terms of place, law, language and ancestry yields complex results. But when territorial markers disappear off the map, when the USSR and Gorkiy are no longer geography, are now just history, the attempt to ground the self in time and space is compromised and disturbed. When borders are re-drawn, when a community forcibly or willingly re-locates, when constitutions are re-drafted, or the status of a language is re-fashioned, or the integrity of lineage is compromised by design or by accident, it becomes exponentially more difficult for people to define their position, that is to say, to know who they are, who they can or cannot be. That problematic lies at the heart of this volume.

The collection of chapters in this volume started life as contributions to a conference in Dublin entitled ‘Relocating Cultures’. This event was hosted by a research team that was conducting a sociolinguistic investigation of the Russian-speaking population(s) in Ireland. This accounts for the Russian slant on what is a much more broadly applicable set of questions, or rather the post-Soviet slant in all the chapters. It was not intended by the organizers that discussion would be restricted to what I will loosely call ‘the Russian sphere of influence’. Indeed the keynote speakers, Professors Jan Blommaert (Tilburg) and Li Wei (Birkbeck) were selected precisely because they could and did distract us from the politically charged and contested claims that define relations in the post-Soviet world. Just as the guest speakers’ interventions provided a very useful wide-angle lens through which to process the contributions to the conference, so I became increasingly confident that the papers we were listening to were of relevance to any readership with an interest in the interrelated issues of language, culture and identity.

In terms of geographic spread the chapters in this volume span Ingrian Finns in Russia, and Russian speakers in Norway and the Baltic States in the north, to Russian-speaking migrants in Israel in the south, and from the Russian diaspora in Ireland in the west to ethnic Kazakh repatriates in the east (see Map 1). The volume is a cross-section of case studies which show the effect of recent geopolitical changes on the vitality and status of languages in regions which either were associated with, or have become connected to, the peoples of the former Soviet Union. Many of the chapters

trace the paths of voluntary or forced, recent or historical movements of population groups across borders. Others focus on a place and evaluate the impact of the reconceptualization or relocation of borders on local attitudes and politics. Linguistic and cultural groups change place either in a spatial sense through repatriation, exile, migration, deportation, or in a political sense through a reversal in power relations within the one territory. With each change in relations, intergroup contact plays itself out in narratives of suppression, assimilation, integration or marginalization. In some chapters these are studied at the group level, in others in terms of their impact on individuals.

The Eurasian landmass that is the present-day Russian Federation and its neighbouring states has, since history records, been crisscrossed by the movements of peoples either along the north-south axis of the waterways joining the arctic north to the Mediterranean, or along the east-west axis of the Silk Road (and its successor trade and migration routes). These lands have been populated, de-populated and re-populated voluntarily and forcibly in response to changing economic and political circumstances. The resulting cultural landscape and the range of identities available to local populations take shape in the historical and geographical interplay of each successive settlement.

Since the eighteenth century a significant portion of the landmass that stretches east of the Oder as far as the Pacific, and south from the Arctic Circle to the Altai, has been a vast geopolitical entity that defined itself as a multiethnic Empire (*Rossiyskaya Imperiya*). This Empire was precursor to political entities which boasted their diversity, whilst simultaneously affirming the authority and superiority of the dominant group – the Slavic peoples. This group had its own internal hierarchy, with the so-called Great Russians, the largest of the three groups of Slavs, at the apex of a triangular relationship and the so-called White Russians (Belorusians) and Little (Malo-) Russians (Ukrainians) at the base.

As the Slavs moved east, they settled the Russian plain and colonized the indigenous peoples of the Siberian expanses and the southern mountainous terrain: these hunting and/or grazing lands, trade routes, and mineral and energy resources were absorbed into the Empire. The people who populated these lands constitute one stratum of Russia's ethnic and

cultural diversity. Another stratum resulted from the rulers of the day inviting in outsiders to provide the skills, knowledge and manpower to effect social, cultural, political, or technological transitions: for example, the Varangian chieftain Rurik became the first of the ruling dynasty of Kievan Rus'; specialists in West-European technology were recruited in the eighteenth century to modernize the Russian Empire's military and economic infrastructure as were farming households who colonized and settled the Volga plains. A third stratum were the peoples who invaded and ruled the Eurasian landmass in the thirteenth century: the Mongol horde dominated parts of what were to become Russian territories until the late fifteenth century. These 'guests of the nation' became integrated into the fabric of Russian society and made a substantial contribution to shaping Russia's political, cultural and social development.

As populations moved, borders were drawn and re-drawn to demarcate the fault lines between Self and Other. Some of the borders were notional – as were the borders, for instance, between Great, Little and White Russians in the days of the Russian Empire – they had symbolic value, but did not function as practical or legal impediments to the movements of individuals or groups of people; some were robust dividing lines, separating in- and out-groups – as have become the borders between the present-day Baltic states and their eastern neighbours since EU enlargement in 2004; some followed the contours of geographic features – the Caucasus mountain range divided (and divides) Russia from the so-called Transcaucasian states of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and traditionally functioned as a border between Europe and Asia; some were drawn for administrative convenience with a pencil and ruler – as were some of the frontiers in the territorial delimitation of Soviet Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s; some have had, and in some cases still have, lengthy contested historic legacies – as do the borders delineating Armenia from Azerbaijan.

The status assigned to borders had changed over time. The post-Soviet world in many ways continues to invoke former borders, in-groups and out-groups even as it denies them. The very term post-Soviet is the most telling reminder of the salience of the Soviet legacy in current discursive practices in East and West alike. Additionally, the two terms, 'the near abroad' and 'the far abroad', were coined in the post-Soviet era to differentiate

between countries with which one shares a border and countries at one remove. These terms invite, or possibly exemplify, a reconceptualization of ‘us’ and ‘other’, ‘home’ and ‘abroad’, as well as ‘native’ and ‘foreign’. The use of these terms is not restricted to allusions to Russia’s real, imagined or desired sphere of influence; Zharkynbekova and Bokayev use ‘the near abroad’ in their chapter in this volume to refer to countries bordering on the Republic of Kazakhstan.

At various points in the history of this landmass the overlords conceptualized ethnic and linguistic diversity differently. Individuals and groups fashioned their cultural identity under the pull of forces from within and the draw of competing opportunities from without. Throughout this process, the configuration of territories associated with, and sometimes laying claim to, national and/or linguistic and/or ethno-cultural identities have never neatly mapped onto one another. Consider three maps: one of the present-day Russian Federation, a second one showing where Russian is currently spoken in the world (either as L1 or official language, or as L2 and *lingua franca*, or as L2 and minority immigrant language) and a third mapping places in the world with differing concentrations of people who consider themselves ethnic Russians. Few of the borders would overlap. Anyone who can lay claim to any strand of Russian identity (national, linguistic or ethnic) belongs to a group which confounds existing geopolitical borders.

It is important when talking about the post-Soviet world to understand the key terms deployed in constructing (and ascribing) identities. According to Article 1 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1977) the USSR was conceived of as a ‘state’ and a ‘country’ which bound together the people of different ‘nations’ and ‘nationalities’: ‘The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests [...] of all the nations and nationalities of the country’. [Союз Советских Социалистических Республик есть социалистическое общенародное государство выраждающее волю и интересы [...] всех наций и народностей страны.]

This distinction between a spatially defined political and administrative structure on the one hand and, on the other, groups with a shared history and culture underpins the Soviet conceptualization and

institutionalization of identity. Soviet passports codified two identities: 'citizenship' (гражданство, *grazhdanstvo*) and 'nationality' (национальность, *natsionalnost'*). Passport holders were classified as citizens of the USSR and of the Soviet Socialist Republic in which they were authorized, and required, to live; the passport's so-called fifth line (пятая графа, *pyataya grafa*) recorded what was conceived of as a person's nationality. Citizenship was accorded by virtue of place of residence; nationality was assigned by virtue of 'blood'; it was inherited from one's parents. Where parents had different nationalities, the young adult could choose between the two available to him/her.

This is a different conceptual framework from the one which dominates in Western academic discourse today. Here 'national' identity is conceptualized as an affiliation to the society in which one lives, works, pays taxes and invests or participates in civil society (Phinney et al. 2001), whereas 'ethnic' identity is conceived of as a sense of belonging to one's heritage culture.

In the *matrioshka*-doll administration of the Russian Empire and its successor states, there is a politically infused linguistic distinction which English does not replicate: the English word 'Russian' imperfectly translates two Russian words: *russkiy* and *rossiyskiy*. The first references a single ethnic group (the ethnic Russians), whereas the second references a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual geopolitical space. The largest Union Republic in the USSR, which English speakers render as the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic [Российская Советская Федеративная Социалистическая Республика] replicates on a smaller scale the distinction drawn between the Soviet Union and its constituent parts – be they geopolitical and administrative or ethnic. And to complicate the issue yet further, the etymological root of the word *russkiy* [Russian] is derived from Rus' [Русь], the name of the first Slav state in the tenth century whose centre was located in Kiev/Kyiv (present-day capital of Ukraine). Ten centuries on, the Russian language and Russian-language cultural heritage were the dominant and unifying banners in the Soviet period. In this way, the words *russkiy*, *rossiyskiy*, *rus-skiy*, and *Soviet* are markers and affirmations of a shared linguistic and cultural tradition whilst also highlighting the fault-lines between identities. Molchanov's chapter in this volume

charts and exemplifies some of the complexity of this history for Russian identity. Any suspicion of a singular essential Russian identity fractures immediately into plurality on virtually every front.

In many of the chapters in this volume authors use nation and nationality in the former Soviet understanding of the word. The editors thought it inappropriate to airbrush that earlier Soviet tradition out. It would be unproblematic if it were a straightforward East-West dichotomy but, to compound the issue, in the post-Soviet world, the notions of 'ethnonational' and indeed 'ethnic' have gained currency. So, for instance, the term 'ethnic German' is used to refer to anyone who is reported 'German' in the nationality line of their passport. As was mentioned above, many so-called ethnic Germans moved to the Russian Empire in the eighteenth century to provide the technical expertise that Russia needed to become the modern Empire it had proclaimed itself to be. After the collapse of the Soviet Union these ethnic Germans acquired the rights to leave the post-Soviet successor states and to return as repatriates to their historic homeland, Germany. The chapter by German Mendzheritskiy and Ekaterina Bagreeva in the current volume contrasts the status and vitality of Russian among ethnic German repatriates in the Federal Republic of Germany with that of Russian-speaking migrants in the Kingdom of Norway. The findings show that the ethnic Germans in Germany enact their Russianness more than do the Norway-based ethnic Russians, whose acculturation strategy is predominantly assimilationist. Many factors account for this. The relative sizes of the two populations are doubtless a contributing factor. It is, however, interesting to note similar integration, or even separation, strategies in other populations that have returned to their historic homeland, as have, for instance, Soviet Jews who emigrated to Israel (see chapters by Irina Zak and Arie Cohen, and by Claudia Zbenovich). The legal (and often national, in the Soviet sense) identity which provides the opportunity or necessity to relocate is re-evaluated after the move: in part in response to a person or group's attachment to the cultural heritage into which they were socialized and in part in response to the opportunities afforded in or by their new cultural context. The perspective of the receiving society is well illustrated in the chapter by Sholpan Zharkynbekova and Baurzhan Bokayev who discuss the repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs.

In terms of language policy, the Soviet Union conferred equality in law on all the languages of all of its peoples (until 1990). In practice this was far from the case: the Russian language was very much the first among equals. The Law on the Languages of the Peoples of the USSR (1990) [О языках народов СССР] formally ratified the primacy of Russian, which at that stage became the official language of the state. This process of the staged ascendancy of Russian during the Soviet period was mirrored in the structures of the education sector. From its inception, the Soviet education system instituted so-called ‘national schools’ in which the single, centrally elaborated curriculum was delivered in the languages of the ethnic groups represented in the Soviet Union. As the years went by, the amount of the curriculum delivered through Russian, the Soviet *lingua franca*, increased, ostensibly in the interests of social mobility and democratic participation. After the reforms of the late 1980s the so-called ‘national’ languages became school subjects, rather than media of instruction.

Linguists’ discussions of the language situation were more finely calibrated than those of legislators. There were four terms used to refer to sociolinguistic identity. Native [родной, *rodnoy*] referred to the language spoken in the family home, the language to which someone was first exposed, the language associated with a particular ethnic group and culture and the language to which a person attributed strong symbolic capital. Second native [второй родной, *vtoroy rodnoy*] in the Soviet context most commonly referred to Russian in the case of people for whom it was not ‘*rodnoy*’ – the language of the public sphere, which was invariably acquired through the state-run childcare and education systems. A second native language is one on which symbolic capital is conferred, unlike a non-native [неродной, *nerodnoy*] language which is required for work or in order to be able to function in the context of internal migration. A non-native language is learnt for instrumental purposes; it rarely has symbolic value; it operates as a *lingua franca* or language of inter-nation communication (межнационального общения, *mezhnatsional'nogo obshcheniya*), where the nations are conceived of as, and limited to, the nations of the Soviet Union. A foreign (иностранный, *inostranniy*) language was associated with a space or ethnos located outside the Soviet borders.

In this volume the terms mother tongue, native language and L1 are used fairly interchangeably to capture the Russian *родной* [*rodnoy*, native]. Different aspects of the *rodnoy* language are valorized: either its symbolic prominence by virtue of its association with a particular ethnic group and their cultural heritage (Sari Pöyhönen, Sholpan Zharkynbekova and Baurzhan Bokayev, Martin Ehala and Anastassia Zabrodskaja), or its being a person's dominant language, the language into which they were predominantly socialized in the home and education sector, with or without reference to ethnic considerations (Dionysios Zoumpalidis, German Mendzheritskiy and Ekaterina Bagreeva, Claudia Zbenovich), or its instrumental function as a global language of inter-nation communication (Galina Nikiporets-Takigawa).

All chapters explore the factors shaping processes of ethnic, cultural and/or linguistic identity construction, maintenance, shift, attrition and transmission, but even more fundamental than that, all touch upon what identification with an ethnic, linguistic or national group means to and for the individual, and how the currency of belonging is conceptualized. For some individuals and groups, affiliation might bring with it certain imperatives: to speak a given language; to share a set of inherited values; to have certain duties, such as protecting and/or transmitting core values to future generations. For others it triggers anxiety: what to transmit in a multilingual family; how, and in what language to bequeath an identity that is compromised by the means of its expression. Some conceptualize identity as a fixed point at the end of a continuum along which one progresses from unknowing to knowing, ever more closely approximating the ideal of absolute self-presence; others theorize it as fluid and context-dependent; Svetlana Eriksson investigates which boundaries between in- and out-groups are divisive and which are porous and renegotiable. Some raise questions as to how many concentric or ex-centric identities one can have at any moment in time. For instance, in her study of transnational manifestations of identity, Galina Nikiporets-Takigawa reports on the interplay of multiple attachments: to the Soviet state's achievements, to one's ethnic group's historical memory, and to the community in which one lives and works.

Though public rhetoric in the Soviet Union made reference to the multicultural and multilingual configuration of the state, ethnic Russians were predominantly monolingual speakers of Russian (with or without some degree of proficiency in a foreign (*иностранный*) language); bilingualism tended to be restricted to members of non-Russian ethnic groups. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, bilingualism and biculturalism on the periphery of the Russian Federation and its near abroad has been – and is being – re-evaluated, as newly established nation states and regions which have become border regions elaborate the core values of their new (post-colonial or borderland) identities. The chapters by Martin Ehala and Anastassia Zabrodskaja, by Sholpan Zharkynbekova and Baurzhan Bokayev and by Jasmine Dum-Tragut all point to the complex dynamics of languages and cultures in contact in a post-colonial context and the precarious balancing act societies need to sustain in order to redress past inequities, restore parity of esteem and safeguard the Other within. The aims in different jurisdictions differ: maintaining cordial international relations, safeguarding social cohesion, building or re-affirming nationhood, developing a pluralist society that boasts its diversity, or combinations of some or all of these. These chapters explore how the Baltic States, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Armenia have re-imagined their social fabric in the past twenty years, and in so doing have implemented policies, fashioned public opinion and re-calibrated the balance of prestige accorded to linguistic and cultural groups. In these countries identity construction is intimately related to their colonial past, to recent processes of nation building, re-defining the Other and re-assessing the status of geographical borders. In all cases the populations and individuals in these territories find themselves engaging with the question of whether languages, values and cultures in contact necessarily mean languages, values and cultures in conflict.

This volume divides into three interrelated sections. The first section consists of three chapters that provide a broad theoretical base in which to contextualize later chapters. These chapters do not provide a shared theoretical or methodological framework; on the contrary, there would be many points of disagreement. But they do develop a number of common threads: how the relocation of borders, or the relocation of people across

borders and consequent changes in language policy impact on groups and individuals. The key issues which are revisited in later chapters include: factors impacting on the vitality of an ethnolinguistic group (be it a majority or minority group); factors impacting on an individual's successful adaptation to a new (or altered) cultural context; political continuities and discontinuities between the top-down and the bottom-up perspective.

Much recent research agrees on the importance for one's well-being of feeling secure with one's national, ethnic and linguistic identities where the contours of each are not coterminous. However, research findings on the relationship between optimal adaptation to a new society and a person's involvement in, and attitudes to, mainstream and heritage cultures are contested. In their study of sociocultural adaptation of Russian-speaking migrants in Israel, Irina Zak and Arie Cohen argue that inconsistencies in these findings may be accounted for by discontinuities between a person's explicit and implicit attitudes towards the culture into which they were socialized. Their research suggests that the degree of consistency between explicit and implicit attitudes is a better predictor of well-being than a person's attitudes or adaptation strategy *per se*. They also argue that correspondence between explicit and implicit attitudes towards the heritage culture is an important variable contributing to migrants' adjustment.

Martin Ehala and Anastassia Zabrodskaja present the results of a large-scale quantitative study of the ethnolinguistic vitality of major ethnic groups in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Ehala and Zabrodskaja argue that vitality measures derived from subjective attitudes have greater reliability and validity than those obtained from purely objective indicators. This study reveals significant differences in the vitality of ethnic groups in these three countries.

Mikhail A. Molchanov's chapter analyses difficulties associated with the analysis of Russian national identity since the end of the Soviet Union. This chapter is informed by a historical-phenomenological perspective on the main components of Russian national identity and corresponding ethno-national perceptions at the elite and mass levels of society.

The second section of this volume consists of four chapters all of which explore processes of identity construction. Just as a state's language policy, as mediated through the education system, language-related legislation

and official discourse impact in a very real way on the lives of communities and individuals, so too the parenting strategies deployed within families impact on the identity options available to the children of migrants who are growing up with one foot in each of two sociocultural worlds. For this group home life is shaped by the ethos of the heritage community, in contrast to the dominant sociocultural paradigms of the host or mainstream community in which a young person's peer group are anchored. This is the focus of Svetlana Eriksson's chapter, which looks at migrant children's perceptions of Self and Other. Also focusing on children within migrant families is the chapter by Claudia Zbenovich, which discusses child-rearing practices in the Russian-speaking migrant community in Israel. Its primary focus is the dynamics of the cross-generational transmission of cultural values as evidenced in the verbal interaction between Russian-speaking grandmothers [*babushkas*] and their Israeli-born grandchildren.

The study reported in German Mendzheritskiy and Ekaterina Bagreeva's chapter was conducted amongst Russian-speaking migrants in Germany and Norway. The research identifies and discusses some of the similarities and differences between these two populations' attitudes to Russian and the maintenance of their first linguistic identity. The chapter by Galina Nikiporets-Takigawa compares discourses of national identity construction among the migrants from a range of post-Soviet countries by analysing digital debates on the forum RuTalk.

The third and final section of the volume consists of four chapters which explore the loss and recovery of identities in the context of geopolitical shifts. Sari Pöyhönen's chapter is based on an ethnographic study of the professional identity of Ingrian Finnish teachers. She focuses on the many meanings that teachers of Finnish attribute to the Finnish language and the part this plays in their sense of selfhood. Dionysios Zoumpalidis examines the current sociolinguistic situation of Pontic Greeks living in the north Caucasus. He asks how Pontic Greeks perceive their ethnic identity and how this is reflected in their language preferences.

Sholpan Zharkynbekova and Baurzhan Bokayev analyse the challenges associated with the policy of repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs and their adaptation and integration into Kazakhstani society. Jasmine Dum-Tragut's

chapter charts the history and status of the Russian language in Armenia that has been shaped by alternating waves of sympathy and antipathy.

All of the contributions in this volume problematize the Herderian adage ‘one people – one language – one nation’: Zoumpalidis demonstrates that the high status of Russian within the Pontic Greek community does not threaten their affiliation to a Greek ethnic identity; on the evidence of the Ingrian Finns, Pöyhönen argues that affiliation with ethnic and linguistic communities may change over a lifetime, or may vary from day to day depending on contextual factors; Eriksson and Zbenovich explore the tug-o’-war between the host and heritage cultures in the upbringing of the 1.5 generation; Dum-Tragut looks at the fracturing of Armenian into two languages as the newly-born nation reclaims its heritage from its colonizer, on the one hand, and its diaspora on the other. All contributions too, and here we return to our own beginning, deal with the tension for individuals and groups between the backwards gesturing towards a singular historical, geographical or genealogical point of origin, and a less circumscribed gesturing to the future.

—SARAH SMYTH, Trinity College Dublin





Russia



Map 1 The geographic scope of the current volume



Map 2 The Baltic States and Finland



Map 3 The Black Sea region



Map 4 Kazakhstan and its near abroad

PART I

Identity options



## Explicit/implicit acculturation and adaptation among Russian immigrant teachers in Israel

SIMON: I've been wondering who of us, Russian immigrant teachers, feels happier in Israel?

LUDA: Those preferring Israeli culture over the Russian may feel slightly better.

GALA: Well, there are people abandoning the Russian culture, they don't even want to speak Russian. I saw people for whom this was a principled line. They want to show they are not interested in the Russian culture anymore.

LUDA: I have friends who do this. They do not watch Russian TV, do not read Russian books, do not prefer the Russian language, they are really well adapted, and they feel themselves Israeli.

ROMAN: There is no doubt that teachers who have abandoned the Russian culture, at least to some extent, feel psychologically much better than those who didn't.

SIMON: I am not sure. My Russian culture helps me cope with whatever hardships or dilemmas I have. It is like a moral compass for me. Remember the song of Vladimir Vysotsky's?

I don't like bullies or acquiescent victims  
Yet pity moves me for Christ crucified ...

ROMAN: Still I think quitting the Russian culture is a defensive function of the organism.

RAYA: I think maintaining or abandoning the Russian culture depends on one's inner needs. I think that one can combine both cultures and feel wonderfully in the Israeli society. As for me, the truth is that suddenly I felt I don't enjoy reading Russian literature anymore. The taste has gone ...

LUDA: I feel wonderful in Israeli society but I am Russian inside. When I came to Israel, I cried bitterly when I realized I may never again sing songs till morning, may never meet people whom I understand from half a word ... Twenty years have passed. Now, when I feel nostalgic, or just sad, I read Dostoyevsky or Pushkin and this makes me feel better.

— Conversation of Russian immigrant teachers  
in the teachers' room of an Israeli high school

## 1. Introduction

In the above discussion, Russian immigrant teachers in Israel consider the role of their heritage culture for their psychological and socioeconomic well-being. Some of these immigrants seem to suggest intuitively that letting go of their heritage culture may be functionally valuable for successful psychological adaptation (i.e. emotional and physical well-being) and sociocultural adaptation (i.e. acquisition of social skills and competences necessary for effective functioning in the new culture). Others find a source of inspiration and joy in Russian language and literature, and therefore are unwilling or unable to let go of their heritage culture. According to Pöyhönen (in this volume), Finnish Ingrian teachers in Russia face a similar dilemma: for these teachers the Finnish language and identity may be both cultural capital and cultural burden.

The present study investigates the role of the heritage culture in the acculturation and adaptation of Russian immigrant teachers in Israel. We inquire whether integration (acquisition of the new culture and retaining of the heritage culture) or assimilation (acquisition of the new culture and discarding the heritage culture) is more psychologically and socioculturally adaptive for Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel. Is maintenance of the heritage culture adaptive for immigrants? Or is it the authenticity of attitudes towards one's heritage culture, rather than the attitudes *per se*, that is important for optimal adaptation to the new society?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As will become apparent, by authenticity we mean the degree of consistency between explicit and implicit cultural attitudes, consistency between explicit and implicit levels of acculturation.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Jewish identity in Soviet and post-Soviet Jews

Historically, the culture and language of Soviet Jews were Russian, even though they were well aware that their nationality was not (Gitelman 1982). For many Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union, their Jewish identity was a part of individual awareness, ‘something hard to express’, ‘something hidden deep inside’ (Ben-Refael and Ben-Chaim 2006: 304). According to Epstein and Kheimets, self-identification of the Soviet (and post-Soviet) Jewish *intelligentsia* is a unique combination of ethical and cultural (albeit not religious or national) Jewish legacy combined with the heritage of Russian culture (2000: 467). Thus, the acculturation process of Russian-Jewish immigrants to the state of Israel represents a unique situation for investigating the vitality of Russian cultural identity and its relation to the adaptation to Israeli culture in Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. A special feature of the present study is that it makes use of both explicit and implicit methods of measurement to reveal explicit and implicit levels of acculturation. The latter method, tapping the deeper, less conscious aspects, seems especially suitable for the case of immigrant teachers, since their educational work involves deep cultural contents.

### 2.2. Explicit and implicit aspects of acculturation

Acculturation refers to the ‘changes that arise following “contact” between individuals and groups of different cultural backgrounds’ (Sam 2006: 11). Some researchers emphasize the conscious and deliberate motifs in the process of acculturation, viewing it as ‘a deliberate, reflective ... cognitive activity of understanding ... the meanings with regard to the world, others and self’ (Chirkov 2009: 178). Others suggest that cultural experience can shape one’s cultural beliefs without one’s awareness (Kim et al. 2006). Zoumpalidis (in this volume) notes that in order to identify oneself with a

heritage cultural identity it is enough to 'feel' so inclined; thus, for example, for Pontic Greeks living in Russia, knowing or speaking Greek 'is not a necessary prerequisite for ethnic group membership'.

According to Parekh (2000), people living within a new culture may develop critical views of their heritage culture and even adopt the other culture, but their heritage culture will always be imprinted on them. The current study addresses the question of whether the strength of this imprint can be related to immigrants' psychological and sociocultural adaptation. We operationalized the imprint of heritage culture as the strength of immigrants' implicit self-association with that culture relative to the new one. Below we discuss the possible contribution of this construct to traditional acculturation research.

### *2.3. Previous acculturation research*

One of the most influential acculturation theories is that of Canadian social psychologist Berry (1974, 1997). This theory suggests that the acquisition of the mainstream culture and retention of the heritage culture represent independent dimensions. In other words, an immigrant's attitudes toward the mainstream culture does not depend on his/her attitudes toward the heritage culture and vice versa. These are independent choices, which give rise to four acculturation strategies or profiles: assimilation (the immigrant acquires the receiving culture and discards the heritage culture); separation (the immigrant rejects the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture); integration (the immigrant acquires the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture); and marginalization (the immigrant rejects the receiving culture and discards the heritage culture).

An important theoretical and practical question addressed by numerous studies pertains to the relationship between acculturation strategies and psychological and sociocultural adaptation. Some studies have found substantial and quite consistent evidence for an association between the preference for integration strategy and adaptation (Berry and Sam 1997; Berry et al. 2006; Pham and Harris 2001); others have contested the unique advantages of preferring integration (Nigbur et al. 2008;

Rudmin, 2006; Van Oudenhoven and Eisses 1998; Van Oudenhoven, Van der Zee and Bakker 2002). For example, in a study conducted with veteran Frisian immigrants in Canada (Van Oudenhoven et al. 2002), the authors found that a preference for integration strategy was not related to higher levels of satisfaction with life than a preference for assimilation. Van Oudenhoven and Eisses (1998) found that for Moroccan immigrants in Israel and the Netherlands assimilation was a better strategy than integration for minimizing prejudice from the dominant groups, providing further evidence against the privileged adaptive value of the integration strategy. In summary, there is a controversy as to whether the integration or the assimilation strategy is more psychologically and socioculturally adaptive for immigrants.

One way of explaining these inconclusive findings is to suggest that the concept of acculturation is too complicated to be measured solely by self-report measures. Although these tools have led to many important insights, self-report measures were shown to be vulnerable to self-presentation bias (Baumeister 1982) and to the unavailability of certain contents in one's conscious mind (Greenwald 1988).

In view of the inconclusive findings in the relationship between immigrants' acculturation attitudes and their psychological and sociocultural adaptation, and in view of the limitations of the self-report measurement, the present study argues that the implicit level of acculturation may be one of the variables in the acculturation–adaptation link. We suggest that an implicit method of measurement may increase the validity and reliability of explicit estimates of acculturation.

Immigrants may or may not be aware of their implicit acculturation level. For example, an immigrant reporting preference for the assimilation strategy may implicitly either cling to his/her heritage culture or strongly identify him-/herself with the new culture. A person experiencing a match between his/her implicit and explicit attitudes may enjoy better psychological adaptation than a person experiencing mismatch between his/her explicit and implicit worlds (Strack and Deutsch 2004). Thus, the addition of an implicit measurement enables a fuller representation of the assimilation construct than would the exclusive use of self-report measures.

A possible means to assess implicit acculturation is the Implicit Association Test (IAT) developed by Greenwald et al. (1998). IAT indirectly measures relative strengths of automatic associations between concepts by comparing the performance speeds on two classification tasks (Greenwald et al. 2003). In this way, it is possible to assess, for example, how strongly a person associates him-/herself with concepts associated with 'heritage' and 'mainstream' cultures, and thus the level of their implicit acculturation.

Research using IAT for the assessment of the acculturation process is still scarce but has nonetheless begun to shed light on cultural changes of which immigrants may be not aware. Recent studies have addressed the question to what extent bicultural individuals endorse both cultures on the implicit level. Overall, findings in the samples of Turkish immigrants to Germany and Korean immigrants to America showed that their implicit ethnic identity was more prominent than their national one (Bohner et al. 2008; Kim et al. 2006). However, immigrants' implicit self-concepts seem to change over time. For example, Hetts et al. (1999) found evidence that the implicit self-evaluations of recent Asian immigrants in the US were becoming more individualistic over time. Boucher et al. (2009) provide further evidence of changing implicit self-construals as a result of exposure and life in a new culture, reporting that the explicit self-esteem of Chinese-Americans was similar to that of Chinese controls while their implicit self-esteem was similar to that of Euro-Americans. As far as the acculturation–adaptation link is concerned, Kim et al. (2006) found that more favourable implicit attitudes towards Koreans than Americans were related to higher levels of psychological distress among Korean immigrant adolescents in the US.

#### *2.4. The present study*

This study explores the acculturation–adaptation link using explicit and implicit measures of acculturation among Russian immigrant teachers in Israel. First, we determine immigrants' explicit attitudes towards the heritage and new cultures across life domains. Next, we establish how the explicit

attitudes, and the four acculturation profiles based on them, are related to sociocultural and psychological adaptation. Further, we assess implicit acculturation using an Implicit Association Test. We hypothesize that a high level of implicit acculturation would be related to better adaptation. Finally, we test the hypothesis that an implicit measurement will introduce changes in interpretation of the data provided by traditional self-report measures of acculturation.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Participants

The participants were 118 teachers (forty-one men and seventy-seven women) aged twenty-four to seventy-five years ( $M = 49.07$ ,  $SD = 10.81$ ) drawn from ten state high schools: three schools where the majority of students and teachers are Russian speakers ( $n = 57$ ), and seven schools where a minority of students, or no students, are Russian speakers ( $n = 61$ ). All participants were first-generation immigrants. The average length of residence in Israel was 16.23 years ( $SD = .22$ ). Most participants came from Russia ( $n = 45$ ; of these: seventeen teachers from Moscow, eight from St Petersburg and twenty from other cities), Ukraine ( $n = 39$ ), Moldova ( $n = 11$ ), Belarus ( $n = 9$ ), Lithuania ( $n = 1$ ), Georgia ( $n = 1$ ), Azerbaijan ( $n = 1$ ) and Uzbekistan ( $n = 1$ ). Most participants held an MA degree (85 per cent), 7 per cent of the participants held a BA, and 8 per cent a PhD. 9 per cent of the participants had no experience of teaching prior to immigration. The average number of years of teaching experience prior to immigration of the participants with teaching experience was 11.33 ( $SD = 6.34$ ); the average teaching experience in Israel was 12.98 years ( $SD = 6.32$ ). 71 per cent of the participants were married to a spouse from their heritage culture; others were divorced or single.

Sixty-two per cent of the participants taught science and maths; thirty-eight per cent taught humanities or physical education, or they were employed as school counsellors.

### 3.2. Materials

#### 3.2.1. ACCULTURATION MEASURES

(1) *The explicit acculturation measure* was based on the eighteen-item Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA; Ryder, Alden and Paulhus 2000) (two-statement method). The questionnaires elicit heritage and mainstream cultural dimensions of attitude and were tailored to the present study to include domains relevant for Russian immigrant teachers. Each cultural dimension (heritage and mainstream) was measured by nine items referring to the following domains: command of each language (e.g., *I feel comfortable speaking Hebrew/Russian*), humour characteristic of either culture (e.g., *I enjoy typical Israeli / Russian jokes and humour*), social activities (e.g., *I enjoy social activities with people from the same heritage culture as myself/ from Israeli culture*), arts and music, cultural traditions, cultural behaviour, belief in cultural values, education methods characteristic for each culture and media consumption (language(s) in which participants watch TV). The participants were asked to rate the degree of their agreement or disagreement with the statements on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

(2) *The Implicit Association Test* (IAT; Greenwald et al. 1998) was used to assess implicit cultural identity by measuring the relative strength of heritage and national identities. This latency-based categorization task required the sorting of stimuli from four concepts (e.g. *heritage culture, Israeli culture, self* and *other*) using just two response options (two keys of a computer keyboard, each of which is assigned to two of the four concepts). Stimuli were either images (representative of the heritage or Israeli cultures) or word stimuli (representing the 'self' or 'other' concepts). Participants were asked to rapidly sort the stimuli appearing in the centre of the screen in accordance with the categories that appeared in the upper left and upper right corners

of the screen by pressing one of the two dedicated keys on the keyboard. Table 1 shows the sequence of blocks employed by the programme.

Table 1 Sequence of trial blocks

Block	Number of trials	Functions	Items assigned to left-key response	Items assigned to right-key response
1	20	Practice	'Self' stimuli	'Other' stimuli
2	20	Practice	Heritage culture images	Israeli culture images
3	20	Practice	'Self' stimuli + Heritage culture images	'Other' stimuli + Israeli culture images
4	40	Test	'Self' stimuli + Heritage culture images	'Other' stimuli + Israeli culture images
5	20	Practice	Israeli culture images	Heritage culture images
6	20	Practice	'Self' stimuli + Israeli culture images	'Other' stimuli + Heritage culture images
7	40	Test	'Self' stimuli + Israeli culture images	'Other' stimuli + Heritage culture images

To compute the IAT measure, the response latencies from the fourth and seventh trial blocks (test blocks) are compared (Greenwald et al. 1998).

To rule out the possibility that particular stimuli would influence the IAT measure because they are insufficiently representative of the category (Steffens et al. 2008) or because some stimuli are positively connected with the category while others are connected negatively, the stimuli were carefully chosen.

A panel of seven volunteers aged between twenty-five and forty-five who had immigrated to Israel between the ages of eighteen and thirty and were Russian-speaking MA students from the Bar-Ilan University selected a pool of images representing the heritage culture ( $n = 60$ ) and Israeli culture ( $n = 60$ ) respectively. The following domains were sampled: Hebrew language, politics, army, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, Judaism, repatriation, Israeli media, music, nature, food, school, Israeli symbols, Israeli literature,

Jerusalem, famous people in Israeli history, Jewish holidays; Russian language and literature, painting, cinematography, cartoons, army, politics, Christian religion, media, music, nature, food, Russian-Soviet symbols, Russian cities, school, famous people in Russian-Soviet history, holidays, etc.

A pretest conducted with thirty-five high school teachers identified sixteen images that would be unambiguous with respect to their category membership. The stimuli were chosen according to teachers' evaluations of the extent to which the stimuli were representative on a nine-point rating scale. All images were rated as slightly to moderately positive (3–7 on the nine-point rating scale).

### 3.2.2. ADAPTATION MEASURES

a. *The Beck Depression Inventory* (BDI – II; Beck et al. 2007) consists of twenty-one items designed to reflect expressions of depression and depressive thoughts (psychological adaptation). Each item contains four response options of increasing severity. Participants choose the sentence that most accurately describes their current feelings. Each item is rated on a four-point scale ranging from 0 to 3. For example, participants are requested to choose one of the following sentences: *I don't feel sad* (0), *I feel sad much of the time* (1), *I am sad all the time* (2), *I am so sad I can't stand it* (3).

b. *The Riverside Acculturative Stress Inventory* (RASI; Benet-Martinez 2003) consists of fifteen items designed to tap culture-related challenges (sociocultural adaptation) in the following five life domains: language skills (e.g., being misunderstood because of one's accent), work (e.g., having to work harder than non-immigrant/minority peers), intercultural relations (e.g., having disagreements with others for behaving in ways that are too 'Israeli' or too 'heritage'), discrimination (e.g., being mistreated because of one's ethnicity), and cultural/ethnic makeup of the community (e.g., living in an environment that is not culturally diverse). Each item is rated on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

To avoid a possible effect of attitude activation through exposure to the questions about one's immigration experience on the IAT results (Fazio and Olson 2003), all participants performed the IAT test before the administration of the explicit acculturation measure and the adaptation questionnaires.

## 4. Results

The relationship between acculturation and psychological/sociocultural adaptation was tested in the following order: 1) using only explicit measures of acculturation measurement; 2) using the implicit method; 3) testing the interaction of both methods.

### *4.1. Explicit measurement of acculturation*

Table 2 shows means and standard deviations of teachers' explicit acculturation attitudes across life domains, along the two cultural dimensions 'Heritage' and 'Mainstream'. The heritage and mainstream acculturation scales range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The results show that the participants hold highly positive attitudes toward their heritage culture and prefer it to the mainstream culture in most domains. Teachers scored below the median (4) on mainstream education methods, media use and typical cultural behaviour.

Table 2 Teachers' acculturation attitudes across life domains

Domains	Heritage Mean (SD)	Mainstream Mean (SD)	Significance
Command of the language	6.07 (1.58)	5.64 (1.66)	$t(112) = 2.85^{**}$
Arts (music, theatre)	6.26 (1.32)	5.31 (1.71)	$t(111) = 5.09^{**}$
Cultural values	5.78 (1.35)	5.15 (1.65)	$t(110) = 3.36^{**}$
Social contacts	5.65 (1.65)	5.08 (1.75)	$t(112) = 2.53^*$
Rituals, tradition	4.69 (1.78)	4.88 (1.72)	$t(112) = -0.61$
Humour and jokes	5.76 (1.42)	4.57 (1.79)	$t(112) = 5.80^{**}$
Education methods	5.36 (1.38)	3.79 (1.66)	$t(111) = 7.37^{***}$
Media use	4.68 (1.98)	3.69 (1.75)	$t(111) = 3.48^{**}$
Culturally typical behaviour	4.89 (1.63)	3.19 (1.50)	$t(112) = 7.64^{***}$
Total	5.46 (0.82)	4.59 (1.00)	$t(114) = 6.86^{***}$

Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

#### *4.2. Relationship between acculturation profiles and adaptation*

The four acculturation profiles (Integration, Assimilation, Separation and Marginalization) were computed on the basis of applying the *median-split procedure* to the heritage and mainstream scales (mainstream scale:  $Mdn = 4.67$ , heritage scale:  $Mdn = 5.56$ ). One-way ANOVA tests between BDI-II and the four profiles did not show any significant differences: the four profiles reported the same level of psychological adaptation. However, significant differences between the profiles were revealed on RASI ( $F(3,110) = 3.79, p < .05$ ): *post-hoc* comparisons using the Fisher LSD test showed that the Assimilation profile had significantly lower scores on RASI than the Separation and Marginalization profiles ( $LSD = 0.93, p < .05$ , and  $LSD = -0.76, p < .05$ , respectively).

Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations of the adaptation measures in the four acculturation profiles. The BDI-II scale ranges from 0 to 3, the RASI scale from 1 to 7.

Table 3 ANOVA scores for acculturation profiles with BDI-II/RASI

Acculturation Profiles	BDI-II M (SD)	RASI M (SD)
Integration	0.29 (0.31)	2.88 (1.03)
Assimilation	0.34 (0.26)	2.45 (1.01)
Separation	0.45 (0.33)	3.38 (1.39)
Marginalization	0.42 (0.37)	3.20 (0.97)
Total	0.37 (0.31)	2.96 (1.15)

#### *4.3. Correlations between cultural dimensions and adaptation*

Zero-order correlations between the mainstream and heritage acculturation scales and adaptation measures are presented in Table 4. The mainstream dimension is negatively correlated with both adaptation measures while the heritage dimension is positively correlated with RASI. In other

words, more positive attitudes towards the mainstream culture are linked with higher psychological and sociocultural adaptation, and more positive attitudes towards the heritage culture with lower sociocultural adaptation.

Table 4 Correlations between the acculturation scales and adaptation measures

Measure	BD-II	RASI	Mainstream	Heritage
BDI-II	I			
RASI	.35**	I		
Mainstream	-.26**	-.31**	I	
Heritage	-.01	.24*	-.23*	I

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

#### 4.4 Implicit acculturation measured by the IAT

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) in the present study measures the relative strength of immigrants' self-association with the heritage and mainstream cultures.

To normalize the distribution of the IAT scores, the raw data were log-transformed and averaged for each of the two blocks. The difference between the fourth and seventh blocks (self-heritage minus self-mainstream block) was computed for each participant (B7-B4). Positive difference scores reflect stronger implicit self-association with the heritage culture than with the Israeli one, while negative difference scores reflect stronger implicit self-association with the Israeli culture than with the heritage. Zero scores indicate equal implicit self-association with both cultures.

Most teachers (80 per cent) showed positive log-transformed IAT scores ( $M = 0.12$ ;  $SD = 0.14$ ;  $Mdn = 0.13$ ). This means that the majority of the teachers have stronger implicit self-association with the heritage culture than with the Israeli one.

#### *4.5. Correlations between implicit acculturation and adaptation*

The IAT measure was significantly and positively related to BDI-II ( $r = .25^{**}$ ), and RASI ( $r = .25^{**}$ ). Moreover, the partial correlations between the IAT and BDI-II, and between IAT and RASI, controlling for the mainstream and heritage dimensions, are significant as well ( $r = .25^{**}$  and  $r = .22^*$ , respectively).

#### *4.6. Explicit–implicit correspondence and adaptation*

To investigate the contribution of the implicit measure to the relationship between the acculturation profiles and adaptation measures, the participants were divided into two groups: a group scoring above the IAT median ( $Mdn = 0.13$ ), hereafter referred to as ‘more Russian’, and a group scoring below the median (‘less Russian’).

The main effect of the IAT scores was significant [ $F(1,117) = 8.46, p < .01$ ], meaning that the overall BDI-II scores are lower in the ‘less Russian’ group than in the ‘more Russian’ one. The ANOVA analysis showed that the acculturation profiles were differentially related to the BDI-II in the two groups. In the ‘less Russian’ group, the four acculturation profiles did not differ on the BDI-II scale. In contrast, in the ‘more Russian’ group, there was a significant difference in BDI-II between the four acculturation profiles ( $F(3, 56) = 3.15, p < .05$ ). Specifically, the Integration profile had lower scores on BDI-II than the Separation and Marginalization profiles ( $LSD = -5.07, p < .01$  and  $-6.94, p < .01$ , respectively). The acculturation profiles were also differentially related to the RASI in the two groups. The Assimilation profile scored significantly lower on RASI than the Separation and Marginalization profiles only among ‘less Russian’ participants ( $F(3, 53) = 3.34, p < .05$ ;  $LSD = -1.13, p < .01$ , and  $-1.01, p < .01$ , respectively). Among ‘more Russian’ participants no differences between the four profiles in RASI were revealed.

To test whether *within each acculturation profile* 'less Russian' participants were also better adapted than their 'more Russian' colleagues, t-tests were performed between the adaptation measures and the subgroups. Significant differences were found in BDI-II between 'more' ( $M = 0.42, SD = 0.29, n = 15$ ) and 'less Russian' ( $M = 0.25, SD = 0.22, n = 15$ ) participants with the Assimilation profile ( $t(28) = -1.79, p < .05,$ ), and between 'more' ( $M = 0.56, SD = 0.33, n = 13$ ) and 'less Russian' ( $M = 0.26, SD = 0.18, n = 14$ ) participants with the Marginalization profile ( $t(25) = -2.90, p < .01$ ). In addition, the t-test on RASI showed significant differences between 'more' ( $M = 2.84, SD = 1.05, n = 15$ ) and 'less Russian' ( $M = 2.02, SD = 0.79, n = 15$ ) participants with the Assimilation profile ( $t(28) = 2.34, p < .05$ , one-tailed). Figures 1 and 2 illustrate these findings.

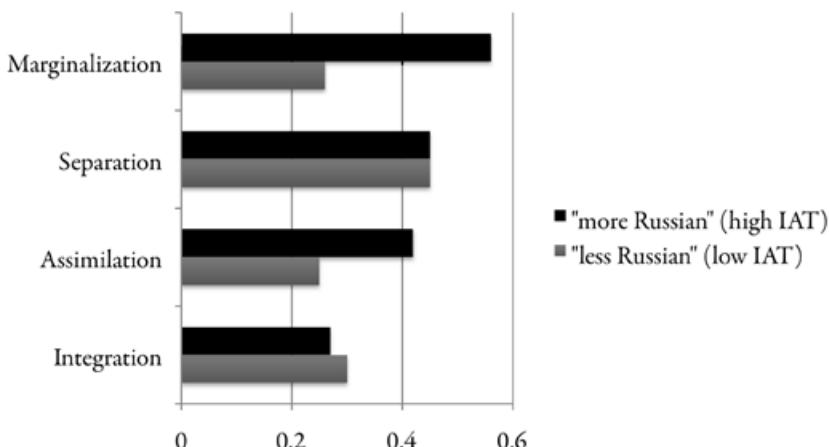


Figure 1 Comparison of BDI-II scores in teachers with high and low IAT within each acculturation profile

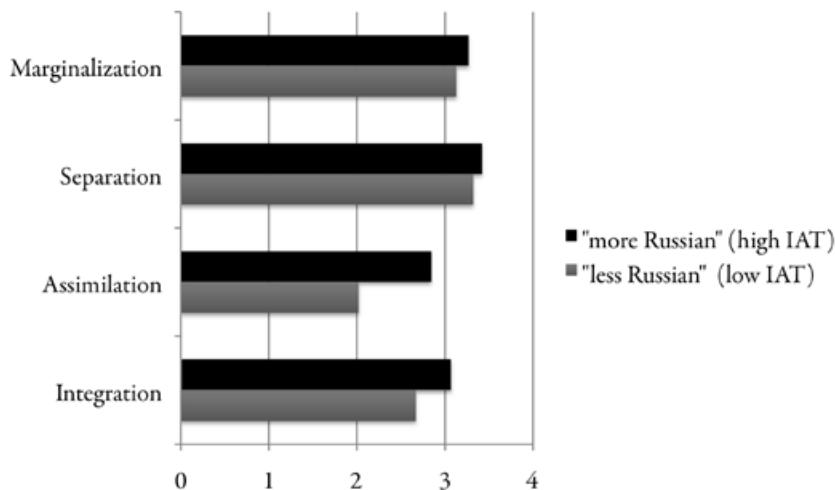


Figure 2 Comparison of RASI scores in teachers with high and low IAT within each acculturation profile

Table 5 summarizes the results regarding the contribution of the implicit and explicit methods of acculturation measurement to the evaluation of adaptation.

Table 5 Contribution of implicit and explicit methods to evaluation of BDI-II and RASI

Methods of measurement/ Kinds of comparison	Groups of comparison	Findings regarding BDI-II (depression)	Findings regarding RASI (acculturation stress)
1. Explicit. Comparison between four acculturation profiles (Integration, Assimilation, Separation, Marginalization)	The whole sample	No differences between the four profiles	Assimilation report lower RASI than Separation and Marginalization

2. Explicit. Testing the contribution of mainstream and heritage cultural dimensions	The whole sample	Mainstream dimension is negatively correlated with BDI-II; heritage dimension is not	Mainstream dimension is negatively correlated with RASI; heritage dimension is positively correlated with RASI
3. Implicit. Testing the contribution of implicit acculturation (measured by the IAT)	The whole sample	Implicit acculturation is negatively correlated with BDI-II	Implicit acculturation is negatively correlated with RASI
4. Explicit and Implicit. Comparison between four acculturation profiles in 'more Russian' (high IAT) and 'less Russian' (low IAT) groups	'more Russian'	Integration report lower BDI-II than Separation and Marginalization	No differences between the four profiles on RASI
	'less Russian'	No differences between the four profiles	Assimilation report lower RASI than Separation, Marginalization
5. Explicit and Implicit. Testing explicit-implicit correspondence: Comparison within each acculturation profile of 'more Russian' and 'less Russian' groups	Integration Profile	No differences between 'more Russian' and 'less Russian' groups	No differences between 'more Russian' and 'less Russian' groups
	Assimilation Profile	'Less Russian' report lower BDI-II than 'more Russian'	'Less Russian' report lower BDI-II than 'more Russian'
	Separation Profile	No differences between 'more Russian' and 'less Russian' groups	No differences between 'more Russian' and 'less Russian' groups
	Marginalization Profile	'Less Russian' report lower RASI than 'more Russian'	No differences between 'more Russian' and 'less Russian' groups

## 5. Discussion

The main goal of the present study was to explore the relationship between explicit and implicit measures of acculturation and two measures of adaptation – psychological and sociocultural – among Russian immigrant teachers in Israel. The explicit method included the self-report measures of attitudes towards the heritage and mainstream cultural dimensions; the median scores on these dimensions were used to generate four acculturation profiles based on Berry's theory. The implicit method utilized the IAT to measure the immigrants' implicit cultural identities by assessing the relative strength of associations between self and the representations of the heritage and mainstream cultures.

### 5.1. *Explicit acculturation patterns and adaptation*

The participants in the present study were found to hold highly positive attitudes toward their heritage Russian culture and prefer it to the mainstream culture in most life domains. It would be of interest to explore whether high appreciation of heritage culture is unique to Russian immigrants in Israel, or is common to most immigrants coming from different cultures. There is evidence, however, that for Russian immigrants to Norway and Germany, preserving native Russian culture may be less important than adopting the new one (see Mendzheritskiy and Bagreeva, in this volume). These authors report that 'it often happens that parents do not pay sufficient attention to the question of teaching their children how to speak Russian, as they find no immediate need for it'. According to Zbenovich (in this volume), one of the important social agents conveying the crucial Russian-Soviet cultural information to children in Russian Israeli families is the grandmother, *babushka*. *Babushka*, according to Zbenovich, helps actualize 'the cultural legacy of the older generation of Russian Israelis', including education and discipline in raising children. In line with this view, the participants in this study rated mainstream education methods negatively.

Previous research commonly presents a bidimensional conception of acculturation, according to which the heritage and mainstream cultural identities vary independently (Berry 1997; Ryder et al. 2000). While some studies found that immigrants tend to have greater readiness to adapt to the mainstream culture in the public domain (media use, education methods, typical cultural behaviour, rituals) rather than in the private one (social contacts, arts, cultural values, humour) (Arends-Toth and Van de Vijver 2004; Phalet et al. 2000), the findings of the present study do not support this trend: the teachers scored below the median on the public domain of the mainstream cultural dimension including attitudes toward education methods, media use and typical cultural behaviour. A possible explanation for this finding is that the distinction between the public and private domains is not easily made in the case of immigrant teachers: acculturation in public domains involves socioemotional elements, while acculturation in the private domains may be also instrumentally valuable for the teachers' work.

No significant differences in psychological adaptation between the four acculturation profiles were revealed by the traditional self-report measures. One possible explanation for this finding is that such categorization may be artificial in the sample under investigation, as all the four profiles are rather high on both dimensions, i.e., most of them are bicultural to some extent. In addition, the absence of a clear distinction between the profiles in terms of psychological adjustment fits the inconsistent pattern of results reported by the acculturation literature (Berry et al. 2006; Nigbur et al. 2008; Van Oudenhoven et al. 2002).

While the categorization of immigrants into four acculturation profiles does not yield unequivocal results regarding the relationship between the four profiles and psychological adaptation, the mainstream cultural dimension, taken independently, was found to correlate weakly but significantly with both sociocultural and psychological adaptation. Some researchers actually argue that the positive relationship between integration and adaptation may be found because the integration attitude shares variance with the positive attitude towards the mainstream culture (Watanabe et al. 2006). In line with this argument, many studies found positive relation between involvement in the mainstream culture and adjustment, while no

relation, or even a negative one, was found between involvement in the heritage culture and adjustment (Birman et al. 2002; Nguyen et al. 1999; Trickett and Birman 2005; Watanabe et al. 2006).

Thus, although the Russian heritage culture is important for immigrants' emotional integrity, in the present study it was not found to contribute to their adaptation. Moreover, the heritage culture dimension was found to correlate negatively with the measure of sociocultural adaptation. In line with these results, immigrants with the Assimilation profile were found to be somewhat better adapted than those with the Integration profile: the former report significantly better sociocultural adaptation than those with Separation and Marginalization profiles, while the latter report the same level of sociocultural adaptation as the profiles resisting adoption of the mainstream culture.

In summary, the explicit method of acculturation measurement mainly reveals the relationship between the mainstream cultural dimension and adaptation. It does not seem to disclose any advantages of maintaining the heritage culture for immigrant teachers' adaptation. Neither can the Integration profile, beyond the effect of positive attitudes towards the mainstream culture, be claimed to be of unique benefit. Implicit measurement, however, specified the conditions when holding positive attitudes towards the heritage culture does have an adaptive value.

### *5.2. Implicit acculturation and adaptation*

The results of the current study suggest that most participants implicitly associate themselves more strongly with the heritage than with the mainstream culture. This finding is in line with the results of some previous studies performed on adult immigrants in other countries (Bohner et al. 2008; Kim and Oh 2001). The finding also supports Parekh's view that one's heritage culture remains imprinted on a person whatever cultural changes she may undergo (2000). However, strong implicit self-association with one's heritage culture is related to difficulties in both psychological and socio-cultural adaptation. This latter finding is also in line with previous research.

### *5.3. Interaction of the implicit and explicit measures on adaptation*

As mentioned above, 'more Russian' participants experience more psychological difficulties than 'less Russian' participants, indicating that strong implicit attachment to one's heritage culture is not particularly adaptive. Nevertheless, 'more Russian' participants with the Integration profile (high on both mainstream and heritage dimensions) are adapted as much as 'less Russian' participants, in contrast to the 'more Russian' participants with the remaining three profiles (Assimilation, Separation, Marginalization). These findings indicate that the Integration profile is especially adaptive, probably because it enables the immigrant teachers to stay authentically attached to their heritage culture and to preserve a positive self-image as Russian Jews, while building positive attitudes towards the dominant culture. The present results support the prediction based on Berry's theory stating that preference for the integration acculturation strategy is the most adaptive (Berry 2006: p. 51).

The present findings may provide an explanation for inconsistencies in the traditional acculturation research regarding the relationship between the acculturation strategies and adaptation. Why is Integration more advantageous than Assimilation in the group of 'more Russian' participants, but not 'less Russian' participants? The two systems model can help answer this question.

The two systems model states that the two kinds of processes – reflective and impulsive – are located in the Reflective and Impulsive Systems. In the Impulsive System knowledge is represented as patterns of activation; behavioural schemata are activated by spreading activation from the perception of an object. In the Reflective System the knowledge is represented by the elements that are interconnected by semantic relations to which truth value is attached; the behaviour is the result of decision taking; the process is available to introspection. The Reflective System processes information only when there is enough cognitive capacity, whereas the Impulsive System requires no or few cognitive resources. The theory claims that when the two systems operate the behavioural schema in synergy, the behaviour takes place in a smooth way and is accompanied by the pleasurable feeling of flow. However, when the two systems compete, for example, when they

operate two incompatible behavioural schemas, or when the Reflective system suppresses the behaviour activated through the Impulsive schema, the behaviour is accompanied by the feeling of conflict.

If the logic of this model is applied to the immigrant's experience, it can be suggested that his/her cultural behaviour will be a result of both systems' activation. The Reflective System would form an acculturation attitude as a result of 'deliberate, reflective, and for the most part comparative, cognitive activity of understanding' (Chirkov 2009: 178) of the relevant information. The Impulsive system would activate the behavioural schema from the associative store that can be conceptualized as a long-term memory. Thus, immigrants' wishes to belong to the dominant society and adopt its norms can coexist with impulsive choices to behave in ways concordant with the heritage culture. However, the two systems model would predict better adjustment of those immigrants whose two systems operate synergetically. It may be suggested, therefore, that when explicit, deliberate orientation towards the mainstream culture is accompanied by spontaneous activation of behavioural schema compatible with the mainstream culture, the optimal adaptation is achieved.

Thus, 'less Russian' participants choosing the assimilation strategy experience a match between the explicit and implicit attitudes toward their heritage culture – they explicitly decide not to maintain it while implicitly they have probably succeeded in overriding the automatic associations with it. 'More Russian' participants choosing the assimilation strategy experience a mismatch between the explicit and implicit attitudes toward their heritage culture, and thus may feel a conflict compromising their psychological adaptation.

Among 'less Russian' participants, however, no differences between the acculturation profiles in the level of psychological adaptation were revealed. It is interesting to note, for example, that 'less Russian' participants with the Marginalization profile, who implicitly are not clinging to their heritage culture, although they do experience difficulties in sociocultural adaptation, as Berry predicted (2006), are as psychologically adjusted as the participants with the Integration profile. This finding is in line with Rudmin's argument that the rejection of the heritage and mainstream cultures does not necessarily lead to distress, but may be an expression of

cultural autonomy implying 'self-actualization or assertion of oneself as an autonomous individual in a liberal society' (2006: 12).

In terms of sociocultural adaptation the Assimilation profile is found to be the most advantageous among 'less Russian', but not among 'more Russian' participants. This finding may indicate that choosing the assimilation strategy both implicitly and explicitly, i.e. experiencing a match between the explicit and implicit attitudes toward one's heritage culture, is highly adaptive. The present finding again confirms the idea that maintaining explicit–implicit correspondence in attitudes towards the heritage culture – either in one's wish to maintain it or to let go of it – is an important variable contributing to immigrants' adjustment.

## 6. Conclusion

According to past research, there is a controversy around whether the Integration or the Assimilation profile is more psychologically and socioculturally adaptive for immigrants. The present study tried to shed some light on this issue using an implicit acculturation measure (IAT). Psychological adaptation of participants with the Integration profile remains high independent of immigrants' implicit acculturation. Psychological adaptation of participants with the Assimilation profile becomes somewhat compromised in the face of a mismatch between the explicit and implicit attitudes towards the heritage culture. In terms of sociocultural adaptation, the Assimilation profile is found to be the most advantageous as long as the participants show an assimilative tendency also on an implicit level. Thus, it seems that the authenticity of attitudes towards one's heritage culture, rather than the attitudes *per se*, together with involvement in the mainstream culture, enable an optimal adaptation to the new society. The present study demonstrated that the findings obtained through the implicit method of acculturation measurement introduce nontrivial corrections into the interpretation of the results obtained by means of traditional self-report acculturation measures.



MARTIN EHALA AND ANASTASSIA ZABRODSKAJA

## Ethnolinguistic vitality of ethnic groups in the Baltic countries

### Introduction

Ethnolinguistic vitality ‘is that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations’ (Giles et al. 1977: 308). It has been suggested that groups that have low vitality are likely to cease to exist as distinctive collectives, while those that have high vitality are likely to survive.

Ethnolinguistic vitality is a complex social psychological phenomenon, a collective mindset to behave distinctively as a group. It is formed by several factors that will be outlined in Section 1. Vitality is also related to the group’s strength, sometimes called ‘objective vitality’, which is determined by three structural variables: demography, institutional support and status (Giles et al. 1977). For our analysis, we also present short accounts of the strength of the groups whose vitalities are analysed (Section 2). Objective vitality serves as an important reference point for assessing how vitality, which is socially constructed, reflects objective reality. In Section 3, the methodology of the study and sample design are addressed. Finally, the chapter presents the results of three quantitative surveys of the ethnolinguistic vitality of the main ethnic groups in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The results are discussed comparatively, in an effort to further our understanding of ethnolinguistic vitalities of the Baltic titular groups and minorities.

## 1. Theoretical background

Although the concept of vitality is intuitively clear and has remained attractive for researchers, it has been criticized for being a rough and unreliable tool for measuring a group's ability to behave collectively as a distinctive entity (Husband and Saifullah Khan 1982). As a response to this criticism, Ehala (2005, 2008, 2010a, 2010b) developed an extended theory of ethnolinguistic vitality (EEV) that draws on previous models of ethnolinguistic vitality (Giles et al. 1977; Sachdev and Bourhis 1993; Allard and Landry 1994; Landry et al. 1996; Bourhis 2001) and several other works on the social psychology of language maintenance (Conklin and Lourie 1983; Edwards 1985, 1994; Fishman 1986; Smolicz 1981; Sanders 2002). EEV specifies the structural relationships between its four key variables that affect the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups:

1. perceived strength differential (PSD) between the in-group ('us') and the most prominent out-group ('them');
2. the level of intergroup discordance (D);
3. perceived intergroup distance (R);<sup>1</sup> and
4. the level of utilitarianism (U) in the value system of the group studied.

All these factors are sociopsychological, and they reflect group members' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about their own group and interethnic relations in the setting in which they live. EEV is operationalized in a way that makes it possible to assess these factors on a scale, so that each respondent is characterized by a vitality score. By calculating the average score for the sample and/or finding subgroups with different vitality scores, it becomes possible to assess the vitality of a given group, i.e. its readiness to act as a collective entity in intergroup relations. Below we characterize each of the subcomponents of EEV in more detail.

<sup>1</sup> R comes from the notion of radius, from the metaphor of ethnic groups having a certain gravity that attracts their members. The attraction decreases as the value of R grows.

### 1.1. Perceived strength differential (PSD)

The driving force behind language shift is the power difference between dominant and minority groups. Language and identity maintenance depends on the opportunities and rewards, real or symbolic (including positive social identity), that the competing groups can provide for their members. The sum of these factors can be called the perceived strength of the group. In EV, perceived strength is the same variable that is understood as 'subjective vitality' in the standard ethnolinguistic vitality theory (see Bourhis et al. 1981).

For group vitality, the crucial factor is not perceived strength itself, but the perceived strength differential between the in-group and the most prominent out-group. The reason is that groups exist in their sociohistorical settings and the perception of the strength of the 'us' group depends on the relative strength of any 'them' groups (see Figure 1).

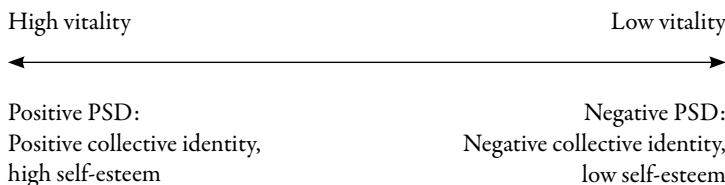


Figure 1 Interdependence between group vitality V  
and the perceived strength of the groups' PSD

In general, if PSD is small, the benefits of shifting one's group membership do not outweigh the emotional and social costs needed for a radical identity shift. The more PSD is in favour of the out-group, the more beneficial it seems to shift identity. Thus, provided that the influence of all other factors is zero, the group V is equal to the differential of the perceived strengths ( $S_{we}$  and  $S_{they}$ ) of the minority (in our case, Russian-speaking) and majority (Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian) groups. Mathematically, this can be formulated as follows:  $V = PSD = S_{we} - S_{they}$ . If  $V < 0$ , then the group has low vitality; in other words, it has low potential to act as a group, a condition that may lead to identity and language shift. If  $V \geq 0$ , then the group is vital, i.e. it is able to function as a group and to maintain its identity over time.

### *1.2. Intergroup discordance (D)*

Intergroup discordance (D) expresses the perceived illegitimacy of the intergroup power relations, as well as distrust towards the out-group. For example, if a minority group perceives its low status to be legitimate, its members may exhibit out-group favouritism (Sachdev and Bourhis 1991; Batalha et al. 2007), which encourages identity and language shift. On the other hand, if the situation is perceived to be illegitimate, the members are likely to feel distrust towards the majority. In such conditions, there is less motivation and possibility for individual minority group members to shift their identities. Instead, the minority will be more prone to act collectively for justice. Thus, the lower the sense of legitimacy (i.e. the stronger the feeling of injustice) and the higher the perception of distrust towards the powerful out-group, the higher the vitality of the minority group.

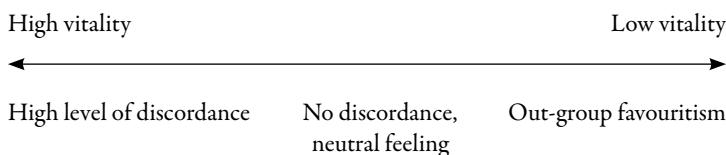


Figure 2 Interdependence between group vitality V and intergroup discordance D

The relationship between D and the other components of V needs to be specified, too. It would be reasonable to assume that the larger the negative PSD and the lower the value of D (i.e. the more legitimate the situation is considered to be, and the more trusting the attitudes are towards the out-group), the lower the V value of the respective group (see Figure 2). In this case, the low-status group is unlikely to challenge the existing power relations, as it feels too weak and perceives its low status as legitimate. The smaller the negative PSD and/or the higher D, the higher the V value, as the low-status group has both the motivation (establishing justice) and the perceived strength to change the power relations. When D is incorporated, the V formula takes the following form:  $V = (S_{we} - S_{they}) + D$ .

It is reasonable to assume that in a case where there is neither perceived discordance with the out-group nor perceived out-group favouritism, the

value of D would be equal to zero, i.e. it would not affect the value of V. The higher the positive value of D, the more it will reduce the negative value of PSD, leading to higher values of V. If D has a negative value (indicating out-group favouritism), it will increase the negative value of PSD, leading to lower values of V.

### I.3. Intergroup distance ( $R$ )

Intergroup distance ( $R$ ) relates to the extent of intergroup contact and the distinctiveness of features characterizing the group. The avoidance of intergroup contact expresses a group's disposition to maintain its in-group networks, while the environment offers opportunities for the development of a different network that unavoidably weakens the heritage network (Landry et al. 1996). Therefore, a disposition to maintain segregative minority networks would enhance  $V$ , despite a large negative PSD.

The network structure, in turn, is heavily related to language use: as intergroup contact often involves two languages, network structure determines language use patterns. The more numerous the contacts of the minority group with the dominant out-group, the more the dominant language tends to be used. This means that the language use pattern is often a good indicator of the extent of intergroup contact. Besides language, intergroup distance can also be marked by other features, such as religion and other cultural practices (Myhill 2003), as well as racial features. Ultimately, intergroup distance is dependent on the symbolic and discursive factors that establish the norms concerning the acceptability, extent and nature of intergroup contacts; this is also related to ethnic distinctiveness (see Figure 3).



Figure 3 Interdependence between group vitality V and intergroup distance R

Thus, all other factors being constant, the less intergroup contact takes place and the more distinct the groups appear, i.e. the larger R, the higher V. Mathematically, the relationship of intergroup distance to the other factors can be expressed as  $V = ((S_{we} - S_{they}) + D) / R$ .

The minimum value of R, both in terms of contact and distinctiveness, is 1. This means a very strong interconnectedness of social networks and a high cultural similarity between the groups. Such a situation may be characteristic of dialect or regional language groups in relation to standard language speakers (Ehala and Niglas 2007). In such cases, it is very easy to shift from one group to the other, and R has no impact on vitality, which is determined only by PSD. When R is larger than 1, this starts to reduce the effect of negative PSD, because of the costs that are associated with the shift from one group to another. Thus, the larger R gets, the closer V gets to zero, i.e. the point where the benefits of identity shift are cancelled out by the costs. At this point, there would be no motivation for an identity shift by the minority group members. This indicates a relatively higher vitality.

#### *1.4. Utilitarianism (U)*

U is a value system that justifies a pragmatic and economically beneficial course of action (Scollon and Scollon 1995). Cultures, however, function as the interplay of pragmatic and emotional motivations, and utilitarian principles are balanced by what can be called the traditionalist value system. The traditionalist value system expresses the group members' commitment to their cultural practices and values. In a balanced culture, utilitarian and traditionalist values are in modest conflict, the two sides of which are rational efficiency and tradition, which is a characteristic of many well-functioning societies. This opposition is well recognized by the major theories of human values, such as Schwartz (1992, 2006) and Inglehart and Welzel (2005), although all authors use their own terminology.

Different groups may vary with regard to the salience of utilitarian and traditionalist values in their culture. Although the levels of utilitarianism and traditionalism can form different combinations (see Ehala 2012), both of them are directly relevant to language and identity maintenance.

Groups which are very low in utilitarianism while holding strongly traditionalist values tend to be highly committed to their social identity (see Figure 4). For example, some religious groups (such as the Amish or the Russian Old Believers in Latvia and Estonia)<sup>2</sup> are so traditionalist that they hardly assimilate at all, despite their large negative PSD with the mainstream society. This value configuration would support language and identity maintenance.

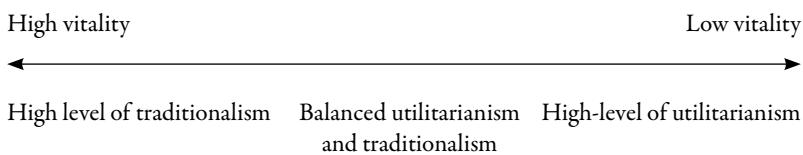


Figure 4 Interdependence between group vitality V and group value system U

If a group tends towards utilitarian values, group members are more predisposed to abandon heritage traditions, as maintaining them seems costly, meaningless and/or backward. Such a value configuration would reduce V. If the utilitarian and traditionalist values are balanced, U does not have an effect on V.

Therefore, the higher U, the more it reduces V. Given this, utilitarianism can be included in the formula in the following way:  $V = U \cdot (S_{we} - S_{they}) / R$ . This means that if the value of U is 1 (balanced utilitarianism and traditionalism), its impact on overall vitality can be disregarded. If the value of U falls below 1, it starts to reduce the negative value of PSD. When U reaches 0, the whole equation becomes equal to 0, meaning that the group is so traditional that it has no inclination for identity shift towards the majority. If the value of U is greater than 1, the effects of PSD start to increase, causing the V value to drop.

<sup>2</sup> The Old Believers (*starovery* or *staroobriadtsy*) were anathematized by the Russian Orthodox Church after Patriarch Nikon's 1666–1667 church reforms; in order to avoid religious persecution in Russia, they fled to the periphery of the Empire. Some settled on the western coast of Lake Peipus in Estonia; as discussed by Dum-Tragut (this volume), some settled in Armenia.

It must be noted, however, that language shift is not always connected to high level of utilitarianism. As Zoumpalidis (this volume) shows, the Pontic Greek community is undergoing a shift to Russian, yet the community is quite traditional in other aspects of its culture and has a strong sense of group identity. This is often the case with communities whose heritage language is not one of their core values (see Smolicz 1981). Thus it is more appropriate to say that high traditionalism favours identity maintenance in general and if language is one of the core values it is also maintained.

In some circumstances, utilitarianism can also be beneficial for ethnic minority maintenance, but only in cases where the language is spoken by a majority in another prominent country. For example, Pöyhönen (this volume) reports that the Finnish language has become very popular in north-western Russia, which helps the Ingrians to regain their lost language competency. The same appears to be the case with Russian minorities in the Baltic countries, where Russian can be maintained even on utilitarian grounds as it is a useful language in the region.

In sum, there are four vitality factors: perceived strength differential (PSD); intergroup discordance (D); intergroup distance (R); and traditionalism/utilitarianism (U). By measuring these factors, we can draw a vitality profile of a group. This profile may help to predict the group's interethnic behaviour and acculturation orientations.

## 2. General characteristics of the main ethnic groups in the Baltic States

Vitality is a complex combination of attitudes, which although they reflect the strength of the ethnic group do not always reflect it objectively. This section gives an overview of the demographic and institutional support factors that could be taken as characterizing the strength of each particular ethnic group. This overview serves as a reference point in the analysis and

discussion stages to pinpoint the differences between the objective strength of the groups and the way they have constructed their vitality.

With regard to demographics, absolute values (the actual proportions of each group in the population and its dispersion in the territory) are given. Institutional support factors include the presence of education in the mother tongue at different levels, heritage language mass media and their diversity as well as the diversity of cultural activities in the language and their quality and prestige. The economic context is described through the evaluation of the welfare of group members, and the stability of the group's ethnic economy and political organization. Next, we present an overview of these characteristics as applied to the ethnicities in the Baltic countries to contextualize the results of the vitality study.

Russian is the dominant language of ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians and members of a number of other ethnicities in the territory of the Soviet Union who settled in the Baltic countries during the Soviet period. These communities/groups have constructed a common language-based identity in which the Soviet element has a substantial role. In this sense, these communities show similar identity processes, which are characterized in detail by Nikiporets-Takigawa (this volume): Victory Day has become a strong uniting symbol, along with nostalgia for several other Soviet-era phenomena. As this common identity is constructed mainly by means of the Russian language, we call these groups Russian-speaking communities without distinguishing the share of different ethnic backgrounds in them.

### *2.1. Estonia*

According to the 2012 census, there are 1.29 million people in Estonia. The participants in our study were Estonians and Russian speakers (see Table 1). As just noted, the latter included, along with Russians, representatives of other ethnicities (share in the country's population: 26 per cent Russians, 2 per cent Ukrainians, and 1 per cent Belarusians).

Table 1 General characteristics of the two major linguistic groups in Estonia

	Estonians	Russian speakers
Population size	889,000	384,000
Percentage of total population	69 per cent	29 per cent
Geographical distribution	17,780 (2 per cent) in Ida-Virumaa 215,000 (24 per cent) in Tallinn 666,750 (75 per cent) in other areas with high ethnic density	130,000 (34 per cent) in Ida-Virumaa (high ethnic density) 185,000 (48 per cent) in Tallinn 76,800 (20 per cent) in other areas
Education in the native language	All levels and in all areas	Basic and incomplete secondary education; higher education only in a few disciplines
Mass media in the native language	A wide range of print, electronic and audiovisual media	Few local print, electronic and audiovisual media; however, many Russian Federation sources are accessible
Cultural life in the native language	Broad and rich cultural life	Limited local cultural life
Material prosperity	Higher incomes than the national average	Lower incomes compared to the national average
Role in Estonian economy	Decisive	Modest, with the exception of Ida-Viru, where substantial
Political activity	Politically well organized	Politically poorly organized

The sizable Russian-speaking population of Estonia lives very compactly: only 20 per cent are scattered in Estonian-speaking areas. Almost half of the Russian-speaking population lives in Tallinn and a third in Ida-Viru County, a region which is economically weaker than the national average. Here, the density of the Russian-speaking population is extremely high.

Although education in Russian currently continues to the end of secondary school, Russian-language schools are now being actively transitioned to partial Estonian-language instruction in the upper secondary level. The local cultural life is fairly poor in comparison with Russia. Thus, our educated guess would be that despite the fact that the demographics of the Russian-speaking community are quite good, economic weakness does not allow the community to be culturally and politically active.

## *2.2. Latvia*

According to the 2011 census, the population of Latvia was 2,067,000 (see Table 2 for a comparison of the major ethnic groups). Although Latgalian Latvians themselves consider themselves to be Latvians and are thus included in the population figures vis-a-vis the Russian-speaking population, the share of Latgalian Latvians is additionally expressed as a proportion of the rest of the population. Latgalian Latvian identity is thus a sub-identity of a regional Latvian identity. At the same time, Latgalian Latvians themselves still want to be seen separately from the rest of the Latvians (Latgalian is not understandable to Latvians; the mentality and culture are also different). Therefore, in evaluating the vitality of Latgalian Latvians, we consider the two groups separately.

Table 2 General characteristics of the major linguistic groups in Latvia<sup>3</sup>

	Latvians (incl. Latgalian Latvians)	Russian speakers	Latgalian Latvians
Population size	1.284 million	676,000	140,000
Percentage of total population	61 per cent	32 per cent	7 per cent

<sup>3</sup> Data from the 2011 census; Joma and Meržs 2008; Marten et al. 2009.

Geographical distribution	Dominant in small towns and rural areas. In the minority in Riga (299,171 or 23 per cent), in Daugavpils (1.4 per cent or 18,026) and Rēzekne (1.2 per cent or 15,560)	Dominant in two largest cities: 387,000 (57 per cent) in Riga (55 per cent of city population), 88,000 (13 per cent) in Daugavpils (85 per cent of city population)	Ca. 60,000 in the Latgale region (43 per cent of population). The rest are scattered across other parts of Latvia
Education in the native language	At all levels and in all areas	Basic and partly secondary education, higher education in many disciplines	Practically absent; taught as a subject in seven schools in Latgale
Mass media in the native language	A wide range of print, electronic and audiovisual media	Good selection of printed, electronic and audiovisual information. Media channels from Russia	Just one newspaper and a half-hour radio programme once a week
Cultural life in the native language	Broad and rich cultural life	Significant local cultural life	Activities and religious services
Material prosperity	Average	Above average	Below average
Economic role	Average	Significant	Below average
Political maturity	Politically well-organized	Politically well-organized	Narrow circle of activists

The Latvian Russian-speaking community is large in absolute numbers: it constitutes more than one-third of the Latvian population and dominates in the capital and major cities. In addition, the Russian speakers in Latvia are quite active economically and their standard of living is above average. All of this supports strong cultural and political organization. Given these figures, it can be argued that the Russian-speaking community, by its size and power, is a strong group and only slightly weaker than Latvians. Latvians dominate numerically but most of them live in rural areas and are weaker economically than the urban Russian community. This balance of power has allowed the Russian minority to strengthen its presence in public policy.

Latgalian Latvians form a relatively small community, which is scattered throughout the country and is in the minority even in its historical homeland. The cultural and economic role of Latgalian Latvians is very modest. Objective indicators show that their language is under considerable threat. The cultural identity of Latgalian Latvians is better maintained because it is associated with the Catholic Church.

### *2.3. Lithuania*

According to the 2011 census, there are 3.05 million people in Lithuania (Table 3).

Table 3 General characteristics of the major linguistic groups in Lithuania<sup>4</sup>

	Lithuanians	Russian speakers	Poles
Population size	2,583,000	201,000	212,800
Percentage of total population	85 per cent	6.5 per cent	7 per cent
Geographical distribution	Dominant in most parts of the country. 40 per cent live in the south-east and south. In Vilnius constitute 59 per cent of town population.	Ca. 108,000 which is 54 per cent of the Russian-speaking people in Lithuania and 20 per cent of the population of Vilnius. In Visaginas, 23,000 or 11 per cent (75 per cent of population).	Over 50 per cent in rural areas. In the vicinity of Vilnius 54,322 or 25 per cent (61.3 per cent of total region's population), and in Šalčininkų region 31,223 or 15 per cent (79.5 per cent of total region's population). In Vilnius, 100,000 or 55 per cent (19 per cent of its population).

4 Data from overview publications by Hogan-Brun et al. 2009.

Education in the native language	At all levels and in all areas	Basic education available, but Lithuanian-language schools preferred	Basic education guaranteed. Limited access to higher education.
Mass media in the native language	A wide range of print, electronic and audiovisual media	Print media and radio programmes; TV channels from Russia widely available	Print media and radio stations; Polish TV channels
Cultural life in the native language	Broad and rich cultural life	Limited local cultural life	Limited local cultural life
Material prosperity	Average	Below average	Below average
Economic role	Significant	Below average	Below average
Political maturity	Politically well organized	Politically not organized	Politically organized

In terms of ethnic composition, Lithuania is the most homogeneous of the Baltic countries: the share of the titular nation is the largest, and no minority exceeds 10 per cent of the population. However, south-east and southern Lithuania, including the capital, are fairly multiethnic. Rural areas in the vicinity of Vilnius are populated by Polish speakers, a group which is considerable in size and lives quite compactly, promoting the stability of this group. In contrast, the Russian-speaking community is widely scattered; the biggest part lives in Vilnius, making up one-fifth of the capital's inhabitants. Though Russian-language mass media are easily accessible in Lithuania and schools with Russian as a language of instruction do exist, the majority of the Russian speakers prefer Lithuanian schools and cultural life. The political organization of Russians is very weak, in contrast to the Poles, with their high political and cultural unity.

#### *2.4. Summary*

To summarize, on the basis of demographic and institutional support factors, the titular ethnic groups of the Baltic States are sustainable ethnolinguistically, although some difficulties with cultural and political domination are encountered by Latvians. Among the Russian-speaking communities, the largest lives in Latvia and has considerable cultural, economic and linguistic influence in the country. The second largest Russian-speaking community lives in Estonia, but both economically and politically it is much weaker than in Latvia. At the same time, it is quite compactly settled, ensuring its sustainability. The number of Russian speakers in Lithuania is lower, they are more dispersed across the country and they are considerably weaker than the Estonian Russian speakers. Considering the historical roots and compact residence of Poles in Vilnius and its vicinity, it is possible to consider the Polish community of Lithuania stronger than the local Russian one, though it is smaller. The small size is compensated for by the high level of political and cultural self-organization. Among the Baltic minorities under consideration, the weakest are, undoubtedly, the Latgalian Latvians, because the community is small, scattered around the country and completely bilingual.

### **3. Research methodology**

#### *3.1. Measuring vitality*

To date, no widely accepted measures of vitality exist, for various reasons. First, social phenomena are extremely varied and difficult to measure, since the vitality of groups is influenced by various economic, demographic, historico-cultural and political factors. There is also no reliable method for measuring the economic, cultural, political and demographic power of these groups, which hampers comparative research, particularly in relation to different language environments.

Secondly, these factors influence the vitality of a group and its assimilation only indirectly, and this influence does not always lend itself to unequivocal interpretation. The reason is that, strictly speaking, the phenomena of language and identity shift occur not at the group level, but at the level of the individual. What language is used in speaking with children, and what language is used in their education, depends primarily on individual beliefs and the decisions made on the basis on those beliefs, instead of being based on the economic, cultural and other forces working on the group as a whole. Given that language shift is a result of the language behaviour of individuals, the actual strength of a group is not as important as the individual opinions of the group members regarding the group's strength, which are formed and expressed in communication.

Measurement of subjective assessment and attitudes makes it possible to create a tool by means of which it is possible to collect easily comparable data in very different social environments. The main assumption is that, while the strength of the group undeniably influences group behaviour, its influence is mediated by its symbolic representations in public and private discourse. These socially shared representations can be formalized on universal scales of human cognition such as weak-strong, similar-dissimilar, high-low. These scales can be transformed to quantitatively measurable mathematical scales that enable quantitative comparison across different interethnic situations.

One of the best research methods that meet these conditions is the Likert scale questionnaire, which offers a range of responses (Garrett et al. 2003). This approach has also been used in classic studies on subjective vitality (Bourhis et al. 1981; Abrams et al. 2009). To reduce possible errors caused by formulations of single questions, it was decided to measure each model component by using thematic groups of questions, comprising ten questions each. The reliability of such a thematic group can be checked by means of statistical methods that strengthen the reliability of the theoretical propositions underlying the formulation of the questions. Basically, if the questions whose content reflects the concepts they are based on show high correlation among themselves, it is possible to argue with confidence that

all these questions express the attitudes of the respondents to more general phenomena underlying the questions themselves. For a more detailed overview of the choice of questions see Ehala (2008).

### *3.2. Sampling*

To conduct an anonymous written survey, the sample was assembled according to where the possible informants lived. The samples of the surveys were composed so as to reflect the sociolinguistic diversity of the relevant regions (five in each case), and were compiled by a professional survey company.

In Estonia, the sample consisted of 460 Russian speakers and 538 Estonians (Table 4). In Latvia, the sample consisted of 406 Russian speakers, 419 Latvians and 200 Latgalian Latvians (Table 5). In Lithuania, the sample consisted of 230 Russian speakers, 270 Poles and 400 Lithuanians (Table 6). The data were analysed using SPSS, Version 14.0.

Table 4 The sample in Estonia

Regional concentration of sociolinguistic communities	Proportion of Russian speakers	No. of Russian-speaking respondents	No. of Estonian respondents
Rural settlements	1–10 per cent	50	147
Towns and settlements	10–20 per cent	70	132
Western Tallinn	30–50 per cent	70	126
Eastern Tallinn	50–80 per cent	120	82
Towns in eastern Estonia	80–100 per cent	150	51
Total		460	538

Table 5 The sample in Latvia

Regional concentration of sociolinguistic communities	Proportion of ethnic groups in the area	No. of Russian-speaking respondents	No. of Latvian respondents	No. of Latgalian Latvian respondents
Daugavpils	Russian speakers: 85 per cent	98	53	
Riga	Russian speakers: 50 per cent	152	150	
Rēzekne	Latvians + Latgalian Latvians: 45 per cent Russian speakers: 55 per cent	50	50	100
Balvi	Latvians + Latgalian Latvians: 78 per cent	3	48	100
Cesis and rural regions (Valmieras rajons, Madonas rajons, Cēsu rajons)	Latvians: 90 per cent	51 52	50 68	
Total		406	419	200

Table 6 The sample in Lithuania

Regional concentration of sociolinguistic communities	Proportion of ethnic groups in the area	No. of Russian-speaking respondents	No. of Lithuanian respondents	No. of Polish respondents
Vilnius	Poles: 19 per cent Russian speakers: 14 per cent	60	110	130
Vilnius region	Poles: 61 per cent Russian speakers: 8 per cent		50	140
Visaginas	Russian speakers: 56 per cent Poles: 9 per cent	50	50	

Klaipėda	Russian speakers: 28 per cent Poles: 5 per cent	60	80	
Kaunas	Russian speakers: 4 per cent Poles: 0.4 per cent	60	110	
Total		230	400	270

The sociodemographic backgrounds of the informants (e.g. gender, age, education, family income) are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Sociodemographic descriptors of the samples (percentages)

		Estonia	Latvia		Lithuania				
		Estonians	Russians	Latvians	Russians	Latgalian Latvians	Lithuanians	Russians	Polish
Gender	Male	45	41	34	40	40	49	46	50
	Female	55	59	66	60	60	51	54	50
Age	<25	19	17	23	21	20	25	20	17
	25–34	18	18	24	21	21	23	9	15
	35–49	27	29	23	29	26	26	23	23
	50–64	26	27	21	22	19	20	33	27
	>65	10	9	8	7	14	16	15	18
Education	< Basic	3	4	2	1	1	1	2	2
	Basic	13	11	8	8	12	13	8	15
	Secondary	25	23	19	23	23	32	33	39
	Vocational Secondary	30	41	28	21	44	25	33	29
	Vocational Higher	8	6	16	15	17	N/A	N/A	N/A
	University	21	15	28	32	3	30	24	14
Income	much below average	10	14	16	24	9	11	19	18

	slightly below average	20	23	21	21	16	24	22	29
	average	54	55	53	41	59	53	51	45
	slightly above average	13	8	10	12	15	10	8	6
	much above average	2	0	0	2	1	2	0	2

The questionnaires were presented in the state language (Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian) and Russian for the participants to choose the preferred one. There were no Polish or Latgalian Latvian versions.

## 4. Results of the study

First, results are presented separately for each factor (PSD, D, U and R) of the theoretical vitality model, followed by the results for the combined factors for measuring vitality (V). A short description of questions measuring each factor and indicators of reliability statistics are given (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , the factor of internal constancy or internal uniformity indicating the strength of the correlation between variables forming a scale).

### 4.1. Perceived strength differential

The PSD section comprised twenty questions, ten of which measured how strong the minority group perceived itself ( $S_{we}$ ) as being, and ten more measuring how they compared themselves to the majority ( $S_{they}$ ). Questions about in- and out-groups were formulated in parallel and were asked alternately. For example, a Russian-speaking informant was asked: 'How much are Russian culture and traditions appreciated in Estonian society?', and 'How much are Estonian culture and traditions appreciated in Estonian society?' The same questions were addressed to Estonians, only in reverse order.

In our study, the reliability level of almost all groups of questions (twenty-two) was high (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .7$ ) with the exception of Lithuanian

Russian speakers evaluating the potential of Lithuanian ( $\alpha = .571$ ), Latgalian Latvians evaluating the capacity of the Russian-speaking group ( $\alpha = .641$ ), Latvians evaluating Latvian Russians ( $\alpha = .679$ ), and Latgalian Latvians ( $\alpha = .683$ ). As the deviations were insignificant, the average values on all blocks of questions were calculated. The numerical indicators were then transformed from the initial scale (1 – very strong ... 7 – very weak) to a standard scale (0 – very weak ... 1 – very strong). Therefore, it is possible to consider each result as a percentage of absolute power, which was equal to 1. Perceived strength differential was calculated as  $S_{we} - S_{they}$ , and fell within the interval from -1 (very weak) to +1 (very strong). If the result of a calculation equals 0, it means that groups are perceived as equal among themselves. The results of the perceived strength of in- and out-groups are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Perceived strength differential D  
(1 – maximum superiority ... -1 – maximum inferiority)

we → they	PSD	we → they	PSD	we → they	PSD
Estonians → Russians	0.23	Latvians → Latgalian Latvians	0.30	Lithuanians → Poles	0.30
		Russians → Latgalian Latvians	0.15	Lithuanians → Russians	0.19
		Latvians → Russians	0.10	Russians → Poles	0.07
		Latgalian Latvians → Russians	-0.10	Poles → Russians	0.00
Russians → Estonians	-0.29	Russians → Latvians	-0.20	Russians → Lithuanians	-0.29
		Latgalian Latvians → Latvians	-0.29	Poles → Lithuanians	-0.29

The results show that all titular nations perceived their group as stronger than the other groups. In Latvia and Lithuania, Russian speakers were seen as stronger than the other minority group, but Latvians perceive themselves

to be closer to their Russian speakers in strength than Lithuanians. This is mirrored in the perception of all minority groups. Thus, Latvian Russian speakers felt relatively stronger compared to the other groups of Russian speakers, which is not surprising, considering the fact that they are the biggest Russian-speaking community in the Baltic States. Lithuanian Russian speakers and Poles felt that they were almost equal to one another, while Latvian Russians and Latgalian Latvians saw Latvian Russians as the stronger group.

Undoubtedly, the most interesting result is the level of strength Estonians felt in comparison with the local Russian-speaking community. Lithuanians assessed the strength of Russian speakers as much higher than would be expected from the small size of the group. To understand where such views originate, we next address the analysis of single questions.

The evaluation by Lithuanians of their strength varied in the block of questions from 0.96 ('How much is Lithuanian used in media?') to 0.58 ('How would you estimate the population of the group?'). It became clear that Lithuanians estimated the group as strong on language, cultural and economic indicators, but weak in terms of how much Lithuanian culture in Lithuania was appreciated, how active and strong Lithuanians were in Lithuanian society and how influential, in comparison with the present situation, the Lithuanian language and culture in Lithuania would be in twenty to thirty years' time.

Overall, Lithuanians estimated the strength of Russian speakers in Lithuania, in relation to some questions, to be high. The highest rating was given to Russian-language use in mass media (0.65) and its importance in Lithuanian society (0.60); the lowest was the estimated strength of the Russian community in the demographic plan (0.43) and of the community's prospects in twenty to thirty years (0.40).

By way of comparison, Estonians estimated the prevalence of Russian-language mass media as much lower (0.51), and the importance of Russian in Estonia as especially low (0.42). Latvians rated the prevalence of Russian-language mass media the highest (0.70), but the importance of Russian for them was almost as low as for Estonians (0.44). Thus, Lithuanians felt a weakness in their own ethnic group because of the perceived wide prevalence of Russian-language mass media, and also the high importance of

Russian in Lithuania. This result reflects not so much the power of the Lithuanian Russian-speaking community, but a greater orientation of Lithuania towards Russia in comparison with Latvia and Estonia. Such a 'Russian' orientation was apparently also partially caused by a weak or absent sense of danger in relation to the Russian language and the local Russian-speaking community.

#### *4.2. Perceived interethnic discordance D*

To a large extent, interethnic relations are based on a shared understanding of reality constructed in public discourse and influenced by personal experiences. Interethnic discordance expresses the perceived illegitimacy of intergroup power relations, as well as distrust towards the out-group.

As legitimacy is a highly abstract notion, the items that were used to measure this variable were designed so that they would be maximally context sensitive, i.e. having direct relevance for this particular intergroup setting. Questions affecting legitimacy focused on the status of the Russian language in the country and the fairness of the treatment of the Russian minority. For example, in Estonia, the statements read as follows:

1. Русскому языку следовало бы быть в Эстонии вторым государственным языком. [Russian should be the second official language in Estonia];
2. Положение русскоговорящей общины в Эстонии отвечает международным нормам. [The situation of the Russian community in Estonia corresponds to international norms];
3. В отношении к русскоязычному населению Эстонское государство следует Европейским демократическим принципам. [In its relations with the Russian community, the Estonian Republic acts in accordance with European democratic principles].

In Latvia and Lithuania, the statements were the same, but the name of the country was changed accordingly. In the questionnaires for Poles and Latgalian Latvians, the questions concerning legitimacy were changed so

that they would express the most relevant questions about legitimacy and power relations from the perspective of the respective minorities. For example, in the Polish questionnaire, the following statements were provided:

4. Польскому языку следовало бы быть вторым государственным языком в Юго-Восточной части Литвы. [Polish should be the second official language in the south-eastern part of Lithuania];
5. Вильнюс и его окрестности должны стать Польской автономной областью. [Vilnius and its region should be a Polish autonomous region].

In the questionnaire for Latgalian Latvians, instead of the question on official language status, the statement was phrased as

6. Latgaliešu valodai Latgales reģionā būtu jābūt par reģionālo valodu. [Latgalian should be the regional language in the Latgalian region]

There were also such questions as

7. Latvijai Latgales reģionā jānodrošina mācības latgaliešu valodā. [Latvia should provide Latgalian as a language of instruction in the Latgalian region];
8. Latgales reģionam Latvijā ir jāiegūst kultūras autonomijas statuss. [The Latgalian region should get the status of cultural autonomy in Latvia].

A ten-item questionnaire was designed to measure legitimacy and trust. All of the items used Likert-type scales, allowing for the following choices: 1 – strongly agree, 2 – agree, 3 – somewhat agree, 4 – somewhat disagree, 5 – disagree, and 6 – strongly disagree. The validity and reliability of the scales were tested in a pilot study (Zabrodskaja 2009).

The same items were used with all three samples to measure the perception of legitimacy and trust among the titular nation, the local Russian community and the second biggest ethnic group (in the case of Latvia and Lithuania). The validity and reliability of the relevant scales were at acceptable levels (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .7$ ). Four statements were of a positive nature:

9. Эстонцы отзывчивы по отношению к единоземельцам. [Estonians are helpful as cultural go-betweens];

10. Эстонцы надёжны. [Estonians are reliable];
11. Эстонцы относятся к русскоговорящим жителям Эстонии хорошо. [Estonian Russian speakers are regarded well by Estonians];
12. Эстонцы хотят сотрудничать с русскоговорящими жителями Эстонии. [Estonians wish to cooperate with Estonian Russian-speakers].

Two statements expressed negative attitudes:

13. Эстонцы действуют под влиянием самых низменных инстинктов. [Estonians behave according to the influence of their lowest instincts];
14. Эстонцы агрессивны. [Estonians are aggressive].

In other versions of the questionnaire, the names of the ethnicities were changed accordingly. The scales of the questions pertaining to trust were reversed so that the results express the level of distrust. This was needed to calculate the D index.

For statements expressing interethnic illegitimacy, three different versions of the questionnaire were used. Thus, the reliability indices differ (Latvia and Estonia: Cronbach's  $\alpha > .7$ , except for one sample of Estonian Russian speakers: Cronbach's  $\alpha = .665$ ; Lithuania: Cronbach's  $\alpha < .7$ , lowest value in a sample of Lithuanian Russians Cronbach's  $\alpha = .578$ , indicating that, in the Lithuanian context, the question about the Russian language as a possible state language is not closely associated with the treatment of the Russian minority).<sup>5</sup>

Comparative data on the perception of legitimacy are presented in Table 9. In Latvia and Lithuania, titular nations show two results: the first row expresses the variables in relation to the Russian minority, and the second towards the second minority (Latgalian Latvians and Poles, respectively). Low values correspond to low legitimacy. The neutral midpoint is 3.5.

5 The questions about the status of the Polish language as a possible second official language and the questions about Polish autonomy are equally unrelated to the concept of legitimacy.

Table 9 Perception of legitimacy (1 – low ... 6 – high)

	Estonia		Latvia		Lithuania			
	Estonians	Russians	Larvians	Russians	Latgalian Larvians	Lithuanians	Russians	Poles
legitimacy	4.78	2.78	4.43	2.31	3.36	4.80	3.77	3.90
legitimacy <sub>2</sub>			3.43			4.83		

In analysing the results for legitimacy and distrust, it was clear that the titular nations of the Baltic countries perceive the situation as quite legitimate: the highest scores for legitimacy are from the Lithuanians, especially in relation to the Polish minority (4.83); the lowest are among Latvians, especially with regard to Latgalian Latvians (3.43). These results are not surprising, since they reflect the national state system, including the attitude towards minority rights in the Baltic States since their formation. The relatively low legitimacy index in relation to Latgalian Latvians clearly indicates the fairly positive attitude of Latvian respondents to a wider acceptance and use of the Latgalian language.

In comparison with the titular nations, the assessment of the legitimacy of power relations by Baltic ethnic minorities was lower. The lowest result was from Latvian Russians (2.31), and the highest results among ethnic minorities were in Lithuania (Russians 3.77 and Poles 3.9). The evaluation given by Latgalian Latvians (3.36) was close to the neutral mid-scale (3.5). We can therefore suggest that ‘small’ minorities (Poles and Lithuanian Russians) see the ethnic situation in their country as legitimate or almost legitimate (Latgalian Latvians). The larger Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia, by contrast, see the situation as significantly more illegitimate, mainly because of the attitudes towards the status of Russian as a possible official language.

In analysing the indices of distrust (Table 10), it is important to highlight the fact that in all cases they were below 3.5, which characterizes a neutral attitude according to the scale. Therefore, in each case, the average result indicates the trust relationship to members of out-groups rather

than distrust. Perhaps we are dealing with a simple desire to express the conventional position, but the result may also be explained by the fact that there is very little grassroots hostility amongst the general population of the Baltic countries, despite the fact that in political discourse strong language is quite common. A similar phenomenon has also been noticed in the multilingual environment of Transylvania (Brubaker et al. 2006).

Table 10 Perception of distrust (1 – low ... 6 – high)

	Estonia		Latvia			Lithuania		
	Estonians	Russians	Latvians	Russians	Latgalian Latvians	Lithuanians	Russians	Poles
distrust	3.06	3.16	3.29	3.37	2.74	2.76	2.60	3.00
distrust <sub>2</sub>			2.21			3.32		

The index of distrust by the Lithuanian respondents towards the Polish was high (3.32), in comparison with indicators of the Poles towards the Lithuanians (3.0). Also, the relatively high indices of the mutual distrust in the pair ‘Latvian Russians – Latvians’ (3.37 and 3.29) should be noted. The results clearly demonstrate that the interethnic situation in Latvia is the most intense in comparison with its Baltic neighbours. Yet as the low distrust values indicate, the tensions in the Baltic states are on the political level (legitimacy of power relations) rather than interpersonal level (distrust towards the members of the out-group).

In order to compile indicators of legitimacy and trust into one general indicator, the perceived intergroup discordance D, both indicators were transformed to fit a scale of measurement from 0 ... 1, so that a neutral attitude (i.e., the absence of negative or positive feelings) merged with zero on the scale (see Ehala and Zabrodskaja 2011). Thus, the discordance scale ranges from -0.25, which expresses the most positive attitude to the out-group, to +0.75, the most negative attitudes towards the out-group. A null result is a neutral attitude. The values are presented in Table 11.

Table 11 Indicators of discordance D (-0.25 – positive ... 0.75 – negative)

we → they	D	we → they	D	we → they	D
Estonians → Russians	0.12	Latvians → Russians	0.10	Lithuanians → Russians	0.07
		Latvians → Latgalian Latvians	-0.09	Lithuanians → Poles	0.14
Russians → Estonians	0.06	Russians → Latvians	0.15	Russians → Lithuanians	-0.09
		Latgalian Latvians → Latvians	-0.04	Poles → Lithuanians	-0.06

Intergroup discordance is thus felt to the highest degree by Russian speakers towards Latvians, followed by Lithuanians in their attitude towards Poles. Given the small size of the Polish community and its negative discordance in relation to the Lithuanians (-0.06), this index is somewhat unexpected and probably reflects the sensitivity of Lithuanians to the problems of Lithuanian territorial integrity (in relation to Poland). A relatively unexpected result is the low average discordance of Russians in Estonia. The positive attitude of Latvians, as a majority group, towards Latgalian Latvians shows, of course, their commitment to greater recognition of the Latgalian language.

#### 4.3. Utilitarianism

To measure the utilitarianism and traditionalism of ethnic groups, a questionnaire of ten statements was created, of which six concerned utilitarianism and four traditionalism. The structure of the questionnaire was inspired by the Portrait Values Questionnaire by Schwartz et al. (2001), who asked participants to mark on a six-point Likert scale to what extent they were similar to the described person (1 – very much similar to me ... 6 – completely distinct from me). Among the statements on utilitarianism were the following: 'He/she is open to all that is new' and 'He/she finds

that traditional ways of living and old-fashioned values have become a hindrance to progress'. The statements about traditionalism included the following: 'He/she considers it important to follow the practices of his/her culture' and 'It is important to him/her that his/her children should value these customs and traditions, too'.

All Cronbach's alphas were on the acceptable level. The comparative average values for the groups of questions of utilitarianism and traditionalism are presented in Table 12. This is based on a six-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates the lowest level of utilitarianism or traditionalism and 6 the highest.

Table 12 Levels of utilitarianism and traditionalism (1 – lowest ... 6 – highest)

	Estonia		Latvia			Lithuania		
	Estonians	Russians	Latvians	Russians	Latgalian Latvians	Lithuanians	Russians	Poles
Utilitarianism	3.55	3.47	3.48	3.59	3.81	3.86	3.63	3.74
Traditionalism	4.58	4.26	4.20	3.99	4.53	4.71	4.35	4.45

Data comparison shows that the titular groups in Estonia and Latvia expressed rather balanced utilitarianism (the average value is close to the neutral point 3.5), while Latgalian Latvians and the ethnic groups of Lithuania showed a tendency to utilitarianism. At the same time, Lithuanians displayed the highest level of traditionalism among the Baltic nations. Let us also note that the level of traditionalism among all groups was essentially above the neutral value of the scale, 3.5. This indicator is the lowest in the case of Latvian Russians (3.99).

The high values on the scale of traditionalism and small distinctions between the indicators of the studied groups mean that the values of the U index, which usually reflect a tendency for assimilation and language shift, are rather small, and the tendency for culture and language preservation dominates. As explained in Section 1.4., U expresses an interval

between utilitarianism and traditionalism and is calculated as follows:  $U = (Ut - Tr) + 1$ . This means that, in the case of maximum traditionalism and absolute lack of utilitarianism,  $U = 0$ . When  $Ut$  and  $Tr$  values are equal,  $U = 1$  and, in the case of maximum utilitarianism and an absolute lack of traditionalism,  $U = 2$ . All of the values of the  $U$  index are given in Table 13 in decreasing order, from most ‘utilitarian’ to most ‘traditional’.

Table 13 Indicators of the  $U$  index (2 – highest ... 0 – lowest)

Estonia	U	Latvia	U	Lithuania	U
Estonians	0.79	Latvians	0.85	Lithuanians	0.83
Russians	0.84	Russians	0.92	Russians	0.86
		Latgalian Latvians	0.86	Poles	0.86

A comparison of the indicators of the  $U$  index makes it clear that all of the peoples of the Baltic countries gravitated towards traditionalism (the  $U$  values are lower than 1.0). Latvian Russians had the highest  $U$  and Estonians the lowest. At the same time, it is surprising that the general variability in the  $U$  index in the case of different ethnic groups was extremely low (only 6 per cent on the scale) and, for most of the groups, the  $U$  values were almost identical. It is also interesting that the standard deviations of the  $U$  index remained in all cases in the interval from 0.23 to 0.29. This means that the internal variability of the  $U$  index within ethnic groups was much higher than the difference between them. In all groups, there were subgroups which were much more utilitarian or more traditional than others. However, the analysis of these features lies outside the scope of the present chapter.

#### 4.4. Interethnic distance

The variable of distance  $R$  is comprised of two components:  $R_1$  expresses the distance in terms of the choice of language, and  $R_2$  shows a respondent's assessment of his or her cultural distance in relation to both groups.

For the measurement of the R<sub>1</sub> (language choice), ten questions were taken from a questionnaire about language contact networks (Landry et al. 1996), concerning language use in the family; with friends; with colleagues; with officials and service personnel; and in the sphere of mass media and culture. For example, participants were asked: 'In which language do you communicate with your friends?'. Responses were given on a seven-point Likert scale, with the following range: 1 – only in language y; 2 – mainly in language y; 3 – more in language y than in language x; 4 – equally in language y and language x; 5 – more in language x than in language y; 6 – mainly in language x; 7 – only in language x. An eighth option was also added: 'in other languages'. Language y indicates the language in which a representative of an ethnic group normally communicates, and language x is the language of an out-group (group 'they'). In the Estonian questionnaire, there was only one scale (Estonian-Russian or Russian-Estonian, depending on ethnicity); in the questionnaires in Latvia and Lithuania, each respondent had to note his or her language distance on two scales because there were three groups participating in the study (Latvians, Russians and Latgalian Latvians; Lithuanians, Russians and Poles, respectively). In all cases, the internal uniformity of the scales was very high (Cronbach's  $\alpha \geq .7$ ).

For the measurement of cultural distance R<sub>2</sub>, existing models (Babiker et al. 1980; Fukurawa 1997; Shenkar 2001; Chirkov et al. 2005) were analysed and a block of ten questions concerning the perception of intercultural differences in culinary preferences, clothing styles, religious beliefs, mentality and traditions of communication was selected. The questions in this block included: 'In terms of physical appearance, how different are the Xs and you?', 'In terms of religious beliefs, how different are the Xs and you?', and 'How easy is it to communicate with an X in relation to studies/work?'. The responses were analysed on a seven-point Likert scale, which represented a choice from maximum difficulty of communication (1) to minimum (7). The internal uniformity of this questionnaire was very high: in most cases the Cronbach's alphas were higher than 0.8; only in four cases were the Cronbach's alphas lower than 0.8, although all were higher than 0.75.

The high internal uniformity of both R components made it possible to calculate the R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> indices, and the R index as their arithmetic average.

To make the results easier to understand, all variables were converted to a scale of 0 (minimum distance) to 1 (maximum distance). The results for  $R_1$  are presented in Table 14.

Table 14 Language choice  $R_1$  (0 – out-group language only  
... 1 – in-group language only)

we → they	$R_1$	we → they	$R_1$	we → they	$R_1$
Estonians → Russian	0.86	Latvians → Russian	0.77	Lithuanians → Russian	0.89
Russians → Estonian	0.81	Russians → Latvian	0.75	Russians → Lithuanian	0.61
		Latvians → Latgalian	0.96	Lithuanians → Polish	0.98
		Latgalian Latvians → Latvian	0.38	Poles → Lithuanian	0.41
		Latgalian Latvians → Russian	0.93	Poles → Russian	0.40
		Russians → Latgalian	0.98	Russians → Polish	0.99

In analysing  $R_1$ , or the results of language use in the case of the titular nations, it becomes clear that the greatest distance occurred with Latgalian Latvians and Poles: the majority of representatives of the titular nations (respectively, Latvians and Lithuanians) did not use minority languages in everyday life at all (the  $R_1$  values are equal to 0.96 and 0.98). Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians used much more Russian: Latvians more often than the others ( $R_1 = 0.77$ ), and Lithuanians less ( $R_1 = 0.89$ ). In the case of the Russian communities, interesting distinctions occurred: Lithuanian Russians used Lithuanian rather widely ( $R_1 = 0.66$ ), Latvian Russian speakers lagged behind them a little in the use of Latvian, and most of the Estonian Russian speakers resorted to the state language less often ( $R_1 = 0.81$ ). These indicators illustrate the isolation of the Russian-speaking community in Ida-Viru county, while Latvian Russian speakers seem to be more connected with Latvians in the language domain.

The data also allow us to compare the family language use of Russian-speaking communities in Germany and Norway (Mendzheritskiy and Bagreeva, this volume). Mendzheritskiy and Bagreeva report that 72.9 per cent of Russian-speaking respondents in Germany and 61.4 per cent in Norway use Russian as the single home language. In Latvia, 69 per cent of Russian speakers used only Russian to communicate with their family members; in Estonia and Lithuania this figure was 75 per cent. This indicates that Russian-speaking communities which remained in the Baltic countries after the break-up of the Soviet Union maintain Russian as the home language marginally more than in countries to which they have recently immigrated.

Judging by R<sub>1</sub> values, Latgalian Latvians and Lithuanian Poles are the most assimilated linguistically, as their results show that in certain situations they used the majority language more often than their native language (the value 0.5 indicates an equal use of both languages, while a smaller value indicates language shift). Considering the language practice accepted between minorities, Latgalian Latvians and Russians do not use each other's languages, whereas Poles are assimilated into the Russian language a little more than into Lithuanian.

In comparison with language distance, the cultural distance between the peoples of the Baltic countries was noticeably smaller: 0.5 or less (see Table 15).

Table 15 Cultural distance R<sub>2</sub> (0 – minimal ... 1 – maximal)

we → they	R <sub>2</sub>	we → they	R <sub>2</sub>	we → they	R <sub>2</sub>
Estonians → Russian	0.50	Latvians → Russian	0.51	Lithuanians → Russian	0.42
Russians → Estonian	0.48	Russians → Latvian	0.49	Russians → Lithuanian	0.38
		Latvians → Latgalian	0.40	Lithuanians → Polish	0.44
		Latgalian Latvians → Latvian	0.31	Poles → Lithuanian	0.32
		Latgalian Latvians → Russian	0.47	Poles → Russian	0.37
		Russians → Latgalian	0.49	Russians → Polish	0.42

It is interesting to note that the results in Latvia and Estonia (close to 0.5) were much higher than the indicators for Lithuania (close to 0.4). The more difficult situation of the interethnic relations in Estonia and Latvia, which led respondents to say that they felt distinctions more strongly, is reflected here. It is surprising that Lithuanians felt a sharp difference with Poles (0.44), since due to religious proximity the feeling of a smaller distance with Poles, in comparison with Russians, would be more expected. Again, the results were influenced by the interethnic discordance which Lithuanians feel towards Poles more strongly towards Russians. But the Poles of Lithuania considered themselves very close to Lithuanians in culture (0.32), closer than to Russians (0.37). Latgalian Latvians felt the least distance from Latvians, which is to be expected considering that Latgalian Latvian identity is a regional identity within Latvian national identity. To sum up, it turns out that the identity of the Lithuanian Polish community and its dynamics are quite complicated: this group is rather strongly located in both the Lithuanian and Russian language spaces, and feels very similar to Lithuanians, while Lithuanians apparently wish to separate themselves from Poles.

To account for both language and cultural distance between groups, R values as an average of  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  were calculated and the values used to assess vitality (next section).

#### *4.5. Vitality*

The vitality of ethnic groups was calculated with the help of two formulas:

- 1)  $V = U \cdot ((S_{we} - S_{they}) + D) / R$
- 2)  $V = R \cdot ((S_{we} - S_{they}) + D) / U$

Formula (1) was used when PSD ( $S_{we} - S_{they}$ ) was less than 0. Negative PSD is common to minority groups, but not always and not unconditionally. Formula (2) was used when PSD was equal to 0 or exceeded 0. Such a result was characteristic of members of majority groups.

Because of the formulas' mathematical properties, the scale's negative and positive halves are not symmetrical on numerical values, though in terms of rating it is possible to distinguish the same degrees. Degrees of vitality scales along with their description are presented in Table 16.

Table 16 Degrees of vitality scale

	Values of V	Description
High vitality	> 1.5	Extreme ethnocentrism
	0.6 ... 1.5	Strong ethnocentrism
	0.3 ... 0.6	Moderate ethnocentrism
	0.1 ... 0.3	Weak ethnocentrism
	0 ... 0.1	Stable vitality
	0 ... -0.1	
	-0.1 ... -0.2	Weakly shifting
	-0.2 ... -0.3	Moderately shifting
	-0.3 ... -0.4	Strongly shifting
	< -0.4	Extremely shifting

It is important to note that the values of V are very closely connected with ethnocentrism: the higher the vitality (V), the more ethnocentric the ethnos. In the case of a very low V, the centre of the collective identity of a group moves from the ethnic group to the majority group, which, in essence, means identity and language shift. In some ways, it is possible to consider the scale of vitality to be a scale for the measurement of ethnocentrism, where negative values indicate negative ethnocentrism. In the case of negative ethnocentrism, members of a group would like to disassociate themselves from their identity and to strive for some other more prestigious identity (usually the majority identity). Undoubtedly, from the point of view of group maintenance, ethnocentrism is important, although extreme ethnocentrism is accompanied, as a rule, by a number of undesirable side effects, such as a sense of superiority (God's chosen people) and contempt for out-groups.

Table 17 presents the average values of vitality (V) of all the ethnic groups of the Baltic countries, and also the values of the variables based on the calculation of vitality. The values of V in Table 17 are interpreted based on the scale presented in Table 16. Since V expresses vitality only on an axis of two measured groups, in interpreting a V value, it is always necessary to consider the out-group in relation to which it was calculated.

Table 17 Vitality of ethnic groups in the Baltic countries

Ethnic group	V	PSD	D	U	R	Characterization
Lithuanians → Poles	0.91	0.3	0.14	0.83	0.71	Strong ethnocentrism
Estonians → Estonian Russians	0.87	0.23	0.12	0.79	0.68	
Lithuanians → Lithuanian Russians	0.65	0.19	0.07	0.83	0.65	
Latvians → Latvian Russians	0.55	0.10	0.10	0.85	0.64	Moderate ethnocentrism
Latvians → Latgalian Latvians	0.42	0.30	-0.09	0.85	0.69	
Latvian Russians → Latvians	0.06	-0.20	0.15	0.92	0.62	Stable vitality
Estonian Russians → Estonians	-0.08	-0.29	0.06	0.84	0.64	
Latgalian Latvians → Latvians	-0.20	-0.29	-0.04	0.86	0.34	Moderately shifting
Lithuanian Russians → Lithuanians	-0.22	-0.29	-0.09	0.86	0.49	
Polish → Lithuanians	-0.24	-0.29	-0.06	0.86	0.37	

On the basis of these data, the most ethnocentric of the Baltic groups are the Lithuanians in relation to the Poles, and the Estonians in relation to the Russians. The degree of their ethnocentrism can be characterized as strong. Such a position expresses the rather rigid border between the majority group and the corresponding minority, and a clear feeling of superiority on the part of the majority group, with low interest in and sympathy for the minority.

In this context, it is interesting to note that the ethnocentrism of Lithuanians in relation to Russians was much lower, as was the ethnocentrism of Latvians concerning Latvian Russian speakers. Such a position indicates a slightly greater readiness to communicate and co-operate with these minority groups. The ethnocentrism of Latvians in relation to Latgalian Latvians appeared to be even lower. This is, however, quite explainable: Latvians simply perceive Latgarians as a part of the group (i.e. as Latvians). The low ethnocentrism indicates a readiness to recognize the right of Latgalian Latvians to use a variant of the language and to have an autochthonic culture.

Judging by the results of the research, the Russian communities of Latvia and Estonia are in a stable situation. As minorities, they do not aspire to assimilation. However, this is not true of Latgalian Latvians, nor of Poles and Lithuanian Russians. The corresponding values indicate the extent of the relative threat to their vitality, i.e. their clear desire to belong to each country's majority group. Unfortunately, this depends not only on them, but also on the vitality of members of the majority group or, to be more exact, on its ethnocentrism, since these processes occur not only intragroup, but also intergroup. An interpretation of the study results and the conclusions drawn on this basis about possible paths of development of interethnic processes in the three Baltic countries are presented below.

## 5. Influence of vitality on interethnic processes

Though vitality expresses the readiness of an ethnic group for collective action, processes occurring in reality depend not only on representations shared by group members, but also on the attitudes of other groups in society and their relation to the same variables. In other words, real processes depend on the vitality of both minority and majority groups.

A majority group which sees itself as being much stronger than the minority, and sees the situation as being quite legitimate (high PSD and D), tends to have assimilative influence on the minority in cases when the minority perceives itself as similar to the majority (low R) and, in terms of its values, is utilitarian (high U). Conversely, as the value of V depends on the values of R, U and D, a majority group with high V is more segregative than a majority with a lower V value.

If a majority group sees itself as being only a bit stronger than the minority and its discordance in relation to the minority is insignificant (small PSD and D), then such a group does not pressure the minority to assimilate. Depending on the R and U values, such a situation promotes either minority integration (low R and high U), or its separation (high R and low U).

Integration will occur when groups are similar culturally, and when the majority is open to the cultural changes which integration can bring about. If the difference in the strength of the groups is small, closer inter-group contact does not result in assimilation of the strong minority; it retains its cultural features. If the majority group feels a large interethnic distance and, at the same time, is traditional (high R and low U), it is quite probable that it will not wish to assimilate a strong minority and consequently will prefer separation of the minority into an autonomous or even independent territory.

In the case of the minority, the influence of the V value is on the whole comparable: the greater the vitality of the minority, the more probable that it will aspire to preserve its cultural and linguistic identity, or to achieve autonomy. In the case of a low V value, a lot depends on the R and U

indicators: if cultural differences are large and the level of traditionalism is high (as in some Islamic-origin immigrant communities living in Europe), the process of assimilation will be difficult and improbable.

Such properties of vitality and its components make it possible to use the V value to anticipate acculturation and assimilation processes. John Berry's model of acculturation processes (1997) distinguishes five types of acculturation: integration, segregation, separation, marginalization and assimilation. In Table 18 these processes are defined through the functions of the V values of the majority and minority groups.

Table 18 Acculturation processes as a function of majority and minority groups' vitality

		Majority	
		$V > 0$	$V \approx 0$
Minority	$V \approx 0$	segregation	integration or separation
	$V < 0$	marginalization	assimilation

A high V in the majority leads to segregation or marginalization of the minority, depending on whether the V value of the minority is close to zero or considerably below it. A rather low V value for the majority indicates possible separation of the minority, integration of the two groups or minority assimilation, depending on how high or low a V value the minority has.

Interpreting the vitality results of the ethnic groups in the Baltic countries in the framework presented in Table 18, it is possible to draw some conclusions about interethnic processes. Based on the V values of the Estonians and Estonian Russians, it is clear that the tendency prevailing in society is segregation, which most likely will continue if there are no major shifts in the V values. The connection between the Lithuanian and Polish communities indicates a marginalization of the Poles, while the V values in connection with the relationship between Lithuanians and Russians point to the assimilation of Russian speakers.

The V indicators of Latvians and Russians are closest to the combination predicting integration or separation. It is very probable that a change in this situation depends on whether the D value increases or decreases. In the first case, the ethnic borders will become stronger and there will be little possibility of co-operation, which, considering the comparable strength of both groups, may lead to an increase in the rights of the Russian community in Latvia or even to its autonomy. The destiny of Latgalian Latvians is most likely assimilation or, at best, integration if they manage to maintain a high level of traditionalism and their uniqueness from other Latvians.

If these results are accurate and reliable, they can be helpful in understanding the nature of the distinctions between the interethnic situations which have developed during the last decades in the Baltic States, and also in confirming the significance of vitality as an important variable influencing a situation. These data can only be used to assess explicit integration attitudes, not implicit attitudes. It would be very useful to study the interrelationship of implicit acculturation attitudes (see Zak and Cohen in this volume) to see whether the Lithuanian Russians and Poles also show higher levels of implicit attitudes towards identity shift.

Considering that the Russian communities in Estonia and Latvia are sizable, it is possible to assume that, in both states, the relationship between the majority and the minority might be similar. However, contemporary events have shown that the Latvian Russian community is much more active in upholding its rights. It is possible to explain this distinction by the quite low vitality of Estonian Russians. On the basis of the results, we cannot give a definite answer to the question of why the vitality of Russian speakers in Estonia is so small considering their demographic and institutional strength; for this purpose, it would be necessary to carry out a thorough analysis of qualitative data. At the same time, it is quite probable that the Estonian Russian community is not (and most likely will not be in future) ready for collective action.

The quite low vitality of Lithuanians in relation to the local Russian community provides some explanation for their readiness to accept minority members into their ranks. The low vitality of Lithuanians is also the reason that Lithuanian Russians shift to Lithuanian so quickly, whereas the aggravated interethnic borders with Poland make it difficult for Poles

to do the same (leaving aside the topic of the legitimacy of Poles' position in Lithuania, which has been controversial during the whole post-Soviet period).

On the basis of the above-mentioned factors, it is possible to assume that if there are no significant changes in vitality values in the near future, the scenarios of development for interethnic relations in the three Baltic states will be as follows. In Estonia, the segregation of the Russian community will continue; in Latvia, though some readiness of Russians for integration has been shown, a strengthening of intensity may lead the Russian community to achieve autonomy; for the Russian-speaking community of Lithuania, assimilation seems the most likely outcome, which would be satisfactory to both the Russian-speaking community and the representatives of the titular nation. Latgalian Latvians may improve their status if they manage to increase their vitality and demand more rights. Lithuanian Poles will remain marginalized, unless they completely renounce their identity and shift to Lithuanian.

In general, the results of this research reflect the interethnic processes taking place in the societies of the Baltic states as they have been presented in numerous earlier studies. However, we have added to the existing body of facts a great deal of more detailed comparative information. Further qualitative research should help to confirm the accuracy of these details and, if necessary, will lead to modification of the model. The subsequent application of the described model in research on other interethnic situations would help to test the universality of the model.

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MIKHAIL A. MOLCHANOV

## Russian national identity: old traumas and new challenges

### I. Trauma

When the Soviet Union ceased to exist, its most numerous ethnic group, the Russians, was left with a profound gap in its self-understanding and worldview. Two factors account for this gap. First, the sense of existential belonging with the family of Eastern Slavic nations dictated a perception of Ukrainians and Belarusians as Russia's next of kin: ethnic cousins and nations united with Russia by common history, ancestry, religion, culture, and, ultimately, shared statehood. While over the course of history some branches of the common East Slavic family may temporarily have been lost to foreign states, it was the Russian state's self-assigned duty to bring them back under the authority of the Russian rulers of the day. Under no circumstances would the Russian state abandon either Ukraine or Belarus voluntarily and irrevocably. No turn of events would make Russians think of either Ukrainians or Belarusians as foreigners. The end of the USSR imparted a sense of the abandonment of the historic mission of the Russian nation – that of a protector and defender of Eastern Slavdom.

The second factor has to do with the Russians' sense of national purpose. Soviet Russian identity subsumed Russianness under the anonymous disguise of new Soviet man supposedly devoid of distinctly Russian features. Imperial Russian identity had combined elements of *mission civilisatrice* with the profoundly conservative idea of the protection of the Eastern Orthodox faith. The patrimonial political culture of unquestioning service to the czar was part and parcel of this conservative mentality (Pipes 2005), which found its expression in Count Uvarov's famous dictum *Pravoslavie*,

*Samoderzhavie, Narodnost'* [Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality]. Both the Muscovite and the Kievan periods of Russian/Rus'ian history were steeped in opposition to the invading hordes – some coming from the east, some from the south, and yet others from the west and the north. Just as in later Soviet times, the principal sources of common identity were defensive and oppositional in nature. The Eastern Slavic/Rus'ian language formed a principal foundation of this common identity (Likhachev 1945: 42). In all instances across history and geography, remaining a Russian meant fighting for a community of belonging and against the pressure to assimilate to foreign influences. In most instances, it also meant siding with some form of Russian statehood against those keen to dislodge it. These dualistic and mutually reinforcing drives formed the basis of a national purpose.

The collapse of the Soviet Union denied Russians their community of belonging, while also denying the sense of national purpose. The end of the ideological goal of constructing an ideal international family of socialist nations has resulted in a profound loss of national pride. The fallout resulting from the shedding of the empire was aggravated by the fact that Russians did not have an uncontested historic hinterland to which they could withdraw. The heritage of Kievan Rus' has been claimed by Ukrainian and Belarusian nationalists, while its core lands are now largely located in the newly independent, non-Russian states. The Russian Federation itself is punctuated with non-Russian ethnic enclaves, established in the 1920s in implementation of the Bolsheviks' 'embedding' (*korenizatsiya*) policies. While the Russian Federation exists as a separate sovereign state, it has no core designated as a 'Russia proper', contrasting it with, for example, England's role and position within the United Kingdom.

Russia has thus experienced two traumas of denationalization in quick historic succession. First, the collapse of the Russian Empire and its replacement with the officially multinational USSR robbed Russians of their homeland by suppressing all symbols and institutions that could have spoken to the ethnic Russian core of the Soviet statehood in a clear and meaningful way. Second, disintegration of the Soviet Union into fifteen independent states based on former Union republics has left Russians without the lands of their historic origin, has shrunk the territory of the erstwhile Russian Empire by 25 per cent and has locked Russians in a state

they share with ethnic minorities, some of which have been historically hostile to Russian statehood, while others are enjoying institutional privileges and affirmative policies that do not apply to ethnic Russians. Finally, the re-emergence of the profound gap between the Russian elites and the masses (Billington 2004; Molchanov 2002) may be viewed as the most important source of post-imperial trauma and debilitation of the Russian national identity.

The post-Soviet break-up of the bonds between the Russian citizen and the state can be explained by several factors, which include the state's role in the post-communist privatization and the attendant pauperization of the masses (Reddaway and Glinski 2001); the re-emergence of poverty and unemployment; and the state's apparent siding with the rich against the background of an ever-growing gap between the super-rich and the poor. Among other factors, what should be noted is the loss of all pretence of governing 'by the people and for the people' and resurrection of the openly elitist style of rulership dubbed 'neofeudal' for its disdain of the masses (Shlapentokh 1996).

The Russian state had never commanded the undivided loyalties of its citizens, since the very notion of inclusive citizenship could not develop until after the liberation of the serfs in 1861. Historically, Russian identity was localist, perhaps religion-based, but certainly not national. There was no attempt at nationwide mobilization until the very existence of the Russian state was thrown into peril by the Polish invasion and usurping of the throne in the early seventeenth century. The restoration of Russian statehood brought a temporary sense of national unity, but the oppressive absolutist state soon drove people away both metaphorically and literally. Thousands upon thousands chose to run away from serfdom, evade the draft and settle in pure wilderness. Herein lie the origins of the Cossack movement and of Russian frontier exploits which those runaways pioneered, only to pave the way for subsequent imperial conquests. Herein also lies the source of the existential alienation from the powers-that-be, which has stifled Russian national consolidation. The gap between elites and masses influenced the evolution of Russian national identity and contributed to its unfinished and convoluted state today.

## 2. Elites and masses

The question of Russian national unity did not arise until the emergence of a nationalist *intelligentsia* in the late eighteenth century. This is the time occasionally referred to as the Russian Enlightenment, which produced figures such as Aleksandr Radishchev and Mikhail Lomonosov and coined the slogan *Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality*, tying the otherwise indifferent masses to the state via the medium of religion and faithful allegiance to the Orthodox monarch. Even then, a shared sense of identity could not emerge among the ethnically and religiously diverse population of the Empire. Modern national identity appears inexorably tied to the arrival of the middle classes, democratization and the demise of absolutist monarchies (Hobsbawm 1992; Kedourie 1993). In Russia, it could not emerge until the historically belated abolition of serfdom in 1861 gave a push to capitalist modernization. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, Russian national identity was defined by the country's 'elite of the pen', who spent time on debates poorly understood by the people. The gap between the educated elites and the uneducated masses reinforced the division between the upper strata of nobility, higher clergy and rich merchants and the rest of society. The cleavages of class and educational attainment delayed the development of national self-consciousness.

The Russian state has always remained the purview of the elites. First, feudal lords, then the upper classes of the Empire, the vanguard party created by Lenin and perfected by Stalin, and, finally, Yeltsin's oligarchs and Putin's *siloviki* have held common folk in disdain. The arrival of a mass society did not change the calculus: the mass society's elites used totalitarian uniformity to control the people, while carving out the *nomenklatura*'s rule and privileges for themselves.

The Soviet Union was dissolved not through a mass revolt like the Arab revolutions of 2011, but rather through collusion between the central and provincial elites, who chose to ignore the people's vote for a revitalized Union in March 1991. The emerging national elites of the constituent republics of the USSR wanted independent seats of power and demanded

status recognition from Moscow. The resulting politics of status posturing – the ‘parade of sovereignties’, in Gorbachev’s memorable phrase – offered little real value to the people.

However, the birth of mass politics was real. After the end of communism, nationalism grew in the non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union. New ‘movement entrepreneurs’ exploited the people’s aversion to failed Soviet policies and equated Soviet communism with the ‘Russian’ Other. As a result, anti-Russian sentiment grew, was magnified in the media and frequently acquired tones of ethnic-based hatred toward both the rulers in Moscow and the Russian population at large.

The construction of post-Soviet national identities in the non-Russian Soviet successor states was presided over by the elites and executed in the simplest possible fashion – through resolute condemnation of the Soviet/Russian ‘centre’ and the so-called ‘fifth column’ allegedly constituted by local Russians. The familiar talk of a Soviet ‘brotherhood of nations’ was now replaced with a narrative of national persecution and the myth of Russian Soviet ‘imperialism’. De-Russification became the central element of discriminatory ‘nationalizing policies’ (Brubaker 1996), targeting local Russians in the newly independent Baltic states, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Georgia and further afield (see Laitin 1998; Molchanov 2002). Billions of dollars in federal subsidies to the periphery were now interpreted as an instrument of colonization (Estonia, Latvia), forgotten as a thing of the past (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) or accepted with a sense of entitlement and anticipation of similar subsidies in the future (Belarus, Ukraine).

With the exception of the Baltic nations, few of the non-Russian peoples of the former Soviet Union took the newly forged ‘post-imperialist’ discourse at face value. However, the anti-Russian propaganda was reinforced through re-education and a whole system of policies aimed at the promotion of titular non-Russian ethnicities at the expense of ethnic Russians and Russophones (Dave 2007; Janmaat 2007). The ‘nationalizing’ policies resulted in the socioeconomic, political, and cultural marginalization of Russians in Russia’s ‘near abroad’. Since Moscow did little to oppose such marginalization, the ethnic Russian diaspora in the former Soviet republics felt abandoned by the Russian state and became increasingly alienated from it.

### 3. Soviet legacies

Reforging national identity via wholesale condemnation of the Soviet past was not an option in the Russian Federation. Here, disentangling true Russianness from the caricatured representations of vilified Soviet identity was made difficult by close association between the two. After all, the ‘empire’ was run from Moscow, and the ‘great Russian nation’ was periodically mentioned by the Soviet leaders. Russian was the *lingua franca* of the Soviet Union for communication between peoples, administrators, mid-level functionaries, and rank-and-file operatives; it was the language of the party, the police, the army, and the main mass media outlets. On the surface, the USSR seemed like a Russian project both in style and substance.

The reality was far more complex. The Soviet elite was multinational in composition: ethnic Russians were virtually absent from Stalin’s Politburo; they were underrepresented in the institutions of Soviet power since their party representation was proportionately lower than that of Georgians or Jews. They were also underrepresented in the academic *intelligentsia*, the intellectual elite, relative to Armenians, Estonians, Georgians and Jews (Friedgut 1992: 219). Social services were better developed in the Baltic republics than in Russia itself. In the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR), ethnic Russians ranked only fourth in their degree of urbanization, thus yielding to the non-Russian ethnic groups. Per thousand of population, there were fewer ethnic Russians with at least some years of higher education than there were Russia-based Armenians, Belarusians, Buryats, Jews, Kalmyks or Ossetians (Mastyugina and Perepelkin 1996: 62–63). Russia was on the losing side in federal budgetary transfers, with the Central Asian republics and the Caucasus being primary beneficiaries.

Russian national identity was suppressed and submerged through the denial of representative institutions, even when national identities of the non-Russian peoples were given a boost through the promotion of native cadres in their republics of origin. Among all of the Union republics, the RSFSR was the only one that lacked the whole battery of obligatory state institutions from the national capital to ‘power ministries’, such as the KGB

or the Ministry of the Interior, to the Academy of Sciences. The ‘national cadres’ policy erected glass ceilings that blocked ethnic Russians from effectively competing with the non-Russian cadres living in the eponymously named administrative-territorial units. There were no such restrictions on promotion of non-Russians residing in the Russian Federation. All attempts to reassert national pride, priorities or visions of the *Russian* (rather than artificial Soviet) statehood were ruthlessly suppressed as manifestations of imperial chauvinism.

Thus, one of the results of Soviet nationality policies was the denationalization and marginalization of Russian ethnicity, sacrificed in the ideologically induced construction of the ethnically amorphous new Soviet man. This ‘indigenization-in-reverse’ severely undermined and distorted national identity and solidarity of the Russian people,<sup>1</sup> and could not but contribute to the feelings of abuse that widened the gap between the Russian elites and masses. Once the Soviet Union was no more, Russians faced an existential void.

#### 4. New challenges

In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, in both Russia and Russia’s ‘near abroad’, new ethnopolitical conflicts arose. Ethnicity became politicized by the professional elites, who fomented nationalist and xenophobic feelings among their followers for the sake of personal political advantage. Typically, post-communist nationalism disguises struggles that are waged around tough issues of political power and the reallocation of property rights. Ethnopolitics offers a seemingly ‘natural’ mode of interest articulation vis-a-vis power pretenders from a non-titular nationality, with ethnicity effectively masking the true nature of these disputes.

<sup>1</sup> See Molchanov (2002): 32–34, 47–50, 78–79, 88, 161–163.

Post-communist nationalism has little to do with the feelings of primordial animosity often ascribed to it. Such animosities are rarely found in a diverse, modern society. It is worth remembering that the USSR presided over an industrially developed economy that lacked market instruments, but was essentially modern at its core. The state's political and administrative institutions seemed capable of guiding the developmental efforts of the nation in the foreseeable future. How could this political and economic system give way to the re-emergence of the essentially antiquated nationalist mobilization movements?

Firstly, Soviet-style modernization proved detrimental to national interests. Having realized this, Gorbachev's reformers tried to change the country's course. Yet neither genuinely democratic consultation with the people nor the empowerment of the masses was ever on the agenda. One of the unintended consequences of Gorbachev's *perestroika* was the unravelling of the state. The oligarchic revolution of the nineties further disempowered the masses. The new Russian nationalism was born out of an economic dislocation unprecedented during peaceful times. The Communists' 1999 attempt to impeach President Boris Yeltsin with accusations of genocide reflected the 60 per cent decline of Russia's industrial production in less than ten years and the corresponding free fall in the living standards and life expectancy of the Russian population. Official nationalism of the Putin era did little to mend the rift that separates Russia's new rich, and their patrons in the Kremlin, from the rest of society.

Western scholars have argued that the main focus of debate around a new Russian national identity engages the opposition between the imperial and the modern national consciousness (Szporluk 1989; Laruelle 2004). In their view, Russia's imperial identity stalled the development of a modern national identity. Over time, Russia lost her potential for independent nation building, being unable to distinguish between the Russian Empire and Russia proper. In addition to that, Vera Tolz (1998) separates the imperial/Union identity from the East Slavic identity and draws distinctions between the *jus sanguinis* community of the Russians defined by ties of common ancestry and the *jus soli* community of a civic Russian (*rossiyskaya*) nation.

The anti-immigrant riots in Moscow and St Petersburg in December 2010 may illustrate the claim that Russia still lacks modern national consciousness. At the mass level of society, it is still a far cry from western-style multiculturalism: while officially ‘ethnic’ republics do exist as constituent elements of the Russian Federation, the Russian masses remain self-centred and endorse casual assimilation of the non-Russian minorities. At the elite level, politicians cannot rely on the essentially archaic patriotism of a Greater Russia that fails to account for the existence of national minorities determined to preserve their separate cultures and languages. In both instances, the Russian collective ‘we’ appears immature, which makes the task of modern nation building difficult.

Identifying the subject of national appellation should necessarily precede the full-blown development of a national consciousness. A clear sense of a national identity, of ‘who we are’ and ‘who we are not’, forms a nucleus for more complex forms of national consciousness. Meanwhile, Russians are still arguing about who must be counted in, and who should be vested with the job of national mobilization – the state, society, the people at large, all of the ‘compatriots’, all of these taken together and so on. The subject and agency of the Russian national identity remain unanswered questions.

## 5. The perspective of ethnosymbolism

A recently suggested approach to the study of national identity focuses on: the essential continuity of collective cultural identities over long periods of time; the importance of collective historical memories and other cultural archetypes constitutive of a group for the ethnic group’s survival and transformation into a nation; the special role that ethnic types of collective identity play in the nation-building processes; and the historic and cultural continuity between pre-modern *ethnies* and modern nations (Smith 2002: 14–15). Dubbed ethnosymbolism, this approach underlines the fact that pre-existing cultural material and the dispositions of a particular ethnic

group impose significant restraints on what national movement entrepreneurs may or may not accomplish. According to Smith, the modernist distinction between 'ethnic' and 'civic' types of national identity fails to appreciate the importance of this ethnic core of any given nation. All nations grow out of pre-existing ethnic communities and make use of their cultural resources.

Moreover, the opposition of civic to ethnic nationalism leads to a view that represents the western, 'civic' model as progressive and benign, and the eastern, or 'ethnic' model as inherently illiberal, parochial, xenophobic and authoritarian. As Hans Kohn (2005: 330) put it, '[w]hile western nationalism was, in its origin, connected with the concepts of individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism current in the eighteenth century, the later nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe and in Asia easily tended towards a contrary development'. The idea of a 'good' versus 'bad' nationalism obscures the interpenetration of features presumed to be uniquely characteristic of either the western or the eastern model. Modern scholarship rejects such dichotomies, arguing instead for a continuum, or even co-presence, of these features, some of which may take centre stage at various times (Spencer and Wollman 2005: 197–217).

Although ethnocultural 'pedigrees' are equally characteristic of both western and non-western nations, Smith (2002) nonetheless distinguishes between them, finding that the pattern of so-called 'modern nationalist territorial nations' historically originates in western Europe, while 'modern nationalist ethnic nations' made their first appearance in eastern Europe and Asia. There, the ethnic model became associated not only with the smaller nations that failed to develop strong territorial, political attachments because of their subjugation to larger imperial powers, but also, paradoxically, with those very same imperial powers, including such late developers as Russia, Turkey and Japan.

An ethnosymbolic perspective reads as a historical-phenomenological approach, which emphasizes meaning-structures that constitute a concrete life world of the nation, itself a product of the historically contingent development of a particular ethnic community. It is important to stress that the phenomenological approach in social sciences focuses on *intersubjective*, rather than purely subjective, readings of historical phenomena. It is a social

group, or a community, which gives meaning to the events and occurrences that together form collectively meaningful contexts. Historical phenomenology perceives of symbols, memories and other cultural archetypes as products of recurrent social practices. These insights have direct relevance to a study of Russian national identity.

## 6. East Slavic unity?

In accordance with the ethnosymbolic perspective described above, the development of Russian national identity will, of necessity, have to make use of the available ethnocultural material and political history of the nation. Following this model, we treat the predicate ‘national’ in a generalized fashion, as encompassing not only contemporary phenomena of nation building, national integration and the rise of modern nationalism (see Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1992; Kedourie 1993), but also the pre-modern manifestations of a shared sense of common ancestry, common in- and out-group identity, language, culture and institutions. In this widened conception of ‘national’ we may deviate from the social science modernist mainstream, incorporating the phenomena that Smith prefers to term ‘ethnie’, rather than ‘nation’ or ‘nationality’.

Russia was a slow national developer and lagged behind western Europe in creating the institutions of a modern state, cemented by shared civic loyalty. The empire-bearing nationality, the Russians, defined itself as a community of Russian Orthodox believers, diverse in dialects and traditions and dispersed over the vast territory of the Empire. Consequently, self-identification based on unambiguous cultural markers was lacking. Common history and a state-reinforced sense of common allegiance to the czar acted as substitutes for modern national consciousness. The socioeconomic and cultural gap between elites and masses was enormous. It stalled the development of civic ties that, under better circumstances, would bond the compatriots together. As an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 2006), Russia was living in the past as much, if not more, than in the present.

Cultural reliving of the historical past shaped Russian political culture and nascent national identity throughout all major turning points in Russia's history: from the Slavophile Romanticism to the current attempts to unify the Red and White strands of the Russian patriotic movement.

Historical continuities cannot be contained within the time frame of the last two centuries, but go back much deeper than is usually acknowledged. An ethnosymbolic perspective allows us to see the myths and stories of a pre-national ethnic community at the core of Russian national identity. However, the boundaries of a Russian ethnic community are not clearly defined either. It cannot be neatly characterized by categories typically employed in the cultural-anthropological analysis of ethnic groups. Thus, its linguistic identity overlaps with Belarusian and Ukrainian elements on the margins; territorial attachment is unclear; folkways are often undistinguishable from not only other Eastern Slavs' but also those of some other non-Slavic nationalities, such as Udmurts, Mordvins, and even Bashkirs and Tatars. The collective name is blurred by opposition between ethnocultural *russkie* and the civic-national *rossiyane*. A sense of solidarity is manifestly absent. Four out of the six proposed dimensions of the ethnies (see Smith 1986: 22–31) are therefore lacking.

Instead, the myth of a 'golden past' is used to compensate for the present, the powerful state [*derzhava*] is evoked in place of a weakly consolidated nation and the amorphous idea of the East Slavic ('all-Russian') unity is employed to channel the national energy on expansionism abroad, rather than national consolidation and development at home. The myth of the ancestral homeland, found in the ancient Slavic state of Kievan Rus', remains at the core of Russian national identity. It is there, in the pre-Mongol flourishing of Rus'ian civilization, where contemporary Russian nationalists locate the early 'golden age' of the nation.

Given the cultural and political importance of Kievan Rus' in the high Middle Ages, the narrative of Kievan origin and descent becomes a recurrent rallying point for the Russian cultural elites. 'It is clear that Muscovite Rus did not simply follow Kievan traditions, but consciously cultivated them. The struggle for the Kievan heritage – territorial, political, and cultural – inspired Moscow in the course of three whole centuries.' (Likhachev 1963: 117)

The first literary monument reflecting on the Russian national idea, the poem ‘The Lay of Igor’s Campaign’, dates back to the twelfth century. It describes an unsuccessful campaign of the Kievan Prince Igor against Turkic nomads of the steppe – long-standing enemies of the Rus’ian people. The main themes of the poem are the love of the Russian homeland and the call for its common defence against invaders. The anonymous author emphasized the need for unity of the land and warned about the dangers that the ruling princes’ fratricidal rivalry brought upon its people. Likhachev (1945) argued that the poem signalled the emergence of a new understanding of the Motherland as a living being, the sum total of Russian ethnic history, culture and nature. If one were to compress the poem’s content into a single idea, it would be a call to unite, addressed not only to the princes, but to the whole of the Rus’, all of its inhabitants.

Kievan Rus’ gave birth to the three modern nationalities with their separate languages, literatures and cultures: Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians. Each of them may legitimately claim not a part, but the whole of the Kievan heritage. Yet the process of the construction of national identities and adaptation to the realities of post-Soviet life pose new challenges. With Belarus and Ukraine separating from Russia as newly independent states, attempts to divide the common cultural heritage into three mutually exclusive streams started gaining momentum. Ukrainian and Belarusian nationalists prefer to read the history of their nation in terms of the heroic struggle against Russian oppression. Consequently, any attempt to ground the origins of Russian national identity in the Kievan epoch is fiercely resisted as an act of cultural imperialism, and all reintegration initiatives coming from Moscow are looked upon with deep suspicion.

Meanwhile, Russians tend to think about their Motherland in terms of a succession of states – from Kievan Rus’ through Moscow czardom to the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and the contemporary Russian Federation. As an imperial nation whose national identity has been shaped by a great-power mythology, Russians are prone to dismiss the ethnocultural distinctions of other East Slavic nationalities as something insignificant. For many Russians, the differences between Eastern Slavs have been no more important than differences between, say, northern and southern Russians, with their distinct dialects, peculiarities of pronunciation and

specificities in folkways. The Russian problem in sharing joint Eastern Slavic legacy is that of the ‘big brother’s’ naivety: in the traditional Russian view, the separate identity claims advanced by the Ukrainians and Belarusians are, at best, unnecessary, and, at worst, nonsensical. A key component in the Russian myth of national origin is the idea that Ukraine and Belarus form natural parts of a bigger Russian universe and are destined to remain this way. From this perspective, these countries, independent or not, are expected to follow in Russia’s footsteps and accept Moscow’s primacy in matters of foreign policy and international relations.

The condescending and, at times, angry attitude by Russian cultural elites towards their former ‘junior brothers’ is indicative of a post-imperial trauma of maladjustment to the reality of these newly independent states: it betrays not only bewilderment at the loss of territory that had been considered core to the ‘Greater Russian’ area, but also a profound sense of sociohistorical displacement, the loss of ties with Russia’s own past, the undermining of the foundational myth of the nation, vital symbols and narratives of Russian national identity. All sources of cultural authenticity flow from the historical period and geographical area of Kievan Rus’, but more than half of this area now lies beyond the boundaries of the Russian Federation, forming contemporary Ukraine and Belarus. Both are fully independent states with linguistic identities different from that of Russia.<sup>2</sup> Russia’s elites and masses alike were hurt by the discriminatory language policies applied to compatriots abroad and criticized hostile historiographical representations of Russia and the Russians that became commonplace in Latvia and Estonia.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Although Russia and Belarus signed a treaty on a two-state union in 1999, the arrangement remains largely symbolic and does not involve pooling of sovereignty.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Russia withdrew its signature from the Russo-Estonian border treaty of 2005 following the inclusion, by the Estonian parliament, of references to Soviet ‘occupation’ and the 1922 Tartu Peace Treaty, which saw the embattled Bolsheviks awarding Estonia the Russian town of Ivangorod and the Pechory district of the Pskov region. Russia condemns the Estonian government’s toleration of periodic marches of the Estonian Waffen SS veterans in Tallinn and other Estonian cities. Russian activists drew attention to what they saw as the ‘nostalgic’ map of greater

Post-Soviet Russian nationalism has embraced the idea of the USSR as a greater Russia, a more or less legitimate heir of the Russian Empire, an idea that was taboo throughout the Soviet period. The break-up of the USSR is accordingly rethought as a Russian national tragedy, the main cause of the ongoing crisis of Russian national identity. However, the understanding that the former empire cannot be resurrected in any of its previous forms prompts the quest to save what, in the opinion of many, properly belongs to the ‘pan-Russian’ sphere. The idea of East Slavic unity, or of Russia’s full political and economic reunification with Belarus and Ukraine, becomes the primary engine of this quest.

## 7. The role of complementary identities

A constructivist, ethnoscopic reading of Russian national identity acknowledges that it is an unfinished project. Its diachronic, sociohistorical dimensions reveal recurrent attempts to root the Russian ‘ethnie’ in a cultural milieu of a higher, regional or civilizational order. In other words, Russia’s foundational myths, symbols, narratives and memories are never uniquely Russian, but are shared with kindred, neighbouring, modular or emulated nations. Even when claims of an implicitly exclusivist, imperial character are advanced, the Russian elites often use the logic of complementarity and continuity, for example, by positioning themselves as self-designated heirs to a venerated tradition, such as contained in the idea of Moscow as the ‘Third Rome’.

Ethnocultural traits that Russians cultivate in interaction with their neighbours often exist in a complementary, rather than contradictory, fashion. Thus differences are used as a tool of communication, not a barrier

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Estonia, including land in western Russia, being embossed on the new Estonian euro coins (Osborn 2011). [The issue of whether there are, or are not, contested borders between Russia and Estonia is itself contested. *Editor.*]

to it. They enrich ethnocultural interaction and create a common cultural universe, which extends beyond the borders of the nation state. In T. H. Eriksen's words,

[s]uch an acknowledgement of differences can be labelled 'complementarisation'. Here, the cultural differences communicated through ethnicity are considered a fact and frequently an asset. Whereas dichotomisation essentially expresses an Us–Them kind of relationship, complementarisation can be described as a We–You kind of process. [...] [E]thnicity entails the establishment of both Us–Them contrasts (dichotomisation) *and* a shared field for interethnic discourse and interaction (complementarisation). (Eriksen 2002: 28–29)

The We–You categorization provides the necessary means for solving potential boundary conflicts. The very success of the crystallization of distinct national identities from the ethnically amorphous source group depends on the adoption of such an attitude by all parties concerned. However, a closer degree of proximity in interethnic categorization is also possible. The next step in the development of ethnic interaction may be acquiring the dialogic ability to see the Self in the Other and the Other in the Self. Only closely related and mutually tied nations can develop these capabilities. Russians' views of Ukraine, in particular, could have evolved along these lines. In the elites' early modern and contemporary soul-searching, Ukraine has always played a special role. As the most direct successor to Kievan Rus', Ukraine was seen as the link to Russia's golden past, a mirror where the true image of the nation could be discerned. If one of the sources of Russia's present trauma is alienation from its East Slavic neighbourhood, the nation's ability to engage its 'near abroad' dialogically should now be developed according to the logic of complementarization.

The geopolitical dimensions of Russian national identity, often invoked in contemporary debates, are usually grandiose in scope. Such was the resurrection of the early-twentieth-century controversy between Eurasianists and Atlanticists during the 1990s. Reminiscent of the nineteenth-century debate between Slavophiles and Westernizers, the debate pitted pro-western liberals against conservative Russian nationalists. While Atlanticists, represented, for example, by *perestroika* liberals and Yeltsin's Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, sided with the Euro-Atlantic community, Eurasianists saw the west as an arch-enemy and derived Russia's destiny from its geostrategic

location and self-ascribed role of a bridge between Europe and Asia. With the emergence of new disagreements between Russia and the USA in the Balkans and throughout Russia's periphery, Atlanticists were soon defeated. However, the Eurasianist reformulation of Russia's national identity as, first, *sui generis*, and second, primarily non-Western presents its own problems.

The first problem lies in the fact that Russia is neither fully European nor fully Asian, nor an eclectic mixture of some sort. It is simply too complex to subsume its national identity under a geographic rubric, which may be appropriate for smaller countries clustering together in a group based on a form of geographically defined cultural mythology. Russia merits a category of its own. If it is Eurasian, then not in the sense of a centaur-like hybrid, but rather in the sense of cross-fertilization and creation of a unique, new quality based on the logic of complementarity and mutual enrichment of interacting parts.

Second, in some of its more extreme manifestations, Eurasianism gravitates towards pure Asianism, losing Russia's European connection. While it may be useful in justifying Russia's vast geopolitical pretensions, a radically anti-Western strand in Eurasianism paradoxically denies Russians their European roots. The European sources of Russian national identity lie within a cultural area that sprang from Kievan Rus' and its East Slavic successor states. They have been and are continuously reinforced through the primary and secondary elites' interaction and fascination with the West. In denying European and Euro-Atlantic formative influences on the Russian psyche, Eurasianism tends to create a historical and intellectual 'black hole', where a good part of the constitutive myths of the nation disappears without a trace.

Third, Eurasianism glosses over the religious incongruence of Eastern Christian and Asian civilizations. The idea of Moscow as 'the Third Rome' underscored the importance of the Orthodox religion for early Russia's national identity. Mongol domination left Orthodox Christianity intact, and the subsequent growth of Muscovy saw the Christianization of its Asian subjects, rather than ethnic Russians embracing Asian religions. Eastern Orthodoxy played a very special role in both the formation of Russian national identity and its reconstitution after periods of crisis. But Christianity came to Rus' via Kiev, and Kievan monks inspired continuous

resistance to Mongol rule over centuries. When Eurasianists elevate Moscow over Kiev and the east over the west, they lose one of the key elements of Russian national consciousness, what Smith (2002: 19) calls the myth of ethnic election, ‘the sense of collective chosenness for a task entrusted to the people by its deity’. Consequently, Eurasianists fail to appreciate both the imaginary and practical-historical continuity of Russia’s religious life, which forms one of the mainstays of the national community.

Asian influences on Russia were ingrained during the two and a half centuries of Mongol domination, and the subsequent three centuries of Russia’s expansion into Siberia and central Asia. While the first was nothing short of a national tragedy, the second involved an essentially colonial conquest and the creation of a far-flung continental empire, which radically changed the historically defensive ethos of Russia’s national life. Neither the first nor the second period of Russia’s active engagement with Asia can be described as particularly productive or affirmative for Russian national life *per se*. A third wave of Asian influences on Russia started after the collapse of the Soviet Union, with the political and economic rise of the People’s Republic of China. The Chinese economic miracle and impressive geo-political advances revived Russia’s fascination with Asia, which has found new outlets, such as the establishment of a ‘special partnership’ with China and the Medvedev-Putin attempts to reorient Russia’s foreign economic policy significantly toward the markets of north-east Asia.

At present, the European Union and China provide two magnets for the ‘multivectorism’ (Lavrov 2006) of Russia’s foreign policy, and two powerful models for emulation that cannot but influence the ongoing construction of national identity. The EU’s experience of successful regional integration serves as a constant reminder of both the ultimate failure of the Soviet-type ‘new community of the people’ and the ultimate promise of neo-imperial restoration under the guise of regional co-operation and development. Russian cultural elites have always tried to identify with Europe, even though Europeans have always considered Russia as Europe’s perennial Other (see Neumann 1999). China as a model is a more recent development. It is China’s economic success and power aggrandizement, rather than cultural achievements, that cause envy in the Russian elite and serve as objects of emulation.

Russia's elites are also fond of drawing comparisons to the United States of America. The complementarization of Russian national identity along American lines took the form of a great power syndrome in the absence of great power strength or capacities. Russians compare themselves to Americans in matters of global politics and international security. Russia's press and politicians continuously denounce America's 'double standards', i.e. the refusal of the US elites to treat their Russian counterparts as equals and grant them rights and exceptions similar to those enjoyed by the world's last 'hyperpower'. Russian oligarchs attempt to model their lifestyles on those of the American super-rich. American pop-culture provides a yardstick of comparison for Russian youth and professional artists alike. Even so, the complementarization potential of the European Union, China or the USA remains limited due to the lack of deep societal or cultural interpenetration between the Russian people and any of these three societies. Instead, the conceptualization of Russian national identity on a mass level appears centrally informed by centuries of close interaction and proximity to other Eastern Slavic nations.

## 8. Towards a new dialogue

Kievan influences shaped the Russian state historically, institutionally and genealogically. Descendants of the Kievan dynasty took over the Moscow principality and, subsequently, created Russian czardom. The political inheritance found its counterpart in ecclesiastical continuity, when the Metropolitan of Kiev settled in Moscow and changed his title from 'Kiev and all Rus' to 'Moscow and all Rus'. The Russian state took upon itself the role of protector of all Eastern Slavs, which left deep traces on the national mentality.

Russia's national identity was obscured by its proximity to Eastern Slavic neighbours. Russia's assumption of ethnocultural continuity erroneously represented Ukrainians and Belarusians as localist varieties of the same Great Russian nation, and their languages as territorial dialects of the

vernacular. The post-Petrine period added imperial confusion to what had been already thoroughly confused. An independent Russian identity had no chance to develop, and was supplanted by an amorphous attachment to all three Eastern Slavic nations.

It is only after the end of the Soviet Union that a true dialogue between Russia and its Eastern Slavic neighbours, as well as some of the states recently admitted to the European Union, such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, has become possible. Even so, Russian political discourse remains permeated with paternalistic attitudes towards former Soviet republics, including attempts, allegedly on behalf of Russophone ‘compatriots’ residing there, to control the content of history textbooks and celebrations of national holidays.<sup>4</sup> Political and economic disputes, such as the infamous interruptions of Russia’s gas supplies traversing Belarus (in 2004) and Ukraine (in 2006 and 2009), occasionally poison relations. It is also illustrative in this regard that the border demarcation between Russia and Ukraine was delayed by more than fifteen years until the requisite agreement was finally signed in May 2010.

Other developments, for example regional economic integration, may be considered positive for all sides involved. The Single Economic Space (SES) agreement between Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan was signed in September 2003. The Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan came into force in July 2010. While Ukraine is not yet part of the Customs Union, cultural reintegration shows in the fact that individual regions of Ukraine now have the right to use Russian as their official language locally, while Ukrainian remains the official language of the state. If Russia will be capable of showing genuine leadership in mutually beneficial regional integration efforts, the success of Russia’s regional integration with Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan may help to address the two key problems of Russia’s protracted national identity crisis: the community problem and the national purpose problem.

<sup>4</sup> In 2007, President Putin authorized establishment of the Russian World (*Russkiy Mir*) Foundation, vested with the task of promoting the Russian language abroad. In May 2011, President Medvedev followed suit by signing a decree establishing the state-run foundation ‘to support ethnic Russians abroad and protect their rights’ (RIA *Novosti*, 25/05/2011).

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian elites and masses alike have been searching for a new community of belonging. The search has not been easy and has led to many disappointments. After the much-celebrated national revival, intense soul-searching and much back-and-forth between the west and the east, the USA and the EU, on the one hand, China and Eurasia, on the other, it seems Russia is finally coming to terms with Russianness, as well as with its embeddedness in Eastern Slavic cultural and political space. Regional integration helps to revive its sense of purpose, which the post-Soviet governments appeared to lose. Though possibly lacking a global scope or ideological grandeur, its simple values of economic development and good-neighbourly relations with historically friendly nations may be just enough to help Russia finally come to terms with itself.

## 9. Conclusion

In this chapter, I inquired into the cultural sources of the post-Soviet trauma of Russian national identity, addressed the new challenges faced by the Russian people and elites, and suggested some potential remedies. Some of the key issues that emerged in this analysis include an uneasy relationship between the elites and the masses, the underdeveloped sense of national unity or identity, the amorphousness of Russia's perception of itself and a unique preoccupation with its Eastern Slavic roots. The thrust to disentangle national identity from the complex network of interdependencies created by transnational, imperial culture and history continues to influence Russia's identity battles today.

The two decades since the end of the Soviet Union have revealed the true essence of the Russian identity crisis, lost in a transition from the dynastic, pre-modern, imperial nation of many nationalities to the largely post-national world of today. The idea of the common bonds of ancestry and the golden age of peaceful living among the kindred Eastern Slavic tribes, which constituted the core of the Russian ethnie's foundational myth, was undermined by the proclamation of national independence by Belarus and Ukraine.

Maturation of national identity perceptions is possible and desirable. It may be achieved when the Russian elites learn how to deal with their former ‘junior partners’ as fully independent counterparts, actors in their own right. Regional integration with Belarus and Ukraine, apart from its immediate and narrowly conceived political-economic objectives, allows a genuine revival of a jointly developed ethnocultural field. International relations of a new kind may help establish a revived Russia-friendly community within the bigger realm of international society.

PART 2

Identities in the making



SVETLANA ERIKSSON

# Who are you? Cultural associations in (self-)othering and cultural identity negotiation among Russian-speaking adolescents from Russia and Latvia in Ireland

## 1. Introduction

On the one hand it might seem that as borders become weaker – as people and goods traverse them more easily – there will be a consequent relaxing of the sense of allegiance to place and people, [but] very often the reverse is actually the case. Notions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ become stronger still.

— MCDONALD 1993: 1

The focus of the current study is the cultural socialization and cultural identity construction among children and adolescents in migrant families which belong to the same language group, but have different points of departure.

The study was conducted in 2008–2011 in Ireland and consisted of semi-structured interviews with each of one parent and one child from Russian-speaking (henceforth RS) families from Russia (fifteen families) and Latvia (fifteen families);<sup>1</sup> the children were aged between ten and

<sup>1</sup> In 2006, 13,319 Latvian nationals were living in Ireland (Profile of Nationalities 2007), which made Latvia the fifth largest sender of migrants to Ireland (Central Statistics Office 2007). In 2006 there were officially 4,495 Russian nationals in Ireland.

nineteen years of age.<sup>2</sup> Cultural self-identification and its metamorphosis was the object of the broader study; the children's self-identification (for example, Russian, Latvian, Irish, bi-cultural) was not known and consequently not a factor at the stage of recruitment. These target groups are referred to as 'from Russia' and 'from Latvia'. The study also comprised three non-migrant control groups: fifteen RS parents and their children in Russia, fifteen RS parents and their children in Latvia, and fifteen Irish parents and their children, referred to as 'children/parents in Russia', 'children/parents in Latvia' and 'Irish children/parents' respectively. The two Russian-speaking control groups are distinguished by their geographical position: Latvia is located within the European Union, while the controls in Russia live in Barnaul, a south-west Siberian city that is 3,600km from Moscow and thus very remote from Europe. The names used to refer to the participants in this research are pseudonyms. Children's ages and genders are given in Appendix 2.

The main criteria for recruiting the participants for this research were:

1. Both parents of participating children from Latvia and Russia should be able to speak Russian.
2. The target-group children's parents should be originally either from Russia or from Latvia.

With one exception, the interviews with the children from and in Russia as well as those from and in Latvia were conducted in Russian, with occasional code-switching into English with the children living in Ireland for the purpose of clarifying some of the questions and concepts. One girl from Latvia does not speak Russian and was interviewed in English. All interviews with the Irish children were conducted in English. The interviews lasted from twenty minutes to an hour, depending on the enthusiasm of the participants. In order to synthesize and structure the data, and focus

<sup>2</sup> Though some of the so-called children were technically adults by virtue of their age, we use the words child and children in this chapter to refer to their status within the family unit and to reflect the parent-child relationship, rather than as an age-specific reference.

on emerging trends, I transcribed and translated the interviews; the data was then analytically coded and themed.

The interviews included questions that covered cultural socialization and the socialization of value orientations; the socialization of social/family roles; language repertoires and language socialization; and cultural identity construction and othering at school.

In this chapter I discuss what migrant children's associations reveal about their perception of, affiliation to and attitudes towards their own and the other cultural groups. Austers argues (2002: 275) that an analysis of cultural associations can provide information on existing stereotypes and prejudices, and dynamics between and within groups. The participants were asked to name the first five associations that came to their mind on hearing the words 'Russian' ('русский', adj. and noun), 'Irish' ('ирландский/ирландец') or 'Latvian' ('латыш/латышский'). This chapter analyses the results of the association task, focusing on the children's answers. The following questions are asked:

1. What are stereotypes and how do they relate to cultural attitudes and prejudices?
2. What in-group and out-group associations prevail among migrant children from Russia and Latvia? What modality can be observed: positive, negative or neutral?
3. What factors impact on the shaping of cultural attitudes among migrant children from Russia and Latvia in this research population?

#### *1.1. What are stereotypes and how do they relate to attitudes and prejudices?*

Almost all participants of my study commented during the interview that they inevitably thought of some 'stereotypes' that 'other people hold' of the cultural groups in question. Thus, it is worthwhile to define 'stereotypes' and related terms, although in this chapter I mainly deal with cultural associations more generally. I use the term 'cultural associations' as a cover term to include both stereotypes and prejudices.

Stereotypes are defined by Lepore and Brown as ‘networks of linked attributes, variously conceptualized’ (1997: 275), which become associated with the group category ‘through frequency and consistency of activation’ (1997: 275). Some links may be stronger than others if they are activated more often. Stereotypes exist on a societal level as culturally shared, but also on an individual level when shared by individuals in smaller social groups (Schaller et al. 2002: 862). Austers (2002) refers to the process of stereotyping one’s own cultural group as *autostereotyping*, and representations of a given group by non-members as *heterostereotyping*.

Allport, the originator of research about prejudice, treated stereotypes as the cause and the consequence of *prejudice* (1954/1979: 192) that can be conscious and/or unconscious (Dovidio et al. 2005: 13). According to Eagly and Diekman (2005: 19), a minimalist definition of prejudice as an overall negative attitude toward a group is widely accepted in social psychology. However, research in the twentieth century suggested that negativity is not a necessary attribute of a prejudice (Eagly and Diekman 2005). Positive stereotyping can also form a prejudice. The authors provide an example that the stereotype holding that women are ‘nice’ forms a prejudice against women when they are considered mismatched for some social roles (for example, as attorneys). Thus, a prejudice is formed at the intersection of stereotypes and perceived inappropriateness of a social group for specific social roles (2005: 25). Consequently, prejudices are context-dependent.

How are stereotypes formed? Ehrlich (1973) proposes that ethnic stereotypes are part of the heritage of a society and that no-one, whether disposed towards a high or low level of prejudice, can escape learning and automatically activating the prevailing stereotypes assigned to the major ethnic groups. At the same time, Devine argues that there is an important distinction between knowledge or awareness of a cultural stereotype on the one hand, and acceptance or endorsement of that stereotype, in other words, one’s belief, on the other. Although there may be some overlapping features between stereotypes and personal beliefs, they are conceptually distinct cognitive structures which represent part of a person’s entire knowledge base of a particular group (Devine 1989: 5). Consequently, although most of my participants mention stereotypes that they associate with ‘Russian’, ‘Irish’, or ‘Latvian’, this does not mean that these stereotypes

are their personal attitudes/beliefs about these notions. The participants may merely be aware of existing common cultural stereotypes.

What shapes the modality of cultural associations? For the purposes of the current research, modality is understood as an evaluative stance. Positive modality implies treating a characteristic associated with a cultural group as its merit, advantage or achievement. Negative modality implies viewing such a characteristic as a group's weakness, disadvantage or flaw. Interviews are an appropriate method to study cultural associations from this point of view in order to avoid ungrounded assumptions of the modality.

According to Phalet and Poppe (1997: 721), the modality of cultural associations that given cultural groups have about each other depends on the perceived balance of power and conflict of interests between these groups. Thus, one could expect that parents from Latvia would have more negative associations with 'Irish' than parents from Russia because the interests of migrant adults from Latvia are more likely to clash in the Irish job market than those of migrants from Russia.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the participants from Latvia in my sample report instances of ethnic discrimination encountered in Ireland from the majority cultural group more often than participants from Russia, which might also trigger negative hetero-stereotyping of the Irish.

The associations with 'Latvian' of adults and children from Latvia are likely to be negative because the decision to leave the country was often triggered by the inability or lack of desire to adjust to the new conditions in Latvian society where the RS community suddenly lost the prestigious

3 Russian speakers from Russia in Ireland present a legally different group from migrants from Latvia, because of their non-EU status. Although officially many Russian-speaking migrants from Latvia are stateless persons who suffer from limited or no access to a broad range of rights in Latvia (they were not naturalized after Latvia claimed independence in 1991), they have equal rights in Ireland to other EU citizens. In contrast, Russian migrants are mainly economic migrants who come on an invitation from an employer. Indeed, they require a work permit to be allowed to work in Ireland. Whereas the main wave of immigration from Latvia started after 2004 when Latvia joined the European Union, immigration from Russia had begun in the 1990s, well before EU expansion, to address the skills deficit in Ireland, as, for instance, in the information technologies sector.

status it used to enjoy.<sup>4</sup> These Russian speakers may be experiencing feelings of bitterness, and the Latvian-speaking population of Latvia may, consciously or subconsciously, be held accountable for the losses the Russian speakers incurred. In analysing participants' responses, I am mindful of such 'past antagonism' (Phalet and Poppe 1997: 721).

According to Spears, Oakes et al. (1997), stereotyping activities are purposeful, aimed at what is relevant for a certain perceiver in a specific context. The modality of stereotyping may be of a temporary nature if triggered by recent intercultural experiences, potentially prompting generally low-prejudiced persons to list negatively coloured associations with a particular cultural group on this task in the study.

Who is likely to be stereotyped? Research on ethnic stereotyping (Austers 2002: 283) shows that representatives of ethnic minority groups pay more attention to the ethnic majority group across different evaluative attributes than the majority towards the minorities, possibly because, as Fiske puts it, 'attention follows power' (1993: 624). Schaller et al. (2002: 863) explain this phenomenon by arguing that some groups have a greater conversational prominence than others: migrants are more likely to discuss the majority group than the majority group a particular migrant group. At the same time, some migrant groups might have a greater *conversational prominence* than others due to some factors, like their status in the host society, or their size, or conspicuous ethnic differences. From this perspective, I expect the participants of the Irish sample of the current study to perceive Latvians and Russians in a less differentiated way than the other way round.

4 The attitudes to Russian in Latvia are complicated by ideological issues. Latvia is one of the countries that 'were incorporated [in the USSR] by force' and 'that orient themselves towards the West' (Pavlenko 2006: 78–99). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Latvia experienced drastic changes in its language policy towards dramatic de-Russification (2006: 85). Latvia pursues a single language policy, with the titular language as the main language both *de jure* and *de facto* (2006: 84). The empowered Russian-speaking population of Latvia thus became a disempowered minority overnight. In his chapter on Russian national identity, Molchanov (in this volume) also writes about cultural attitudes towards Russia and Russians in post-Soviet successor states, including Latvia.

Schaller et al. (2002: 863) propose that some perceived traits are like 'viruses': the highly *communicable* ones are more likely to shape into the stereotypic beliefs of a population and to be maintained. This was shown to hold only for conversationally prominent groups (Schaller et al. 2002: 873). As the authors point out, the reverse direction of causality may also operate: people tend to talk about something that they first perceive as stereotypic. In this study, the categories that are mostly commented on and the consistency of the modality of the associations comprising the category may suggest that there is a stereotypic belief about the given group within the assessing group. The qualitative nature of my study allows me to analyse the responses at the individual level.

What other factors may influence the naming of cultural associations, as elicited in this study? First, the identity of the researcher may impact on the participants' answers. In this case, probably because I am part of the Russian-speaking ethnolinguistic group, the RS participants in general were more open than Irish participants and did not appear to be shy or embarrassed when naming their cultural associations. Moreover, some assumed that I would share their attitudes or at least understand the connotations ascribed to certain associations. It is possible that political correctness, social desirability bias and, consequently, 'attempts at impression management' which Devine writes about (1989: 15) may have obscured the beliefs held by the Irish participants. Given that the methodology of the current study precludes anonymity, it is difficult to ascertain the actual levels of prejudice by the groups under investigation towards each other, where such prejudice is not explicitly expressed.

Second, in-group bias needs to be taken into account during the analysis of cultural associations, as, according to Greenwald and Banaji (1995: 11), people tend to judge members of their own group (in-group) more favourably than comparable persons who are members of another group (out-group). In this study, belonging to the in-group was operationalized as the migrating parent's country of origin, rather than the self-identification of the participants.

Finally, due to the small sample size and high subjectivity of the notion of stereotyping in general, autostereotypes as elicited in this study cannot be regarded as a valid estimate of the whole group's autostereotyping (Austers

2002: 283). Moreover, the contents of specific stereotypes needs to be interpreted with extreme caution, since many of the questions concerning stereotype interpretation remain largely unanswered despite decades of psychological research (2002: 861).

In summary:

- ‘Cultural associations’ is a general term: all beliefs, stereotypes and prejudices are cultural associations, but not all cultural associations are at the same time beliefs, stereotypes or prejudices;
- Stereotypes and prejudices are a result of frequently activated cultural associations and attitudes within a cultural group or, on the individual level, as a result of repeated intercultural experiences;
- Stereotypes are highly communicable cultural attitudes prevailing in a specific context, under certain circumstances and in specific cultural groups;
- Prejudices are cultural associations which are born when positive or negative stereotypes about a social group and their attributes result in an idea that members of the stereotyped group are inappropriate for certain social roles because of those attributes;
- Cultural associations, including beliefs, stereotypes and prejudices, can be of positive, negative or neutral modality;
- Belonging to a specific cultural group does not presuppose sharing the cultural stereotypes or prejudices that exist in this group about other cultural groups due to differences in personal intercultural experiences; however, an individual can hardly avoid being aware of such stereotypes existing within their cultural group;
- Prejudices and stereotypes are context-specific.

2. What in-group and out-group associations prevail among migrant children from Russia and Latvia? What modality can be observed: positive, negative or neutral?

Participants were asked to name the first five associations that came to their mind on hearing the words ‘Russian’ (‘русский’, adj. and noun), ‘Irish’ (‘ирландский/ирландец’) or ‘Latvian’ (‘латыш/латышский’). If participants had problems supplying associations, I suggested that they might think of people, places, realia and other objects. Nevertheless, not everyone was able to name five associations, particularly the children. Naming fewer than five associations was accepted, as too much deliberation on the question would have compromised the idea of spontaneous activation of first associations. Although I focus on the children’s answers in this chapter, in individual interesting cases I compare children’s answers to those of their parents.

### *2.1. Corpus*

When I was analysing the interviews I partially transcribed and translated them, as well as coding and theming the associations the children provided. Themes and categories of cultural associations emerged during this process. Ascribing cultural associations to a group is to some extent a subjective process as the researcher’s judgement is at the base of the categorization. Some cultural associations could be assigned to a number of groups/categories, so a decision had to be made based on the respondent’s primary idea as perceived by the researcher. The categorization of the associations took into account any implicit non-verbal messages that participants conveyed during the association tasks through mimicry and body language; what could be assessed as an association with a neutral modality actually may have a positive or a negative connotation. While interviews are a good method to eliminate such ambiguity, future research would benefit from participants’ elaborating about the reasons they perceive to be behind

certain associations that came to their mind, which would help further to eliminate researcher's subjective interpretation of participants' answers.

The associations were grouped into the following categories:

- Cultural and historic references (CH). Associations referring to cultural practices, Russian, Latvian and Irish realia, popular knowledge, geographical names, historical events, current socioeconomic and political situation in the country, famous people, holidays and traditions, weather and landscape, food, drinks, fashion, and culture;
- Language, mentality. Associations including reference to language, people and 'Russian/Latvian/Irish mentality' in general without mentioning personality traits;
- Personal connections. Associations referring to relatives, friends, the idea of 'us', home and motherland, nostalgia;
- Personality traits attributed to members of a cultural group. These were categorized in accordance with Schwartz's value dimensions (1994);<sup>5</sup>
- Other attributes. A small number of varied and random associations, for example referring to appearance, that could not be included in any of the above-listed categories. This group includes the smallest number of associations for all three cultural groups and is not included in the analysis.

The children's responses were analysed in conjunction with their cultural self-identification, which is provided in Appendix 3, allowing for bi- and multicultural identifications. In order to establish the children's self-identification, they were asked to answer the question: *What do you feel your nationality is? What do you feel in your heart?* If participants had difficulty understanding this question, examples were provided to them, for instance, *Do you feel you are Russian, Spanish, Italian, or Irish, or both, or neither...?* Thus, it is the subjective definition of cultural identity as explained in the chapter by Zoumpalidis (this volume) that I was interested in.

<sup>5</sup> Schwartz suggested ten major categories of value dimensions: *Self-Enhancement* (*Power, Achievement* and *Hedonism*), *Openness* (*Stimulation* and *Self-Direction*), *Self Transcendence* (*Universalism* and *Benevolence*) and *Conservation* (*Tradition, Conformity* and *Security*).

## *2.2. Associations with 'Russian'*

### **2.2.1. 'RUSSIAN' AS RUSSIAN CULTURE, HISTORY, PRACTICES AND OTHER REALIA**

An equal number of children in the Russian target and control groups give CH associations with 'Russian' (eleven children in and from Russia),<sup>6</sup> but the number of associations named by the children from Russia is three times as high. More children from Latvia (ten) have CH associations with 'Russian', such as 'bear', 'the Kremlin', 'Moscow', 'USSR', 'a big country', 'vodka', 'culture', 'literature', than do children in Latvia (five). In comparison, fourteen of the Irish children also mention CH associations with 'Russian'. Thus, it is possible that after migration children from Russia and Latvia become more aware of the common cultural and historic associations with 'Russian' than before. They start looking at everything connected with the notion 'Russian' from an outsider's perspective. In contrast, for the children in Russia and Latvia many realia are part of their everyday lives, and, thus, are less prominent.

### **2.2.2. 'RUSSIAN' AS LANGUAGE, PEOPLE AND MENTALITY**

Among the children from Russia, only one boy associates 'Russian' with 'people who speak Russian'. Thus, the Russian language does not appear to be focal for the perception of Russianness by the children from Russia. Seven children in Russia say that 'Russian' for them associates with the 'language', or 'a Russian person', or 'a Russian character'. In contrast, seven children from Latvia give such associations as 'the Russian language', 'alphabet', 'a hard language', 'Russian-speaking', or 'I think in Russian'. Five children in Latvia associate 'Russian' with 'a Russian character', 'an important/favourite language', 'a Russian person' or with 'understanding each other'; and three Irish children associate 'Russian' with 'Cyrillic alphabet', 'a language [they] do not understand', or 'Russian people'.

6 As was mentioned in my introduction, fifteen is the total number of participants in each group. It is to be taken as read that the number of responses provided in each category of associations is given out of fifteen.

The children from and in Latvia are more consistent in associating the Russian language with ‘Russian’ than the children from and in Russia. They live (or have lived) in a predominantly bicultural and bilingual context, where speaking a language might signal membership of one of the two camps.

### 2.2.3. PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Among the children from Russia, three mention ‘home’, ‘grandparents’, ‘relatives’, their Russian ‘friends’ and ‘school’. Three children in Russia also name ‘relatives’, as well as themselves – ‘me’ – the notion of ‘motherland’ and associations that reveal emotional attachment to ‘Russian’, like ‘dear’, ‘kin’ [родной/родное], and ‘close’ [близкий/близкое]. Five children from Latvia mention associations like ‘parents’, ‘grandparents’, ‘friends’, as well as ‘motherland’ and ‘we/one of us’ [наш/свой человек]. In comparison, four children in Latvia mention the same associations, apart from ‘motherland’, and add associations with emotional connotations, like ‘dear’ and ‘warm’ (figurative). Four Irish children said that the word ‘Russian’ makes them think of their Russian-speaking classmates. As can be expected, there are no more personal connections with ‘Russian’ in this group. In all four Russian-speaking groups, three to five children mention personal connections with ‘Russian’.

Although the numbers do not allow us to extrapolate, it is interesting that in this category, associations with emotional connotation tend to appear more in the Russian-speaking control groups in Russia and Latvia than in the migrant children’s groups, which might suggest that distance from one’s or one’s parents’ country of origin decreases emotional attachment to it. Mentioning associations of the category ‘Personal connections’ is characteristic of migrant children, who identify themselves as ‘Russian’: two out of three children from Russia and three out of five children from Latvia. It is interesting that Lena from Latvia (sixteen) self-identifies as Latvian, but one of her associations with ‘Russian’ is ‘we, one of us’, [наш]. This suggests that applying a label to oneself may not fully reflect the complex internal self-identification a person may have on an emotional level.

#### 2.2.4. 'RUSSIAN' AS A PERSON

Seven children from Russia name attributes of a 'Russian' person. Most of them give either neutral or positive associations, while two children give both negative and positive associations. The children from Russia see a 'Russian' as a 'cheerful and joyful', 'good', 'affable', 'amicable', 'understanding', 'interesting', 'intelligent' and 'curious' person, who is 'proud' and 'can protect oneself and one's nation', but who also 'fights other people for no reason, just to show off'; who 'builds houses better than the Irish', but is also 'impatient and likes doing everything fast'; a Russian person, they say, has 'a strong character'. Thus, children from Russia tend to view a 'Russian' person positively as a benevolent person, associated with safety and security, who is an achiever and likes to stimulate him-/herself, but lacks patience and rationality and can be rude.

Five children in Russia have associations with 'Russian' as a person, and the image they create is almost identical to the one created by the children from Russia: a 'friendly', 'kind and caring', 'intelligent' person, who is 'strong', 'a defender' and an achiever in 'sports', who is 'joyful', 'sociable' and 'charming', but 'not very tidy' and who is also 'egoistic'. Again in this image, such value dimensions as Benevolence, Achievement and Security (Schwartz 1994) come to the fore, but alongside the dominant positive traits, negative ones are also listed.

Five children from Latvia have associations in this category. For them, a 'Russian' person is 'intelligent', 'victorious' and good at 'sports'; this person is 'a lot of fun' and has 'a strong and firm character' which allows them to 'always find a way'. The image is more limited than the one provided by the children from Russia, and is 100 per cent positive: no criticism is mentioned. A 'Russian' person appears to be an achiever, who is also good company.

The children in Latvia are the most generous group with regard to the image they create of a 'Russian' person. Twelve children comment on traits they associate with 'Russian', and in their perception, a 'Russian' person is 'joyful' and 'kind', 'sociable', 'polite', 'hospitable', 'welcoming', and 'a good friend', who can 'talk to you in a sympathetic manner', and who can 'judge in a just way'. At the same time this person is 'courageous', 'serious' and 'strict' (positive modality), 'intelligent', with 'good imagination', 'cultured'

and ‘proud’ (positive modality), if ‘not rich’. In summary, a ‘Russian’ person is a positive and benevolent achiever. There is no criticism of a ‘Russian’ person in this group of children. This image, metaphorically speaking, is painted in the same colours as that of children from Latvia, but with greater depth and intensity.

Only one Irish child gave an association with ‘Russian’ relating to traits: ‘sports’ – he then explains that he means ‘achievements in sport’.

The last observation shows a tendency among the children in and from Latvia to idealize the ‘Russian’ person, whereas self-critique is present in the associations with ‘Russian’ among the two Russian groups of children. More conclusions can be drawn when we compare the associations with ‘Russian’ with the other two notions: ‘Latvian’ and ‘Irish’.

### *2.3. Associations with ‘Latvian’*

Children from and in Russia and Irish children had to be excluded from the analysis of the associations with ‘Latvian’ because there was a general lack of data. See Appendix 1.

#### **2.3.1. ‘LATVIAN’ AS LATVIAN CULTURE, HISTORY, PRACTICES AND OTHER REALIA**

There are fewer children in the two Latvian children’s samples who give CH associations with ‘Latvian’ than with ‘Russian’: six children from Latvia have such associations as ‘Latvia’, ‘Riga’, ‘Daugavpils’, ‘lake’, ‘trolley-buses’, ‘the white-and-red flag’, ‘bonfire’, ‘forest’, ‘music’ and ‘living in Latvia’; three children in Latvia say ‘folk’, ‘a statue in Riga’, ‘many shops’, ‘crisis’ and ‘national decorations’. All the associations are neutral, and, as in the situation with ‘Russian’, there are more migrant children who have CH associations with ‘Latvian’ than non-migrant, which supports the idea of a greater prominence of cultural references after migration.

### 2.3.2. ‘LATVIAN’ AS LANGUAGE, PEOPLE AND MENTALITY

Similarly to the associations of this category with ‘Russian’, five children from Latvia and seven children in Latvia mention associations of this category. Children from Latvia mention the language itself, or that it is used ‘when shopping’ or ‘when addressing someone’, another association in this category is ‘people who speak Latvian’ and ‘a language which is hard to learn’. These associations are neutral, unlike some made by the children in Latvia such as ‘common and annoying’, and ‘unpleasant’. Among neutral associations of this category are ‘compulsory and natural’, ‘people who do not speak Russian’, ‘we can understand each other’, ‘language’, ‘street signs in Latvian’, and ‘many Latvian people around’. One can think that the negative connotations with ‘Latvian’ among the children in Latvia are prompted by the topicality of the necessity to deal with the issues of learning Latvian in order to succeed in the new independent Latvia and the redistribution of power in contemporary society which is present in everyday life, public discourse and the media. However, for the migrating children, these issues have less conversational prominence: out of sight, out of mind.

### 2.3.3. PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Seven children from Latvia have association of this category with ‘Latvian’, and they are all either positive or neutral: ‘friends from the neighbourhood [in Ireland]’, ‘relatives’, ‘a kin person’, ‘very close’, ‘a teacher of Latvian’, ‘grandmother’, ‘my Latvian passport’, ‘my crèche’, and ‘me, my family and my home in Latvia’. Some children in Latvia appear to have mixed feelings about their connection with ‘Latvian’, thus, Kristina (nineteen), says that it is something ‘both strange/alien and close’ [Знакомое, близкое, но как бы и чужое в какой-то степени]. Other children in that group name associations such as ‘familiar’, ‘acquaintances’, ‘granny’, ‘neighbours’, ‘school and teachers’. There is no difference in the number of emotional connotations that children in and from Latvia have with ‘Latvian’: in both groups there are one or two emotionally charged associations, which are positive

or of mixed modality, so no conclusion can be drawn in this respect. Only one of the two children from Latvia who gave such positively-charged associations, as ‘a kin person’, or ‘very close’, self-identifies as Latvian. It is Lena, who also speaks about ‘Russian’ as ‘one of us’.

Although children from Latvia tend to report monocultural identities, such as ‘Russian’, ‘Latvian’ or ‘Irish’ (Appendix 3), it is possible that coming from a country with two dominant cultures leaves its trace. The other identity may be dormant and may only become prominent in particular situations or with particular audiences, or when automatically triggered by emotions on the subconscious level, which might lead to slips of the tongue like ‘one of us’ when speaking about a member of a group one does not explicitly identify with. Alternatively, the other identity, although not perceived as primary by the child, may still coexist with the primary one, and not be forsaken (see Pöyhönen in this volume). In contrast, for children who are used to living in a bi-/multicultural context, the scope of ‘us’ becomes greater than the borders of one’s primary cultural group. As Pöyhönen indicates in her chapter, identity is ‘dynamic, multi-voiced, changeable and process-like – in one metaphor: kaleidoscopic’. The current study provides examples of identities in the making.

#### 2.3.4. ‘LATVIAN’ AS A PERSON

Again, fewer children from Latvia than in Latvia give associations with the traits that they perceive Latvians to have: three children as opposed to eight, notwithstanding the fact that more children from Latvia than in Latvia give associations with ‘Latvian’ overall.

For the three children from Latvia who give associations from this category, a ‘Latvian’ is a predominantly negative person: ‘miserable’, ‘impolite’, ‘sly’, ‘not pleasant to deal with’, ‘a coward’ who ‘litters’. Oleg (fifteen) says ‘I don’t like them’ [Не люблю латышей]. Negative associations with ‘Latvian’ do not appear to be connected with children’s cultural self-identification, because among these three children, one self-identifies as Russian, one as Latvian and one as Irish.

The eight children in Latvia are not as negative in their perceptions of a ‘Latvian’ as the children from Latvia: although seven of them name at least one negative trait, only Oksana (seventeen) gives just negative

associations with a Latvian personality, whereas others give both negative and positive associations in this category. Incidentally, Oksana's mother Tatiana (thirty-seven) associates just one word with 'Latvian': 'Nazis'. Thus, the negative attitude toward Latvians may have been socialized to the child. Yana (fifteen) also says that Latvians are 'nationalists and do not like Russians'; however her mother does not mention any negative associations with 'Latvian'.

The image of a 'Latvian' in this group of children is very complex. A 'Latvian' is benevolent, because a 'Latvian' is 'friendly', 'just', 'not a bully', 'sociable', 'sentimental and emotional'; however, a 'Latvian' is also perceived as 'cold' and an 'individualist' (negative modality). A 'Latvian' can be 'persistent' and 'to the point'; they can also be 'cheerful'. However they are 'not very responsible', 'they are arrogant people who overrate themselves' and 'do not behave in public places' or 'respect their elders'. Moreover, as has been mentioned before, two children in Latvia perceive a 'Latvian' as 'a nationalist who does not like Russians'.

Thus, there is a lack of consensus with regard to 'Latvian' as a person. Personal feelings and intercultural experiences may be intertwined with comments overheard in adult conversations, on the TV and in public discourse in general. My field trip to Latvia (Riga, Liepaja and Daugavpils) in 2009, the interviews and the personal observations made it clear that there is still tension between Russian speakers and the ethnic majority in Latvia which is gradually subsiding according to the adult participants in my research. However, conflict is still regularly spurred by the Latvian- and Russian-medium press giving their polar interpretations of political and social events in Latvia (Hogan-Brun 2006: 322).

Comparing the positive image of a 'Russian' person with the negative or mixed image of a 'Latvian' person that children in and from Latvia create, in a way, illustrates McDonald's (1993) idea in the epigraph which can be applied here: there are persistent invisible borders between the two major groups that coexist and negotiate the rules of living together in Latvia on a daily basis. Their ideas of each other form into fixed associations that are likely to become stereotypes. Furthermore, this situation can be an example of in-group bias: idealizing Russian speakers and demonizing Latvian speakers among the children from and, to a lesser extent, in Latvia. Analysing associations with 'Irish' will shed further light on this question.

## *2.4. Associations with 'Irish'*

As the image associated with 'Irish' is limited among the children in Russia and tends to be stereotypical (dancing), I limit the analysis of associations with 'Irish' to the answers given by the other four groups of children. See Appendix 1. All Irish children have associations with 'Irish'.

### **2.4.1. 'IRISH' AS IRISH CULTURE, HISTORY, PRACTICES AND OTHER REALIA**

Eleven children from Russia, eight children from Latvia, five children in Latvia and thirteen Irish children mention CH associations with 'Irish'. Association include 'Dublin', 'the Shannon', 'leprechaun', 'shamrock', 'Guinness', 'Irish flag', 'sport' and 'drinking' to name just a few. Irish culture is of great conversational prominence among the three groups of children living in Ireland, where it is the culture of the majority. The Russian-speaking migrant children in Ireland have approximately the same number of CH associations with 'Russian' and 'Irish'.

### **2.4.2. 'IRISH' AS LANGUAGE, PEOPLE AND MENTALITY**

There are only two children from Russia, whose associations with 'Irish' fall into this category. Sonya's (fourteen) association is 'crowd'; Katya (ten) comments that 'one has to articulate it all [the Irish language]' [Надо все проговаривать] and that 'it is hard to spell'. The language category is consistently not salient among the children from Russia. In contrast, it is equally salient for the children from Latvia for all three stimuli. Six children from Latvia have the following associations in this category: 'language', 'English language', 'speaking English', 'no one speaks Irish', and 'I'd like to read something in English now'. It is interesting that the children from Latvia demonstrate their awareness of the Irish language situation in Ireland, but the children from Russia never comment on it in this task. The past experience of the children from Latvia of the situation when the prestige and power of languages is renegotiated in a country might make them more sensitive than the children from Russia to such issues.

Five children in Latvia are aware of either ‘the accent’ that Irish people have in English, or that the Irish ‘language is hard’, or they simply comment that the Irish speak ‘a different language’, so that there might be problems in understanding should the child and an Irish person meet. Yana (fifteen) also says that an ‘Irish’ is the ‘same as an Englishman’, and Elvira (eleven) thinks that the Irish are ‘different people’ [люди другие] from her.

Seven Irish children name associations from this category such as ‘Irish-speaking’, ‘language’, ‘Irish words’. David (ten) mentions ‘Irish people’. Eva’s (ten) associations with ‘Irish’ are ‘school homework’ and ‘books’. It is interesting that associations to do with school and Irish as a school subject were very common among the Irish children: for most Irish participants, the Irish language only has the formal quality of a school subject.

#### 2.4.3. PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

The children from Russia and the Irish children are less likely to give associations describing personal ties with ‘Irish’ than the children from Latvia who speak of their ‘friends’, ‘school’, ‘cousin who lives in Dublin’ and their ‘living in Ireland’ in general. Nadya from Russia (eleven), who was born in Ireland, and who self-identifies as Irish, calls Ireland ‘home’.

#### 2.4.4. ‘IRISH’ AS A PERSON

Eight children from Russia have associations from this category, and their modality varies. The three children from Russia who self-identify as Irish have either neutral or positive associations with ‘Irish’ in this category. The children from Russia tend to think that an ‘Irish’ person is ‘cheerful and joyful’, ‘full of energy and active’, ‘peace-loving’ and ‘carefree’, ‘friendly and affable’, ‘honest’ and ‘hospitable if they like you’. At the same time they ‘can be aggressive and fight if they don’t like you’. Other associations with ‘Irish’ suggest criticism of Irish people’s lifestyle, as the Irish can be ‘shallow materialists’, ‘lazy’, ‘fat’ and ‘eat unhealthy food’ and be ‘sloppy and not neat’. One child from Russia says that Irish children can be ‘undisciplined as they are loud, laugh and scream’. Alexandra (ten) has an association with ‘Irish’

traditionalism as one of her associations is ‘church’. A generalized image is, thus, that of a benevolent hedonist, in Schwartz’s (1994) conception.

Alexandra from Russia (ten) self-identifies as bicultural because she does not feel particularly attached to either Russia or Ireland, does not ‘approve of’ their lifestyles. She criticizes the Irish for ‘unhealthy food’ choices. This comment supports my suggestion that children pick up their parents’ negative comments about other cultures and internalize them, if the negative associations are regularly activated. For example, Alexandra’s mother Sveta (thirty-nine) admits that she holds negative attitudes toward Irish mores; even her Irish ex-husband openly criticizes Ireland. Nevertheless, they are trying not to transfer these attitudes to their children and leave it up to them to develop their own. As we see, this is easier said than done. Indeed, her daughter is already following in her footsteps with regard to cultural attitudes.

As we can see, the children from Russia create an image of mixed modality; however, when they gave their associations with ‘Russian’, there was also an element of critique, although to a lesser extent. Self-criticism, in general, is common for this group of participants. Furthermore, associations with ‘Irish’ show that children from Russia internalize their parents’ views that Irish people often lead an unhealthy lifestyle and are less neat than Russians.

The image that three children from Latvia draw of an ‘Irish’ person coincides with the self-portrait, in that an ‘Irish’ is ‘more sociable [than Latvians or Russians]’, ‘friendly’, ‘kind’, ‘cheerful’, and ‘happy’. However, two more children from Latvia comment on the fact that an ‘Irish’ person can be ‘undisciplined’, ‘rude’, ‘wild’ and ‘a show-off’. The two children who self-identify as Irish (Appendix 3) have associations with positive modality in this category. Depending on personal intercultural experiences, the modality of the associations may differ. These children’s image of an ‘Irish’ person is less positive than that of a ‘Russian’, but more positive than that of a ‘Latvian’.

In comparison, the image that four children in Latvia have of an ‘Irish’ person is predominantly positive. Again, there is a theme of the Irish being ‘friendly’, ‘sociable’, ‘kind’, ‘cheerful’, ‘inquisitive and creative’ ‘life-loving’ people, who can be ‘loud’, and are ‘conservative’. In general, negative traits only feature among their associations with ‘Latvian’.

Four Irish children say that 'Irish' people are 'friendly', 'funny', 'with a good sense of humour', though Tom (eleven) adds that 'there's a lot of fighting', as 'some people are friendly, but some people are aggressive'. The associations that Simon (eleven) has with 'Irish' differ from the other four children, as for him an 'Irish' is 'proud' 'strong', and has 'honour'. Thus, the image is positive with a hint of self-critique with regard to fighting. The Irish children name fewer personal characteristics that they associate with 'Irish' than migrant children do, and children from Russia list the greatest variety of personal traits they associate with 'Irish'.

### 3. Discussion

#### *3.1. What factors impact on the shaping of cultural attitudes among migrant children from Russia and Latvia?*

What does the analysis of the observations above reveal with regard to the factors that shape cultural attitudes among migrant children from Russia and Latvia in this study?

*Migration experience*, or having *migrant parents* (for four children in the Russian target group who were born in Ireland). This results in an increase in the number of CH associations with one's or one's parents' country of origin. Thus, migrant children begin to view Russia and Latvia from the point of view of other cultural groups and the position these two countries occupy and the reputation they have in Europe and in the world in general. Target-group children are more aware of common cultural stereotypes associated with Russia and Latvia than non-migrant control-group children.

*Children's age.* Older children share more cultural associations than younger children, who sometimes have difficulties thinking of any.

*Conversational prominence of the country* (Latvia, Russia or Ireland). In general, the more conversational prominence a particular concept holds for a particular cultural group of children, the more associations with this

concept one can expect. For example, 'Irish' is of greater conversational prominence for the children from Russia and Latvia than 'Russian' or 'Latvian' for the Irish children of this research. 'Russian' is of greater conversational prominence for the Irish children than 'Latvian'. 'Latvian' and 'Irish' have little conversational prominence for the children in Russia.

*In-group bias.* The tendency to have positive autostereotyping and negative heterostereotyping is noticeable among the children from Latvia and is evidenced by their idealizing 'Russian' and criticizing 'Latvian' and 'Irish'. In-group bias is a common phenomenon in bi-/multi-cultural contexts, as is evident in the chapter by Zbenovich in this volume where we see how in-group culture, language and (grand-)parenting practices are considered superior to those of the Other. In her chapter in this volume, Nikiporets-Takigawa also points out that post-Soviet migrants often have attitudes of superiority towards the local population, particularly with regard to their levels of culture and education.

*Past practices of othering Self and Other.* The children from and in Latvia are used to associating the Russian language with 'Russian', and the Latvian language with 'Latvian', thus categorizing cultural groups in relation to the dominant language spoken in those groups. There are more language-related cultural associations among the children from and in Latvia than among those from and in Russia.

*Past antagonism.* Negative associations with 'Latvian' among the children from Latvia may be attributed to past antagonism and to conversational prominence of the issues of power redistribution between cultural groups in Latvia that the children were exposed to. The children from and in Latvia are aware of how ideologically charged the questions of language policy and practices can be, and how power can be redistributed between different ethnolinguistic groups of the same country. They were witnesses to their parents' decisions to migrate, and they may be aware of some of the push-factors for their parents' migration, for instance, their parents' unwillingness to adapt to their new socioeconomic status in Latvia. The children from and in Latvia are more sensitive to the relationship between language and power than are the children from and in Russia, which accounts for some of the negative cultural associations that these groups of children have with 'Latvian' as a person or Latvian as a language.

*Parental cultural attitudes.* Some of the negative cultural associations with 'Latvian' and 'Irish' seem to have been transmitted from migrant parents to their children. Overhearing comments in adult conversations about various cultural groups may result in the children adopting some of those attitudes, particularly when the associations are activated frequently enough to form stereotypes, and/or if reinforced with the children's personal negative cultural experiences with these cultural groups.

*Researcher effect, political correctness and attempts at impression management.* These factors may have stopped Irish children from mentioning cultural associations with 'Russian' or 'Latvian' if they were of negative modality. Similar reasons may have resulted in fewer negative associations with 'Latvian' in the two Latvian groups of children, as well as with 'Irish' among children from Russia and Latvia.

#### 4. Conclusions

I explored the relationships between cultural associations/views, stereotypes and prejudices, the differences in autostereotyping and heterostereotyping in migrant children's groups and the factors that shape cultural attitudes among the migrant children subjects of the current research.

The cultural associations mentioned by the children of this study include their personal associations with 'Russian', 'Latvian' and 'Irish', their personal stereotypes and those they have heard being mentioned in their social networks and in the media, as well as prejudices that they have formed based on their own intercultural experiences and those of their parents and important others. As we saw in Section 3.1. above, the migrant children's cultural associations are a result of the interplay of such factors as migration experience or having migrant parents, the children's age, the conversational prominence of given cultures, in-group bias, past practices of othering Self and Other, past antagonism, parental cultural attitudes, and researcher effect, political correctness and attempts at impression management.

The associations that the children have with 'Russian', 'Latvian' and 'Irish' come from the dimensions of popular knowledge, culture, history, lifestyle and cultural practices (CH), and inevitably contain some amount of stereotyping, like 'bear' for 'Russian', or 'leprechaun' for 'Irish'; however, it is hard to say where cultural symbolism finishes and stereotyping begins. As a migrant in Ireland, I had numerous initial encounters with people who, on finding out that I was from Russia, would inevitably reference associations such as 'cold' and 'snow'. I found myself chanting the same responses to my interlocutors' associations with 'Russia/Russian' almost every day. Likewise, target group participants are aware of the stereotypes associated with 'Russian', and it is these stereotypes that are triggered by the association tasks first of all.

Migrant children tend to lose emotionally charged associations with their or their parents' country of origin. For them, their parents' culture may be just another culture in their cultural repertoire. It may carry pragmatic value (additional cultural knowledge) but be devoid of any emotional value (nostalgia).

Although children from Latvia tend to report a monocultural identity, their emotionally charged associations with groups other than the one reported as their own indicate bicultural tendencies. There is a greater tendency among the children from Latvia than those from Russia to positively autostereotype and negatively heterostereotype. However, due to the developing duality of migrant children's cultural identities, it is sometimes difficult to tell autostereotyping from heterostereotyping, particularly in the case of children from Latvia, or those children from the two target groups who self-identify as Irish, bicultural, or multicultural. This further underlines the fluidity of identity, as well as the invisibility and elusive nature of the boundaries between in- and out-groups, which are ever revisited and renegotiated.

The formation and the renegotiation of cultural attitudes is a salient element in the acculturation processes of migrant children in their new context. The cultural attitudes embraced by an individual play a significant part in determining the social groups to which that individual does, may or may not belong; they are shaped by and shape intergroup interaction, be it migrant versus non-migrant groups or intergenerational transactions.

This may account for how a migrant RS adolescent's aspiration to belong to a valued Irish peer group might be dampened by the negative attitudes the adolescent's parents hold of such groups, or by the parents' constant othering of their child from such groups. Of course, the accessibility of such groups also depends on the opportunities and constraints at the point of entry: how willing are the members of the group to let one in?

Cultural associations, whether inherited through transmission within a family or heritage community, or assimilated through contact with peer and host-community groups, reveal the tugs and pulls of in- and out-group allegiances. Cultural associations map out the coordinates of one's cultural identity/ies at a given point in time; like cultural identities, they are changeable and context-dependent.

In future research more emphasis should be placed on studying the transmission of cultural attitudes from migrant parents to their children in order to explore the interplay of parental influence on their children's cultural attitudes and of their children's own intercultural experiences. Furthermore, the research would benefit from discussion with participants after the association task of the possible reasons for their cultural associations.

## Appendix 1: Non-responses

One boy from Latvia, two children in Russia, two children in Latvia and four Irish children could not give any associations with 'Russian'; seven out of these nine children are pre-adolescents (under thirteen years of age). Thus, it would appear that the association task might have been too difficult for pre-adolescents, but this is contradicted by the fact that the mean age of the children in Russia and in Latvia (fourteen years) is the highest across the child population of the current study: there are more pre-adolescents in the migrant children's groups, and yet everybody apart from one boy from Latvia was able to complete the task. It is possible that

the four Irish pre-adolescents who failed to name associations with 'Russian' did so because of their lack of knowledge about Russia, as all four were able to name associations with 'Irish'. 'Russian' may not be a notion of high conversational prominence for Irish children. Similarly, perhaps the four children in Russia and Latvia have never thought about what 'Russian' means to them from a cultural perspective, or they may have been experiencing research fatigue at this final stage of the interview.

Children from and in Russia and Irish children had to be excluded from the analysis of the associations with 'Latvian', because there was a general lack of data. This cultural group, Latvians, may not be conversationally prominent in Ireland and Russia. Two boys from Latvia, and two girls and one boy in Latvia could not give any associations with 'Latvian'. Again, pre-adolescents prevail among those who could not complete the association task. Sergei from Latvia (fifteen), Ira (ten) and Vitaly (ten) in Latvia could not give associations with 'Russian' either, but the other two children did give associations with 'Russian'. In the wider study, which analysed the parents' responses, it is noteworthy that Sergei's mother, Ludmila (thirty-three), and Lena's father, Vadim (thirty-five), say that they only have negative associations, so they would rather not say anything. Could it be the case that the children have predominantly negative associations, which they do not feel like sharing? Another explanation may be that 'Latvian' is a notion of low conversational prominence for these children, although the fact that one still lives in Latvia, and that the other is eighteen years old belies this suggestion.

Among the migrant children only Sergei (fifteen) and Lena (sixteen) from Latvia did not have associations with 'Irish' *per se*.

1. I don't like Irish, we are different people, and we don't communicate with each other. They are silly, I don't know ... Our opinions differ, we don't agree, and I don't want to deal with them. (Lena, sixteen years old)
  
1. [Мне, как бы, ирландцы сами по себе не нравятся, потому что ... ну, они другие люди как бы, и я с ними вообще не общуюсь как бы, поэтому как бы. [...] Они как бы, ну, такие, не знаю, дурачки, может быть [смеется], не знаю, ну не знаю как бы. Мне не нравится как бы. Ну, у них другие эти, все понятия и всё, и я с ними не согласна как бы и как бы не хочу [общаться с ними] ...]

This comment might explain why she did not mention associations with the concept of 'Irish': she may have them, but may be unwilling to share negative associations.

Children in Latvia have many more associations with 'Irish' than children in 'Russia', as only two children in Latvia, both in their late adolescence, could not name any associations, in contrast to eight in Russia, seven of whom are pre-adolescents. The age factor may be relevant here, but the difference in the geographical position of the two Russian-speaking control groups has to be taken into account as well. Migration from Latvia to Ireland has been on the rise in recent years, which likely has increased the general awareness of Ireland, its culture and lifestyle in Latvia through the stories that migrants bring back to Latvia. The control-group participants in Russia live in Barnaul, which is very remote from Europe; thus, Ireland does not hold great conversational prominence there.

Three out of the seven children in Russia who were able to give their associations with 'Irish' spoke about 'skirts', meaning 'kilts', and Olesya (sixteen) says that she thinks of Scotland when she hears 'Irish', which is her only association with this notion. This supports the idea of limited knowledge of Ireland and its culture in this children's group. Four girls in Russia know about Irish dancing; a friend of one of them does Irish dancing in Barnaul. Misha (fifteen) says that the Irish 'have a peculiar sense of humour' [особое какое-то чувство юмора], but he is not able to explain what makes him think so. Finally, Zhenya (fifteen) is the most familiar with Irish culture. First of all, her mother is a professor of English at the department of foreign languages at Barnaul State Pedagogical University, so she could have transmitted some knowledge of Ireland to her daughter. Furthermore, the girl has been doing horseback riding since she was little, so she knows about Irish stables and traditions concerning horse breeding.

2. I am drawn to the country [Ireland], I love the way of living there, I like the atmosphere ... there [...] I have seen films and read that horse breeding is popular in Ireland. (Zhenya, fifteen years old)
2. [...] И лошади, потому что как бы читала много и смотрела фильмы, то, что в Ирландии, ну, как бы лошади – довольно такое распространенное явление, что там занимаются.]

## Appendix 2: Age and gender of research participants

Table 1 Age of research participants

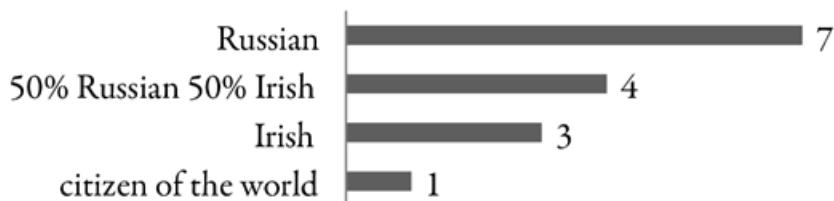
Children's Age	from Russia	in Russia	from Latvia	in Latvia	in/from Ireland
N	15	15	15	15	15
mean age	12.9	14	13.8	14.1	11.8
min.	10	11	10	10	10
max.	18	19	18	19	19

Table 2 Gender of research participants

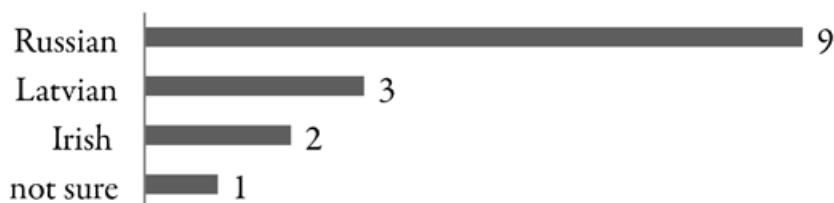
Children's Gender	from Russia	in Russia	from Latvia	in Latvia	in/from Ireland
boys	8	4	7	7	9
girls	7	11	8	8	6

Appendix 3: Cultural self-identification. Children (N=15)

In my heart I am... (children from Russia)



In my heart I am... (children from Latvia)



In my heart I am... (Irish children)



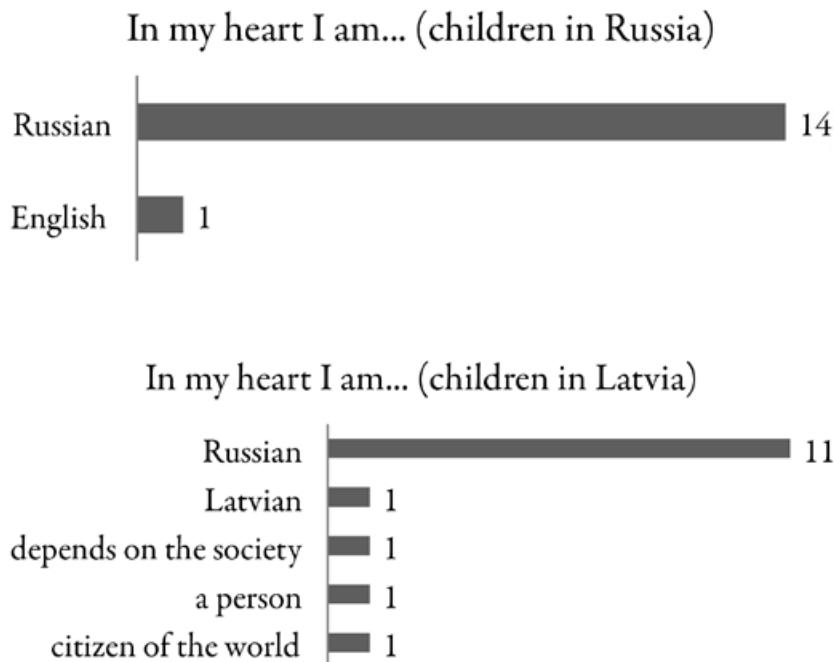


Figure 1 Cultural self-identification of research participants

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CLAUDIA ZBENOVICH

## The Russian-Jewish *babushka* in Israel: discourse analysis of a cultural phenomenon

### 1. Introduction

For a number of Soviet-born generations, the concept of the grandmother (hereafter *babushka*) has traditionally carried strong emotional connotations. Along with literature and media that depict the *babushka* as an explicit cultural symbol of affinity and mature wisdom, in scholarly literature the role of the *babushka* is delineated as an imperative, steady and vigorous social institution of child rearing (Semenova and Thompson 2003). These attributes characterize the Soviet-Jewish *babushka* in particular,<sup>1</sup> who is furthermore portrayed in folklore and literature as a clever and overprotective family figure, always eager to offer good counsel.

The institution of the Soviet-Jewish *babushka* has been challenged during the last two decades by its transposition to the new cultural soil of the Israeli immigrant community. As a part of their cultural capital, new immigrant families have brought with them conceptual models of successful parenting and grandparenting, as well as their personal experience of childhood and knowledge of habitual patterns of communication with children. The host society, in turn, suggests alternative sociocultural paradigms, and consequently Russian-speaking immigrant families encounter new implicit assumptions on, as well as explicit practices in, child rearing in Israel, and, willingly or unwillingly, familiarize themselves with different traditions of intrafamily communication.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to Russian-speaking Jewish grandmothers from the former Soviet Union.

The new models of life are absorbed to different extents by different generations within the same family. While the generation of parents, the in-between generation, is more socially mobile and more linguistically engaged and as such is more likely to adjust to a new environment, Russian-speaking grandmothers integrate into the new cultural context more slowly and more often than not preserve their traditional familiar patterns of behaviour within the family. *Babushkas* continue to help their families to take care of and raise their grandchildren, who are for the most part Israeli-born, with dominant Hebrew and a different perception of the world, informed predominantly by their Israeli cultural background. Hence child rearing can become a baffling endeavour for the *babushkas*. Most specifically, beliefs about acceptable ways of verbal interaction between the older generation and children are contested.

The *babushka* brings her cultural assumptions of what it is appropriate to say or do to interactions with her grandchildren, and her expectations, consequently, influence the tenor and structure of communication. Bearing in mind that Russian-speaking *babushkas* who migrated to Israel in the 1990s are the penultimate generation to have been acculturated in the Soviet Union, their style of communication with their grandchildren provides a challenging site for research. Thus this chapter looks at the cross-cultural communication between the older and the younger generations in the families of Russian Israelis. It explores the culture-specific patterns of linguistic behaviour which Russian-Israeli *babushkas* deploy in the transmission of cultural capital to their grandchildren. It also analyses how communication is constructed between grandmothers and grandchildren, where the latter are the carriers of conventional Israeli verbal behaviour styles.

## 2. Russian-speaking families in Israel: intergenerational legacies

In my work, I observe and analyse the conversational organization of grandmothers' and grandchildren's day-to-day encounters. As noted by Schieffelin and Ochs (1986: 164), ordinary discourse is a 'powerful socializing medium', conveying crucial cultural information not only through content but through discourse forms as well. Since children are socialized to their elders' ways of talking, this research provides insight into the language and communicative practices that Russian-Israeli grandmothers deploy to mediate Russian-Soviet cultural perspectives. The dynamics of cross-cultural and cross-generational communication and, more specifically, the study of verbal behaviour employed by grandmothers and grandchildren within the interaction, are the concern in this chapter. The research further extends Schieffelin and Ochs' (1986) language socialization paradigm to explore how immigration affects the acquisition of cultural norms via communication between the *babushkas* and their grandchildren.

Immigrant countries like the United States, France and Germany treat multiculturalism as a temporary compromise in the hope that the second generation will narrow down or close the gap with the host community (Alba 2005; Alba and Nee 1997). In Israel, as anywhere else, the integration of new immigrants depends on their readiness to accept Israeli values and the cultural stereotypes of the new homeland. Crossing the cultural bridge to the host society goes hand in hand with the acquisition of a new language. Hebrew proficiency is regarded as a sign of a successful acculturation, and state language policy has traditionally been targeted at encouraging the use of Hebrew in all domains, with apparent disregard for other languages and the cultural identities that these languages invoke (Ben Rafael 1994; Spolsky and Shohamy 1999).

Within this general policy, however, as recent research on immigrants has reported, many Russian Israelis see Russian culture and language as a major factor in their identity construction (Remennick 2003; Yelenevskaya and Fialkova 2006). They also believe that Russian culture is one of the

most important values, not only for themselves but also for their children, and they include the language as part of that culture. Most immigrants perceive Russian culture and the Russian language as superior to Israeli culture and the Hebrew language; they feel deeply rooted in Russian culture and exhibit ambivalent attitudes towards Israeli cultural life (Niznik 2011).

An indispensable component of the cultural legacy of the older generation of Russian Israelis is the value they place on education and discipline in raising children. The upholding of traditional cultural patterns of child rearing is favoured in (and is commonly limited to) the private realm – the context of home and family. Hence, the *babushka* who remains at home during the day while the children's parents are at work and who helps the parents take care of the younger generation typifies a valid cultural anchor. In such circumstances, there are many opportunities for the *babushka* to be involved in joint activities with the children, to communicate with them and, in this way, to transmit her cultural assumptions. It is not uncommon for children who are Israeli-born with dominant Hebrew and a cultural background different from their grandmothers' to experience tension and even confront their grandmothers' attempts to impart Russian-Soviet cultural norms in the cultural world within which they live.

In the context of immigration, the resources mobilized by the older generation of Russian-Israelis to preserve their cultural and linguistic universe and to transmit their cultural capital to their grandchildren conflicts with the behaviour traditionally accepted by the host community. Thus, the *babushka*'s practices of child rearing result in clashes which are vividly illustrated in interactions between immigrant grandmothers and their Israeli-born grandchildren. The differences between these two worlds and sets of experiences as exemplified in the generation gap (penultimate-Soviet and post-Zionist), the language gap (Russian and Hebrew) and the cultural gap (Russian-Soviet and Israeli), underlie the two sets of assumptions held by the parties within the discourse. The inherent cultural variance embodies the particular fabric of family discourse manifested in two different modes of communication. A study of everyday family communication provides a valuable way of analysing grandparenting practices and understanding how children are included in or avoid their family's world.

Grandmothers and grandchildren do not consistently act out their inherited legacies in pre-scripted scenarios: throughout their interaction they try to negotiate common ground which is neither Russian nor Israeli. Moreover, the grandmothers' past heritage and their grandchildren's appropriation of Israeli verbal behaviour and cultural norms is not a strait-jacket – both parties can and do manoeuvre around them, and in a number of cases the anticipated stereotypes do not reveal themselves in family communication. However, my interest in this chapter lies in scenarios of discord arising from either a language or cultural discrepancy between two generations in family talk. I consider such cross-cultural talk in immigrant families as a common activity type (Levinson 1979) and focus on uncovering the different sociocultural universes which inform it.

### 3. Data

The present study is based on ongoing work with Russian-speaking Israeli grandmothers. The subjects of the research are twenty urban, educated, middle-class *babushkas* from the *intelligentsia* in their mid-sixties to early seventies who immigrated to Israel together with their families in the early 1990s. Some of them are still living in the same apartment as their children's families, though the majority live separately. All actively help with child rearing on a daily basis. Their grandchildren are Israeli-born schoolchildren between the ages of six and ten.

The grandmothers were selected through the snowball technique – the families who were initially contacted helped me to find others.<sup>2</sup> At first, a focus group of four grandmothers was held in a home setting, where I elicited information by conducting an unstructured and informal interview.

<sup>2</sup> The first Russian-speaking *babushkas* were residents of the Jerusalem neighbourhood of Rechavia. They contacted me in response to flyers I placed in primary schools in the area requesting participants for the focus group.

In a second phase the grandmothers raised their own topics. The group discussion stimulated the grandmothers' recollections and produced the initial data and insights.

At the next stage, natural conversations, mostly at mealtimes, were recorded and transcribed; these constitute the database of texts for analysis. The families were told that the focus of the research was on the mechanisms of maintaining the Russian language at home; they were not, however, told of the research interest in culturally- and linguistically-bound ways of organizing communication, family control and language socialization in immigrant families. In the process of gathering material, I examined the content and dynamics of the interaction, paying attention to *babushka*-children negotiation patterns, code-switching modes, turn-taking and speaking rights in relation to family hierarchies.

Over twenty hours of tape-recorded family conversations were thus collected through ethnographic participant and non-participant observations. So far eight extended episodes have been transcribed and identified to be discord talk – intergenerational disagreements and disputes of various kinds, resulting in cross-cultural misunderstanding. In this chapter, I examine two episodes in detail: one involves a language and cultural misunderstanding between parties as a result of different proficiency levels of Hebrew and Russian, and the other reveals different perceptions and knowledge of specific aspects of Russian-Soviet cultural prerequisites, namely the notions of duty and discipline. In the analysis, I adopt the communicative-pragmatic model of family discourse proposed by Blum-Kulka (1997). The broader methodological approach draws on and takes inspiration from the modes of discourse analysis to be found in sociolinguistic studies for accounts of sociocultural process: speech act theory (Austin 1999), pragmatic analysis (Grice 1975), interactional sociolinguistics (Goffman 1967), as well as the more general study of dialogue (Bakhtin 1984; Burton 1980).

Additional data were collected by way of interviews with the families on child rearing in Israel, on the host culture and on Russian cultural values. The interviews create the broader context that explains data collected

through *babushka*-children interactions.<sup>3</sup> The interviews and mealtime conversations allow a combination of two types of information for the same research objective: to interpret the Russian-Israeli grandmothers' cultural assumptions in guiding the children as reflected in the patterns of their Russian linguistic performance.

The linguistic and social motivations of cross-generational and cross-cultural interaction within the Russian-speaking immigrant communities worldwide, and the *babushkas'* style of communication specifically, have up until now not been the subject of scholarly investigation. Sociolinguistic research on multilingual family communication in diaspora has so far focused on issues like the psychology of communication (Shulova-Piruatinsky and Harkins 2009) and bilingualism (Pavlenko 2004) and was based on data from parents' questionnaires and discussions within Internet forums. Though gathering instances of private discourse is a lengthy and demanding procedure, I consider material derived from participant observation a rich resource for identifying attitudes to and practices of child rearing in immigrant communities. Therefore, this approach is key to and motivation for the current study.

#### 4. Language gap between grandmothers and grandchildren

Like other immigrants in Israel, Russian-Israeli grandmothers face the competing demands of maintaining their native language, Russian, on the one hand, and becoming proficient in Hebrew on the other.

<sup>3</sup> The grandmothers voiced the importance of introducing their grandchildren to the Russian language and exposing them to Russian-Soviet cultural norms; simultaneously, however, they expressed dissatisfaction at native Israelis' manner of child rearing. Asked during the interviews where they differ in grandparenting styles from native Israelis, Russian-Israeli *babushkas* repeatedly mentioned discipline, authority and children's status in the family (all the topics mentioned have their correspondence in discourse practices employed by the grandmothers).

One contributing factor to the need to maintain Russian is the desire to transmit their language to the younger generation. Along with parents, grandmothers are the main promoters of Russian: the interview data makes it clear that Russian-Israeli families would like their children to achieve and preserve full mastery of the Russian language.<sup>4</sup> This is further evidenced in the *babushkas'* exclusive use of Russian when speaking with their grandchildren. Moreover, the *babushka* has the opportunity to guide the children's verbal interaction and to supervise the accuracy of their speech during the time she takes care of them. In the families observed, children spend most of their after-school time with their *babushkas*; in this way the children are exposed to Russian on a regular basis.

Though *babushkas* use Russian as the primary language of communication, most of them can understand and, when necessary, speak Hebrew with varying, but generally very basic, degrees of proficiency. The poor acquisition of the new language exacerbates the challenge of adjusting to a new environment for the grandmothers. While the grandchildren are for the most part native Hebrew speakers, and their parents are likely to pick up and maintain Hebrew in the context of their professional training or professional circles, the *babushka* acquires the new language at a relatively slow pace. Different levels of familiarity with the two languages – Russian and Hebrew – which organize daily discourse create an underlying gap in the cross-generational interaction that is observed and often causes miscommunication between the *babushka* and her grandchildren. Simultaneously, however, this gap also forces the *babushka* to exploit her grandchildren's better command of Hebrew as an additional source of learning and language clarification in different speech situations.

4 The studies in this volume provide empirical evidence that enables us to understand the sociolinguistic situation in the families of some Russian-speaking ethnic and immigrant communities. Thus, Pontic Greeks who live in the Russian Federation resort to the Russian language when they speak to their children, viewing this to be the language of prestige, facility in which could provide more career opportunities (Zoumpalidis). In Germany and Norway, however, though such factors as family position and support affect the parents' desire to maintain the Russian language and culture, in practice it is not used as the language of first priority and high frequency in communication (Mendzheritskiy and Bagreeva).

The following conversation illustrates the *babushka*'s meticulous learning of Hebrew. The conversation takes place at home between a *babushka* Berta (aged 67, came from Leningrad in 1991, lives in Jerusalem) and her granddaughter Dana (aged 9), a competent bilingual Russian and Hebrew speaker; both are sitting at the table, and Dana is looking through Berta's Hebrew language course textbook. Suddenly, the girl discovers a funny drawing and bursts into laughter. She points to the picture and says (using Hebrew slang):

1. DANA: *Aval ze korea!* [(Heb.) This is so funny!]
2. BERTA: Что это значит – *korea*?
3. DANA: Ну, это когда очень смешно.
4. BERTA: А какой это *bynian*?<sup>5</sup>
5. DANA: Что?
6. BERTA: Ну, какой это глагол?
7. DANA: Глагол: *korea* – порвать.
8. BERTA: Не понимаю.
9. DANA: Порвать, ну ...
10. BERTA: Это у вас так говорят, что ли?

- [1. DANA: *Aval ze korea!* [(Heb.) This is so funny!]
2. BERTA: What does it mean – *korea*?
3. DANA: Well, it is when something is very funny.
4. BERTA: What *bynian* is it?
5. DANA: What?
6. BERTA: Well, what verb is it?
7. DANA: The verb is: *korea* – to tear.
8. BERTA: I do not understand.
9. DANA: To tear, well ...
10. BERTA: This is the way you talk amongst yourselves, is it?]

Specifying the original question '*What does it mean – "korea"?*' in different ways throughout the dialogue, the *babushka* tries to understand the meaning of the unknown word as well as its contextual application. Having not recognized the actual meaning of the slang, in her next move Berta inquires about the verb structure: 'А какой это *bynian*? [*What bynian is it?*] (4).

<sup>5</sup> (Heb.) the verb stem pattern.

Since the verb stem pattern is the main resource for studying verbs in Hebrew course textbooks for adult immigrants in Israel, the *babushka* applies a grammatical perspective – a known and proven tool – as a particular frame for the identification of the verb paradigm.

In order to approach the understanding of the slang term, Berta also tries to get a general idea of the verb in ‘*Hy, какой это глагол?*’ [Well, what verb is it?] (6), and is further bound to acknowledge her failure to grasp it: ‘*Не понимаю*’ [I don’t understand] (8). Eventually, the *babushka* detaches herself from the granddaughter and her peers who do know and do understand the language: ‘*Это у вас так говорят, что ли?*’ [This is the way you talk amongst yourselves, is it?] (10). Because of her lower proficiency in Hebrew, a new language to her, the grandmother regards it as a ‘they-code’ (Gumperz 1982) and, consequently, feels the same way about the social roles and identities that are inextricably entwined with the language and promulgated by it.

The granddaughter, alternatively, considers Hebrew as the ‘we-code’ and prefers it when designating and constructing her everyday world. In using the phrase ‘*Aval ze korea!*’, Dana expresses her attitude to the picture and intuitively adjusts Hebrew to fit her sense of what she feels. Hereafter she tries to explain the meaning of the word *korea*: ‘*Hy, это когда очень смешно*’ [Well, it is when something is very funny] (3), to her *babushka*. Since Hebrew slang reflects the realities related to the Israeli experience, and slang words are prevalent among school children, the girl can identify the term with her peers. Throughout the dialogue, however, she does not manage to find a common basis that would allow her to do the same with Berta. In elementary school in Israel, the verb stem patterns are not systematically taught; as a result, in her attempt to communicate the meaning of the verb, the girl does not know the term *bynian* that her grandmother uses – ‘*Что?*’ [What?] (5) – nor is she able to account for the figurative meaning of the verb: ‘*Глагол: “korea” – порвать*’ [The verb is: ‘*korea*’ – to tear] (7). Dana did not manage to find the tools to explain the concept to her *babushka* and concluded discontentedly by repeating the word itself: ‘*Порвать, ну ...*’ [To tear, well ...] (9).

The result is that mutual translation was not achieved, and the gap between the two generations is clearly discernible. The dialogue reveals that

Dana and Berta are different in their worlds and experiences, and highlights that they are different by virtue of their languages. The cross-generational language shift within the family is a core dimension that indicates a generation gap in the immigrant community: the Russian-Jewish *babushka* is generally seen as incompetent in her use of Hebrew and as foreign to the Israeli cultural context, where her grandchildren were born and grow up.

## 5. Cultural gap and different modes of communication

In the context of immigration, the *babushka* operates in an ineffectual linguistic mode. The question arises as to how she compensates for this gap. As was mentioned earlier, the *babushka* was born, brought up and has lived the most part of her life in the Soviet Union, and as such she remains the main carrier of the Russian-Soviet cultural heritage. Cultural perceptions and experiences, rooted in the past, underlie the grandmothers' current social and linguistic behaviour. In order to understand the ways in which the imported cultural repertoire manifests itself through grandparenting practices, I examine discursive strategies that the older generation deploys in interactions with their grandchildren.

The next example illustrates an event of cultural mistranslation which reflects the rigid pedagogical patterns characteristically employed by the *babushka*. This involves the 'misuse' and 'correction' of the meaning of a negotiated concept through a cross-generational disagreement. Divergent uses of a word emerge and operate in the conversation as a result of a particular connotation applied to it by the *babushka* as part of her Russian-Soviet cultural knowledge, and by the granddaughter as a part of her Israeli cultural background. As a consequence, different contextual meanings of the concept govern the communication.

*Babushka* Genya (aged 70, came from Yekaterinburg in 1993, lives in Tel Aviv) collects Aviva (aged 8) from school every day, and they usually have lunch together. The *babushka* is cooking a meal, while Aviva is watching TV in the sitting room and eating bread and hummus. Aviva runs to the

kitchen to fetch some water. Genya, noticing that Aviva is running around with the food, states in a strict and authoritative manner:

11. GENYA: Авива, я это просто не разрешаю! Я не разрешаю ходить по квартире и есть. Кухня у нас для того, чтобы есть. Есть какие-то вещи, которые я не разрешаю делать.

12. AVIVA: Ну мне обязательно!

13. GENYA: Обязательно – это сделать уроки, русский и вообще все, что нужно сделать и пойти в ‘Мофет’! А смотреть телевизор и есть как попало, Авива, как все делают ... здесь, это – не обязательно!

[11. GENYA: Aviva, I simply do not allow this! I just do not allow running around the apartment and eating. We have a kitchen for eating. Really, there are some things that I do not allow!

12. AVIVA: But I really need to!

13. GENYA: What you really need is: to do your homework, your exercises in Russian, and everything else you need to do – and to go to the Mofet!<sup>6</sup> But watching TV and eating how and when you want to, Aviva, as everybody does ... here – this is not what you really need to do!]

In the dialogue, we witness the explicit command style of control by the *babushka* that potentially offers little room for negotiation. In her verbal move (11) Genya uses a direct ban '*I do not allow*' three times to emphasize the speech act of prohibition that implicitly extends, apart from improper eating habits, to an entire list of other presumably unacceptable behavioural norms: 'Есть какие-то вещи, которые я не разрешаю делать' [*There are some things that I do not allow*]. As a response to the girl's running around, the *babushka* also feels that it is necessary to convey a message about what she perceives to be appropriate behaviour and a proper eating place at meal-time: 'Кухня у нас для того, чтобы есть' [*We have a kitchen for eating*]. The *babushka*'s act of control is based on a clear-cut presupposition: the girl should behave in a manner appropriate to eating norms.

6 Russian evening school for children.

Aviva's response (12) to the grandmother's educational attempt exemplifies a mistranslation event. The girl, in trying to express her strong desire to eat in the sitting room while watching TV, constructs a distorted phrase in Russian: 'Ну мне обязательно' (*I really need to ...*) that is syntactically incomplete and thus improper. As a native Hebrew speaker, the girl adopts and thus translates into Russian the original Hebrew phrase '*Ani ha'evet*' ('*I need to*') expecting that the *babushka* would understand and sympathize with that need. The propositional content of the girl's utterance suggests the semantics of 'indispensable and essential', and by uttering this Aviva brings her personal needs to the forefront. Indeed, when the Hebrew modal verb *hayevet* (must) is used on its own, without a following infinitive, it serves – as in Aviva's statement – as an indicator of a colloquial expression, meaning 'this is my need'.

The grandmother, in turn, takes the Russian word *обязательно*, used by Aviva, and reconstructs its root *обяз(ан)* (obliged) to conform with the Russian-Soviet concept of *обязанности* (obligations).<sup>7</sup> This cross-interpretation illustrates that, although the interpretations of the concept by both communicants intersect within the same semantic field 'need/necessity', they are different in terms of the arbiter of 'necessity': society or the individual. Genya uses Aviva's utterance to follow her pedagogical strategies and to present behavioural norms to be adhered to. For the *babushka*, the word 'need' means an obvious and unqualified must:<sup>8</sup> she enumerates the obligations for Aviva (13) where 'и вообще все что нужно сделать' [*everything else you need to do*] refers to an additional number of such duties. Genya opposes Aviva's appeal, and by doing so she disregards her granddaughter's personal needs: 'Это – не обязательно!' [*This is not what you really need to do!*].

- 7 The concept of *обязанности* (obligations) as a component of Russian-Soviet ideas and practices of child rearing in Russian immigrant community in Israel is elaborated in Zbenovich and Lerner 2013 (forthcoming).
- 8 Dictionary definitions of the concept of *обязательно* reflect social and cultural implications embodied in this notion. Ushakov's Dictionary (1935:742) defines *обязательно* as 'required to be fulfilled' (необходимо к исполнению). Ozhegov's Dictionary (1999: 442) gives the following definition for *обязательно*: 'required to be fulfilled, mandatory' (безусловно для исполнения, непременно).

Though the *babushka* does not take an overtly critical stance towards liberal Israeli manners and attitude to the appropriate ways of eating, her disapproval is implicitly stated in the phrase ‘как все делают... здесь’ [*as everybody does... here*]. In this sense, the practice of teaching children proper manners and behaviour might have the same appearance as in Russia; moreover, however, they acquire an additional implied meaning – dissatisfaction with the host culture’s codes of conduct and striving to be culturally ‘superior.’<sup>9</sup>

As revealed through the discourse of mistranslation, the clash between two discourses and two cultures is evident. The connotations that govern the use of the linguistic repertoire both reflect and create different cultural contexts. The discourse of discussing a child’s personal needs, considering the child’s internal self and addressing the child’s personal choices is widespread in Israel. Though this kind of communication is socially inherent in the Israeli child, on the part of grandmother, conversely, the concept of ‘children’s choices and needs’ is rarely documented. The *babushka*’s modes of communication often echo the common rhetoric of duty-oriented discourse with children, exhibiting sets of convictions that are continuously upheld by generations of Soviet parents and grandparents. Needs as obligations and duties are conceptualized by the *babushka* in their external (versus internal) sense – in relation to ‘what should be done’ to other people and to society in general as it was routinely established in Soviet discourse. This translational double-game is most likely to occur in an immigration setting, since apart from the language gap perspective, it presents a broader discord of cultural contexts.

- 9 Different generations of the family are exposed to different cultural models and construct different cultural attitudes reflected in the linguistic forms and communicative modes employed in the talk. The *babushka*, who continues to perform cultural practices that are considered part of her Russian identity (among them, the focus on proper table manners), clearly does not approve of Israeli inept manners of eating. The phrase that the grandmother uses in the dialogue [*as everybody does ... here*] implies a specific cultural stereotype about Israelis – the ‘other’ cultural group (see Eriksson in this volume). In the context of the immigrant family intergenerational communication, however, the granddaughter does not fully share the cultural stereotypes about Israelis that exist in the *babushka*’s group, since she belongs to this ‘other’ Israeli group by virtue of her birth and her own intercultural experience.

## 6. Grandmothers' tales in two cultures

A final example illustrates a similar event of mistranslation and reveals how a different connotation applied to a set expression, *grandmothers' tales*, is a potential indicator of a novel sociocultural meaning that emerges in the context of migration. On a number of occasions, I observed family discourse where a child, displeased by the admonishing tone of a directive (e.g. 'Если ты что-то пообещал, то ты должен это сделать!' [*You should do this, if you have promised to!*]) issued by the grandmother, responded by exclaiming in Hebrew: '*Dai im sipurei savta ele!*' [(Heb.) *Enough of those grandmothers' tales!*], implying that the stories 'are not relevant to the situation, or to the real thing'.<sup>10</sup>

When using this set phrase, the child imbues the propositional content of the expression with a different meaning: the semantic element of non-appropriateness ('Enough!') in his response targeted a particular verbal mode of control issued by the *babushka*, rather than the content of the utterance, which bears no relation to a 'tale'. In other words, parallel to the concept of *grandmothers' tales* (~ old wives' tales) used in modern Hebrew, the Russian concept emerged as a product of a different cultural translation: the child's association of the directive discourse form with grandmothers' tales created the opportunity for the 'correction' of meaning in the discourse function. As such, it is possible to assume that since the start of the Russian-Jewish immigration two decades ago the rhetorical use of *grandmothers' tales* has also been associated with explicit command discourse.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Even-Shoshan Dictionary 2003: 1312.

<sup>11</sup> It is interesting to trace the rhetorical use of the phrase *sipurei savta* (*grandmothers' tales*), since the concept originates from a different environment, and has already undergone a different mechanism of cultural translation. The phrase appeared in Hebrew from the Yiddish '*bobe mayse*' which literally means 'Story by Buova'; it is found in a book by the Italian storyteller Buova di Antona, translated into Yiddish in the sixteenth century (Weinreich 2008). According to research, there was no reference to a grandmother (however, in Yiddish the word *bobe* (grandmother) sounds

The example reveals how the perception of the conditions by which children recognize the use or the meaning of the word is part of the cultural knowledge within which they organize their interactions. At the same time, the particular disciplinary, commanding and even authoritative way of speaking displays the cultural identity of the *babushka* in immigration, and by means of these practices she develops her positional stance in the discourse. This stance is materially shaped in the excerpt from the following interview with another *babushka* (Slava, aged 74, came from Riga in 1991, lives in Jerusalem) that continues to emphasize the dominance of discipline and the repression of self and personal needs, in other words, the aspects that were demonstrated by virtue of the previous examples of communication. Slava says,

14. Не хватает слов, чтобы упомянуть обо всем что раздражает, удивляет, угнетает и не может быть одобрено и воспринято как норма воспитания. Детям дается слишком много свободы в удовлетворении своих личных желаний или нежеланий, вплоть до абсолютной раскованности, даже грубости в отношении взрослых. Не воспитываются, не прививаются такие качества как уважение к другим, между прочим, тоже личностям, как бережливость (материалов, воды, еды, игрушек), как прыгунка убирать за собой, как любовь к чистоте и порядку, как умение сдерживаться в разных ситуациях, и пр.

[14. There are not enough words to refer to everything that annoys, surprises, depresses, cannot be approved, and is perceived as an educational norm. Children are provided with too much freedom to satisfy their personal wishes or unwillingnesses, down to sheer casualness and even rudeness pertaining to adults. The following qualities are not learned, however: respect for others who are also individuals; economy (of materials, water, food, toys); the habits of tidying up; an affinity to cleanliness and order, the ability to restrain oneself in various situations, etc.]

similar to Buova and as such could potentially literally give the term that meaning). Over time, the book lost its popularity, and the original meaning of the phrase was lost. The use of similar terms for *grandmothers' tales* in other languages presumably aided that type of cultural translation of the Yiddish phrase. Today '*bobe-mayse*' has no connection to the original romance novel. It is noteworthy that the expression *grandmothers' tales* has undergone another process of cultural translation in the Russian immigrant community in Israel; there its use by young Russian-speaking Israelis has a new connotation expressive of the dynamic between grandmothers and grandchildren.

This quote by Slava reveals her understanding of the difference the *babushka* sees between Russian-Soviet and Israeli attitudes to raising children and to the educational agenda of family communication. This emotional description reveals the content of the child-rearing practices – what they should be – coupled with Slava's perception of the attributes of Israeli parenting style that she, as grandmother, finds unacceptable.<sup>12</sup>

Recent empirical evidence provides a way of understanding the perspective of local Israeli discourse of childhood and of the interaction between parents and children. It is suggested that in the host society the system of rights and duties is more voluntary (Katriel 1991), and as such, the attitude to the rights and positions of a child is different: in Israel, children are the focus of attention, and they are allowed a great deal of latitude. Moreover, the modern power ambiguities between the generations invoke parenting practices and models of family dynamics that are reflected in less explicitly power-oriented forms of interpersonal communication (Blum-Kulka 1997).

This can be illustrated by an example I observed in the playground where an Israeli grandmother was commenting on the pattern of verbal behaviour of a Russian-speaking *babushka*. The former noticed a *babushka* continuously admonishing her grandson in a strict and authoritarian tone. The Israeli grandmother did not understand what was said in Russian;

<sup>12</sup> Such a disgruntled attitude on the part of Russian-speaking grandmothers towards the local Israeli parenting style and their implicit tenet to teach their grandchildren the appropriate set of behavioural patterns, manners and skills and way of life in general is inextricably linked with the fact that the older generation of immigrants strongly associate themselves with the heritage of the Russian-Soviet culture. The immigrants' desire to preserve the imported cultural patterns is in line with Zak's findings in this volume as regards Russian immigrant teachers in Israel. These teachers hold highly positive attitudes towards the culture of their heritage, even though the strength of this imprinted culture affects the process of their sociocultural adaptation in Israel. Thus it can be argued that although the Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel represent an extremely heterogeneous group in terms of their sociocultural characteristics, they exhibit common perceptions and patterns of life, rooted in their cultural and educational Russian-Soviet background as well as their experience and identity as Soviet Jewish *intelligentsia* (Lerner et al. 2007; Remennick 2007).

however, the instructive manner and the positional tone bore testimony to a prolonged event of chiding a child. The Hebrew-speaking grandmother addressed the Russian-speaking one: '*Excuse me, but you are educating your grandson all the time; however, a granny should be more like a sweetie.*' Although the *babushka*'s verbal mode in that situation might not necessarily have been directly influenced by her social values, this type of comment reveals expectations of appropriate conversational behaviour between communicants of different generations in Israeli culture. The simile makes explicit the Israeli grandmother's understanding of the concept of a grandmother as a person who shows kindness and whom it is easy to like, and expresses a general societal attitude to the grandmother's role: to give love and not rebukes, which are a sign of redundant power and superiority.

One could conjecture that while observing a different system of cultural practices, the *babushka* would gradually adapt her own patterns of child rearing to fit Israeli modes of communication. However, the *babushka* remains within the scope of her perceptions and powers and goes beyond local, expected authorities. It is not an infrequent occurrence that, after their own grandchildren have grown up, Russian-Israeli grandmothers start working as nannies or babysitters for native Israeli families. Thus, in a different cultural setting, the *babushka* further reinforces her role as agent of the parenting norms and values of child rearing that she systematically inculcates in young Israelis. The concept of *vospitanie* [education, upbringing] as the transmission of values and rules remains a key cultural priority and is revealed by the *babushka*'s negotiating the nature of her responsibilities. The following dialogue between a *babushka* (Anna, aged 74, came from Moscow in 1994, lives in Haifa) and her friend Mira illustrates the above.

15. ANNA: Несколько лет назад я работала в одной семье, израильской; я воспитывала ... там четверых детей.
16. MIRA: Но вы их не воспитывали ...
17. ANNA: Я их воспитывала.
18. MIRA: Но когда кто-то работает няней, в семье, ее обязанность ведь не воспитывать, а, скорее, присматривать за детьми ...
19. ANNA: Но я не могла не воспитывать! Потому что я знаю, что если я этого не сделаю, этого никто не сделает.

- [15. ANNA: A few years ago, I worked in one family, Israeli family; I was educating ... four kids there.
16. MIRA: But you didn't actually educate them ...
17. ANNA: Yes, I did.
18. MIRA: But, when one works as nanny in a family, one's responsibility is not to educate kids, but rather to take care of them ...
19. ANNA: But I could not NOT educate the kids! I knew that if I didn't, then no one would.]

Anna's statement about different cultural and social beliefs and practices regarding child rearing in Soviet Russia and Israel takes an explicit format. She extrapolates the inherited familiar concepts of 'rearing' and 'educating' onto her job duties of 'taking care of kids' as being responsible for children and dealing with the situation of staying with them. Anna was brought up in a hierarchical culture where teaching discipline was regarded as a prescriptive activity, and she feels uncomfortable when she is expected to conform to the cultural norms only passively. She overtly suggests that the cultural value of an explicit and consistent teaching of the rules and values is embedded in her generation; however, such an activity is extrinsic ('no one would') to the modern and different environment in which she now lives.

## 7. Closing remarks: the *babushka* as an agent of Russian-Soviet culture in immigration

To conclude, the *babushka* preserves her traditional familiar patterns of functioning within the family, and more importantly, her Russian-Soviet knowledge becomes her key resource in integrating herself into the new cultural context. Thus the interplay of change on the part of the children and continuity on the part of the *babushka* in the immigrant family creates a particular type of family discourse, where *babushka* acquires a social role as the agent of a Russian-Soviet cultural scenario of unqualified compliance and duty to the grandchildren. It is noteworthy that in promoting her

grandchildren's identification with such norms of behaviour, the *babushka* conveys crucial cultural information through both explicit content and the discourse form.

The discursive practice of teaching duty and obedience manifests a register of ordinary cross-generational communication that was constituted in the private, emotional and interpersonal sphere of the Russian-Soviet family and that was continuously upheld by generations of Soviet parents and grandparents. Thus the grandmothers' educational interaction mode echoes the common rhetoric of compliance-oriented discourse with children. In her new cultural setting the *babushka* continues to rely on directly positional, authoritarian attitudes in her style of communication as intrinsic cultural capital. The language paradigm used by the *babushka* pertains to a Soviet cultural universe which no longer exists. This virtually 'frozen' discourse, nonetheless, due to its 'encapsulation' in immigration, operates locally in a vibrant way: it is transmitted in the linguistic repertoire and indeed enforced through language use in the families of Russian Israelis. Moreover, although the *babushka*'s sociocultural and verbal practices are variable and, compared to the input of the host culture, insignificant in number, they withstand the local Israeli discourse on child rearing and possibly undermine meanings and ideas the local discourse supports.

The everyday interaction of Russian-speaking grandmothers and their grandchildren is a valid tool for revealing how immigration impacts on the process of constructing social identity. The *babushka*, who is less competent in the majority Hebrew language and dominant in the minority Russian language, works to preserve the Russian language as part of her grandchildren's 'Russianness'. She thereby empowers the continuity of the children's self-identification as 'Russian Israelis', while the grandchildren, the second generation of immigrants, are for the most part Israeli-born, with Hebrew language dominance. Furthermore, Russian-speaking Israeli *babushkas* cultivate not only the importance of language as a medium of communication, but also the educational messages it conveys, thus making it a powerful cultural resource within the new cultural context of their host country and a tool for fortifying the cultural capital of an immigrant group.

The analysis revealed that these traditional child rearing practices are challenged in Israel by a new language and a new communication style that

is deeply rooted in the Israeli cultural ethos. Though Russian grandmothers retain embedded stereotypes of child rearing and preset goals for the education of their grandchildren from their former culture, they encounter new implicit assumptions as well as explicit practices in child rearing in Israel. Moreover, the grandchildren's adaptation to the educational practices of the host culture occurs mostly outside the home, specifically at school, while the maintenance of grandparental cultural practices is limited to the private realm of the family context. As a result of their encounter with the Israeli cultural approach children introduce a new type of family discourse, and it is not uncommon for the grandchildren to experience tension in their communication with *babushkas* and even to challenge their attempts to instil Russian-Soviet cultural norms. Since Israeli cultural ideas of child rearing bring with them new discursive formats, the fabric of Russian immigrant family communication exhibits episodes of misunderstanding and of the mistranslation of key concepts of educational messages ingrained in both cultures.

Bearing this in mind, it is essential to register the type of everyday communication that is created between the Russian-Israeli *babushka* and her Israeli-born grandchildren, whose status of centrality is emphasized in the Israeli discourse and who adhere to an incompatible, culturally different manner of verbal self-expression. It will be interesting to understand what the outcome of this family cultural clash will be: what kind of a dialogue will continue to develop between different generations of immigrants and which modes of communication will be worked out. This study is the beginning of a broader project aimed at motivating thought and inspiring further analysis in this direction.



# Digital debates on Soviet memory in the national identity construction of post-Soviet migrants

## 1. Introduction

Three theoretical premises inform this research. First, in line with Anderson (1983) and Wodak, my principal operating assumption has been that a nation is an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 1983) and that national identities are imagined, constructed, ‘generated and reproduced through discourse’ (Wodak et al. 1999: 186). The second premise is formulated by Hall, who describes: ‘identity as a “production”, which is never complete, always in process’ (Hall 1990: 222). The third premise is attributable to both Hall and Wodak. As Wodak et al. put it: ‘Loosely speaking, the personal dimension of national identity has appeared on the one hand in relation to the themes of history and culture, and on the other hand in relation to the themes of “selfhood”, “sameness”, “equality”, “similarity”, “difference” (or the “other”), “uniqueness” and “autonomy” (the counterpart of which is “heteronomy” – an antonym for autonomy) “unity”, “community” and “group”’ (Wodak et al. 1999: 26). Hall also considers national identity as ‘always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth’ (Hall 1990: 226).

These three tenets, the discursive character of national identity construction, identity construction as a dynamic process, and the close relationship between national identity and national culture, have informed and in part determined my methodology, corpus and key topics for investigation. My research is carried out within the framework of discourse analysis and a mixed methodology which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches.

In order to research dynamic and changing representations and constructions of national identity, I chose digital communication and, in particular, debates conducted on RuTalk (formerly RuPoint), the biggest site for Russian speakers in the UK, which has 23,381 users.<sup>1</sup>

My virtual informants come from different parts of the former Soviet space, have various ethnic backgrounds and represent two numerous groups: 'highly skilled migrants' invited to work in the UK,<sup>2</sup> and family migrants who are joining a spouse, be he/she a local citizen or migrant. Both groups are a feature of the last twenty years (family migration existed on a very modest scale before the collapse of the Soviet Union). Family migrants and skilled migrants may differ sharply in professional, educational and private backgrounds. Spouses of local citizens are more assimilative, whereas skilled migrants prefer integration (see definitions in Zak and Cohen, this volume), often do not see themselves as immigrants, maintain close relationship with their home countries, work in both home and host countries and change one country for another to satisfy their professional and individual ambitions and plans for their children's schooling. However, many post-Soviet migrants of both groups regardless of their backgrounds, adaptation strategies, and motivations communicate actively in the virtual space.

Digital debates can be seen as a topic-oriented group conversation, in which the position of a researcher is that of an unobtrusive observer. This kind of material is rewarding because it provides one with a large group of informants and allows one to track transformations and changes in strategies of national identity construction over time. I registered for the forum in 2008 and have followed it consistently since then. As this forum contains archives which are searchable for a registered user, I have searched the content by key words: vague ones such as 'national culture', 'national history', 'national character', 'national identity', 'national past', 'memory', and more specific such as 'Soviet', 'Soviet school', 'Soviet education', 'Stalin', 'Bandera', 'World War II', 'The Great Patriotic War', '9 May' or 'Victory Day'.

1 <<http://www.rutalk.co.uk>>. For a comparison between migrants and non-migrants I used a forum in a Ukrainian domain: <<http://forum.pravda.com.ua>>.

2 'Highly skilled migrant' is an official UK Border Agencies term for this group of migrants (IT specialists and academics, predominantly).

I do not know the real names, gender, age, or place of origin of many of my virtual informants. Information on their individual profiles often consists of imagined, blurred or false biographical details, created with good reason or just for fun; nicknames give false hints. Informants hide their personalities as this helps them to express their opinion openly. A meticulous reading of hundreds of comments, however, makes it possible to reconstruct biographical details and to know much more about participants than their profile and nicknames supply. Some of this information proves highly relevant for our topic. Take, for example, a forum participant who conceals his or her place of origin during highly emotional discussions about the Soviet past, but mentions it in a more neutral thread.

One has to ask whether it is ethical for a researcher to use this information. It can be difficult to draw a line between research necessity and the ethics of respecting (and protecting) Internet users' privacy. This matter is further complicated by the fact that we cannot gain informed consent from virtual informants. I address the issue of protecting privacy by not providing nicknames or traceable biographical details; indeed I do not use demographic data unless it is necessary to prove/disprove a research hypothesis. Furthermore, I include only points of view typical of the majority of participants in any given thread. This approach allows me to avoid personalization and to present examples as representative of the 23,381 RuTalk users. In June 2011 the Office for National Statistics provided estimates of the population of overseas nationals resident in the United Kingdom, categorized by country of birth and nationality. The figures given were: 118,000 Lithuanians; 55,000 Latvians; 27,000 Russians; 12,000 Ukrainians (no data was provided on other post-Soviet countries).<sup>3</sup> I cannot provide figures on the proportion of those who are Russian speakers and are therefore able to participate in Russian-speaking forums. Given that I selected all 23,381 RuTalk users as my sample, I hazard an even more daring claim: I argue that these voices are representative of the views of the British Russian-speaking community in their entirety.

<sup>3</sup> Migration Statistics Quarterly Report, Population by Country of birth and Nationality, <<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-256033>>, available online, accessed 1 June 2011.

## 2. Soviet past – common discourse in the negotiation of national identities among post-Soviet people

In a recent paper (Nikiporets-Takigawa 2011) focusing on the digital communication of Russian-speaking communities in three countries (Australia, Great Britain and Japan) I suggested that their digital communication forms a linguistically homogeneous space, despite the fact that Russian-speaking post-Soviet communities are embedded in different geographical places. This shared space does not demonstrate local features (with the exception of a very narrow stratum of inevitable borrowings for the denomination of local *realia*) and has much in common with the Russian language of digital communication in their motherland.

In this chapter I further test these hypotheses about homogeneity, concentrating not on language inventories which manifested meeting points between all participants in Russian-speaking digital communication, but on the common discourses and discursive strategies for national identity construction in online debates in and outside the countries of the former Soviet Union. I show where discourses of national identity construction in these communities have no national specificity (i.e. Belarusian, Kazakh, Russian, Ukrainian, etc.), and then compare these discourses with those areas where they diverge according to different national vectors.<sup>4</sup>

My virtual informants draw on the Soviet historical legacy for national identity construction, but divide this legacy into two parts: favourable and traumatic. They take advantage of the first part to prove their uniqueness and superiority and to differentiate themselves from the Other. Discussions about Soviet achievements unite migrants from different post-Soviet countries into one nation: the Soviet Union. On the other hand, controversial figures and traumatic events of the Soviet past differentiate migrants according to current national vectors such as Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian. This dual strategy is also typical in the construction of national identities

4 By ‘national’ I refer to the titular nationalities of the successor states of the Soviet Union.

in migrants' motherlands (Russian Federation, Ukraine, and many other post-Soviet countries).

Post-Soviet migrants tend to choose events of Soviet glory from their favourably marked common past: victory in the Great Patriotic War and space exploration are most often alluded to. The Soviet education system comes in third place. This chapter considers Soviet education as a locus of shared identity; it then analyses examples of migrants' battles over their traumatic past.

### *2.1. Favourable Soviet past – the basis for emphasis of national uniqueness*

According to Wodak et al., 'the process of national identification is promoted by the emphasis on "national uniqueness", which is assigned entirely positive attributes' (Wodak et al. 1999: 27). The process of emphasizing national uniqueness may involve disparagement of other nations by focusing on differences between the 'worse Other' and the 'better Self'. For post-Soviet migrants, discourses of national superiority which simultaneously disparage and undermine the local population are very widespread. Among the qualities and behaviours commonly perceived by many post-Soviet migrants as characteristic of their national uniqueness are their spirituality and soul.

But probably the strongest theme in the discourse of post-Soviet migrants' superiority is their cultural capital: high culture and a good education. In accordance with global processes of 'cultural segregation in enclaves or segments, structured by means of cultural heritage and language' (Perfil'ev 2003), post-Soviet migrants stress their own cultural identity and contrast it with the cultural identity of the Other. Even if they feel that 'high culture' is a highly abstract concept and the 'highly cultured person' is hard to delineate, they recognize themselves as 'a highly cultured people'. As regards education, post-Soviet migrants give it great symbolic value, and see themselves as better educated than people in the host community. They constantly try to prove their superiority in education, while disparaging local education:<sup>5</sup>

5 All postings are provided in the original spelling in the original Russian language with translation into English following. All translations are my own. It should be

1. На защиту советской (и ныне в бСССР) диссертации теоретически мог прийти любой человек с улицы и задать любой вопрос, именно для этого диссер помещался в библиотеку института и авторефераты рассыпались по списку в 50 ведущих организаций по тематике, требовалось иметь не менее 3-х опубликованных научных работ. В России обязательно было иметь двух оппонентов, но реально на защите была комиссия из 21 человека (с правом голоса) и просто любопытствующие ученые из окрестных институтов. Местный ПхД точно проще, можно защитить то, что нельзя опубликовать, что не есть хорошая наука.

[1. At the public defence of a Soviet (and now ex USSR) candidate's thesis it was theoretically possible for anyone to walk in off the streets and ask any question they liked,<sup>6</sup> which is why a copy of the thesis was placed in the institution's library and the abstract was sent to a list of the 50 leading organizations in the field, and you had to have no fewer than three published works. In Russia you had to have two opponents, but in reality for the defence there was a board of 21 people (each with a vote), as well as merely curious scholars from neighbouring institutions. The PhD here is definitely easier; you can submit stuff that couldn't be published, which isn't good science.]

2. Если честно, то я бы и PhD поставил бы несколько ниже чем Советская кандидатская степень.

[2. To be honest, I would rate the PhD somewhat lower than the Soviet candidate's degree.]

3. Как-то в институте поднимали вопрос, почему нет ни одного постдока—шотландца из 450 позиций. Завлабы дружно сказали, что они не хотят снижать уровень своих 5-звездочных исследований. Просто открытым текстом признали, что немецкие, французские, русские и китайские ПхД выше местных, которых они сами и плодят. Вот такой парадокс.

mentioned here that the language of Internet communication of Russian speakers abroad has in general the same features as this language in Russia. It is characterized by a graphical simulation of phonetic phenomena; reduction of high frequency words with loss of intervocalic consonants and simplification of groups of consonants; contraction of vowels; use of internet slang such as '*yazyk padonkov'* and '*lurkspeak*'; and high variability.

6 The degree of Candidate of Science was (and still is) awarded for a thesis written after (usually) three years of study and research. It is considered to be equivalent to a PhD.

- [3. Someone at the institute once asked the question why out of 450 post-docs not one of them is Scottish. The directors of the labs unanimously said that they did not want to reduce the level of their 5-star research. They frankly acknowledged that the German, French, Russian and Chinese PhDs are better than the local ones, which they produce themselves. There's a paradox for you.]
4. Если насчет образования – чтобы не отступать, ходим в украинскую школу по субботам. там есть домашние задания. Плюс русские фильмы. Плюс каникулы на родине, с 'теми' друзьями. Плюс общение с ними же по интернету.
- [4. As regards education – to keep our minds active, we go to Ukrainian school on Saturdays. They have homework. Plus Russian films. Plus holidays in Ukraine with 'the right kind of' friends. Plus contact with them on the Internet.]
5. Это у нас было образование, а тут эдьюкейшн с натяжкой на образование. Да и в школе мне на днях заявили: 'We don't teach in nova days, we deliver'.
- [5. What we had was proper education [the English word 'education' transcribed into Cyrillic characters], but what they call education here hardly matches the real thing. Even in school they said to me recently 'We don't teach nowadays, we deliver'.]

The idea of one's superiority in education and culture in comparison with locals is very typical for migrants in different countries. As Zbenovich argues in her chapter in this volume, in Israel 'most immigrants perceive Russian culture and the Russian language as superior to Israeli culture and the Hebrew language'. Post-Soviet migrants in Japan argue that the Japanese have to buy 'brains' from abroad or go to foreign universities as Japanese universities cannot provide a high quality of education. With regard to schools, these discourses have more local differences, depending on the qualities of the education systems in different countries and other factors. For instance, I cannot find disparaging remarks about Japanese schools in the discourse of post-Soviet migrants living in Japan for two reasons: first, the majority of selective Japanese schools are very good; and second, many post-Soviet migrants living in Japan do not know much about Japanese schools, as they tend to educate their children in international schools (Nikiporets-Takigawa 2009: 53). Migrants living in Finland are also satisfied with local schooling and do not discuss any failings it might have (Protassova: 2004).

Is Soviet education, as an element in the construction of post-Soviet migrants' national superiority, real or imaginary? The answer should be 'imaginary'. In reality Soviet education was not universal: there were a dozen elite universities, and a couple of dozen elite institutes, but there were also thousands of institutions where the quality of education was poor. Assertions of educational superiority are probably understandable when voiced by graduates of elite Soviet universities, especially in the fields of science and technology. The Russian-speaking community is not, however, composed exclusively of these graduates. Nonetheless, the quality of educational attainment is discussed as representing something common to all post-Soviet migrants, regardless of their personal educational experience and even age.

The more the Soviet education system becomes a thing of the past, and the further the post-Soviet system diverges qualitatively from its predecessor, the less convincing this element becomes in discursive constructions of national uniqueness. Young speakers of Russian abroad do not have any memory of the perceived strengths of Soviet education, and if they have had experience of that education system, it was very brief. They do, however, share the myth about it as a source of pride in their own achievements. As Marianne Hirsh puts it in her 'The Generation of Postmemory' (Hirsch 2008), this type of knowledge can be understood as 'postmemory': 'the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right' (Hirsch 2008: 103). She concentrates in her essay on the remembrance of the Holocaust, but her findings are equally applicable to other, even favourable, past events.

She notes, after Hoffman, that the older generations express not exactly 'memories' but 'emanations' in 'a chaos of emotion' (Hirsch 2008). Parents living abroad and relatives who live in former Soviet republics emotionally convey to their children the idea that the Soviet education system was the best. As a result the young generation maintain strong beliefs about the good quality of the education system in the home countries of their parents, and about their parents as well educated, as they were educated in Soviet countries. Compare these two conversations about sons:

6. Он считает англичан ограниченными, смеётся над тем, что у его сверстников нет навыков чистописания, а когда его засунули из-за поведения в боттом левел он вообще перестал там кого-либо за людей считать и я его понимаю, видите ли там такие дети.
- [6. He believes the British are limited, jeers at the fact that his peers do not have penmanship skills, and when as a result of his behaviour he was put down into the bottom level, he couldn't even think of them any more as human beings, and I understand him, you see, some of the children are like that ...]
7. Сын хочет жить и учиться в России. Хотя никогда там не учился. Мы уехали, когда ему было 5 лет. Тем не менее, совершенно серьезно собирается делать там А-левелы. И хочет учиться в МГУ. А потом водить поезда московского метро.
- [7. My son wants to live and study in Russia. Although he has never studied there. We left when he was 5 years old. Nevertheless, in all seriousness he is going to do his A Levels there. And he wants to study at Moscow University. And then drive trains on the Moscow metro.]

In Tokyo and Edinburgh, where I lived, worked, conducted semi-structured interviews and engaged in participant observation, I confirmed my hypothesis that post-Soviet migrants and their children often argue that they are better educated, more intelligent and more cultured than local people and that they admire the Soviet education system. It correlates perfectly with Wodak et al.'s claim that 'the discursive constructs of national identities emphasize foremost national uniqueness and intra-national uniformity, and largely tend to ignore intra-national difference' (Wodak et al. 1999: 186). In emphasizing the uniqueness of their educational background, post-Soviet migrants perform as one nation, this uniqueness being based on collective memory about the Soviet education system. The data show that Russian speakers tend to use the adjective *Soviet* when speaking about the advantages of their education:

8. Мы же, как сознательные советские родители, помимо того, что в школе, еще дополнительно пытаемся ребёнка занять.
- [8. We, as good Soviet parents, try to give our child things to do above and beyond what they get at school.]

9. Кстати, благодаря универсальному образованию советской системы, почти любой повар, который закончил среднюю школу по советской программе, прочитал куда больше литературы, чем некоторые местные интеллигенты.

[9. By the way, thanks to the universal education of the Soviet system, almost any cook who went through secondary school following the Soviet programme will have read much more literature than some of the local intellectuals.]

10. А вот берем среднего русско-казахско-украинского ребенка и засовываем в среднюю английскую школу. И потянет ведь! Средний ребенок – среднюю школу. А теперь возьмем среднего английского ребенка и засунем в среднююsovdepovskую школу ... Представили на минуточку?

[10. Let's take an average Russian-Kazakh-Ukrainian child and put him in an average English school. He will cope perfectly well! An average child – in an average school. And now let's take an average British child and put him in an average Soviet<sup>7</sup> school ... Can you imagine?]

11. Какая интересная мысль! Засунуть среднего британского ребенка в среднюю российскую школу! Точно не потянет! Даже не сомневаюсь.

[11. What an interesting idea! To put an average British child in an average Russian school! They wouldn't even begin to cope! I don't doubt it for a minute.]

At the same time post-Soviet migrants can display strong negative attitudes towards Soviet-type elements in the education system:

12. Полный тупойсовок, хотя это не относится ко всем учителям.

[12. A totally stupid *sovok*,<sup>8</sup> although this does not apply to all teachers.]

Some ironical self-criticism can accompany their claims about the superiority of Soviet education:

<sup>7</sup> The adjective used here for 'Soviet' is the generally pejorative *sovdepovskii*.

<sup>8</sup> The noun *sovok* (lit. 'dustpan') and its associated adjective *sovkovyi* are pejorative terms for 'Soviet'.

13. Лучше, качественнее – этому нас в школе учили. Видимо хорошо учили, раз верим в это.

[13. Better, higher quality – that's what we were taught in school. Apparently, we were well taught, since we believe it.]

Despite the positive attitude to their own (Soviet) education, the attitude to other Soviet elements in life is often negative. This attitude can be found, for instance, in the thread *Зачем нужна эта гадость советская?* [Why this Soviet crap?] in RuTalk about a Russian Federation requirement to register with the police within three days:<sup>9</sup>

14. Это большевистский, совковый, великодержавношовинистический подход.

[14. It is a Bolshevik, Soviet (*sovkovy*), great power, chauvinistic approach.]

In my data I found only one speaker who describes the Soviet education system disparagingly:

15. Тут те «кем гордилась школа» работают топ менеджерами, банкирами, адвокатами и тд с семизначными зарплатами и бонусами. а те кем гордилась школа в СССР в основном тут горничными или на фабриках работают, ну или замуж вышли ... Хорошая школа тут в подметки не годится ни одной Российской. Никакой зубрежки и унижений как в совке-не дай Бог.

[15. Here those ‘who their school was proud of’ work as top managers, bankers, lawyers, etc. with seven-figure salaries and bonuses, but those who their school was proud of in the USSR work here mainly as chamber-maids or in factories, or have got married ... A good school here doesn't hold a candle to any Russian one. No cramming and humiliation here, please God, as there were in the *sovok*.]

The majority of post-Soviet migrants, however, eulogize their own education, discuss the superiority of their academic qualifications and successfully convert them into salaries abroad, believing themselves to be successful products of the USSR’s education system. And the negative comment in quote 15 above was immediately rejected and criticized:

9 <<http://www.rutalk.co.uk/showthread.php>>.

16. Хорошая английская школа в подметки не годится на одной российской!? Ах как вы правы! Только видно вы в Российской-то 'баклушки били'. Или вы не русская?

[16. A good school here doesn't hold a candle to any Russian one!? Oh, how right you are! But it seems that you sat and twiddled your thumbs when you were at your Russian school. Or are you not Russian?] <sup>10</sup>

17. Не знаю, что у вас за контингент знакомых из совка, но мои знакомые сплошь и рядом преуспевающие люди, имеющие учennые степени и состоявшиеся в своей профессии, денег при встрече не занимают, проблем у них материальных нет и на фабриках не батрачат. А вы дома сидите получается.

[17. I don't know who your *sovok* friends are, but all my friends are very successful people, who have postgraduate degrees and have established themselves in their chosen professions, don't borrow money when we meet, don't have financial problems and don't toil in factories. While you presumably just stay at home all day.]

In this conversation, the three last posts (15–17) were authored by migrants from different post-Soviet countries. Negotiation of Soviet education and other achievements from the Soviet past are convergence points of national identity construction among post-Soviet migrants because the Soviet past is common to all of them. In these negotiations the majority of post-Soviet migrants perform like members of (to paraphrase Khrushchev)<sup>11</sup> a 'single national community of post-Soviet people': in negotiation we cannot find any national differences, and the majority of post-Soviet migrants tend to use Soviet achievements as a basis for emphasizing their national uniqueness, for their confidence in their superiority over the local people. This corresponds with the discursive strategies found among non-migrants: post-Soviet countries vaunt Soviet achievements and exploit them to construct

<sup>10</sup> This is a reaction to the grammatical mistakes and the misuse of a common idiom in the previous example and to all the other mistakes in that participant's posts.

<sup>11</sup> «В СССР сложилась новая историческая общность людей различных национальностей, имеющих общие характерные черты – советский народ». [In the USSR a new historic community has been formed, made up of people from different ethnic groups, but with common characteristics: the Soviet people.] (N. Khrushchev, 1961, 22nd Congress of the CPSU).

a positive national identity and to justify/legitimize feelings of superiority vis-a-vis other countries. Thus, many post-Soviet people hold up the victory in the Second World War as a symbol of their might and status as a super-power, and the Soviet education system as an example of their privilege. This sometimes causes tension between representatives from former Soviet Bloc states. For instance, Ukrainians and Russians might argue over their respective country's contribution to the victory in the Second World War, or Kazakhs and Russians disagree on their impact on space exploration – however, Soviet education is treated as a positively marked common legacy.

This solidarity is very marked when contrasted with the tensions between different post-Soviet national communities in negotiations about another part of the common Soviet past – this time not favourable, but traumatic.

## *2.2. Traumatic Soviet past – the basis for division of identity by national vectors*

Post-Soviet migrants create a topic on sub-forums after any news event in a post-Soviet country which is linked with the Soviet legacy. Memory negotiation of figures (Stalin, Bandera) and events of the Soviet past (deportations during the Second World War, *golodomor*) are very intensive and in these negotiations no common 'single community of post-Soviet people' can be seen.

Figures of national history provide the basis for aggressive disputes on RuTalk: Bandera and Vlasov in a thread entitled *Герой Украины Бандера, а значит и Власов герой* [Bandera is a hero of Ukraine, so Vlasov is also a hero], or Stalin in the threads *21 декабря был день рождения Сталина* [21 December was Stalin's birthday] and *Лужков посоветовал по торжественным дням вывешивать портреты Сталина* [Luzhkov has advised people to display portraits of Stalin on special days]:

18. Светлая память тов. Сталину и цивилизации, которую он строил и которую англосоксено-жиды сейчас добивают.

- [18. May the blessed memory of comrade Stalin live for ever – and that of the civilization, which he built, and which the Anglo-Saxon-Yids are now destroying.]<sup>12</sup>
19. СССР выиграл Вторую Мировую под руководством Верховного Главнокомандующего Сталина. Это исторический факт, как бы ни противно это было продажным либерастам! Лужок рулит! Сталин из бэк. И Молотова и Берии. Хотим видеть наших героев. Великий был человек.
- [19. The USSR won the Second World War under the leadership of supreme Commander-in-Chief Stalin. It is a historical fact, no matter how unpleasant it is for corrupt *liberasts*.<sup>13</sup> Respect for Luzhkov! Stalin is back. And Molotov and Beria. We want to see our heroes. He was a great man.]
20. Поддерживаю. А возмущающимся рекомендую ознакомиться с историей отечества.
- [20. I agree. And those who are upset should learn our country's history.]
21. Кадыров – такой же эффективный менеджер, как и Иосиф Висарионыч, только маштабом поменьше.
- [21. Kadyrov is the same sort of effective manager as Josef Vissarionovich, only on a smaller scale.]

The process of commemorating as part of national identity construction is greatly affected by the specific character of digital communication. The technological characteristics of digital communication – polylogism, interactivity, speed, spontaneity, lack of time to consider arguments, and the tendency to base negotiation on non-edited digital sources such as Wikipedia – produce constant shifts in consciousness and private commemorative discourse. Digital communication is multinational and blurs state boundaries: when a news event occurs in some part of post-Soviet space, it starts to be discussed on any forums by interested individuals of any nationality,

<sup>12</sup> The word used to refer to the Jews is the offensive term *zhidy*, which corresponds approximately to the offensive English term *Yids*.

<sup>13</sup> The author uses the term *liberast*, which combines *liberal* and *pederast* (an offensive term for gay people).

and thus the local event becomes translocal and common property. For instance, in example 21 the user of RuTalk uses the expression *эффективный манагер* [effective manager] which is popular in ironic or direct contexts in various Russian media and appeared in a Russian textbook:

В прошлом году грандиозный скандал вызвала книга для учителя «История России 1945–2007 гг.», созданная неким Филипповым, превратившим Сталина в «эффективного менеджера» и объяснившим необходимость «сouverенной демократии». Тема «большого террора» 1937–1938 годов, как и вообще всего сталинского периода советской истории, вновь стала предметом общественного обсуждения после того, как пару лет назад формулировка «Сталин – это эффективный менеджер» из сочинения никому не известной старшеклассницы перекочевала на страницы учебного пособия по истории XX столетия.<sup>14</sup>

[Last year a huge scandal was caused by a book for teachers called *The History of Russia 1945 – 2007*. Written by a certain Filippov, this turned Stalin into an ‘effective manager’ and explained the need for ‘sovereign democracy’. The topic of the Great Terror of 1937–1938 and, indeed, the whole of the Stalin period in Soviet history became once more a matter for public discussion after an incident a few years ago when the formulation ‘Stalin was an effective manager’, taken from an essay of an unknown schoolgirl, found its way onto the pages of a textbook on twentieth-century history.]

Digital communication is expressive, and the expressions used in digital discussions can be profoundly nationalistic, patriotic, radically right-wing, racist, and xenophobic: for instance, *zhidy* and *liberast* in the examples above and *khokhlukha*,<sup>15</sup> *Ukrainian/Russian/Georgian fascist* or *fashistik* [a little fascist], which appear in topics below about the relationship between users’ home countries, Ukraine and Russia, in the thread *Украинцы выстраиваются в очередь за российским гражданством* [Ukrainians are lining up to obtain Russian citizenship] within the sub-forum ‘Politics’ at RuTalk:

<sup>14</sup> *Novaia gazeta*. 73, 24 September 2007.

<sup>15</sup> *Khokhliandiia* is a pejorative name for Ukraine; *khokhliandskii* is an adjective formed from this name; *Khokhlukha* is a pejorative term for a Ukrainian woman.

22. Тред создал в подтверждение своего убеждения в том что каждый украинский фашистик тайно мечтает о Российском паспорте.

[22. I created this thread in support of my belief that every little Ukrainian fascist secretly dreams of having a Russian passport.]

23. Этот русский фашистик недавно тут откровенничал, что работает на заказы НАТО, мол, несмотря на то что он патриот.

[23. This little Russian fascist recently admitted here that he works on behalf of NATO, in spite of the fact that he is a patriot.]

24. ... так ... кто там остался? эта.. королева хохляндских прерий ...? скучота последнее время: Грузинчик – приходит и любую тему сводит к разговору о Грузии, далее называет всех русских п\*сами. Ловит бан. Безустали реинкарнируется. Babuny – в диалоге про Украину, всегда понимает что не прав, но диалог продолжает до посинения. Dunduk – приходит и рассказывает легенды о далекой прекрасной стране Украина.

[24. So, who is left? The Queen of the Khokhliandiiia (Ukrainian) prairies ...? What boredom recently: Gruzinchik – he turns every topic into a conversation about Georgia, then calls all Russians b\*gg\*rs, so that he gets banned, and then he endlessly reincarnates himself. Babuny – in any conversation about Ukraine he always knows that he isn't right, but continues to argue until he's blue in the face. Dunduk – he comes and tells legends about the distant and beautiful country of Ukraine.]<sup>16</sup>

25. До полного счастья не хватает борца за свободный татарстан, грузинского фашистика и воинствующей хохлюхи – королевы.

[25. All we lack for complete happiness is 'a fighter for free Tatarstan', a little Georgian fascist, and a militant Ukrainian Queen.]

Post-Soviet migrants share behavioural patterns in their mode of discussion with people living in their motherland. Compare, for instance, examples of aggressive discussions on Ukrainian and Russian national identity, figures

<sup>16</sup> In this comment the author refers to the nicknames of his/her usual opponents in debates: *Babuny*, *Dunduk*, *королева* [the Queen – the nickname of a Ukrainian participant of this forum]. *Gruzinchik* ['a little Georgian'] is a pejorative term for a Georgian man and refers to the nationality of the participant of the forum.

of Russian and Ukrainian history and the common Soviet past between Ukrainians and Russians in the thread *Феномен бандерофобии в русском сознании* [The phenomenon of *banderofobia* in the Russian consciousness] on the forum <<http://forum.pravda.com.ua>>:

26. Не украинцы доказывают, что Власов такой-сякой, нам всё равно, что из себя представляет Болотников или Емельян Пугачёв. Нам и Сергей Лазо по барабану и Колчак. И веток что Пушкин – чмо вы не найдёте. Я вообще не понимаю, что делают россияне в ветках о Бандере – это внутриукраинский вопрос. Мы видим многочисленные интернет-дискуссии о Бандере и бандеровцах, причём владение темой никакое, зато истерики ... такую же позицию выражает российское руководство, т.е. официальная политика РФ.

[26.Ukrainians do not prove that Vlasov is wrong. We do not care about Bolotnikov or Emelyan Pugachev, as well as Sergei Lazo or Kolchak. You won't find the threads about 'Pushkin is rubbish'. I do not understand at all what Russians do in the discussions on Bandera. It is an internal Ukrainian topic. We see numerous debates on the Internet about Bandera and his fellows. They don't know anything about this issue, it's just hysteria. The Russian officials have the same position.]

The communicators in such discussions are quick to take offence and there is commonality between migrants' debates and debates of non-migrants in these wars of words:

27. У россии шансов посыпаться вследствие кризиса ну никак не меньше, чем у Украины. Тот же Кавказ возьмите, непросто очень может быть ...

[27. The chances of russia falling apart are no lower than those of Ukraine. Take, for instance, the Caucasus, that could prove very tricky.]

The lack of capitalization of the first letter for the word 'Russia' in comment 27 immediately drew criticism:

28. Вы учились в МГУ? Имейте уважение писать 'Россия' с большой буквы. А то как то гадко получается на фоне другого гос-ва, которое вы пишете с большой постоянно.

[28. Did you study at Moscow University? Kindly have enough respect to write 'Russia' with a capital letter. It is particularly disgusting next to the name of another state for which you use a capital letter with remarkable consistency.]

Digital debates in social media accumulate different versions of the past and individual memory narratives and negotiate them in the form of a polylogue of conflicting subjects of memory. Individuals write on forums their versions of events in history, while digital communication enables the introduction of all sorts of myths about national history, historical events and figures, and helps to popularize naïve patriotic ideas. This ‘collective flow of thoughts’ is part of collective memory (Halbwachs 1992); even if it constructs a community of forum participants, it does not construct the identity of a transnational community of post-Soviet people. Conflict and national tensions remain strong among the participants of this virtual community, and participants remain divided into national groups. The more traumatic the disputed memory, the more those involved fail to reach consensus.

## Conclusions

Discourses of national identity, as well as events which actualize negotiation of this identity in post-Soviet countries, are consumed and negotiated by post-Soviet migrants via the Internet. Despite the fact that Russian-speaking communities are embedded in different geographical spaces, their digital communication forms a linguistically and discursively homogeneous, transnational space, independent of the host-country of participants and of their status as migrants. Residence outside the country of origin does not prevent presence in its informative and discursive space: the Internet erases the borders between home and the countries of settlement and invites questions on the relevance of the term ‘diaspora’. This is due to the fact that the Internet provides equal access to sources of information and to a fast exchange and delivery of information, as well as offering a unique space for intensive discussion and communication in a shared language. The informative and discursive influence of the motherland grows as the Internet offers migrants the possibility of a presence in the motherland’s

discursive space on the one hand, and also a major source of information on the other. The Internet unites post-Soviet people both within and outside Russia: in this virtual space migrants can feel themselves to be 'at home', 'in their countries of origin'; in this way they can maintain their original identities and national affiliations whilst living abroad. Migrants also maintain their identities, their links with home, and their links with fellow migrants in and through this use of their language. A third uniting feature is the common cultural capital of their shared Soviet past.

The construction of a post-Soviet national identity involves negotiations of both pleasant and traumatic Soviet experiences. Many post-Soviet people, regardless of their nationality, select favourable aspects of their past such as the Soviet education system to emphasize their national uniqueness. The traumatic Soviet legacy, however, divides post-Soviet people along national lines, and leads to 'memory wars'. Thus, the national identity of post-Soviet people involves conflicting discourses. Not only the Soviet past, but also Internet debates about that past, impact on the national identities of post-Soviet people: they provide people with a specific discursive frame through which the dynamic process of identity construction is accelerated and they give people easier access to a group with a shared identity. There are at least two macro-groups with which a post-Soviet individual can identify: a group with a common Soviet past and a common language; and a group sharing a sense of belonging to a particular post-Soviet country, such as Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, Ukraine, etc. This produces a sense of dual identity. In the case of post-Soviet migrants this identity gains a third dimension through their belonging to a Russian-speaking community in a given country and to the larger community of all Russian speakers abroad. The Internet both polarizes and unites, and, finally, intensifies the characteristics of post-industrial societies in which a myriad of micro and macro identities and communities coexist.



GERMAN MENDZHERITSKIY AND EKATERINA BAGREEVA

## Should we speak Russian? Everyday practice of Russian-speaking migrants in Germany and Norway

### 1. Introduction

The participants in the study reported in this chapter are Russian-speaking migrant communities in Germany and Norway. In a research project conducted between 2008 and 2010 we investigated these communities with a range of instruments in order to shed light on the process of adaptation and the everyday life of Russian-speaking migrants in two European countries. Among the key questions we addressed were whether the migrants in these countries were interested in maintaining their native language and culture, and, if so, why and what factors play a role in this decision. Factors we explore include the expectations of the host society, the role of the diaspora, family status and extended family support networks, personal motivation and goals.

### 2. Historical and political background

For a better understanding of the issues under investigation it is necessary to give a brief account of the history and peculiarities of the formation of Russian-speaking migrant communities in Germany and Norway.

The history of migration from the territory of the former Soviet Union can be divided into several waves (Vichnevski and Zayontchkovskaia 1992; *Русский мир* 2008). The reason for the first wave was the revolution of 1917 and the subsequent civil war at the beginning of the twentieth century. The

second wave was the result of the Second World War. The third wave may be defined as mainly dissident migration from the 1960s to the end of the 1980s, when the borders of the Soviet Union were almost entirely closed. The fourth and most recent wave of migration resulted from *perestroika* and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the attendant possibility of leaving the country.

In this chapter, we focus on the fourth wave of migration to two European countries, Germany and Norway, at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries.

### *2.1. Germany*

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries a large number of citizens of the former Soviet Union moved to Germany. Consequently, a large Russian-speaking diaspora was formed in this country which today is one of the two largest foreign-language minorities in Germany with a total population of about 2.5 million people. According to a nationwide survey conducted in 2009 (Mikrozensus 2009; Statistisches Bundesamt 2011) 2,529,000 migrants from countries of the former Soviet Union are now living in Germany. This figure includes all migrant categories from the former Soviet Union: those who possess German citizenship, double citizenship or the citizenship of one of the countries of the former Soviet Union.

Two major groups may be distinguished within the community of Russian-speaking migrants in Germany. The first group are so-called 'ethnic Germans' and their family members. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Germany (Bundesministerium des Inneren, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge), more than two million people (2,100,013) came to Germany from the former Soviet Union between 1990 and 2009, having acquired this status (Migrationsbericht des Bundesamtes 2009). The legal provisions for the migration of this group to Germany are laid down in §§4, 7 and 8 of the Federal Refugees Act (Bundesvertriebenengesetz, BVFG).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For other ethnic minorities of the former Soviet Union who partially migrated to their historical motherland, partially stayed in their country of birth or changed their

Jewish migrants and their families represent the second large group of Russian-speaking immigrants who moved to Germany between 1991 and 2009. According to the German authorities responsible for the integration of migrants, this group of migrants currently numbers a total of 203,215 people (Migrationsbericht des Bundesamtes 2009). The legal basis for the migration of this group to Germany is the decision of the Conference of the State Ministers of the Interior (Innenministerkonferenz) of 9 January 1991 to apply the Refugee Law (Gesetz über Maßnahmen für im Rahmen humanitärer Hilfsaktionen aufgenommene Flüchtlinge, HumHAG) to the case of Jews and their family members from the former Soviet Union.

In addition to the above-mentioned groups, Russian-speaking migrants from the former Soviet Union came to live in Germany for reasons of family reunification, business or education.

## *2.2. Norway*

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics in Norway, in 2009 there were 15,215 migrants from Russia and the former Soviet Union, the majority of whom moved to Norway between 1995 and 2009. Although the Russian-speaking migrants are spread out across the whole of Norway, they are mainly represented in the four largest cities of Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim. In addition to this, a sizable concentration of Russian-speaking migrants (about 20 per cent of the total) is registered in the northern part of the country, in the Finnmark county, on the border with Russia.

More than half of all Russian-speaking migrants (7,902 people) came to Norway for reasons of family reunification (Central Bureau of Statistics). Another large group of migrants are refugees from the former Soviet Union and Russia. The remaining two large groups of Russian-speaking migrants are migrant workers and people in education. It is important to note that the vast majority of the Russian-speaking diaspora consists of females who moved to

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place of living but remained inside the territory of the former USSR, see chapters in this volume by Zoumpalidis (on the Pontic Greek Community) and Zbenovich and Zak and Cohen (on the Russian-speaking community in Israel).

Norway to join their spouses (mainly in cross-cultural marriages with locals). This group of migrants accounted for 67 per cent of all migrants prior to 2007 (Central Bureau of Statistics). The male part of the Russian-speaking diaspora consists mainly of specialists invited to work in Norwegian firms as programmers, engineers, or employees in the Norwegian fishing industry.

Migration to Norway from Russia is influenced by geographical and political considerations. Norway and Russia share a border in the north. In 2010 political relations between the two countries reached a new level with the signing of an agreement creating a 30-kilometer visa-free zone. This zone covers 40,000 inhabitants of the Murmansk region, who may now travel to the municipality of Sør-Varanger in Norway's Finnmark county without a visa.<sup>2</sup>

### *2.3. Comparison*

The Russian-speaking diasporas in Germany and Norway are quite different from one another, in terms of their sizes and assets, as well as their history and current standing within these countries. So, for instance, a clear distinction can be drawn on the basis of the ethnic profiles of these groups of migrants: in the case of Germany, one ethnic group dominates – so-called ethnic Germans; whereas ethnic origin was not a condition or reason for migration to Norway. The main characteristics of the Norwegian community are a common past (all come from countries of the former Soviet Union) and a common language, Russian.

The diasporas also differ in terms of the migrants' social status. Russian-speaking migrants in Norway have higher status than those in Germany. Norway and Russia have common borders, and there has been a considerable increase in cross-border trade and projects on several levels over the past ten years. Therefore, professionals speaking both languages are sought after in the labour market, and knowledge of Russian is becoming

2 For migration from the former USSR and the development of new Russian-speaking communities in diaspora see the chapters in this volume by Eriksson (Ireland) and Nikiporets-Takigawa (UK).

a valuable asset, particularly in the northern parts of Norway. Russian-speaking migrants in this region often realize that their linguistic capital is beneficial for career advancement.

Migrants may benefit from support from the host country not only in integration (for example, through direct support for learning the local language), but also from direct or indirect incentives to preserve the Russian language (either through financial support offered by migrant organizations or better job chances for those who are proficient in Russian). However, the maintenance of linguistic skills is not prioritized in the migration policies in either Norway or Germany.

The differences mentioned above with regard to the historical and political background of migration to Germany and Norway, i.e. the primarily ethnic-based migration to Germany as opposed to the intercultural marriages and work migration to Norway may account for the differences in everyday practices and the use of the Russian language among Russian-speaking migrants in Germany and Norway, which are the primary focus of this study.

### 3. Theoretical approach

This chapter is informed by studies of migration from the Russian Federation by Rybakovskiy (2003) and Tishkov (see Malahov 2002) and by the constructivist theories of research in sociology (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Gergen 1994), especially in the sphere of social group analysis and language use.

Rybakovskiy (2003) describes three stages in the process of migration:

1. the initial stage: the conditions of possibility of mobility for a given population;
2. the main stage: the actual relocation of a population, a wave of migration;
3. the final stage: the adaptation of migrants to the new location.

This study includes in its analysis aspects of all three stages: the preparation for and expectations of migration; the actual migration and realization of expectations; as well as survival practices aimed at adaptation in the host country (see Table 1).

Gergen (1994) describes the role of language in social constructivist theories, pointing out that

[t]he terms by which we account for the world and ourselves are not dictated by the stipulated objects of such accounts [...] The terms and forms by which we achieve understanding of the world and ourselves are social artifacts, products of historically and culturally situated interchanges among people [...] Language derives its significance in human affairs from the way in which it functions within patterns of relationships. (1994: 49, 52)

The parameters of migrant reality as reflected in different spheres of the process of adaptation (perception of the host country, satisfaction with migration decision), and especially in the use and maintenance of the Russian language (for example, speaking Russian in the family, children learning Russian, watching Russian TV, using Russian language for contacts with family members in the home country, etc.), are considered of particular importance for understanding adaptation success and have thus been included in the analysis.

## 4. Methodology

### *4.1. Quantitative data elicitation*

We constructed a self-completion questionnaire with eighty-eight items across several thematic blocks (Table 1).

Table 1 Thematic blocks of questionnaire

Theoretical concept	Thematic blocks
Concept of stages of migration (Rybakovskiy)	Preparation for migration
	Expectations about the host country, expectation about support, opportunities etc.
	Initiation of the process of migration
Theory of social construction (Gergen)	Perception, estimation and personal understanding of the reasons for successful or unsuccessful adaptation to the new place of living
	Satisfaction with decision of migration
	Problems in preserving the former culture and language, and adaptation to the new one
	Personal background questions

The questionnaire was in Russian and contained some items from a questionnaire that had been deployed in previous studies of migrant groups in South Russia (Denisova 2007). A combination of open questions (nine items) and closed single- and multiple-choice questions (forty and twenty items respectively) was used in the questionnaire. There were also questions which required responses on a nine-point Likert scale (nineteen items).

The study was conducted in three federal states of Germany (Bremen, Hessen and North Rhine-Westphalia; 190 respondents), and the region of Oslo as well as the northern parts of Norway (sixty-two respondents). A slightly modified snowball method (the respondents were recruited not only among acquaintances but also through migrant NGO networks, in so-called 'Russian' shops and 'Russian' tourist agencies) was applied with the aim of recruiting Russian-speaking migrants of different genders, ages and educational status.

In terms of demographic profiles, the two populations can be characterized as follows: 36 per cent of respondents in Germany and 25 per cent in Norway were men; the average age in Germany was forty-six whereas in Norway it was thirty-seven; the youngest participants in Germany were eighteen years old and the oldest seventy-seven, in Norway the youngest was twenty-four and the oldest fifty-nine; 63 per cent of respondents in Germany had completed higher education, as opposed to 81 per cent of the Norwegian contingent; all the rest, in both countries, had completed secondary school and/or secondary professional education.

#### *4.2. Qualitative data elicitation*

We developed a guide for in-depth interviews on the basis of the questionnaire with the purpose of exploring themes mentioned by respondents during the quantitative part of the survey. The guide was structured around the same thematic parts as the questionnaire. Twelve in-depth interviews in two federal regions of Germany (Bremen and North Rhine-Westphalia) and six in-depth interviews in the Oslo region in Norway were conducted with experts, leaders and employees of migrant NGOs and other persons responsible for working with migrants.

### 5. Results

In the analysis, we draw on both the quantitative and qualitative data. Here, we pay particular attention to the question of Russian-language use.

#### *5.1. Active and passive use of the Russian language in the home*

Two closed single-choice questions in the questionnaire concerned the active and passive use of the Russian language in the home: 1) whether respondents speak Russian at home, and if so in what kinds of situations;

2) whether respondents watch Russian-language television. In both countries it is possible to watch television transmitted from the Russian Federation via satellite. In Germany, specially produced Russian-language programmes are also available.

### 5.1.1. RUSSIAN AS A HOME LANGUAGE

An important factor influencing whether Russian is spoken in the home is the attitude towards the language within the family. Our results show differences between the migrants in Germany and Norway in this regard.

Table 2 Russian as a language of communication in the home

Question: Разговариваете ли Вы дома в семье, с детьми на русском языке? [Do you speak Russian at home, with your children?]

Possible responses (respondents were able to select more than one answer)	Responses (%)	
	Germany	Norway
Да, русский это наш «домашний» язык общения.	72.9	61.4
Говорим и на русском и на других языках, по настроению.	23.2	17.5
Говорим только тогда, когда есть кто-то, кто, кроме русского ни на каком другом из наших «домашних» языков не говорит.	1.1	5.3
Не говорим.	2.8	15.8
Другое.	7.1	14

The results show that the majority of respondents in both countries do speak Russian at home. In Germany, Russian is used more often than in Norway as the only or as a second family language (72.9 per cent compared

to 61.4 per cent, and 23.2 per cent compared to 17.5 per cent of respondents respectively), while 15.8 per cent of respondents in Norway (as against 2.8 per cent of respondents in Germany) do not use the Russian language in family communication at all.

The following quotes from two expert interviews, one from Norway (female respondent, age group 39–45), and one from Germany (female respondent, age group 40–55), provide possible explanations for these differences.

1. Я слышала много такого, когда мужья запрещают своим женам общаться по-русски с детьми или там, с подругами. Один вообще сказал своей: «А зачем тебе русские друзья, когда ты переехала в Норвегию?» (Норвегия)

[1. I have often heard that the husbands forbid their wives to speak Russian with their children and friends. I've even heard one husband telling his wife: 'Why do you need Russian friends when you've moved to Norway?' (Norway)]

In practice, finding the motivation, or rather, justification, for preserving one's linguistic capital may be a challenge. In Norway, an extra language may be considered to be an additional burden on children. Consequently, motivating children to learn and use an additional language may add strain on the family:

2. Через долгие-долгие часы объяснений и доказаний, почему нужно учить русский язык. Есть еще момент такой, что говорит, например, норвежский муж. То есть, как он относится к этому. То есть как бы считается, что это дурь и не надо ребенка мучить, пусть отдыхает лучше, либо он считает, что да, это надо сохранять и тогда есть результат. Так что, когда в семье есть такой момент, что мама говорит «надо», папа говорит «не надо», ребенок, по норвежской такой традиции выбирает легкий путь. (Норвегия)

[2. In the family, it takes many hours of explanation and reasoning, why children need to learn Russian. It is important what position the Norwegian husband has on this question and what he thinks about it. The common opinion is that it is nonsense and one should not be 'torturing' the child with additional languages, and it is better to let the child rest instead. If the father supports learning another language, it brings positive results. But when the mother says that it is necessary and the father says it is not necessary, the child follows the Norwegian way and chooses the easiest way out. (Norway)]

For the children, another reason for not speaking Russian at home may play a part. It is particularly important for the children of migrants to feel part of the host community. One of the participants in Germany describes the situation as follows:

3. [...] ребенок идет в школу, там он вынужден быстро схватывать язык, потому что он вынужден общаться все время на немецком. [...] А потом он привыкает и ему на немецком языке становится говорить проще, чем на русском, и он потихонечку переходит на немецкий язык, думает на немецком и дома старается на немецком разговаривать. Это хорошо, что он адаптируется в той стране, где он будет жить, плохо, что он забывает русский язык, перестает интересоваться историей, он здесь переключается на историю эту. Понятно, что каждая страна интерпретирует исторические события по-своему. (Германия)
- [3. When children go to school, they are forced to grasp the language quickly because they have to speak it all the time. [...] Very soon, children get used to speaking German, thinking in German – it becomes more difficult to speak Russian. And gradually they shift over to German, they think in German and even at home they try to speak German. It is good that children adapt to the country where they are going to live, but sad that they not only forget the Russian language, but they stop being interested in their history and even switch to the local understanding of history. It is clear that each country interprets historical events in its own way. (Germany)]

Thus, the challenges encountered in the two countries in maintaining Russian include both similarities and differences which seem to be related to, among other factors, the reasons for migrating. Although the reasons for migrating to Germany and Norway were different, both migrant groups were highly motivated to integrate with the local culture: in Germany because of a feeling of ‘returning home’, and in Norway because of a desire to integrate into a new family and/or working environment.

#### **5.1.2. RUSSIAN TELEVISION AS A WAY OF PRESERVING ONE’S NATIVE CULTURE**

Preserving one’s heritage culture while living in a new environment can be quite problematic. The easiest and most frequent way of passive communication with Russian culture is through the mass media.

Table 3 Watching Russian television by respondents

Question: Смотрите ли Вы русскоязычное телевидение? [Do you watch Russian television?]

Possible responses		Responses (%)	
		Germany	Norway
Смотрю часто.	[Watch often.]	52.2	37.7
Смотрю редко.	[Watch rarely.]	25.3	23
Не смотрю вообще.	[Do not watch at all.]	21	39.3
Другое	[Other]	1.6	-

As one expert in Germany pointed out,

4. Целиком зависеть от русского телевидения, русской музыки, книг и тому подобных вещей плохо. Во-первых, это дорогое удовольствие, а во-вторых, не способствует изучению детьми немецкого языка, а укрепляет лишь позиции русского. Безусловно, родной язык и культуру, которую они с собой привезли, нельзя недооценивать, это тоже должно, по моему мнению, поддерживаться. Еще лучше, если бы в семьях пытались говорить на обоих языках. Хотя бы потому, что это обстоятельство позволит детям, которые ходят в немецкие школы, общаясь с родителями, помочь им в освоении немецкого языка и многих других вещей. Это было бы действительно идеальным. (Германия)

[4. To be totally dependent on Russian TV, Russian music and books is bad; firstly because it is expensive, and secondly because it does not contribute to the children's study of German, but only strengthens the position of Russian. Of course, one cannot underestimate the value of a native language and culture; that also needs to be maintained. The best would be if the family tried to speak in both languages. If only because that would allow children who attend German schools to help their parents learn German and other important types of knowledge as well. Such a situation would really be ideal. (Germany)]

In Germany more than half of respondents watch Russian-language television often (52.2 per cent). However, 39.3 per cent of Norwegian respondents do not watch Russian-language television at all.

### *5.2. Dominance of host country language over the Russian language*

Another set of questions covered aspects of the dominance of the host country language over the Russian language. When asked about the success criteria for integration in a new country, the respondents considered learning the new language to be the first priority (32 per cent in Germany and 29,5 per cent in Norway). Such a priority may even extend to the point of transferring respondents' own wishes for integration and acquisition of a new language to their children. During this process, it often happens that parents do not pay sufficient attention to the question of teaching their children how to speak Russian, as they find no immediate need for it, as seen in the following quote from Norway:

5. Люди приезжают сюда и считают, что их дети будут жить в Норвегии и они здесь поэтому должны знать норвежский язык и только. Разговаривают родители, включая маму русскую, на норвежском языке. Дети могут вообще не говорить или говорить с очень тяжелым акцентом, даже часто в русскоговорящих семьях. Редко встретишь русскую семью, где дети говорят по-русски без акцента. Может быть, в связи с очень тяжелой работой: много работают и редко видят своих детей. Может быть, в связи с отсутствием русского общения, русскоязычного. Но что достаточно много людей, которые хотят сохранять, но поздно спохватываются. В частности, в русскую школу отдают детей, которые уже не говорят. (Норвегия)

[5. Migrants coming to Norway feel that their children do not need to learn any language other than Norwegian, as they will only ever live in Norway. Often parents, including mothers of Russian origin, speak Norwegian at home, and the children sometimes do not speak Russian at all or speak with a strong accent, even in Russian-speaking families. It is an exception to meet a Russian family where the children speak Russian without accent. Perhaps it's sort of because the parents work hard and rarely see their children, or because there is a general lack of connection with a Russian-speaking community. Many Russian-speaking migrants, who wish to teach their children to speak Russian, often start to think about this too late. So, when the children enter Russian schools, they do not speak [their native language]. (Norway)]

While some migrants try to shortcut the path to integration by not focusing on their cultural heritage and language, others consider such an approach to be both ignorant and deserving of reproach:

6. Я до сих пор не могу этого понять, что вот рождается у русской мамы ребенок, он не может говорить по-русски. Мне кажется, что это преступление. И матери просто не понимают, что они делают. Наверное, у них есть какое-то оправдание своего вот этого поведения. (Норвегия)

[6. I still cannot understand how a Russian mother could have a child who cannot speak Russian. I think that is a crime. These mothers simply do not understand what they are doing. Though I suppose they have some way of rationalizing their behaviour. (Norway)]

The dominance of the host country's language is associated in the minds of many migrants with a perceived need to preserve one's native culture through maintaining the Russian language.

In addition to learning the host language, adapting to the new rules of life was also considered important by the migrants (15.2 per cent of respondents in Germany, and 16.5 per cent in Norway). Being accepted as a member of the local society and finding new friends was the third most important consideration (17.5 per cent of respondents in Germany, 14.4 per cent in Norway). Being in a country with a different sociocultural context and different value-system also affects the migrants' desire and ability to maintain, learn and understand Russian language and culture.

7. Совсем неправильно говорить о том, что они каким-то местом русские, потому что это дети, у которых русские матери, они сами – норвежцы. И дети, которые прожили здесь с детства, приехали и выросли в норвежской культуре, норвежской среде. И они русские только вот по происхождению. А по своим культурным направлениям они не могут быть русскими. Чтобы быть русским, надо жить в России, надо читать русскую литературу, там, надо смотреть русские мультики, и не просто их смотреть, быть в среде, где понятно, почему это так или это по-другому. (Норвегия)

[7. It is not right to consider [children who are born here] to be Russian, even if a child has a Russian mother, he is a Norwegian because he was born here. And children who came here when they were small and were brought up in Norwegian culture, in a Norwegian environment, they may be considered Russian only by virtue of their heritage. Culturally they cannot be Russian. To be a Russian, one has to live in Russia, read Russian literature, watch Russian cartoons, and be in an environment where one understands why something is done in one way and not another. (Norway)]

On the one hand, some Norwegian participants were pessimistic about the transmission and maintenance of Russian culture by children growing up in Norway because of the distance between them and the Russian environment. On the other hand, those who tried to create a 'Russian' environment, at least in the home, feel that integration is compromised.

8. Моим детям непросто. Мы ходим в норвежскую школу, мы еще и в русской школе, у нас очень много русского языка, читают дома русские книжки. То есть, вот такое русское гетто такое в квартире. (смеется) Вот вышел за порог – говорим по-норвежски, вошел в квартиру – все только по-русски. Поэтому, в частности, интеграцией пока даже и не пахнет. (Норвегия)
- [8. Life for my children is tough, as they attend both Norwegian and Russian schools. We speak Russian a lot at home, and read Russian books. So, we have a sort of a Russian ghetto in our apartment (laughs). Outside the home we speak Norwegian, but at home – only Russian. Therefore, integration is far from being achieved. (Norway)]

### *5.3. Contacts with relatives in the home country*

Contact with relatives in the home country presupposes the active use of Russian and is associated at least by the first generation of migrants with a common cultural past, that is to say, Soviet culture. Contact with relatives thus plays an important role in maintaining the Russian language.

Table 4 Contacts with relatives and family members in the country of origin

Question: Какие контакты Вы поддерживаете с членами Вашей семьи и родственниками, которые остались там, откуда вы приехали? [What kind of contact are you keeping with your family members and relatives who remained where you are from?]

Possible responses	Reponses (%)	
	Germany	Norway
Все мои родственники здесь. [All my relatives are here.]	15.5	3.3
Регулярно общаюсь, помогаю, принимаю. [Regularly communicate, help, invite to visit.]	13.4	6.6

Общаюсь, помогаю.	[Keep contact and help.]	10.2	8.2
Общаюсь, принимаю.	[Keep contact and invite to visit.]	18.2	6.6
Помогаю, принимаю.	[Help (financially) and invite to visit.]	0.5	-
Принимаю их в гости.	[Invite to visit.]	1.6	1.6
Помогаю им материально (деньгами или вещами.)	[Help financially (with money or goods).]	2.7	-
Регулярно общаюсь по телефону.	[Regular phone calls.]	34.2	70.5
Не общаюсь.	[Do not keep contact.]	2.1	1.6
Другое	[Other]	1.6	1.6

There are several tendencies which distinguish the German and Norwegian migrant groups in this respect. Since the item was in the form of a closed multiple-choice question, there was the possibility of several answers which we organized in the blocks presented in Table 4. The following answers and positions are worth mentioning here: firstly, the relatives of 15.5 per cent of Russian-speaking respondents in Germany are themselves resident in Germany, as compared to 3.3 per cent of those in Norway. Secondly, respondents in Germany mentioned almost three times more often that they 'keep in contact with and invite their relatives to visit them' (18.8 per cent in Germany to 6.6 per cent in Norway) and they report that they 'communicate with, help and invite their relatives to visit regularly' twice as often as do their compatriots in Norway (13.4 per cent to 6.6 per cent). Thirdly, the most popular way of communicating with their relatives is by telephone. And here the respondents in Norway are much more active than their German compatriots. 70.5 per cent of the Russian-speaking respondents living in Norway communicate with their relatives in the country of origin on the phone, while only 34.2 per cent of the Russian-speaking respondents in Germany do.

## 6. Conclusions

One of the key aims of the current study was to explore how interested Russian-speaking migrants in Germany and Norway are in maintaining their heritage language and culture. We were also interested in the factors which play an important role in this decision.

In terms of differences, we can conclude that the Russian language plays a more important role in the life of Russian-speaking migrants in Germany than in Norway, both in the active mode of communication in the home, and in passive television watching. Russian-speaking migrants in Germany speak Russian and use it as a second family language more often as compared to Russian-speaking migrants in Norway. Importantly, 15.8 per cent of respondents in Norway do not use Russian in family communication at all. More than a third of Norwegian respondents do not watch Russian-language television at all. The fact that many more relatives of the Russian-speaking migrants in Germany live there may partially explain the more frequent use of Russian when communicating with relatives.

On the other hand, there is no difference between the role respondents in Germany and Norway attribute to the Russian language in terms of integration success; in both Russian-speaking migrant communities about one third of respondents considered learning the language of the host community to be the first priority.



PART 3  
Identities lost and found



# Language and ethnicity lost and found: multiple identities of Ingrian Finnish teachers in Russia<sup>1</sup>

## I. Introduction

I. ALINA:<sup>2</sup> Kouluvuosinani en pitänyt omasta suomalaisesta nimestäni. Lähiystävillä oli venäläisiä nimiä ja minulla niin poikkeava. Halusin olla venäläinen, koska siihen aikaan vain venäläisyys oli ollut suosiossa. Sekä isäni että äitini olivat inkeriläisiä, kotona puhuttiin ensiksi vain suomea, myöhemmin vanhemmat sanoivat meille suomeksi ja vastaukseksi saivat kuulla venäjää. Vasta nyt, aikuisena, ymmärrän, että he yrityivät kaiken voimin säilyttää sen, minkä haluttiin pyyhkäistä pois heidän elämästäään. [–] Miksi en keskustellut enemmän heidän kanssaan näistäasioista? Nyt, kun he ovat lähteneet pois, tekisi mieli tietää paljon enemmän omista juuristani, mutta on jo myöhäistä. Kaikki, mihin pystyn nyt ja olen pystynyt tähän saakka, on äidinkielen opettaminen.

[I. ALINA: During my school years I didn't like my Finnish name. My closest friends had Russian names and mine was so different. I wanted to be a Russian, because at that time only Russianness was popular. Both my father and mother were Ingrians, and at first we spoke only Finnish at home, later on our parents spoke Finnish to us, and in return they heard Russian. Only now, as an adult, I have come to realize that they [the parents] tried in every way to preserve the precious thing which the system had wanted to wipe out from

- 1 I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the teachers who took part in this research and were willing to share their life experiences and narratives with me. I am also grateful for the enthusiastic support and valuable commentaries of Sarah Smyth, Conny Opitz, Sue Wright, Marilyn Martin-Jones and Taina Saarinen. I would also like to thank Helena Mackay for translating the teachers' narratives from Finnish to English.
- 2 The names used here for the subjects in the study are pseudonyms.

their lives. [...] Why didn't I talk more about these things with them? Now that they have passed away, I would like to know more about my own roots, but it's too late. All I can do and have done is to teach the mother tongue.]

— Petrozavodsk, born in 1953, autobiography,  
translated from Finnish

Alina is an Ingrian Finn. She is one of twenty-four teachers of Finnish who took part in a longitudinal ethnographic study on Finnish language teachers' professional identity. The study was conducted in 1996–1998 in two schools in Northwest Russia, and later supplemented by a follow-up study in 2005–2006. The first set of data consists of interviews, written autobiographies, classroom observation of Finnish lessons and field notes on the pedagogical culture in the schools. I spent several months over the course of three years in the schools, living and observing the everyday pedagogical life of the teachers at the peak of the transition period of Russian education and teaching.<sup>3</sup> The ethnographic data have been complemented with follow-up biographical interviews. These interviews were conducted with three key figures of the study.

The study focused on twenty-four teachers of Finnish from Saint Petersburg and Petrozavodsk (Republic of Karelia), of whom twenty-three were women. The teachers' ages ranged from twenty to sixty-four, and they formed a heterogeneous group with respect to their linguistic, ethnic and educational backgrounds. Eight of the teachers defined their background as Ingrian Finn. The majority of teachers, however, were multicultural and multilingual. In this sense, the distinction between Ingrian Finn and Russian, for example, is to a certain extent artificial, and is based on the teachers' views on the ethnic or national group to which they are most affiliated. In this chapter, I analyse the meanings these teachers attribute to the Finnish language and the kind of theoretical discussion these views invite regarding the connection between language and identity.

<sup>3</sup> Transition emerges both conceptually as the re-evaluation of educational and pedagogical values, and structurally as the renewal of the educational system. The period of transition started in the late 1980s during *perestroika* and lasted until the beginning of the 2000s (see, e.g., Webber 2000; Laihiala-Kankainen et al. 2010).

## 2. Dialogical perspective on language, identity and nation building

For most Ingrian Finnish teachers, like Alina in the first example, Finnish was primarily a native minority language, although they taught Finnish as a foreign language to Russian-speaking pupils. These teachers regarded it almost as their duty to advance Finnish culture and maintain Finnish language skills in Russia. But is this more than what they conceptualize as an ‘ethnic duty’? What were/are the connections between linguistic and ethnic identity among the teachers of Finnish during and after the transition period in Russian society? These were the key questions that Ingrian Finnish teachers asked themselves, and provide an interesting perspective on the issues discussed in this volume.

In this chapter, the notions of language and identity are discussed within the framework of the dialogical philosophy of language, specifically the potential contribution of dialogism as a poststructuralist theory to contemporary discussions on language and identity (see, for example, Bakhtin 1981; Voloshinov 1973; Holland et al. 1998; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004; Pöyhönen and Dufva 2007).

Dialogism embraces the idea that language does not exist as a stable, unified and simplified system, but is dynamic and multilayered in nature. In contrast with the monological and structuralist view of language inspired by Saussure, dialogism sees the multiplicity and heterogeneity of language as its inherent and essential property (Pöyhönen and Dufva 2007: 161–162; see also McKinney and Norton 2008: 193).

The role of the social world and others is seen as central in dialogism and other socioculturally oriented views. The social interactions – or dialogues – we are involved in during our lives shape, and are in turn shaped by, the ways we make sense of our identities, and manifest our membership of groups and our agency (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004; Blackledge and Creese 2008). Commitment to and identification with the actions, values and goals of groups are integral to identity formation and maintenance. Consequently, communities with distinct norms and values play an important part in the formation of our identities; so do the authoritative voices

and hegemonic discourses of the broader societies in which those communities exist. Social structures and discourses do not alone determine the formation of identities but function as resources or as a meaning potential. Hence, there is complex, multidimensional tension between several identities that take on different meanings in distinct social situations. There are competing discourses and several significations that may be contradictory, even opposite. Jan Blommaert (2005: 211) notes that '[N]ot every identity will have the same range or scope, nor the same purchase across social and physical spaces. It is therefore a mistake to project attributions of prestige or stigma as well as of a particular identity potential onto seemingly similar resources all over the world'.

A dialogic conceptualization of identity posits that it is conditioned by social interaction and social structure, but at the same time it also conditions social interaction and social structure (Block 2006: 28). This theoretical framework challenges the essentialist view of language, ethnicity and culture, as well as monolingual ideologies (cf. Saxena 2009) where people have only one mother tongue and one cultural identity. Social constructs such as linguistic or ethnic identities are conceived of as open to re-examination and reformulation. As Bakhtin (1984: 166) writes, '[N]othing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future'.

Dialogically interpreted identity is an inherently social phenomenon: it is dynamic, multi-voiced, changeable and process-like; in a word, it is kaleidoscopic.<sup>4</sup> Although dialogism emphasizes the view that identity is social and contextual, it also takes individuality into account, namely the spatio-temporal positions of an individual, his or her unique experiences and views on the world. Social and individual identities do not, therefore, stand in contrast but are supplementary to and dependent on each other (see also, Pietikäinen and Dufva 2006 for their analysis of ethnic identity). As David Block (2007: 27) puts it, 'Individuals are shaped by their sociohistories but they also shape their sociohistories as life goes on'.

4 The term 'kaleidoscopic identity' is an accurate description of the multiple representations of identity. The term was coined by Lotta Weckström in her PhD dissertation on second-generation Finns' language and identity in Sweden (see Weckström 2011).

In this sense, a person does not have one single and permanent linguistic or ethnic identity but his or her identity varies with regard to different social interactions. Identity is not, however, constructed in a random or arbitrary manner, but is linked with a historical and sociocultural dimension, and in this way gains continuity and stability. Hence, identity is at the same time fragmentary and unitary. Instead of one identity we could talk about several identities that have different meanings in dialogical situations. There are several social worlds to which an individual has access, and through language these social worlds shape the individual's identity just as the individual shapes his/her social worlds.

The interplay of language and identity can also be explored from a nation building point of view. Alina's story reflects her relationship with language and identity within the changing context of historical events. Her family lived through a time of muscular nation building (Wright 2004) when Moscow's goal was national homogeneity and language had an important role in the birth of the nation state. The ideology behind this nation building goes hand in hand with a structuralist view of language and a monolingual norm in it.

Nation building creates borders not only between states but also ethnic groups. Monica Heller (1999: 7) states that 'linguistic minorities are created by nationalisms which exclude them'. She continues by arguing that the movements of linguistic minorities reflect, in a smaller scale, the process of nation building (Heller 1997: 2). In other words, nationalism is necessary in theorizing ethnic minority or minority language.

Alina's story (as many other teachers' narratives) reflects several aspects of the nation building and reproducing ethnic minorities. She refers to the time of *perestroika* and ethnic revitalization when linguistic and ethnic minorities made their voice heard and demanded the right to exist.

In addition, Alina's story crystallizes her present day life in post-Soviet Russia after the collapse of the Soviet union. This age of post-nationalism echoes the Bakhtinian view of language (Wright 2007; 2012; Lähteenmäki 2010). Alina is teaching a national minority language in a school that specializes in Finnish as a foreign language. She encounters students from different ethnic groups (for example, Tatars and Jews) who have been socialized into the idea that Russian is now a *lingua franca* and Finnish one of the potential languages in the globalizing labour market.

### 3. Finns and Ingrian Finns in Russia – who are they (claiming to be)?

The majority of Finns in Russia are descendants of Finns who moved in the seventeenth century from Finland, then part of the Kingdom of Sweden, to Ingria, the present Leningrad Region of the Russian Federation, and are thus called Ingrian Finns. Another large group consists of persons and their descendants who have left Finland at various times, for example, after the civil war in the 1920s. A third group consists of so-called American and Canadian Finns and their descendants who moved from North America to Karelia in the 1920s and 1930s. These various migration waves raise the question of whether it is possible to regard the Finns living in Russia as a single ethnic community or whether they rather form a composite of different ethnic groups (Takala 1998). In this respect, the heterogeneity of the Finnish language also becomes relevant.

The Finnish-speaking population has decreased in number over recent decades. In the census of 1959, 72,000 persons identified themselves as Finns, of whom 60.6 per cent considered Finnish and 39 per cent considered Russian their mother tongue (*родной язык*). Thirty years later, in the 1989 census, the situation was almost the reverse. Of the Finnish population in the Russian Federation (47,100 persons), 36.2 per cent identified Finnish as their mother tongue and 63.1 per cent Russian. According to the census of 2002, the number of Finns was in the region of 34,000, while 52,000 persons stated that they knew Finnish. Knowing the language, however, does not necessarily indicate that Finnish is a first language.

The census data must be considered somewhat problematic: the concept of a Finn has not been stable over time; the phrasing of census questions, and in particular the language question, has changed from one census to the next; the geopolitical situation has altered quite dramatically with the redrawing of borders.

According to unofficial estimates in the early 2000s, some 45,000–50,000 persons of Finnish origin were living in Russia and the Baltic countries. A rough estimate of persons with at least one Finnish parent suggests a figure of 70,000–100,000 (Miettinen 2004).

All in all, it is fair to say that Finns form a tiny minority in the Russian Federation.

#### 4. Finnish as an indicator of ethnicity?: three generations of Ingrian Finnish teachers

##### *4.1. First generation – authentic Ingrian Finns?*

It is customary to divide Ingrian Finns into three generations (see, e.g. Kyntäjä 1997; 1999), bearing in mind that the generations are not clear-cut biological categories (grandparents – children – grandchildren), but based on sociocultural experiences in time and place. Those belonging to the first generation or Ingrian generation were born in Ingria in the 1930s or before the Finnish-speaking culture was repressed during the Stalin persecutions. These elderly people are descendants of Finnish-speaking parents and lived in Finnish village communities; they went to Finnish schools and were practicing Lutherans. The ethnic identity of the first generation Ingrians is Finnish. Their mother tongue is Finnish and they learned Russian only later, very often under duress.

The suffering of the Ingrian people unites the members of the first generation. They experienced the first persecutions by Stalin in 1929 when about 20,000 Finns were deported to Siberia. The oppression of Ingrian Finns continued in the 1930s. In 1937, all social activities in Finnish were banned, more than 300 Finnish schools were sovietified and all Finnish newspapers were suppressed. The activities of Finnish churches and the practice of the Lutheran creed were banned in 1938. In the 1930s, about 50,000 Finns were deported from Ingria, mostly to Siberia and Central Asia. In spite of oppression and forced deportation, the first generation retained their command of Finnish and their Lutheran faith.

The sufferings of the first generation have left their mark on the entire Ingrian Finnish population. It has been pointed out that this tale of suffering is the fourth pillar of Ingrian Finnish ethnic identity, the others being the

Finnish language, the fatherland and Lutheran faith (Miettinen 2004: 124). The history of the Ingrian Finns is depicted as a history of suffering, and suffering is also central in individual stories. The Ingrian Finnish teachers who participated in my study also referred to forced deportations and the breaking up of families. These episodes were, however, mentioned in a laconic manner and considered a thing of the past. It is, therefore, difficult to estimate the importance of these tales of suffering in the formation of ethnic or linguistic identity. One could, however, assume that the past, and often tragic, experiences of the teachers play a role when they consider their present identities. What is not willingly talked about is still, nevertheless, present as a semantic potential:

2. ИГОРЬ: Я и в Сибири побывал; нас отсюда выслали, отца взяли на фронт, а нас с матерью, у меня ещё сестра была, младше меня, я с тридцать восьмого она сорокового года, и отправили, и так, жили мы, ну не знаю, тысяча десять наверно километров в Якутии, Якутия чёрт и где там мы были (смех) там я прожил четырнадцать лет, сестра умерла там; пока ехали, она умерла, ну это, история так сказать, многие так вот, обидно.

[2. IGOR: I was in Siberia, we were sent there. Father was sent to the front and mother and I to Siberia. I had a sister, she was younger than me. I was born in 1938 and she in 1940. And so we lived, I don't know, ten thousand kilometres away in Yakutia and the devil knows where else (gives a laugh). There I lived for fourteen years. My sister died on the way. Well, that's history, many people died on the way. It's sad.]

— Saint Petersburg, born in 1938, former Soviet Army officer, interview, translated from Finnish and Russian, original in Russian

#### *4.2. Second generation – lost somewhere in-between?*

The second-generation Ingrian Finns, such as Igor in example 2, were born or raised during the diaspora in Siberia or Central Asia where they had been deported. Although the dominant language of the second generation has usually changed to Russian, the feelings of a Finnish childhood, sufferings and diaspora continue to linger on (Miettinen 2004: 125). Perhaps this is

why the second generation is also called the lost generation. The majority in the second generation experienced the evacuation of the population to Finland in the war years of 1943–1944, and, after the war, their return to the Soviet Union, in many cases straight to Siberia. The youngest members of this generation were born in Soviet Karelia and Estonia, where their parents moved after returning from banishment.

The childhood memories of the second generation are characterized by the terror and feelings of oppression of the Stalin era. As a result of the Sovietification policy and fear, some families gave up using Finnish and tried to assimilate their children into Soviet society. People had to be able to speak Russian in the prison camps and districts to which they had been deported (Savijärvi 2003: 287). On the other hand, some families lived a double life even in the deportation areas: Finnish was spoken at home, Finnish literature was read, the Lutheran religion practised and Finnish traditions observed. Finnish or the Ingrian dialect might be spoken even outside the home if the family was ‘just an ordinary one’, that is, not very high up on the social scale:

3. LEMPI: Olin puolitoistavuotias, kun Stalinin kuoleman jälkeen äitini ja isäni lähtivät Irkutskista Petroskoihin. He eivät päässeet kotipaikoille, Taksovaan, mutta Karjalassa luvattiin työtä sekä jonkinlaisia asuntoja. Äitini kertoi, että matkan aikana, junassa, ihmiset ihmettelivät, mitä kieltä tämä lapsi puhuu niin paljon eikä kukaan ymmärrä sanaakaan. Tietysti, suomen kieli oli aivan ihmeellinen ja outo näille matkustajille, mutta vanhempani eivät halunneet unohtaa sitä, puhuivat keskenään inkeriä silloinkin, kun kukaan ei arvostanut sitä jopa vaarallistakin oli. Mutta isäni ja äitini olivat vain tavallisia ihmisiä, ei missään vastuullisissa tehtävissä, siksi he saivat puhua kotona sitä kieltä, mikä oli heille kallis ja oma, vaikka molemmat osasivat venäjää ihan sujuvasti: koulussahan sitä oli opettettu.

[3. LEMPI: I was a year and half old when, after Stalin's death [1953], my mother and father left Irkutsk for Petrozavodsk. They could not go home, to Taksova, but were promised work and some sort of accommodation in Karelia. My mother told me that during the journey, on the train, people were wondering about the language that this child spoke so fluently and nobody understood a word. Of course, Finnish was totally amazing and strange to these passengers, but my parents did not want to forget it, they spoke Ingrian with each other even at a time when nobody appreciated it and it was even

dangerous. But my father and mother were just ordinary people, not in any responsible position, that is why they were allowed to speak at home the language that was dear to them and their own, although both spoke Russian fluently: it had been taught at school.]

— Petrozavodsk, born in 1952, autobiography,  
translated from Finnish

It was during the school years, at the latest, that the members of the second generation came into contact with the Russian majority, and Finnish gradually gave way. At the same time, they also became aware of the conflicting values of home and school. A member of the second generation, Lepmi, recalls her social activities at school and the cautious attitudes of her parents:

4. LEMPI: Suomi oli vaikka ystävälinen silti kapitalistinen maa. Sinne ei päässyt niin helposti. Meitä, opiskelijoita, pidettiin silmällä. Muistan, kun ensimmäisellä kurssilla minut kutsuttiin yliopiston henkilöstöosastolle, muka haluttiin keskustella jostakin työtarjouksesta. Olin ryhmän 'vanhin' ('staresta'). Keskustelin tuntemattoman nuoren miehen kanssa. Ei hän halunnut tarjota minulle mitään työtä, vaan kyseli ryhmästäimme. Vastasin hänen rehellisesti, en aavistanut mitään. Vasta myöhemmin ymmärsin, kuka hän oli. Onneski en ollut torttunut kantelemaan toisista, niin en kertonut mitään, mikä olisi saanut tuottaa kavereilleni vaikeuksia. Olin silloin 18-vuotiaana niin sinisilmäinen ja tottunut uskomaan, että maamme Neuvostoliitto on oikea onnenmaa.

Ajattelen nyt ja ihmettelen, miten vanhempani, joiden nuoruus oli mennyt niin vaikeissa oloissa ja jotka varmaankin näkivät, mitä ympärillämme tapahtui, onnistuivat kasvattamaan minusta niin aktiivisen, itsevarman ja vapaamielisen nuorisoliittolaisen. Koulussa olin koulun nuorisoliittojärjestön (komsmolin) sihteeri, myöhemmin aktiivinen kaikenlaisissa yhteiskunnallisissa tehtävissä ja palkittu usean kerran kunniakirjoilla ahkerasta työstä.

Äitini oli aina ahkera, mutta hiljainen, ikään kuin pelkäsi jotain. Minullekin yliopistoon pyrkisessäni sanoi: 'Yrittäisit paremmin opistoon, ei sinua yliopistoon hyväksytä, olet syntynyt Siperiassa'. Minulle se ei merkinnyt mitään, uskoin kun julistettiin, että maassamme ihminen on vapaa ja hänellä on kaikki oikeudet.

[4. LEMPI: Although Finland was friendly, it was still a capitalist country. It was not easy to travel there. We, the students [of Finnish at the university] were kept an eye on. I remember when, as a first-year student, I was asked to come to the staff department, they said they wanted to talk about some job offer. I was the group leader (starosta). I talked with a young man I didn't know. He didn't want to offer me a job, but he asked things about our group. I answered him honestly; I didn't have a clue what it was all about. Only later I realized who he was. Luckily, I was not used to snitching on others, so I didn't tell him anything that could have caused trouble for my friends. I was, at the age of 18, so naïve, and used to think that our country the Soviet Union was truly the land of fortune and happiness.

Now when I think about it, I wonder how my parents, who spent their youth in such difficult circumstances, and who apparently saw what was going on around us, could have managed to raise me such an active, self-confident and liberal member of the Komsomol. At school, I was the secretary of the Komsomol, later on I took an active part in all kinds of social activities and was several times commended for good work.

My mother was always so hard working, but kept silent, as if she was afraid of something. When I applied to the university she said, 'you should rather apply to the institute, you won't be accepted into the university, because you were born in Siberia.' Her words didn't mean anything to me because I believed it when it was preached that in our country every human being is free and has every right.]

— Petrozavodsk, born in 1952, autobiography,  
translated from Finnish

After returning from the areas to which they had been deported, most Ingrian Finns moved to Soviet Estonia. Those moving to an Estonian-speaking area had again to adjust to a new culture and learn a new language. A small minority of the second-generation Ingrians are thus trilingual. In previous studies the second-generation Ingrian Finns have been divided roughly into speakers of Russian and speakers of Estonian, on the basis of the culture they have assimilated into. Their identification with Ingrian Finnishness has been described as superficial and their knowledge of the Finnish language and culture as slight, even though Finnish traditions had been cherished at home. Moreover, the second-generation Ingrian Finns are often uncertain about their ethnic identity, unlike those of the first

generation – the ‘authentic’ Ingrians. In adulthood, their ethnic identity has mainly been formed by marriage. Those who married Russians assimilated with Russians, and their children were raised as Russians as well (Kyntäjä 1997: 111). In my study, the teachers described the ethnic identity of second-generation Ingrians in a different manner. Anna and Igor, teachers of Finnish, define their ethnic identity as follows:<sup>5</sup>

5. SARI: tunnetteko te olevanne, inkeriläinen vai venäläinen?  
 ANNA: (huokaa)  
 SARI: miltä teistä tuntuu?  
 ANNA: Enemmän inkeriläinen koska perheessä äitiini on inkeriläinen ja isäni on venäläinen, mutta ja perheessä aina mummo oli päähenkilö. Hänen ker-tomuksiaan ja suvun historian, kertomuksia olivat aina semmosia mielen kiintoisia, että minä enemmän niin kuin kiinnostuin mummon suvusta niinkun esimerkiks isän suvusta. Ja vielä on semmonen että mummo oli minun kanssa ja koska hän asuu maalla, se on semmonen vanha suomalainen paikka myösken Hatchinan alueella, ja minä olin koulussa tuolla alakoulussa, aina minä olin mummon kanssa siellä. Teki kyllä hyvin semmonen leiman minun elämään. Siis, olen enempi inkeriläinen (naurahtaa) mutta olen hyvin ylpeä että minä olen myösken venäläinen.

- [5. SARI: Do you regard yourself as an Ingrian or a Russian?  
 ANNA: (sighs)  
 SARI: How do you feel about it?  
 ANNA: More of an Ingrian because in my family my mother is Ingrian and my father is Russian but in the family Granny was always the most important person. The stories about the history of her family were always so interesting that I sort of became more interested in Granny’s family than in my father’s family, for example [...] And there’s also the fact that Granny was with me, and because she lived in the country, that’s an old Finnish place also in the Hatchina district, and I went to school there, primary school, and I was always with Granny there. That really left its mark on my life. So, I’m more of an Ingrian (laughs) but I’m also very proud of being a Russian.]

— Saint Petersburg, born in 1955, former designer of illustrated advertisements, interview, translated from Finnish

<sup>5</sup> I use the terms Ingrian Finn, Ingrian and Russian Finn synonymously in the same way as the teachers participating in the study. Similarly, the terms Finnish, Ingrian Finnish, and the Ingrian dialect are used synonymously if the teachers have not distinguished between them in a spoken or written text.

6. ИГОРЬ: ну я во-первых чувствую себя сам во многом финном потому что у меня мама финка, мама ингерманландка здесь вот в Ингерманландии она родилась [...] во многом конечно во мне есть финские черты. Вот отец у меня украинец, но, в советское время всё перемешалось, у нас смешались браков [...] я чувствую себя конечно русским, только потому что это среда меня сделала здесь, правильно? Я же жил среди русских, среди мордов в Мордовии, среди якутов, но это всё-равно Россия, это, всё, так или иначе говорят на русском языке, то есть, вся среда, вся культура, которая вот так сказать я впитываю, это всё русская культура безусловно. Не финская. Иногда я говорю, что не в Финляндии же меня кормила в конце концов, хоть худо, хоть плохо, хоть впроголодь жили во время войны и после войны очень долгое время, но ведь, всё-равно же здесь я считаю себя русским, так сказать, по-своему, ну, ну черта характера куда денешься от генов. У меня две дочери. Но они, конечно, тоже, тем более, они, русскими считают себя [...] и я себе выбрал национальность, мне предложили выбрать ‘кто ты будешь?’, когда мне исполнилось шестнадцать лет, ‘кто ты будешь, украинцем, у тебя отец украинец, или финном, у тебя мать финка?’ Я был в Сибири выслан, как член семьи финки, я уже понимал в шестнадцать лет, что это такое, ссылка, так сказать, и прочее, я говорю ‘буду украинцем’, так я стал украинцем, вот, [mhmm] вот украинец в паспорте у меня и есть. Ну обстоятельства так сложились, сложились, что. Было другое время.

[6. IGOR: Well, first of all I regard myself in many respects as a Finn because my mother is Finnish. Mother is Ingrian and she was born here in Ingria [...] Of course I have a lot of Finnish characteristics, well, my father is Ukrainian. During the Soviet era, everything got mixed, there were lots of mixed marriages. [...] I of course regard myself as Russian because this environment has made me a Russian, hasn't it? I have, after all, lived among Russians, among Mordvians in Mordvia, among Yakutians, well all of that is of course Russia. Everyone speaks Russian in one way or another, and so the whole environment, all that culture that I have absorbed has no doubt been Russian. Not Finnish. Sometimes I say that Finland hasn't, after all, fed me. It doesn't matter how poor or hungry we were during the war and a long time after the war, in any case we were living here. Naturally I consider myself Russian but what can you do about your genes. I have two daughters but of course they regard themselves even more as Russians [...] And I chose myself a nationality when I became sixteen. They said to me, 'What will you be, Ukrainian, you have a Ukrainian father, don't you, or Finnish, your mother is Finnish?' I had been sent to Siberia as a member of a Finnish family, and already at the age of sixteen I understood what that meant – deportation and all that.

I said that 'I will become a Ukrainian'. So I became a Ukrainian, and that's what it says in my passport. But circumstances forced me to make that choice, times were different then.]

— Saint Petersburg, born in 1938, former Soviet Army officer, interview, translated from Finnish and Russian, originally Russian

It is noteworthy in Anna's and Igor's definitions that their relationship to Finnishness and Russianness is negotiable and linked with time, place, and the social context (for more on negotiation, see, e.g. Pavlenko 2004; Burck 2003). Sometimes it is even possible to choose an identity, as Igor has done, or one can identify oneself with one ethnic group more closely than with another, as Anna has done, without forsaking the other. Identities are thus situated, consisting of hegemonic voices (e.g. 'Soviet era') and individual experiences. The teachers' narratives are targeted to a particular audience, in this case myself, a young Finnish researcher, who had not personally experienced the Soviet period nor multiple identities. They illuminate some episodes and voices while diminishing others.

#### *4.3. Third generation – from diaspora back to one's roots?*

Ingrian Finns of the third generation were born after the 1950s in various parts of the Soviet Union. This generation has most often grown up in bicultural families in which one of the parents or grandparents is Finnish. In some classifications, the members of the second and the third generation belong to the same diaspora generation who were born somewhere other than historical Ingria (Miettinen 2004: 84; see the research on ethnic diaspora communities in this volume by Mendzheritskiy and Bagreeva and by Zoumpalidis).

All the Ingrian Finnish teachers who participated in my study were born and raised in the diaspora, and at least one of their parents or grandparents came from historical Ingria. None of the teachers has ever lived in Finland. The teachers born in the 1930s and 1940s were still Finnish-speaking, but for some of them Russian was already the stronger language although they had heard Finnish being spoken at home. Those born in the

1970s had learned Finnish at university, and for them, Finnish is practically a foreign language. In general, an Ingrian youngster speaking Finnish is a rarity in today's Ingria (Savijärvi 2003: 296).

The relationship of the members of the third generation to Finnishness or the fate of the Ingrian people is not personal but mostly based on their grandparents' stories. Also, they tend not to know Finnish, as it had not been preserved as a language in the home. The identification of young people with Ingrian Finns is weak, particularly in those families in which Finnishness was not discussed. Their images of Ingria are primarily based on book learning. However, some studies indicate that young Ingrian Finns can be very much aware of their ethnic identity (see, e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000), and this awareness is closely connected with social reforms and ethnic revival as well as remigration to Finland (see Zoumpalidis, in this volume, for parallels in the Pontic Greek community). Particularly those who are thinking about moving to Finland may identify themselves strongly as Ingrian Finns (Räsänen 1999: 14).

For the first generation of Ingrian Finns, in particular, a command of Finnish is an indication of so-called authentic Finnishness, while being a speaker of Russian indicates Russianness/belonging to the Russian community. Those members of the third generation who started their Finnish studies as adults want to show that they identify themselves ethnically with Ingrian Finns. For them it is an *act of identity* to speak Finnish. From their point of view, conversion to the Lutheran creed is also an indication of Finnish identity. Evangelical Lutheranism is still a strong *symbolic* indication of having an Ingrian Finnish identity. The practice of religion is, however, more characteristic of the members of the first Ingrian generation than of those born later in the diaspora who have become secularized over the decades, partly as a result of the anti-religious attitudes in the Soviet Union (Miettinen 2004: 116). Religion did not become an issue among the teachers participating in this study, except in the context of celebrating religious holidays such as Christmas.

## 5. Finnish language – cultural capital or burden?

Schools specializing in Finnish as a foreign language were set up in Saint Petersburg in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These schools were called ‘language schools’, along with other schools with a foreign language specialization, like Spanish, French or German. At the end of the 1990s, when the first part of the study was carried out, there were five such schools with some 2,500 Russian-speaking pupils studying Finnish. In the Republic of Karelia, Finnish was already taught as a foreign language during the Soviet era. The oldest school specializing in Finnish is located in the capital, Petrozavodsk, where Finnish was included in the curriculum in the early 1970s. Thirty years later, in 1997, over ninety schools in the Republic of Karelia taught Finnish as a foreign language. The number of pupils studying Finnish in the area was about 8,400 (Pöyhönen 2004).

In the late 1990s the majority of teachers of Finnish as a foreign language (*иностранный язык*) were of Finnish-speaking or Ingrian Finnish origin (Pöyhönen 2004). For these teachers, Finnish was primarily a national minority language although they officially taught it as a foreign language to Russian-speaking pupils. This was reflected in their beliefs about the language and in their teaching methods and classroom practices.

The Ingrian Finnish teachers who participated in my study were valued members of the school community, and they were in demand as teachers especially when the schools were set up. The teachers themselves were also in need of new jobs in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Many teachers had lost their previous jobs and had to rethink their professional futures. During this time some participants ‘remembered’ that they had a Finnish background and spoke Finnish. Perhaps they had spoken the language in childhood, and after a long period of not using the language they started to remember and use it again. Because of a scarcity of teachers in Saint Petersburg, they were not required to have teacher training or philological qualifications. They could be almost anyone professionally: a retired ballet dancer, an engineer, a commercial artist, a physics teacher, to provide a few examples.

Changing occupation was thus a conscious choice to return to ethnic and linguistic roots. It made the teachers think very consciously about their teaching profession and the language they were teaching: for some it was a language which had been lost and found, while for others it was a language of emotions and of ‘the inner me’ that they had had to be silent about for a long time. Some teachers regretted that they had not wanted to use the Finnish language with their parents or talk about Finnish traditions or Finnish culture in general (see, for example, the quote from Alina’s interview above).

The relationships and group-memberships of the Finnish teachers in the school community were defined by, among other things, ethnicity and language. For example, Ingrian Finnish teachers were often considered a special group because their cultural capital and generally good command of Finnish distinguished them from ethnic Russian teachers. Ingrian Finnish teachers were also popular with students’ parents, for they were thought to be more highly skilled – the cream of teachers of Finnish.

The teachers conceived of their knowledge of Finnish as part of the cultural repertoire they had inherited from parents and grandparents. As Anna and Ella explain,

7. ANNA: No se on kuin minun melkein äidinkieli. Että se on niin kuin totta kuin äidin kieli. Ja hän on inkeriläinen. Hän kasvo tässä Pietarin alueella inkeriläisenä suomalaisen kylässä.

[7. ANNA: Well, it's almost like my mother tongue. Like, it is as true as my mother's tongue. And she was an Ingrian. She grew up here in the Leningrad Region as an Ingrian in a Finnish village.]

— Saint Petersburg, female, born in 1955, interview,  
translated from Finnish

8. ELLA: Minun ‘kouluni’ oli minun rakas mummoni ja isäni. He antoivat minulle suomen kielen, tietoja suomalaisesta kulttuurista, ihmislajeesta kuvan.

[8. ELLA: My ‘school’ was my beloved granny and my father. They gave me the Finnish language, knowledge of Finnish culture, a picture of human nature.]

— Saint Petersburg, female, born in 1946, autobiography, Finnish

However, an Ingrian Finnish ethnic background has not always been an asset. The teachers in this study could clearly remember what it meant to belong to a minority in the Soviet Union and how the Finnish language was not valued or was barely tolerated during the Soviet period in schools.

The elderly Ingrian Finnish teachers talked about their relatives who had been ‘enemies of two states’. In the Soviet Union, they had been second-class citizens, while in Finland they had been forgotten or kept silent about for political reasons. With regard to post-Soviet Russia and today’s Finland, the teachers considered themselves members of a minority that was defined by majority criteria. In Russia, they were Finns, while in Finland they were regarded as Russians.

Thus, cultural capital could also be cultural burden. Their Ingrian Finnish ethnic background distinguished the Ingrian teachers from the other teachers of Finnish at school: senior colleagues and pupils’ parents and extended families ascribed to them the duty of advancing Finnish culture and maintaining the knowledge and use of Finnish in Russia. Also, many teachers themselves had internalized this imperative, ostensibly linked to their ethnic and linguistic background, and regarded it as their duty to sustain tradition and promote the Finnish language. As Alina pointed out earlier in her autobiography and Larissa describes her decisions in the next example,

9. LARISSA: Kuusi vuotta sitten minä jain eläkkeelle Baletista. Tässä koulussa minä olen viisi vuotta. Miksi почему я здесь работаю? Minun mummoni oli inkeriläinen ja sanoi minulle että sinun täytyy ... так, как это? ... ‘noustakaa Suomen kansan kulttuuri’ (naurahtaa).

- [9. LARISSA: I retired six years ago from the Ballet. I’ve been working in this school for five years. Why do I work here? My grandmother was an Ingrian and she said to me that you have to ... how did she say? ... ‘raise the culture of the Finnish nation’ (laughs).]

— Saint Petersburg, female, born in 1949 (former ballet dancer), interview, translated from Finnish and Russian

On the other hand, another indication of cultural burden was that the authenticity of the Ingrian Finns’ ethnicity could be in doubt, especially if their command of the language was not at the same level as that of an

ideal native speaker of Finnish. Thus, the relationship between language and ethnicity (see also Zoumpalidis, this volume) was an issue for some teachers, like Elvira:

10. SARI: Mä ymmärsin että sä oot inkeriläinen.

ELVIRA: juu minä olen inkeriläinen.

SARI: ja sinun äidinkieles on sitte suomi.

ELVIRA: Mmm. Inkerinsuomi puhutaan näin.

[10. SARI: I understand that you are Ingrian?

ELVIRA: Yes, I am Ingrian.

SARI: And so your mother tongue is Finnish?

ELVIRA: Mmm. Ingrian Finnish, let's rather say.]

— Saint Petersburg, female, born in 1962, interview,  
translated from Finnish

As appears from the interview, I assumed that Elvira's mother tongue was Finnish. After some hesitation, she says that her mother tongue is Ingrian Finnish. Presumably, this follows from the fact that her mother and grandmother spoke Ingrian at home, and therefore Elvira regards Ingrian Finnish and not Finnish as her mother tongue. Probably this is why she also later in the interview underrates her proficiency in Finnish and regards it as poor. On the other hand, Elvira's hesitancy about her mother tongue might derive from her childhood, when ethnicity was not really discussed and when it could even be shameful to speak Finnish or Ingrian Finnish, particularly in public. Ethnic revival brought the language into public spaces, and it became possible for Elvira and her colleagues to work in and through Finnish. This example illustrates how ethnic and linguistic identities are formed in dialogic situations, where meanings are formed and interpreted together in time and space.

These returnees to their ethnic and linguistic roots were sometimes uncertain about their new professional identities and felt they had not developed their pedagogical thinking enough. Some of the teachers seemed to rely on teaching methods they had experienced during their schooling in the Soviet period. Others took a different approach, producing materials and developing methods that they felt would best address the needs

of young Russian-speaking pupils. These teachers could be described as risk-takers, because they were ready to interact with their pupils, to explore and learn themselves.

The professional career paths of all these teachers were formed by their individual choices in connection with important others. Members of the family, classmates, former teachers, colleagues and society as a whole were involved in the decisions the teachers made, especially at the crossroads of their career paths. These important others were supporters but also opponents. Ella recalls one difficult moment in her career:

II. ELLA: Vuonna 1971 sain työpaikan [–] keskikoulusta, jossa kahdeksan vuotta olin opettajana. Silloin vielä suhde suomen kieleen oli erilainen. Muistan, että en ehtinyt lapsille antaa kotitehtävää ensimmäisellä tunnilla; soi kello, että tunti on päättynyt, mutta minä jatkoin selityksiä. Luokkaan tuli venäjän kielen ja kirjallisuuden opettaja ja komensi minua, lasten kuullen: 'Lopeta jo' Nyt tässä luokkahuoneessa tulee venäjän kielen tunti ja se on tärkeämpi. Muistan, että itku tuli silmiin. Mutta, onneksi aika on muuttunut!

[II. ELLA: In 1971, I got a job in the [–] junior secondary school where I worked as a teacher for eight years. At that time, people felt differently about the Finnish language. I remember that, during the first lesson, I had had no time to give homework to the children; the bell rang, the lesson was over, but I kept talking. The teacher of the Russian language and literature entered the classroom and gave me an order in front of the children: 'Stop it now! A Russian lesson is about to begin in this classroom and it is more important'. I remember tears coming into my eyes. But, fortunately, times have changed.]

— Petrozavodsk, female, born in 1956, autobiography,  
translated from Finnish.

The economic crisis in 1998 affected the lives and careers of Saint Petersburg teachers. Most of the teachers were forced to change jobs or even professions. During the past ten years, the pedagogical community of Finnish language teachers has become more homogeneous in respect to their relationship to language and profession. Some of them have retired or moved on to teach in the universities. Others have established companies that offer courses in Finnish, guided tours and translation and interpretation services. The ability to change the course of both professional and private lives is essential in order to survive in the Russian Federation.

Most of the teachers in the schools in which I conducted research are ethnic Russians who learnt Finnish as a foreign language at school, and who have formal qualifications in language pedagogy. For this new generation of teachers it is more a professional interest than an ethnic duty to further the cause of Finnish culture in Russia. It is not clear whether the schools will retain these young teachers. Language experts are needed in other, financially more promising, fields.

Does the Finnish language have a future in north-west Russia? Will Finnish gain a footing and flourish or is it on the brink of extinction? The survival of Finnish is threatened by emigration from Karelia and Ingria, the aging of the remaining population, and the Russian majority culture. However, there are new generations to come, and Ingrian Finns have begun actively and publicly to rethink their relationship to the majority population. The emphasis on ethnicity and language has become apparent in, for example, aspirations to improve the status of national minority languages and schools in Russia. In addition, the Finnish language has become very popular among Russian-speaking learners in higher education in Saint Petersburg and Karelia. Still, it is difficult to say anything precise about the future of Finnish in Russia. 'Life will show', as one teacher wisely put it.

## 6. Conclusion

A great deal of ethnographic research on minorities and identities within educational settings (see, e.g. Rampton 1995; Creese 2005; Norton 2000; Hélot and Ó Laoire 2011) has focused on complex dynamics in learning situations and the role of language use in this process. In this chapter, however, I have raised questions concerning the understanding of language, identity, and ethnicity, using dialogism as a framework and narratives of Ingrian teachers of Finnish as an analytic lens. An analysis of the data elicited from Ingrian teachers provides a distinctive point of view, not only because of the geopolitical context, but also because it specifically focuses

on multilingual teachers themselves, their feelings and experiences as both learners and teachers of a language that officially is a foreign language in schools, but in practice has several other definitions as well.

The analysis shows that the teachers' relationships with Finnish were varied. Finnish was, among other things, their mother tongue, a 'granny language', the home language of childhood, a university language or a language lost and found. It was not even called by the same name: in addition to the term Finnish, Ingrian Finnish and Ingrian dialect were used. Thus, this analysis suggests that the clear-cut views in educational settings of a language as the first (*rodnoy*; родной), second (*nerodnoy*; неродной) or foreign (*inostranniy*; иностранный) are not helpful in capturing the dynamics in language teaching.

The Ingrian teachers' experiences of how the Finnish language was positioned in Soviet or post-Soviet society varied, and triggered differing emotional responses. The social space in which the teachers, their parents and grandparents lived, changed dramatically from early nation building of the 1920s through the pathological centralism of the 1930s and to the emerging post-nationalism in the 1990s. The Ingrian Finns, like many other nationalities, took an active part in building a new community. The period of Stalin's regime had been devastating for the teachers and their families, and they were perceived as enemies of the state. It is, therefore, a miracle that some of the informants held onto their linguistic and ethnic identities during this era. The *perestroika* period in the late 1980s provided a new political, cultural and economic space for national minorities, including Ingrian Finns. This ethnic revitalization gave way to multi-layered identities, and a possibility for the teachers to make use of their knowledge in Finnish that was, nonetheless, defined in the schools as a foreign language, rather than a national minority language.

Language and ethnicity do not go hand in hand. Indeed, the teachers' narratives illustrate that linguistic and ethnic identities can change over the course of a person's lifetime. An individual can be born into one language community and ethnic community, but later develop a strong sense of identification with and expertise in another language and ethnic community, as Igor did. Or one can feel strongly affiliated with an ethnic community but not know the language well enough to be regarded as a

native speaker of the language, as in Anna's case. Or, finally, one can live beyond ethnolinguistic boundaries, use a plurality of languages for different social interactions, and feel a strong sense of belonging to more than one ethnic community. This was typical of most of the teachers in my study and has been reported in other studies in this volume as well.

The dialogical framework also reveals how the teachers' beliefs about language are embedded in a complex occupational, social, and cultural context. Seeing this context mostly in terms of discursive practices helps us avoid simplistic worldviews or conclusions about people's actual lives. In addition, the framework recognizes the ideological and value-laden nature of dominant discourses as well as the time and space in which the meanings are manifested. Linguistic and ethnic identities are more often negotiated in multilingual situations where the boundaries between languages begin to blur – as much in how they are viewed as in how they are used. This is evident in this chapter with respect to Ingrian Finnish teachers, and can also be seen in the analysis of Russian-speaking diasporas in Norway and Germany (Mendzheritskiy and Bagreeva), as well as in the Pontic Greek community in Russia (Zoumpalidis).

These findings bring us back to theorizing language itself. Several sociolinguists have suggested new ways of understanding language in a postmodern world. For example, Sinfride Makoni and Alistair Pennycook (2007) argue that languages do not exist as separate entities; Jan Blommaert and Ben Rampton (2011) suggest that we need to talk about *linguistic repertoires* instead of viewing languages as closed systems; furthermore, they posit that concepts such as 'native speaker', 'mother tongue' and 'ethnolinguistic group' are ideologically loaded and 'should have no place in the sociolinguistic toolkit itself'; Makoni and Pennycook (2012) deem these categorizations 'old' and question their ability to describe hybrid language use; Adrian Blackledge and Angela Creese (2010) refer to the concept of *translanguaging* to capture the complexity and multi-dimensional nature of language use beyond conventionally conceived language boundaries. Moreover, Alistair Pennycook (2010) suggests that we move beyond discourses on multilingualism, because they also emphasize the monolingual norm, and explore *translingual practices* instead. The narratives of the Ingrian teachers show that the structuralist concept of language used

in nation building (see, e.g. Wright 2004; 2012) gave way to repertoires and languaging in the post-national age – exactly what Bakhtin foresaw in proposing the term heteroglossia.

The Ingrian teachers' narratives also tell a story about language policies, and the multi-sitedness of these policies (Pöyhönen and Saarinen 2011). They are personal testimonies about both family language policies (see e.g. King et al. 2008) and national language education policies, and reflect the monolingual norm and hegemonic discourses in Russian society across time and space. According to Suresh Canagarajah (2006: 154) language relationships are ideological, and 'difficult to predict and manage'. This study confirms his argument. Being a speaker of Finnish was experienced by the teachers as an asset, but also a burden. The monolingual norm and language ideologies preferring 'native speakers' exerted extra pressure on them to cope both individually and professionally in a Russian-dominant educational setting. The findings also point to the interrelations of endangered and damaged identities and the dynamics of assimilation with language loss, yet another research area that has been little studied from a multilingual and minority language teacher's point of view.

## Russian language – Greek identity: a sociolinguistic approach to the Pontic Greek community in Russia

### 1. Introduction

The present chapter investigates the relationship between language and ethnic identity among Pontic Greeks in Russia. More specifically, I examine what they consider their mother tongue, and how their ethnic identity affects (or does not affect) their language behaviour.

The historical motherland of the Pontic Greeks is Pontos, the area located in today's north-eastern Turkey, whose capital was Trapezounta (see Map 3). The history of the Pontic Greeks dates back to the eighth century BC. In 1461 the land of Pontos was conquered by the Ottoman Turks, who tried to impose on the local population their own order, religion and language. At that time, the usual medium of communication among Pontic Greeks was the Pontic Greek dialect (henceforth PGD), which was their ethnic language. Ottoman rule aimed at the total assimilation of Pontic Greeks by suppressing their language, their Christian religion and their traditions.

Thus, Pontic Greeks were forced to abandon their homes and migrate. Russia and Georgia welcomed the first Pontic Greek immigrants soon after the fall of Trapezounta. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a great number of them moved to the Russian Empire/Georgia. Many settled in the mountainous region of Tsalka in Georgia, whereas those who moved directly to the Russian Empire settled mostly in the Stavropol and Krasnodar regions (see Map 3).

At the time of their settlement in these new host countries, the dominant language of the majority of Pontic Greeks was Turkish; very few

Pontic Greeks had managed to preserve their ancestral language, PGD. In Georgia, Pontic Greeks built more than forty villages where they resided in close-knit communities and, as a result, many of them remained monolingual in Turkish or had Turkish as their dominant language (especially those who did not have any formal schooling), whereas those who settled in the Russian Empire came into contact with the local population and thus the Russian language entered their linguistic repertoire.

Gorbachev's rise to power in 1985 was accompanied by a number of liberal reforms (*perestroika*). One of the consequences of these reforms was the revival of some ethnic communities, predominantly on the periphery of the USSR, and in some cases the rise of ethnic nationalism which eventually, along with other socioeconomic factors, contributed to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. However, one aspect of this socio-political movement was that Pontic Greeks could start learning the Greek language – Standard Modern Greek, henceforth SMG – as a second language in their local schools. A number of Greek organizations, mostly culturally oriented, were established, which provided Pontic Greeks with the opportunity to learn the history of their ancestors, the Greek language and traditional dances.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, a great number of Pontic Greeks from former Soviet republics, predominantly from Georgia and Russia, started migrating (or, as some of the respondents consider it, repatriating to their historical motherland) with their families to Greek-speaking countries, namely to Greece and/or Cyprus. Having settled in Greece/Cyprus, Pontic Greeks began learning what many of the respondents call their (symbolic) mother tongue – SMG, which the majority had never spoken before, and in Cyprus, the Cypriot Greek dialect (henceforth CGD). The focus in this chapter, however, is on those Pontic Greeks who did not migrate and currently live in the Russian Federation.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. *Language maintenance and language shift*

Research on language maintenance and language shift has probably been one of the most influential research areas in the field of sociolinguistics in recent years. In investigating the outcomes of contact between languages, researchers have attempted to shed light on issues so vital to sociolinguistics as well as to anthropological linguistic inquiry, such as factors which determine and predict language shift (which may ultimately lead to language death), language maintenance, factors which impact on language and identity, bilingual language acquisition, societal/individual bilingualism (multilingualism) and language policy, among many other aspects of sociolinguistic investigation. Many factors contribute to language shift: migration to an area where the migrants' native language is not spoken (Tabouret-Keller 1968; Lewis 1972; Lieberson and McCabe 1978; Dorian 1980; Timm 1980); modernization and industrialization (Tabouret-Keller 1968; Gal 1979; Huffines 1980); urbanization (Tabouret-Keller 1968; Gal 1979; Dorian 1981); the language of education and government-imposed pressures (Dressler and Wodak-Leodolter 1977; Gal 1979; Kahane and Kahane 1979; Agyekum 2009). From this perspective, bilingualism is seen as just a transitional stage in a general language shift paradigm which can potentially take place within a three-generation time span (Hamers and Blanc 1989).

In investigating similar language contact situations, Giles et al. (1977) have proposed the concept of 'ethnolinguistic vitality' to account for the circumstances under which a particular language is maintained or abandoned in favour of another (usually a more prestigious one). Ethnolinguistic vitality is analysed in terms of three variables: status, demography and institutional support.

Giles et al. (1977) argue that if a particular language has a relatively high status in the community where it is spoken, then the chances for its maintenance increase. Along these lines, Appel and Muysken (1987) argue that the vitality of a particular language is largely dependent on the

relative status of a community's language and on the economic, social and sociohistorical status of the community. For example, Gal (1979), who investigated the use of German and Hungarian in the Austrian village of Oberwart, reports that speakers of Hungarian are frequently associated with an old-fashioned rural peasant lifestyle whereas speakers of German are associated with the new, modern way of living. Thus, Gal concludes that many Hungarian speakers, especially younger women, have been shifting to German since Hungarian became the symbol of peasant status and hard life.

In relation to demographic factors, Giles et al. (1977) maintain that the smaller the size of a community, the higher the threat of language shift and *vice versa*. However, Mesthrie et al. (2000) criticized this point, stressing the fact that it is nearly impossible to specify the 'critical mass' of speakers necessary for the survival of a language. In the same vein, Romaine (1989: 40) argues that the 'number of speakers *per se*' tells us little of the ability of a group to maintain its language', adding that 'who speaks a language is more important than how many speak it' (see also Clyne 1982). Nonetheless, this factor has been quite influential in language shift/maintenance research. Indeed, Li (1982) found that third-generation Chinese Americans residing in Chinese-dominant neighbourhoods, known as Chinatowns, were less likely to have adopted English as their mother tongue than their peers living outside Chinatowns. Based on this evidence, it has been argued that the demographic factors pertinent to immigrant/minority groups considerably influence language shift/language maintenance processes.

The final component of ethnolinguistic vitality, according to Giles et al. (1977), which may influence the process of language shift/language maintenance, is that of institutional support. This factor refers to the extent to which the institutions of a nation, or of the host country in the case of immigrants, support the language of a minority group. A language has more chance of being maintained if it is used in administration, church, education, the media and cultural organizations. For example, Agyekum (2009), in investigating language shift in Ghana, points out that since some of the minority languages are not broadcast, speakers of these languages are motivated and assimilated into the use of the dominant languages, and language shift is initiated. Conversely, minority languages may be boosted through the publishing of minority-language newspapers, books and magazines (Appel and Muysken 1987: 37).

## 2.2. Language and ethnic identity

The relationship between language and ethnic identity can be quite complex. Nonetheless, at the micro-sociolinguistic level, allegiance to a certain ethnic identity can often be expressed by means of adherence to a specific code or certain linguistic features typical of a particular group (Al-Wer 1999). Given the fact that, subjectively, language possesses affective potential, it often functions, according to Ross (1979: 10), as a powerful symbol of ethnic consciousness, serving ‘as a shorthand for all that makes a group special and unique’ and which, in turn, has the potential to contribute much to the maintenance of the in-group language of that particular community. Similarly, Fishman (1977) argues that language can often be the most salient symbol of ethnicity as it carries the past and expresses present and future attitudes and aspirations of an ethnic group.

Edwards (1985) sees ethnic identity in terms of group boundaries. More specifically, he argues that ethnic identity acquires meaning by functioning in opposition to foreign cultural markers and social ties that differentiate one ethnic group from another (see also Barth 1969; Heller 1987; Haarmann 1999). In addition, Edwards (1985) stresses the importance of differentiating between subjective and objective definitions of ethnic identity. Objective definitions, according to Edwards, include inherited linguistic, racial, geographical, historical, religious and ancestral characteristics of ethnic identity. Subjective definitions, on the other hand, reference a symbolic and emotional facet of ethnic identity where a person can lay claim to the ethnic identity he/she feels is the one which is closest to him/her on the affective level, regardless of any historic, religious, linguistic or racial factors.

The notion of *mother tongue* (родной язык), which often functions as a symbolic projection of ethnic identity, has also been looked at from different sociolinguistic angles. It should be noted that no consensus among researchers has been reached in relation to this term. Weinreich (1953: 88), for instance, defines mother tongue as ‘the language which has been learned first’. Lieberson (1969) similarly considers mother tongue as the language usually spoken in the individual’s home in early childhood, although not necessarily used by him/her at present. A more emotional approach has been adopted by Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1989), who define mother tongue as the language to which a person has the most positive attitude

and affection. In the present chapter, I distinguish between a *symbolic* mother tongue (символический родной язык; the language someone may not speak (well) but considers his/her mother tongue) and an *actual* mother tongue (фактический родной язык) which will be treated here as the language in which a respondent feels most able to express himself/herself, or their dominant language.

In situations of bilingualism, bilingual speakers tend to choose a particular language taking into account the linguistic behaviour of their interlocutor as well as the social contexts in which the speech event occurs. Language choice, according to Hoffman (1991), entails an act of selecting from the linguistic and stylistic items available to a bilingual speaker, that is, favouring some and rejecting others in light of different sets of social, psychological and linguistic factors. Along these lines, Fishman (1964, cited in Fasold 1984) introduces the notion of 'domains', alluding to certain institutional contexts where one language variety is more likely to be appropriate than another. Bilingual speakers will prefer to use one language in certain domains, and the other in others.

Appel and Muysken (1987) stress the importance of group membership in the process of language shift. More specifically, they argue that attention should be paid to the fact that a particular language can often be used to express a person's identity. Consequently, the identity favoured by the members of a particular community is a crucial factor in language choice (Appel and Muysken 1987). Certain group affiliations (e.g. ethnic, national, cultural) influence language preferences directly or indirectly. In this respect, Hoffman (1991: 181) points out that the individual's 'desire to identify with, or dissociate from, a particular language group can be a determining factor in language choice' and this process is likely to lead to language shift. Taking into consideration the above discussion on language and ethnic identity and the sociolinguistic complexities of bilingual (multilingual) communities or societies, it could be argued that for some groups of people language is the prime marker of ethnic identity while for others there is no one-to-one relation between their language and ethnic identity (see, for example, Fishman 1968).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

In total, 111 Pontic Greeks participated in the study. Participants were divided into the following age groups: a. 15–25 ( $n = 39$ ); b. 26–40 ( $n = 31$ ); c. 41–50 ( $n = 12$ ); and d. 51+ ( $n = 29$ ). Age distribution was deemed important as it shows language shift in progress as well as generational differences regarding language preferences and language attitudes.

Most of the participants were born in Russia, but a number of them, especially older Pontic Greeks, were born in Georgia (Tsalka region, see Map 3) but moved to Russia in the early/mid 1960s. Most of them settled in the Stavropol or Krasnodar regions (see Map 3). In the Stavropol region, it is predominantly in the KavMinVody (Caucasus Mineral Waters) area that Pontic Greeks settled, and more specifically in the towns of Pyatigorsk and Essentuki. The study was conducted in Essentuki, in the Kirpichnyi district, where around 5,500 Pontic Greeks are estimated to reside (Galkina 2000). Since the researcher is of Pontic Greek origin himself, he had direct access to the community in question and was considered local by the residents of Kirpichnyi.

#### 3.2. Questionnaire

For this study, 111 questionnaires were collected and analysed. The questionnaire was designed in the Russian language. The questionnaire comprised forty-eight questions that elicited demographic, linguistic and sociolinguistic information, the degree of participants' bilingualism (multilingualism), data on their social networks, domains of language use and language choice, language attitudes and identity. The questionnaires were distributed mainly in the Kirpichnyi district, in the town of Essentuki.

### *3.3. Interview*

In total, nineteen interviews were conducted. The interviewees were randomly selected deploying the ‘friend of a friend’ technique. Most of the participants were adults. The questions for the interview were mostly based on those of the questionnaire, but the participants were free (and were encouraged) to discuss any topic of the questionnaire. In addition, seven open-ended and semi-open questions were designed specifically for the interview to trigger in-depth discussion about the participants’ language choice, their ethnic allegiance and how this allegiance affects (or does not affect) their language preferences and language attitudes.

### *3.4. Participant-observation*

In a study on language shift/maintenance, especially in a particular speech community, it is important to have a ‘view from within’. Participant observation, within the broader field of ethnography, allows a researcher to gain access to a community under investigation in pursuit of local cultural knowledge (Johnstone 2000: 82) and of actual language behaviour. It was decided to observe one family in Russia on a daily basis for a period of three months. The family kindly invited the researcher to stay with them for the whole period of his fieldwork. The family consisted of middle-aged parents who had two children in early adulthood.

## 4. Results and discussion

### *4.1. Mother tongue*

As was discussed above, the notion of mother tongue (родной язык) is far from clear and is not understood in the same way by all the participants. Some respondents take the notion of mother tongue as the language they

speak best (possibly because they have been exposed to it since early childhood), others, however, extend this notion to a more emotional dimension and add more symbolic value to it regardless of whether they speak or know it. For some participants the affective side of the notion of mother tongue is of paramount importance. Thus, to the question ‘What is your mother tongue?’ [Какой у вас родной язык?] the following answers were provided:

Table 1 Self-reported mother tongue(s)

Mother tongue(s)	Rus	SMG	Tur	PGD	Rus/ SMG	Rus/ Tur	Azerbaijani	Difficult to say
Age	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. 15–25 (n = 39)	69.2	17.9	–	5.1	7.6	–	–	–
b. 26–40 (n = 31)	74.1	25.8	–	–	–	–	–	–
c. 41–50 (n = 12)	66.6	16.6	8.3	8.3	–	–	–	–
d. 51+ (n = 29)	34.4	24.1	17.2	6.8	3.4	6.8	3.4	3.4

The evidence of Table 1 establishes that the majority of Pontic Greeks across all four age groups identify Russian as their mother tongue: the proportionately largest group were the 26–40 year-olds (74.1 per cent). Two thirds or more of the participants from the first three age groups identify Russian as their mother tongue, as opposed to only one third of the representatives of older Pontic Greeks (34.4 per cent). There may be two reasons accounting for this lower proportion in the last age group. First, since a number of older Pontic Greeks, as we have seen, were born and lived some time in Georgia, in a remote area which is isolated from other Georgian towns and villages, many of them did not learn to speak Russian (well). The second reason could be that some Turkophone Pontic Greeks (though this could apply to participants from all four age groups) directly link a language, such as for instance SMG, with his/her ethnicity as Greeks (see Table 3).

In other words, in order to highlight and stress their Greekness some of them try to show that they can speak SMG since, as some of them claimed, they have been accused by some Pontic Greek-speaking members of the community of being Turks precisely because they frequently employ the Turkish language in intra-community communication.<sup>1</sup>

SMG comes in second position, with the highest proportion of participants identifying it as their mother tongue coming from the second and the fourth age groups (25.8 per cent and 24.1 per cent respectively). This language mostly performs a symbolic role in an act of ethnic identity construction on the part of Pontic Greeks since none of the participants claimed to have SMG as his/her dominant language (see Table 2). This is also manifest in the fact that of those who identify SMG as their mother tongue, not everybody speaks it well. In the first age group, only 14.2 per cent of participants reported that they could speak it well, while the other 85.7 per cent rated themselves as weak speakers of SMG. Similarly, in the second age group, only 37.5 per cent of participants claimed to know SMG well, 50 per cent reported they were weak speakers, and 12.5 per cent claimed they did not speak/know it at all. In the fourth age group, few individuals reported that they knew this language well (14.2 per cent), whereas 71.4 per cent reported that they had poor knowledge of it and the last 14.2 per cent claimed they had no proficiency in this language whatsoever. In contrast, all the participants from the third age group who claimed SMG to be their mother tongue reported that they knew it well. This could be attributed to the probability that some of these respondents spent some time in a Greek-speaking country.

It becomes clear that the notion of mother tongue for the majority of those participants who identify SMG as their mother tongue has little (or nothing) to do with the skills they possess (or do not possess) in this language. Thus, the mother tongue for these participants is what they feel it is. A similar, if less common, situation can be observed in relation to PGD, where this variety is attributed a more symbolic value in an attempt by some Pontic Greeks to stress their Pontian ethnicity.

<sup>1</sup> The Turkish variety Pontic Greeks speak is an eastern Turkish dialect (Kolossov et al. 2000) which only survives in the spoken form. In order to avoid confusion I am not going to differentiate between standard Turkish and this Turkish dialect.

With regard to the Turkish language, some participants from the third and fourth age groups consider this language their mother tongue (8.3 per cent and 17.2 per cent respectively). This could be because it was Turkish that these participants learnt first, that is, it was the language most frequently used within the family domain. In contrast, none of the participants from the first and second age groups claimed to have Turkish as his/her mother tongue. These participants also do not speak it (well) (see Table 2).

Table 2 Self-reported language(s) known best

Language(s) known best	Russian	Turkish	Rus/PGD	Rus/Tur	Azerbaijani
Age	%	%	%	%	%
a. 15–25 (n = 39)	97.4	–	2.5	–	–
b. 26–40 (n = 31)	96.7	–	–	3.2	–
c. 41–50 (n = 12)	75	–	–	25	–
d. 51+ (n = 29)	48.2	6.8	6.8	34.4	3.4

An analysis of the language(s) Pontic Greeks claimed to know best (the language in which they feel they can express themselves most easily), and comparison of the data in Tables 1 and 2, highlights the symbolic value some Pontic Greeks attach to their self-reported mother tongue(s). Thus, none of the participants from any of the four age groups claimed to express himself/herself most easily in SMG, despite the fact that some of them reported having SMG as their mother tongue.

On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of the participants belonging to the first and second age groups (97.4 per cent and 96.7 per cent respectively) claimed that they can express themselves most easily in the Russian language. In other words, younger and middle-aged Pontic Greeks are predominantly Russian-speaking. Similarly, 75 per cent of the third age group claimed Russian to be their dominant language while the other 25 per cent of the participants claimed they can express themselves equally well in both Russian and Turkish. The same applies to those 34.4

per cent of participants from the fourth age group who claimed to know two languages, namely Russian and Turkish, equally well.

Only a few participants from the fourth age group (6.8 per cent) claimed to know Turkish better than any other language. However, 17.2 per cent of the participants from the same age group claimed to have this language as their mother tongue. This can be accounted for in terms of the *first* language they acquired as children within their homes where the most frequently used language was Turkish; this later, however, has become less dominant as Russian entered their linguistic repertoire.

#### *4.2. Ethnic identity*

The ethnic self-identification of the Pontic Greeks is complex. There is no single ethnic label with which all the participants would self-identify. Ethnicity, as was discussed above, may be highly subjective – a matter of self-ascription – regardless of ethnic descent. What this implies is that ethnicity is not treated in the same way by all members of a community, and different aspects of it are chosen to be stressed. Table 3 presents the answers provided to the question ‘Who are you ethnically?’ [Кто вы по национальности?].

Table 3 Self-reported ethnic identity

Ethnic identity	Greek	Pontian	Russian Pontian	Pontic Greek	Russian (local) Greek	Russian	Multiple identities
Age	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. 15–25 (n = 39)	69.2	10.2	15.3	—	2.5	2.5	—
b. 26–40 (n = 31)	74.1	9.6	3.2	3.2	—	3.2	6.4
c. 41–50 (n = 12)	83.3	8.3	8.3	—	—	—	—
d. 51+ (n = 29)	82.7	—	3.4	—	3.4	3.4	6.8

As can be seen in Table 3, the majority of Pontic Greeks from all four age groups ethnically self-identify as Greeks. The Greek element of their identity is clearly strong, despite the fact that most of them do not speak Greek (SMG) well. Therefore, the relationship between language and ethnic identity of Pontic Greeks is far from simple (see Tables 1 and 2).<sup>2</sup> The adherence to Greek culture, and generally, to whatever may carry a Greek aspect (traditional dances, food, houses built in the style of Greek architecture, Greek flags stuck on cars) stresses their ethnic background and their common descent. According to Paulston (1994: 35), when the use of a community's language ceases to be a core value, other cultural practices acquire a national symbolism. Thus, in a situation where most Pontic Greeks are not very proficient in SMG, it is other aspects of their 'Greekness' that are emphasized.

The label 'Pontic Greek' does not seem to appeal much to Pontic Greeks since very few of them self-identified with this label. Instead, the labels 'Pontian' and 'Russian Pontian' are slightly preferred. The former presupposes ethnic adherence to a solely Pontic ethnicity which may highlight their distinctiveness from Greeks, whether from mainland Greece or from local Turkophone Pontic Greeks. The latter label seems to have a similar function: it differentiates from things Greek (Pontic or otherwise), but adds reference to their Russian (geographical) origin.<sup>3</sup>

2 See also Pöyhönen's chapter on multiple identities of Ingrian Finnish teachers in Russia (in this volume), where she argues that the relationship of some Ingrian teachers to Finnishness and Russianness is not clear but rather negotiable and linked with time, place and social context.

3 It must be noted that some Pontic Greeks believe that such labels as 'Pontian', 'Russian Pontian' or 'Pontic Greek' do not constitute and express a person's ethnicity. As one Pontic Greek commented in an interview, answering the question 'What is your attitude to such ethnic labels as "Pontian", "Pontic Greek", and "Russian Pontian"?' (Как вы относитесь к таким понятиям как 'понтиец', 'понтийский грек' и 'россопонтиос?'): 'the place of origin (namely, the areas of Pontos) cannot function as ethnicity (Pontian), we are all Greeks' [место происхождения (т.е. районы Понта) не может функционировать как национальность (понтиец) мы все являемся греками].

What is particularly interesting is that a very small number of participants claimed that they were Russians.<sup>4</sup> If we assume that ethnicity is a set of behaviours and perceptions, then the self-ascription of 'Russianness' by these Pontic Greeks will not seem odd given that they find themselves in a Russian-dominant socioeconomic and sociocultural environment. Finally, it must be noted that none of the participants claimed to be a Turk, despite the fact that some of them (mostly in the older generation) claimed to have Turkish as their mother tongue. This undoubtedly adds to the complexity of the relationship between language and identity.

Ethnic identity appears to be more or less stable within the Pontic Greek community even in situations where the ethnic language has been lost. Thus language does not seem to play a decisive role in one's ethnic self-identification. Nonetheless, a great number of Pontic Greeks feel that it is important to know the Greek language (SMG) in order to be Greek, as Table 4 reveals.

Table 4 Is it important to know the Greek language in order to be Greek?

	Yes	No
Age	%	%
a. 15–25 ( <i>n</i> = 39)	46.1	53.8
b. 26–40 ( <i>n</i> = 31)	45.1	54.8
c. 41–50 ( <i>n</i> = 12)	58.3	41.6
d. 51+ ( <i>n</i> = 29)	65.5	34.4

4 In one of the interviews, an interesting idea was brought up by an older Pontic Greek man in his attempt to answer the question 'Who are you ethnically?' [Кто вы по национальности?]. He said that he considered himself Greek but in essence, he claimed, he was Russian as he has lived all his life in Russia among the local Russian population, attended Russian school and had worked with Russian colleagues. He said that he saw no difference (maybe apart from external appearance) between himself and other Russians.

The results in Table 4 suggest that for more than half of the participants in the first two age groups the language is not a necessary prerequisite for ethnic group membership. In an interview, one of the respondents argued that it is sufficient just to feel Greek when asked the question ‘Is it important to know the Greek language in order to be Greek?’ [Для вас важно знать греческий язык для того чтобы считать себя греком?]: ‘You are Greek as long as you feel you are Greek and it does not matter what language you speak’. In contrast, the majority of participants from the older generation of Pontic Greeks acknowledge and ascribe an important role to language in their ethnic self-identification. This increased interest in the Greek language may be due in part to the fact that a great number of older Turcophone participants believe that they have been ‘robbed’ of their ethnic language [у нас украли наш язык] and feel the need to speak Greek in order to consider themselves and be considered by others to be truly Greek. In addition, this could be taken as a form of response to Pontic Greeks who accuse (or used to accuse) them of being Turks (as mentioned above in section 4.1.).

#### *4.3. Russian as the language of the community*

As we have seen, language is not only a medium of communication but can also function as a powerful symbol of ethnic self-identification. Language is taken, in other words, as a projection of a person’s ethnicity in an attempt to signal and highlight his/her ethnic group membership. In this light, in a bilingual (or multilingual) community, a particular language behaviour may lead to language shift. Language shift, according to Fasold (1984: 213), occurs when a community begins to choose a new language in domains formerly preserved for the old one; this process may ultimately lead to language death, which presupposes a total shift to a new language so that the old language is no longer used. As regards the Pontic Greek community in Russia, at least two languages are employed by its members. The language behaviour of Pontic Greeks, in this respect, could be said to be targeted at the Russian language where the Turkish language is gradually

being abandoned. In order to illustrate this, the participants were asked to report the language(s) they use to address their parents and their children (Tables 5 and 6 respectively).

Table 5 The language(s) Pontic Greeks use to address their parents

Language(s)	Rus	Tur	Rus/ SMG	Rus/ Tur	Rus/ PGD	PGD	Tur/ Azerb	Rus/Tur/ PGD
Age	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. 15–25 (n = 39)	69.2	—	2.5	17.9	10.2	—	—	—
b. 26–40 (n = 31)	77.4	3.2	—	16.1	3.2	—	—	—
c. 41–50 (n = 12)	33.3	25	—	16.6	16.6	8.3	—	—
d. 51+ (n = 29)	17.2	34.4	—	27.5	6.8	6.8	3.4	3.4

Table 6 The language(s) Pontic Greeks use to address their children

Language(s)	Rus	Tur	Rus/ SMG	Rus/ Tur	Rus/ PGD	Rus/ Azerb
Age	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. 15–25 (n = 39)	96.4	—	—	—	3.5	—
b. 26–40 (n = 31)	89.6	—	6.8	—	3.4	—
c. 41–50 (n = 12)	91.6	—	—	8.3	—	—
d. 51+ (n = 29)	58.6	3.4	3.4	24.1	6.8	3.4

If we compare the number of participants from each age group using Russian to address their parents with that of participants using Russian with their children the difference becomes apparent. A large proportion of younger and middle-aged participants claimed to use Russian in interaction with their parents. Only 17.2 per cent of the participant falling into the fourth age group claimed to use Russian with their parents. This suggests that the majority of their parents are more proficient in other languages, Turkish and/or PGD. Thus in order to communicate effectively with their parents these participants seem to choose a language which their parents feel more comfortable with or know better.

Different linguistic behaviour is observed when it comes to the language(s) participants choose to address their children. As can be seen in Table 6, the overwhelming majority from the first three age groups prefers to use the Russian language exclusively when they address their children. It is worth noting the difference in the language(s) older Pontic Greeks use to address their parents with those used with their children; in the latter case the number of Pontic Greeks preferring the Russian language increases drastically. At the same time Turkish is almost never used by Pontic Greek parents with their children. Its limited use even in combination with the Russian language (in older participants from age groups c. and d. only) suggests that Pontic Greek parents are not transmitting the Turkish language (which was once, for the vast majority of Turkophone Pontic Greeks, the language of intracommunal communication) to the next generation. This suggests that language shift is in process and is reminiscent of Gal's (1979) study, in that Turkish bears a low status within the community and is frequently associated with an old-fashioned, rural way of living whereas Russian is associated with a modern way of living, usually in urban centres, hence its high status in the community.

In this respect, the assimilative processes in wider Russian society, at least on the linguistic level, are quite evident. It seems that a great number of Pontic Greeks want to become 'full' citizens of Russian society, where the Russian language (along with the Russian accent) would facilitate this enterprise. Since the overwhelming majority of younger and middle-aged Pontic Greeks reported Russian as their dominant language (97.4 per cent and 96.7 per cent respectively), the likelihood of the Pontic Greek

community becoming, in two or three generations, entirely Russophone is very high. Even today, it is not difficult to meet (usually younger) Pontic Greeks who are Russian-speaking monolinguals or who possess some basic knowledge in Turkish but would never speak it.<sup>5</sup>

## 5. Concluding remarks

This study has attempted to shed some light on the complex relationship between language and ethnic identity. In examining this relationship, it has been shown that ethnicity has the potential to influence language, and the reverse process can also occur. With regard to ethnicity, the Greek component of the Pontic Greek identity is especially strong since the majority of Pontic Greeks from all four age groups considers themselves Greeks. It can be argued that this strong allegiance to common Greek roots and to broader Greek culture does exert influence on the language for some Pontic Greeks. In terms of mother tongue, it has been shown that almost a quarter of the participants from the second and fourth age groups reported that they see SMG as their (desired) mother tongue admitting, at the same time, that they do not have any skills in this language or that their proficiency in it is poor. Thus, for these Pontic Greeks, SMG plays an important role as a symbolic mother tongue in their attempt to stress and exhibit their ethnic group membership.

Language, in this particular case, functions as a medium for strengthening their identity as Greeks. In this relation, SMG, just like ethnicity, can be considered a subjectively chosen language, a self-ascribed mother tongue. In contrast, the Turkish language, which many (mostly older)

<sup>5</sup> It must be noted here, that certain fixed Turkish expressions which carry mainly expressive meaning (or some Turkish swear words) are still popular even among younger Pontic Greeks and can frequently be inserted in conversation conducted in the Russian language in peer communication.

Pontic Greeks claimed to know and use predominantly with their parents, does not exert any influence on ethnic self-identification. Thus, language does not have a one-to-one relation to ethnicity.

Based on this evidence, language reveals its fluid character as well as its symbolic role in a bilingual community where language choice can be a determining factor in identification with or dissociation from particular language groups (see Hoffman 1991). This can particularly be observed in the language behaviour of Pontic Greeks towards their children. As has been shown, the vast majority of Pontic Greeks resort exclusively to the Russian language (even those who are not fully proficient in Russian) when it comes to interaction with their children. Their attempt to dissociate from the Turkish language, as the one bearing low prestige which also has no institutional support within or outside the Pontic Greek community (low ethnolinguistic vitality), results in most of its members being actively engaged in the process of language shift (see Giles et al. 1977). The specifically Russian-oriented linguistic behaviour on the part of Pontic Greek parents implies that they wish their children to be fully proficient in Russian.

The Russian language can, therefore, be said to be the language of prestige, a good knowledge of which would guarantee (along with other socioeconomic factors) good educational opportunities and provide more opportunities in the career-building process. The high status of Russian within the Pontic Greek community, however, does not seem to threaten the Pontic Greeks' ethnic affiliations since for a great number of them language does not appear to play a major role in ethnic self-identification (see Table 4). In this light, it is expected that Russian will soon become *the* language of the Pontic Greek community. The Greek identity of Pontic Greeks does not appear to be in conflict with the Russian language; on the contrary, it appears to harmoniously coexist with Russian, a language which a great number of Pontic Greeks already consider their mother tongue and speak most fluently.



SHOLPAN ZHARKYNBEKOVA AND BAURZHAN BOKAYEV

## Global transformations in Kazakhstani society and problems of ethno-linguistic identification

### 1. Introduction

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a multilingual, polyethnic, multicultural and polyconfessional country where people speak genetically and structurally different languages. As Suleimenova et al. (2005a: 14) observe,

Этноязыковой ландшафт современного Казахстана характеризуется, с одной стороны, высокой степенью языкового разнообразия, с другой, – тем, что два этноса (титульный казахский и русский) доминируют в количественном отношении над всеми остальными этносами, усиливая демографически неравновесный и несбалансированный характер языковой ситуации.

The ethnolinguistic landscape of contemporary Kazakhstan is characterized, on the one hand, by a high degree of linguistic diversity, and, on the other hand, by the fact that two ethnoses (titular Kazakhs and Russians) are dominant relative to all other ethnoses, thereby intensifying the demographically unequal and unbalanced character of the linguistic environment.

The Republic of Kazakhstan has distinct linguistic situations in its various regions, but most are characterized by differing degrees of Kazakh-Russian bilingualism, even though the balance between Kazakh and Russian that pertained in the Soviet era has been disrupted as a result of recent historical and geopolitical changes.

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan states that Kazakh, the language of the titular nation, is the state language. This policy was further ratified in the Republic of Kazakhstan Language Law of 11 July 1997.

Alongside this, Russian holds a strong position in Kazakhstani society for two reasons: first, because of the ethnic composition of the population and, secondly, as a result of the language policy that was implemented in the Soviet period. After independence, an abrupt transition to Kazakh monolingualism could have led to conflict between ethnic groups. The new sovereign state, therefore, adopted a policy of multilingualism in the interests of political stability and social cohesion. This policy aimed to protect linguistic diversity: in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK) the Russian language was classified an official language alongside Kazakh.

As part of a nation-building strategy, the newly independent state intensified the policy of repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs which had been initiated in the Soviet period. Ethnic Kazakhs are being encouraged to return to a linguistic environment which is essentially bilingual. Some come from the former Soviet space – and would therefore have been exposed to Russian in the public sphere, but not necessarily to Kazakh; others come from outside that space – and might not have been exposed to either Russian or Kazakh prior to their return. This chapter explores the attitudes to Russian and Kazakh among recent repatriates and makes recommendations on how language policy might better facilitate the integration of ethnic Kazakhs into the Kazakhstani social fabric and national community.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The sociolinguistic context

### 2.1. *A brief overview of the ethnolinguistic legacy of the Soviet period*

In the Soviet period, two processes impacted on the prominence of Russian in the Kazakh SSR and the diminished status of Kazakh. First, organized and coercive migration during the Soviet period led to a considerable

<sup>1</sup> In this chapter two related terms are used: the word 'Kazakh' defines everything that relates to the Kazakhs as an ethnic group; the word 'Kazakhstani' refers to everything that relates to Kazakhstan as a state that is home to about 140 ethnic groups.

influx of monolingual Russian speakers and their concentration in the political, economic and cultural centres on the one hand, and, on the other, to the forced migration of ethnic Kazakhs out of the Soviet Republic. Secondly, the language policy of Russification in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) resulted in Russian becoming the main means of interethnic and high-status communication.

The problem of Kazakhs being forced to leave their homeland dates back to the Stalin regime in the 1920s and 1930s. More than a million Kazakhs fled political turmoil, repression, forced collectivization and hunger. According to official census data, the number of people in the country declined from 3.63 million in 1926 to 2.31 million in 1939 (Results of the 1926 All-Union Census 1930: 41). This emigration resulted in the formation of a Kazakh diaspora abroad. The first migration flows were from Kazakhstan to China, Central Asia, Afghanistan and Iran, and then they spread further afield (Mendikulova 1997: 122). Today, ethnic Kazakhs live in over forty countries around the world, the majority settled in countries bordering on Kazakhstan: 1.5 million Kazakhs live in Uzbekistan, a further 1.5 million in China, about a million are resident in Russia, 100,000 in Turkmenistan, 80,000 in Mongolia, and 45,000 in Kyrgyzstan (Mendikulova 1997: 123).

The effect and effectiveness of the Soviet policy of Russification is reflected in Laitin's discussion (1998: 74) of the percentage of Kazakhs in the years 1955–1972 in all leading jobs (46.6 per cent), and those in jobs concerned with personnel (6.7 per cent). Furthermore, the proportion of non-Russian academics and researchers in the intellectual space constituted 21.4 per cent in 1960 and 29.8 per cent in 1973. Such ethnic differentiation in the labour force resulted in the relative privileging of certain ethnic groups. A comparatively low number of Kazakh-language social and educational institutions and the prevalence of Russians in urban areas of Kazakhstan led to language assimilation among the Kazakhs. The percentage of Kazakhs who spoke fluent Russian increased from 41.6 per cent in 1970 to 50.6 per cent in 1979 and then 62.8 per cent in 1989, while only 1 per cent of Russians could speak Kazakh. As Smagulova argues (2008: 445–446), 'asymmetrical bilingualism reflected the ethnic stratification of Soviet Kazakhstan, where Kazakh speakers found themselves dominated politically, economically, and culturally, and threatened demographically'.

According to the 1999 Census, 12.673 million people had some degree of proficiency in Russian in Kazakhstan; that is to say, 84.75 per cent of the total population. For 8.194 million of them it had the status of non-native language (*nerodnoy yazyk*; неродной язык), whereas for 4.48 million it was their native language (*rodnoy yazyk*; родной язык). It is important to emphasize that 75 per cent of the ethnic Kazakhs were proficient in Russian.

Russian was also a prominent, if not the dominant, language for most of the other diasporas in Kazakhstan in the 1990s; see Table 1.

Table 1 Percentage of Russian speakers in ethnic groups in Kazakhstan

Source: The Results of the 1999 Population Census in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Ethnic groups	Percentage of Russian speakers in each ethnic group
Azerbaijanis	86 per cent
Belarusians	99.4 per cent
Chechens	94.1 per cent
Chuvashes	99.3 per cent
Germans	99.3 per cent
Koreans	97.7 per cent
Kurds	76.9 per cent
Moldovans	99.2 per cent
Mordovians	99.5 per cent
Poles	98.9 per cent
Tatars	96.9 per cent
Turks	75.9 per cent
Ukrainians	99.5 per cent
Uyghurs	76.1 per cent

These data demonstrate that the percentage of the population in each ethnic group who spoke Russian was very high. There were a couple of exceptions: the Tajiks (35.8 per cent) had only recently migrated to Kazakhstan at the time of the census; there was also a relatively low percentage of Russian speakers among the Uzbeks living in the South Kazakhstan region on the

border with Uzbekistan (59.2 per cent). These constitute 89.6 per cent of the total Uzbek diaspora (Population Census in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1999). According to Suleimenova (2010b: 42), all the aforementioned ethnic groups, as well as ethnic Russians, could best be described as monolingual Russian speakers.

## *2.2. The immediate aftermath of independence*

The effects of the Soviet policy of Russification and mass deportations were reflected in the language situation in Kazakhstan at the time of independence. In parallel to the promotion of Russian as the high-status language in the whole Soviet space, these processes had conversely restricted the sociolinguistic status and functions of the Kazakh language (Smagulova 2008: 445). Since independence the balance has been redressed; the linguistic situation in Kazakhstan has undergone dramatic changes over recent decades. This is connected to the following factors:

1. The departure from the country of, as a rule, socially active people has led to a dramatic decrease in the Russian-speaking population(s); many diasporas now show low population figures. Thus between 1999 and 2009, the populations of the following ethnic groups decreased in number as follows:

Table 2 Percentage decrease of minority ethnic populations in Kazakhstan, 1999–2009

Source: Results of the Population Censuses in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1999 and 2009

Ethnic groups	Percentage decrease in population, 1999–2009
Belarusians	40.6 per cent
Germans	49.5 per cent (having decreased by 67.2 per cent between 1989–1999)
Poles	28 per cent
Russians	15.3 per cent
Ukrainians	39.1 per cent

It is worth noting that for all these groups Russian was the language of interethnic communication (язык межнационального / межэтнического общения).

2. There has been a large influx of Kazakh repatriates, most of whom – with the exception of those who have returned to the Republic of Kazakhstan from the Russian Federation – experience serious difficulties acquiring basic proficiency in standard Kazakh and Russian.
3. The proportion of the Turkic section of the population (Uzbeks, Uyghurs, Turks, Azerbaijanis) has increased relative to the ethnic Kazakh population as a result of a high birthrate and inward migration. These immigrants tend to settle in discrete communities.

Despite this last trend, Kazakhstan, like all the countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States, is becoming increasingly mono-ethnic. The population, including members of non-Kazakh communities, is becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to know the state language. Proficiency in Kazakh enhances career prospects in the public service and the private sector alike; there is a growing interest in Kazakh as the basis of shared cultural and spiritual values of the Kazakh people; the state language has a vital part to play in the consolidation of Kazakhstani society and the cultivation of patriotism. Slowly but surely the Kazakh language is consolidating its dominance in the linguistic environment.

The current language policy of Kazakhstan reflects the demographic and linguistic complexity of the country. Increased use of the state language aims to consolidate social cohesion and foster patriotism; the prominence of the Kazakh language is gradually being consolidated in the public sphere. All measures aimed at raising the status of the Kazakh language as the national/state language are complemented by steps to provide favourable conditions for other languages and to ensure their survival in the informational and linguistic landscape of the country.

### *2.3. Kazakh post-Soviet space and the policy of repatriation*

At present, many post-Soviet countries are in the process of drafting policies that reflect how the newly independent states conceptualize and respond to the ethnic and linguistic diversity of their populations. These policies in turn impact on how the individual in society defines his/her self, interacts with society and identifies his/her place in the social community (Erikson 1994; Guboglo 2003).

In the context of the state's desire to establish or restore the culture of the titular and dominant ethnic group, the problem of repatriation, and in particular of the sociolinguistic adaptation of repatriates in their historical motherland, is a major concern.

The results of a survey conducted in 2009–2010 among immigrants in Kazakhstan elicited their reasons for returning to their historic homeland. Many respondents expressed the need to move to Kazakhstan in order to preserve their Kazakh identity, which they define as ethnic Kazakh (38 per cent).

The repatriation of Kazakhs is a multifaceted process with a long history: it began in the Soviet period of collectivization; the second phase dates from 1962 with the worsening of Soviet–Chinese relations and a shift in the Chinese leadership's policies toward ethnic minorities in China. In April 1962, the Soviet–Chinese border was redrawn, leading to the resettlement of refugees in the Kazakh countryside, where most of them came to be engaged in animal husbandry. They included teachers, doctors, lawyers, farmers and representatives of other professions (Mendikulova 1997: 135). The third phase of the resettlement of ethnic Kazakhs to their historical homeland began in the early 1990s with the promulgation of Kazakhstan's independence. This was the beginning of important changes in all spheres of public life and the growth of Kazakhstan's international standing.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Sector-oriented Programme of the Republic of Kazakhstan's migration policy for 2001–2010 – electronic resource: <<http://www.enbek.gov.kz>>; some aspects of repatriation of the ethnic Kazakhs to the historical motherland: <<http://portal.mfa.kz>>.

Despite many attempts to conceptualize and categorize the realities of international migration, there is still no consensus on key concepts associated with the various types of migrant, such as *immigrant*, *refugee*, *foreigner*; there is no single criterion for their classification in statistical data; there is no agreement on the temporal and spatial considerations which impact on different categories of migration. With the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the Migration of the Population (henceforth 'Law on Population Migration') on 13 December 1997, the concept of *oralman* was first introduced into Kazakh public discourse. Previously in the Kazakh lexicon the terms *compatriots*, *refugees*, *repatriated*, *ethnic Kazakhs* had dominated. These terms do not, in our opinion, reflect the exact nature of this concept.

The Kazakh word *oralman* means 'returner'. In the above-mentioned legal document this term refers to the following: 'foreigners or stateless persons of Kazakh ethnicity, who were permanently resident abroad at the time of the acquisition of sovereignty of the Republic of Kazakhstan and who have arrived in Kazakhstan to take up permanent residence' (Law on Population Migration 1997). In other words, an *oralman* is necessarily of ethnic Kazakh descent; people of any other ethnic origin, even if their parents or ancestors lived in the territory of Kazakhstan, are not considered *oralmans* on their return to Kazakhstan and, consequently, they do not have rights to certain benefits, subsidies or grants.

Since the establishment of the sovereign Republic of Kazakhstan the number of *oralmans* has soared and today's estimate stands at nearly one million (The Republic of Kazakhstan Census of 2009: 15). Sources in the Migration Police Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan's Internal Affairs Ministry report that 210,225 ethnic Kazakh families (824,170 people) from countries in the far- and near-abroad have settled in the Republic. The majority of these come from countries with large Kazakh diasporas: Uzbekistan (126,790 families; 494,565 people), China (26,764 families; 85,487 people), Mongolia (22,124 families; 110,856 people), Turkmenistan (16,232 families), Russia (11,065 families) and Tajikistan (2,765 families) (Inquiry to the Republic of Kazakhstan Ministry of Internal Affairs' Migration Committee of 20 March 2011).

Statistics reveal that prior to 1995 the migration of ethnic Kazakhs was predominantly from countries outside the former Soviet space; whereas,

since 1995, there has been an increase of immigrants from countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The stages of this recent repatriation process can be classified as follows:

Stage I	1991–1996	104,009 people (12.6 per cent of total number of <i>oralmans</i> )
Stage II	1997–2005	382,175 people (46.2 per cent of total number of <i>oralmans</i> )
Stage III	2006–2010	337,986 people (41.0 per cent of total number of <i>oralmans</i> ).

As we can see, the number of *oralmans* has been steadily increasing over the last few years; this is in part connected with socioeconomic changes in Kazakhstan that have fuelled their desire to return to their historic homeland.

The all-national policy to facilitate the repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs is informed by historic, cultural, socioeconomic, political, demographic and ethnopsychological considerations, as well as a concern to provide a foundation for a particular vision of the country's future. First, immigration increases the total population in general and the proportion of ethnic Kazakhs relative to the total population. Second, the *oralmans* contribute to the growth of national literature, art, music, science, education and business in their historical motherland. Third, the repatriation of considerable numbers of ethnic Kazakhs contributes to the formation of a unified/unitary Kazakh-speaking environment along with the creation of conditions to foster the favourable development of the *oralmans'* self-awareness in terms of language and culture. These are all seen as benefits.

On the other hand, ethnic Kazakh immigrants face the challenges of adaptation and integration in their historical motherland. These challenges are exacerbated by attitudes toward the *oralmans* in certain sections of the local/host population and in some officials who do not recognize them as their own. This results in tense relations between the local Kazakhs and the *oralmans*; it also leads to the formation of a segregated diaspora-type mode of life for the *oralmans*, generates feelings of detachedness and makes inter-group communication difficult. Difficulties addressing the *oralmans'* problems arise at several levels: at the most local levels, with regard to the well-being of a particular section of the population; at the national level, with the problems of social and material costs, political stability and national security; and at the inter-state level, with the problem of the lowering of the social status of representatives of the Kazakh diaspora abroad.

Ethnic Kazakhs in Uzbekistan, who mostly live in the regions of the Aral Sea and Kyzyl-Kum desert, account for their moving by referencing economic, environmental and interethnic factors. The sustainability of the Kazakh diaspora has been compromised in recent years by the decline in the number of schools in which the Kazakh language is taught, the lack of textbooks in the Kazakh language and, since 1996, by problems associated with the transition in Uzbek educational institutions to the Latin script.

The growth in the flow of immigrants from Turkmenistan to Kazakhstan is also due to a sharp deterioration of the economic situation in that republic.

There is no doubt that in returning to their historical homeland the *oralmans* face sociocultural, socioeconomic and psychological challenges. Almost all the *oralmans*, while adapting to new forms of daily life, experience highly stressful situations in their new social and psychological context. All experience culture shock that may result in a failure to learn the language and/or adopt new cultural values; some suffer exclusion, abuse or conflict. All of these factors often lead to social isolation.

According to the results of polls conducted by the sociologists Utalieva and Moldabekov (2009: 199), the most acute problem facing *oralmans* on their return to Kazakhstan is securing employment (40.5 per cent of those polled). The next most marked sets of problems are associated with the as yet imperfect legal framework governing the procedures for return and assimilation/integration (18.8 per cent). These problems are followed by others: filling out forms (11.2 per cent), the ambivalent attitude of the local population to *oralmans* (11.1 per cent), ignorance of the right to education (9.4 per cent), citizenship (8.8 per cent), lack of money (7.6 per cent), the language barrier (7.1 per cent), ignorance of their rights to free medical care (3.5 per cent) and to training and retraining in accordance with the needs of the labour market (1.8 per cent) (Utalieva and Moldabekov 2009: 199).

Today, national government policy aims to intensify the repatriation of 5 million ethnic Kazakhs abroad to their historic homeland. This policy has created a basic legal framework and infrastructure to attract *oralmans*. Increasing the Kazakh ethnic population has improved the demographic balance in the country. But, nevertheless, such a policy requires the state

to refine and review its approaches to the challenges of repatriation which it groups into three strands:

1. the organization of the transportation of *oralmans* to their historic homeland
2. the resettlement and adaptation of *oralmans* to local conditions by providing them with housing, employment and training
3. the provision or restoration of citizenship rights.

In addition to the sociocultural and psychological challenges, the language question is another critical aspect of the *oralman's* adaptation process. The integration of ethnic Kazakhs in Kazakh society involves multiple complex processes in which language is one of the important components of ethnic identity, ethnodifferentiation and ethnointegration. Official policy now conceives of the cultural and linguistic adaptation of immigrants to Kazakh customs and traditions as a strategic goal and a prerequisite for repatriates to have equal opportunities for successful living.

Awareness of the link between social stability and cohesion on the one hand and the requirement to facilitate the social, cultural and linguistic adaptation of *oralmans* on the other has informed the Republic of Kazakhstan's legislation on the procedures for the integration of new citizens:<sup>3</sup> it has designed national programmes on repatriation and adaptation;<sup>4</sup> it has established research centres to study the attendant political, legal, sociological and cultural-historical impacts. The number

3 The 1997 Law of Population Migration. e-resource: <<http://www.zakon.kz>>; the Decree of President N. A. Nazarbayev on the Quota of Immigrants for 2000 'The quotas for immigrants' of 17 June 2000, No.128. *Government Herald*, 2000 (6); the Government Decree of the Republic of Kazakhstan for a Framework for the Repatriation of Ethnic Kazakhs to the Historic Motherland of 16 September 1998, e-resource: <<http://www.enbek.gov.kz>>.

4 Government Decree of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the Creation of Public Centres for the Adaptation and Integration of *oralmans* in Kazakhstan under the Migration Committee of the Ministry of Labour and Social Relief of the Republic of Kazakhstan, issued 29 September 2007, No.859, e-resource: <<http://www.kazakhstan.news-city.info>>.

of publications focusing on repatriation increased during the last five years, demonstrating the urgency of this issue (e.g. Doszhanov 2008; Mendikulova and Ismagulov 2008; Utaliyeva, Moldabekov 2009; Kakimzhanova 2009).

### 3. Methodology

The central objective of our study is to examine the ethnolinguistic self-identification of *oralmans* and to analyse the importance of the Kazakh language in the formation of identity. We administered a survey (questionnaire), informed by the findings of previously published research, in order to ascertain which factors have the most pronounced impact on the development of ethnolinguistic identity. We gathered data on respondents' attitudes to languages and the relative social prestige of competing languages in our survey population. A Russian-language version of Berry's questionnaire (Berry 1997), adapted for use in post-Soviet countries, was used as a basis for our survey.

Other research instruments included informal interviews conducted with sixty-five respondents between the ages of sixteen and sixty; additionally, 130 of the respondents were asked to write an ethnobiography in which they answered the questions 'Who am I?' (e.g., 'I am a Kazakh. What does this mean for me?') [Russian «Кто я?» (к примеру, Я – казах, что это для меня значит?»). Kazakh «Мен кіммін? » (Мысалы, Мен қазақтын, мен үшін бұның маңызы не?].

#### 3.1. *The questionnaire*

The questionnaire was validated by a group of Kazakh sociolinguists working under Suleimenova within the framework of the International Association for the Promotion of Cooperation with Scientists from the

Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (INTAS) (Suleimenova et al. 2005b).

Questionnaires could be completed in Kazakh or Russian and were distributed according to the language preferences of the respondents. Beforehand, participants were advised of the purpose and objectives of the study.

The questionnaire asked respondents 282 questions. The questionnaire combined open- and closed-type questions on the following fields:

1. *sociodemographic characteristics*: respondents supplied information on their gender, age, family status, education, nationality and length of residence in Kazakhstan
2. *attitudes to Kazakh and Russian*: respondents assessed the value, prestige and spread of languages, and made judgments on the necessity (or otherwise) of knowing Kazakh and Russian
3. *language selection in various domains and frequency of use*: respondents supplied information on their use of their languages when communicating with relatives, friends, reading books, watching/reading mass media (the questions asked *oralmans* to respond with reference to Kazakh, Russian and the language of the country where they had lived before returning to Kazakhstan; respondents were not asked to comment on their use of languages such as English or German)
4. *proficiency in the languages*: respondents indicated how proficient they were in each of the languages
5. *social contacts*: respondents characterized their interactions with the local population and other ethnic groups as well as commenting on their auto- and heterostereotypes
6. *additional questions*: respondents supplied information on their legal, social, socioeconomic, political and religious status.

Closed questions offered from two to five answers for respondents to select. See Appendix 1 for examples of survey questions.

The questionnaire was administered between January 2009 and December 2010 in six regions of Kazakhstan. Given the diversity of the linguistic situations in different regions we targeted the following:

1. North Kazakhstan *oblast'*: the northern region of Kazakhstan shares a border with the Russian Federation, and consequently Russian has high prominence among this population
2. East Kazakhstan *oblast'*: the eastern region shares a border with the People's Republic of China
3. Mangistau *oblast'*: the western region of the country
4. South Kazakhstan *oblast'*: the southern region where the Kazakh language has high prominence and which shares a border with Uzbekistan
5. Akmolinsk *oblast'*: the central region of Kazakhstan
6. Astana city: the educational and cultural centre of the country

The questionnaire was administered to students in classrooms in groups of fifteen to twenty people and to the adult population through government agencies. Many of these were resident in areas of the country where *oralmans* are densely populated, as special villages were built to accommodate them (for example, in the East Kazakhstan region, North Kazakhstan and others).

The data were analysed using SPSS. Open questions were analysed qualitatively.

### *3.2. Demographic data on respondents*

Analysis of the age profile of respondents who participated in the survey is presented in Table 3. The 1,000 respondents were aged between sixteen and sixty.

Table 3 Age profile of participants in research

Age group of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Persons under 18 years	16.9 per cent
Persons 19 to 25 years	39.8 per cent
Persons 26 to 34 years	14.2 per cent
Persons 35 to 45 years	12.6 per cent
Persons 46 to 60 years	16.5 per cent

Participants in the research included minors, young adults, middle-aged people, people of pre-retirement and retirement age. The greatest number of respondents were in the age group nineteen to twenty-five (39.8 per cent). This sample included students at Kazakhstani universities studying humanities (philology, journalism, law), as well as students specializing in the sciences (mathematics, physics, biology). The research team had a particular interest in the student population because one of its primary interests was the process of the formation of social, ethnic, political and ideological views. It should be noted that the age profile of respondents has impacted on the outcomes of the study.

In terms of gender demographics, 52.4 per cent of respondents were female and 47.6 per cent male.

The questionnaire was administered among repatriates from China, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Russian Federation (RF). The proportion of respondents from each of these countries of origin mirrors the proportion of *oralmans* from each of those countries currently settled in the Republic of Kazakhstan: 600 *oralmans* from Uzbekistan; 135 from Mongolia; 104 from China; 77 from Turkmenistan; 53 from the RF; and 31 from Tajikistan.

#### 4. Findings

We wanted to ascertain whether a person's privileging of one of a range of languages as native language was an important factor in the process of ethnic and linguistic self-identification; we were also interested in which languages our respondents viewed as their native language in order to characterize the current sociolinguistic standing of previously ethnodispersed groups. Do they preserve an ethnic and linguistic distinctiveness from the historical homeland, are they fully assimilated or do they maintain intermediate positions between these two extremes of a continuum?

The concept of native language (родной язык: *rodnoy yazyk*) has two basic definitions (see also Zoumpalidis, current volume). First, native language is understood as the language learned by a child in early childhood, unconsciously, by imitating the speech of adults. This language may, but need not, be retained in adulthood. This language is usually that of the mother, grandmother and family. This first language learned in childhood is invariably associated with an emotional attachment.

The second definition of *rodnoy yazyk* denotes the language identified with an ethnic group, that is the language which occupies an important place in the linguistic consciousness of a national or ethnic group and their conceptual differentiation of 'my' and 'foreign' (Suleimenova et al. 2007: 287). The Kazakhstani sociolinguist Khasanov (1998: 3) defines this second understanding of native language (*rodnoy yazyk*) as follows:

Родной язык – это любой живой язык, исторически принадлежащий этносу (племени, народности, народу или нации), независимо от его численности, закрепленный в его этническом сознании, употребляемый им в различных сферах жизни (по крайней мере, в семейно-бытовом общении) для полного удовлетворения потребностей. Это исконно общее средство для всех членов этноса – без различия мест проживания, пола, возраста, вероисповедания и убеждений, партийной принадлежности, профессии и рода деятельности, социального и имущественного положения.

A native language is any living language, historically belonging to an ethnic group (tribe, people, populace or nation), regardless of its numerical size, that is embedded in its ethnic consciousness and used in various spheres of life (at least in family communication) to meet their needs. This is traditionally a common tool for all members of an ethnic group – without reference to their places of residence, gender, age, religion or convictions, political affiliation, profession, occupation, social or property status.

From this perspective, one of the main features of ethnicity is the language associated with it (Khasanov 1998: 21). In our study we use the term native language (родной язык) in this second sense, to refer to the Kazakh language for *oralmans*.

Most of the respondents regard the Kazakh language as one of the essential components of ethnic self-identification and of the preservation of the ethnos itself as evidenced in responses to the following closed question:

'What do you consider most important in determining membership of an ethnic group?' [Russian: «Что Вы считаете наиболее важным при определении принадлежности к этносу?»; Kazakh: «Сіз өз ұлтыңызды анықтау кезінде ең маңызды деп нені есептейсіз?»]

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they considered the answers listed in Table 4 important or not important.

Table 4 Possible responses to the question: 'What do you consider most important in determining membership of an ethnic group?'

Knowledge of native language	Знание родного языка	Тұған тілді білу
Observing customs and traditions	Соблюдение национальных традиций	Ұлттық салт дәстүрді сактау
Religion of ancestors	Религия предков	Бұрынғы дін
Cuisine	Кухня	Азық
Living in the same territory	Проживание на одной территории	Бір аумақта өмір сүру
National consciousness and self-consciousness	Национальное сознание и самосознание	Ұлттық сана және сана сезім
Other	Другое	Басқалар

As can be seen from Figure 1 below, a sizable majority of *oralmans* identifies knowledge of the Kazakh language (96 per cent), of popular traditions (90.7 per cent) or shared religious belief and practices (72.5 per cent) and a consciousness of belonging to an ethnic group in terms of a shared mentality, behaviour and culture (87 per cent) as important markers of identity. In contrast, a minority of *oralmans* believes that living in a given territory or being able to cook dishes associated with an ethnic group are prerequisites for group membership.

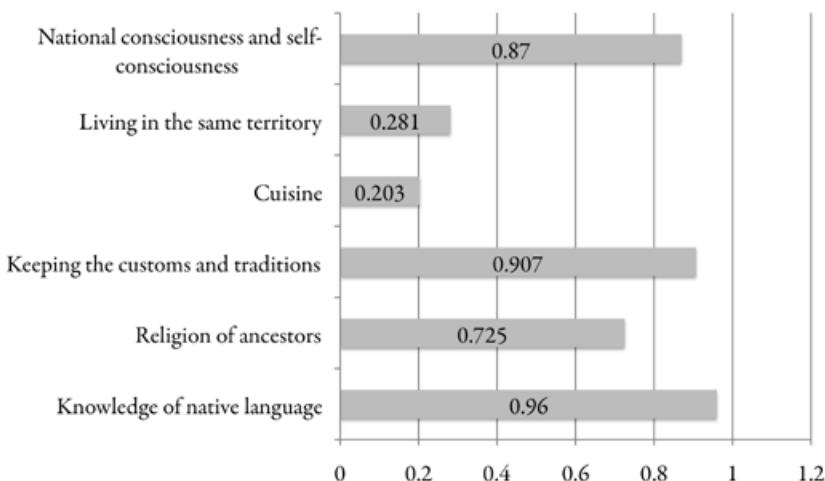


Figure 1 Factors deemed to determine membership of an ethnic group

#### *4.1. The Kazakh language and its role in the ethnic self-identification of the repatriates*

The findings of the questionnaire present a consistent picture of the perceived relationship between identifying Kazakh as one's native language and self-identifying as an ethnic Kazakh. This is evidenced by the data in Table 5, which summarizes responses to the question as to which language respondents considered their native language.

Table 5 The language *oralmans* consider their native language

What language do you consider your native language?	Percentage of respondents
Kazakh	96 per cent
Two native languages: Kazakh and Russian, or Kazakh and Tajik	2.6 per cent
Russian	0.7 per cent
Tajik	0.7 per cent

These data support the argument that, for the majority of respondents, language is inseparable from ethnos, and that linguistic and ethnic identification are inseparable. Indeed, the Kazakh-speaking group of respondents is characterized by a high degree of monolingual and monoethnic identification.

As Eriksson in this volume argues, 'applying a label to oneself may not fully reflect the complex internal self-identification a person may have on an emotional level'. In our target group, a minority of respondents had difficulty identifying their native language: they were undecided as to whether they should indicate the L1 of their mother or father or whether they should identify the language of the ethnic group(s) with whom they identify. For these Russian-speaking and Tajik-speaking *oralmans* their linguistic and ethnic identities did not necessarily coincide:

1. У меня отец – казах, мама – таджичка ... Родной язык – таджикский ... Я только его и знаю хорошо ... Немного знаю русский и казахский ... Здесь научился ... Учился в таджикском классе ...'

- [1. My father is Kazakh, my mother is Tajik ... My native language is Tajik ... It is the only language I know well ... I know some Russian and Kazakh ... I have learnt these here ... I attended a Tajik class ...]

— State sector employee, aged twenty-eight,  
moved from Tajikistan in 2009

2. Отец – казах, мать – иранка ... В данный момент считаю казахский язык родным ... Хотя я понимаю только южный казахский язык, который более похож на узбекский ... Знаю русский, узбекский, понимаю казахский ... Я бы даже сказал, что у меня два родных языка ... В первую очередь, русский язык. Потому что я в садик ходил, где говорил на русском, в школу ходил в русскую ... А так как мы переехали на свою историческую родину, получается и казахский теперь родным ... Мы же теперь здесь живем, потихоньку учимся казахскому языку ...'

- [2. My father is Kazakh, mother is Iranian ... Now I consider Kazakh my native language ... Though I understand only the southern dialect of Kazakh which is more like Uzbek ... I know Russian, Uzbek, understand Kazakh ... I could even say I have two native languages ... First is Russian ... Because I used to go to a kindergarten where I spoke Russian, then I attended a Russian-medium school ... ... And because we moved to our historical motherland, so Kazakh should be our native language ... We are residents of the country, and are learning some Kazakh ...]

— Builder, aged fifty-nine, moved from Uzbekistan in 2009

In this context we note asymmetry in the relationship between an individual's identification with language and ethnos on the one hand, or nation on the other hand.

In response to the question: 'Are you proficient in Kazakh?' [Russian: «Владеете ли вы казахским языком?»; Kazakh: «Қазақ тілін білесіз бе?»], the majority of informants stated that they had mastered Kazakh. When analysed in terms of their country of origin, these included 100 per cent of those from Uzbekistan, 99 per cent of respondents from Turkmenistan, 98 per cent of respondents from Mongolia, 97.8 per cent of respondents from China and 89 per cent of respondents from Tajikistan. In marked contrast, 42.6 per cent of the ethnic Kazakhs who had moved to the historical motherland from the Russian Federation claimed to have no knowledge of Kazakh.

Respondents were asked to assess their language proficiency in Kazakh and other languages on a five-point assessment scale by ticking one of the responses listed in Table 6:

Table 6 Responses to the question: 'Are you proficient in Kazakh?'

Available responses	Percentage of respondents
I speak, write, read and think fluently	33.8 per cent
I speak, read, but do not write	22.4 per cent
I speak, write and read with some difficulty	28.3 per cent
I understand the spoken language but do not speak, and do not write	5.7 per cent
I do not know the language	9.8 per cent

Russian	Kazakh
свободно говорю, пишу, читаю, думаю	Еркін сөйлемін, жазамын, оқимын, ойлаймын
говорю, читаю, но не пишу	Сөйлемін, оқимын, бірақ жазбаймын
говорю, пишу и читаю с некоторыми затруднениями	Сөйлемін, аздаған қыншылықтармен жазамын және оқимын

понимаю разговорную речь, но не говорю и не пишу	Ауызекі сейлеу тілін түсінемін, бірақ сөйлемсімін және жазбаймын
не владею языком	Білмеймін

It is worth noting that in 90 per cent of the interviews with respondents from China and Mongolia respondents had claimed they had difficulty writing Kazakh. The alphabet/script may be an issue here: the Latin script is used in Turkey, in most Western European countries and in America, but in China, Afghanistan, Iran and other Arab countries the Arabic script is used, whereas in Kazakhstan the Cyrillic alphabet is used.

If one leaves aside questions of literacy skills and focuses on respondents' self-assessment of their ability to express themselves in Kazakh, the following picture emerges: 84.5 per cent of respondents have an excellent command of Kazakh. It is respondents who have no knowledge of Kazakh who consider Russian, Tajik or other languages to be their native language. Respondents who claim no or poor proficiency in Kazakh are those for whom there is a split between their ethnic and linguistic identities and for whom it is difficult to provide an unequivocal statement of their linguistic identity.

During the interviews *oralmans* were asked about their attitudes toward the necessity of learning Kazakh and/or Russian. Table 7 provides a summary of responses.

Table 7 Attitude of *oralmans* to the necessity of learning Kazakh and Russian

Groups of respondents	It is necessary to learn Kazakh	It is necessary to learn Russian	It is not necessary to learn Russian
From China	100 per cent	77.6 per cent	22.4 per cent
From Mongolia	100 per cent	82.3 per cent	17.7 per cent
From Uzbekistan	100 per cent	88.5 per cent	11.5 per cent
From Tajikistan	100 per cent	95.5 per cent	4.5 per cent
From Turkmenistan	100 per cent	91.8 per cent	8.2 per cent
From Russia	100 per cent	97.7 per cent	2.3 per cent

Table 7 shows that the necessity of learning Kazakh is recognized by all the respondents irrespective of their country of origin or of their level of proficiency in the language. This points to the linguistic reality: that knowledge of Kazakh is considered essential if one wants to thrive in Kazakhstan.

In order to obtain calibrated data on *oralmans'* attitudes to their languages, respondents were asked to evaluate languages along eleven continua based on eleven pairs of characteristics (see Appendix 2).

When asked to evaluate the Kazakh language, respondents allude to characteristics such as valuable (98 per cent), important (97.3 per cent), easy to learn (94.7 per cent) and useful (97 per cent). *Oralmans* from Uzbekistan, Mongolia and Turkmenistan comment on Kazakh being easy to learn. This is possibly accounted for by the fact that the titular languages of these states and Kazakh all belong to the Altai language family. At the same time, a third of respondents do not consider Kazakh widespread, developed or modern. A developed and widespread language, according to the interviewees, is a language that is used in published textbooks and fiction, mass media (TV, magazines, newspapers) and Internet resources to which they have access.

#### *4.2. Russian-language proficiency of oralmans*

For many repatriates an important part of their adaptation and integration into Kazakhstani society is associated with their level of proficiency in Russian. The repatriates from China, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan living in the northern regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan are experiencing serious difficulties as Russian is used as a means of interethnic communication among the population of that region. The consequences of this situation are predictable: the repatriates, instead of actively interacting with the local population and adopting new standards, are leading secluded lives and making up localized communities. These communities pose a threat to social cohesion and/or social order.

Most of the respondents from China (93.5 per cent) have virtually no command of Russian, and a mere 8.5 per cent claimed to have an middling

command of the language. 60 per cent of respondents from Mongolia do not know Russian, 1.6 per cent have a good command and the rest speak Russian, but with difficulty. The responses of repatriates from Uzbekistan show similar trends: only 0.6 per cent of these respondents said they knew Russian, and 41 per cent said they could speak, write and read with difficulty. Of these repatriates, 42.7 per cent claimed not to have any knowledge of Russian.

The self-assessed level of proficiency in Russian of respondents from Turkmenistan was much higher: 31.4 per cent claimed to speak, write and think fluently in Russian. In our view, this is the effect of Soviet language policy. The same effect is observed with respondents from Tajikistan.

In response to the question on whether they had encountered any difficulties because they do not know Russian, almost half of the repatriates from Uzbekistan (53.5 per cent) and China (45.7 per cent), and around one third of those from Mongolia (29.8 per cent) and Tajikistan (32.8 per cent), answered that they had. In the respondents' views, not knowing Russian creates difficulties when seeking employment (56 per cent), information (34 per cent) and the social welfare benefits provided to repatriates (32 per cent), and/or within the education system (23 per cent).

The necessity of knowing Russian drew variable responses: 22.4 per cent of the respondents from China, 17.7 per cent from Mongolia, 11.5 per cent from Uzbekistan, 8.2 per cent from Turkmenistan and a small number of those from Tajikistan and Russia (4.5 and 2.3 per cent respectively) showed a negative attitude to Russian; some express aggression towards the Russian-speaking population; some state that they do not understand Russian and, moreover, will not speak it. This antipathy suggests that for these respondents the language of 'their own' people is the singular and essential medium through which their ethnicity is expressed. Our findings confirm those of other Kazakhstani linguists who posit that linguistic and ethnic identities as realized in attitudes to Kazakh and Russian might be in conflict: there are at least two linguistic consciousnesses, and, consequently, two linguistic personalities, present in contemporary Kazakhstan which display either covert or overt antagonism (Suleimenova 2010b: 158).

Having said that, on the whole, respondents are tolerant of Russian and allude to the latter's valuable parameters, such as its development and

widespread character. 44.5 per cent of the repatriates from China, 26.9 per cent from Mongolia, 22.2 per cent from Uzbekistan, 32.4 per cent from Tajikistan and 39.8 per cent from Turkmenistan believe that knowledge of Russian is essential to securing a good job and a high quality of education. Russian as a medium of communication is still widespread in the country: it is in active use in domains such as government, business and education.

This study identified three levels of proficiency in Kazakh and Russian. The first group includes repatriates with dominant Kazakh and a poor command of Russian; the second group includes those who have quite different proficiency levels in Kazakh and Russian; the third group includes people who have dominant Russian and a proficiency in Kazakh adequate for understanding day-to-day communication.

The country of origin is an important factor in determining levels of language proficiency: most *oralmans* in the first group come from China and Turkmenistan; in the second group *oralmans* from Mongolia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan make up the larger part; and the third group is made up exclusively of 'Russian' Kazakhs.

## 5. Conclusions

We conclude that repatriates' linguistic identity is a complex and multi-aspectual process determined by linguistic, sociohistorical, psychological and cultural values.

Results of our survey show that the Kazakh language is one of the most valued aspects of ethnic identity regardless of respondents' levels of proficiency. We would suggest that the small proportion of *oralmans* for whom ethnic and linguistic identity do not coincide (mostly from Russia and Tajikistan) is a result of their personal relation with the Kazakh language having been severed. There is willingness among many of these, however, to conform to social expectations.

The data on the use of Kazakh suggests that identification with the language does not depend on respondents' levels of proficiency in the language but on ethnic self-identification. The findings of our research suggest that *oralmans* ascribe high cultural and symbolic significance to the Kazakh language. The Kazakh language for the *oralman* has not only communicative but also cultural and identity value.

The integration of ethnic Kazakhs into their new social context will inevitably involve the contact of two languages: Kazakh and Russian. The level of proficiency in Russian depends on various extralinguistic factors (method of language acquisition, sociodemographic and professional affiliation, degree of bilingualism, educational level, ethnicity, sociocultural factors).

The language preference of *oralmans* is associated with problems of identification, adaptation and integration into society. In order to better facilitate the successful integration of *oralmans* into Kazakhstani society and to foster a strong national identity and ethnolinguistic affiliation, we would argue that the following measures should be implemented:

1. improve the system of testing to determine the level of language skills of immigrants and for the adoption of citizenship
2. establish a network of language training centres to provide language courses (in Russian and Kazakh) for the *oralmans*. There are currently only fourteen such centres and they are located in temporary reception centres for *oralmans*. Research shows that *oralmans* learn languages in educational institutions (kindergarten, school, college, university), or when communicating with the local population. It is necessary to take into account social, professional and demographic factors in the formation of groups of language learners.
3. develop and implement training programmes for *oralmans* in Kazakh and Russian
4. organize special courses to assist *oralmans* to overcome psychological barriers and to develop Kazakh-language literacy skills
5. promote interaction with countries where there are large ethnic Kazakh diasporas, as well as with the European Bureau for Language Minorities and other international organizations

6. develop cross-cultural communication between ethnic Kazakhs living abroad and the indigenous population through the use of existing Internet, print and television resources, and by creating new ones. Communication in a single information field will facilitate the process of integration of *oralmans* into a unified Kazakhstani nation
7. create the conditions for the development of tolerance towards immigrants among the indigenous populations by establishing the primacy of national priorities
8. create conditions for improving national education, literature and publishing in the field
9. facilitate the formation of a positive image of the Kazakh *oralman* as a patriot and guardian of Kazakh culture and language

In this chapter we hope to have demonstrated the importance of identifying and analysing the value-orientations and identification strategies of *oralmans* as one subset of Kazakhstani citizens. This research makes an important contribution to the formulation and articulation of language policy in the country.

## Appendix 1: examples of survey questions

### *English*

#### 1. Closed type

Do you agree with the opinion that it is necessary to speak with children in your family only in your native language?

Don't agree      Agree      Do not know      Other \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree with the opinion that a person must master his/her native language?

Don't agree      Agree      Do not know      Other \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have difficulties due to ignorance of the Kazakh language?

Never      Seldom      Often      Always      Do not know

Do you have difficulties due to ignorance of the Russian language?

Never      Seldom      Often      Always      Do not know

## 2. Open type

How many years did you live abroad before moving to Kazakhstan?

How many years have you lived in Kazakhstan?

Name the languages that you know.

## Russian

### 1. Вопросы закрытого типа

Согласны ли с мнением, что в семье с детьми надо говорить исключительно на языке своей национальности?

Не согласен    Согласен    Затрудняюсь ответить    Другое (впишите) \_\_\_\_

Согласны ли Вы с мнением, что человек должен владеть языком своей национальности?

Не согласен    Согласен    Затрудняюсь ответить    Другое (впишите) \_\_\_\_

Испытывали ли Вы трудности из-за незнания казахского языка?

Никогда      Редко      Часто      Всегда      Затрудняюсь ответить

Испытывали ли Вы трудности из-за незнания русского языка?

Никогда      Редко      Часто      Всегда      Затрудняюсь ответить

## 2. Открытого типа

Сколько лет Вы жили в стране, из которой Вы переехали в Казахстан?

Сколько лет Вы живете в Казахстане?

Перечислите языки, которыми Вы владеете.

## *Kazakh*

### 1. Жабық ттиптегі сұрақтар:

Отбасында бала тек өз үлттының тілінде гана сөйлеуі тиіс деген пікірмен келісесіз бе?

Келіспеймін    Келісемін    Жаяуп беруге қиналып тұрмын    Басқа (жазыңыз) \_\_

Адам өз үлттының тілін білуі қажет деген пікірге келісесіз бе?

Келіспеймін    Келісемін    Жаяуп беруге қиналып тұрмын    Басқа (жазыңыз) \_\_

Сіз қазақ тілін білмеуіңізден қындық көрдіңіз бе?

Ешқашан    Сирек    Жиі    Эрдайым    Жаяуп беруге қыналалип тұрмын

Сіз орыс тілін білмеуіңізден қындық көрдіңіз бе?

Ешқашан      Сирек      Жиі      Әрдайым      Жауап беруге қыналағып тұрмын

2. Ашық типтегі сұраптар:

Сіз Қазақстанға көшіп келген шет елде қанша тұрдыңыз?

Қазақстанда қанша жыл тұрасыз?

Қандай тілдерді білесіз?

## Appendix 2: evaluation of attitudes to languages

### *English*

Evaluate each of the following pairs of opposite qualities, and put an X on the line in the place that best indicates your opinion. First, read the example.

Example: the Kazakh language is:

easy    \_ \_ \_ \_    difficult

If, in your opinion, the Kazakh language is not easy and not difficult insert an 'X' on the line in the middle:

easy    \_ \_ X \_ \_    difficult.

If you think the Kazakh language is easy insert an X towards the left side, closer to the word 'easy':

easy    X \_ \_ \_ \_    difficult or easy    \_ X \_ \_ \_    difficult.

If you think the Kazakh language is difficult, insert an X towards the right side, closer to the word 'difficult':

easy    \_ \_ \_ X \_    difficult or easy    \_ \_ \_ \_ X    difficult.

i. The Kazakh language is:

useful	-----	useless
melodious	-----	monotonous
beautiful	-----	ugly
easy	-----	difficult
soft	-----	hard
developed	-----	undeveloped
important	-----	unimportant
widespread	-----	uncirculated
modern	-----	outmoded
valuable	-----	not valuable
expressive	-----	inexpressive

*Russian*

Оцените каждую из перечисленных ниже пар, противоположных по смыслу качеств, и поставьте галочку на той линии, которая лучше отражает Ваше мнение. Прочтайте сначала пример.

Пример: Казахский язык:

легкий    \_ \_ \_ \_    трудный.

Если, по Вашему мнению, казахский язык не легкий и не трудный, поставьте галочку на линии в середине:

легкий    \_ \_ X \_ \_    трудный.

Если казахский язык, по-вашему, скорее легкий, чем трудный, поставьте галочку на левой стороне, чем ближе к слову «легкий», тем легче казахский язык:

легкий    X\_\_\_\_\_ трудный или легкий    \_X\_\_\_\_\_ трудный.

Если казахский язык, по-вашему, скорее трудный, чем легкий, поставьте галочку на правой стороне, чем ближе к слову «трудный», тем труднее казахский язык:

легкий    \_\_\_\_ X\_    трудный или легкий    \_\_\_\_ X    трудный

#### 1. Казахский язык:

полезный	-----	бесполезный
мелодичный	-----	монотонный
красивый	-----	некрасивый
легкий	-----	трудный
мягкий	-----	твёрдый
развитый	-----	неразвитый
важный	-----	неважный
распространенный	-----	нераспространенный
современный	-----	устаревший
ценный	-----	малоценный
выразительный	-----	невыразительный

#### Kazakh

Сапа мағынасында қарай қарама-қарсы орналасқан төмөндегі жұптың әрқайсысын бағалаңыз, сіздің пікіріңізді дұрыс сипаттаған сзызыққа қарай қанат белгісін қойыңыз.

Мысалы: Орыс тілі

оңай    \_\_\_\_\_ қиын.

Егер, сіздің пікірінізше, орыс тілі оңай емес және қыын емес болса, қанат белгісін ортасындағы сзызыққа белгілейсіз:

оңай    X    қыын.

Егер, сізге орыс тілі неғұрлым қыынға қарағанда оңай болса, қанат белгісін сзызықтың сол жағына белгілейсіз, «Оңай» сөзіне неғұрлым жақын болса, сонымен орыс тілі оңай:

оңай    X    қыын немесе оңай    X    қыын.

Егер, сізге орыс тілі неғұрлым оңайға қарағанда қыын болса, қанат белгісін сзызықтың оң жағына белгілейсіз, «Қыын» сөзіне неғұрлым жақын болса, сонымен орыс тілі қыын:

оңай    X    қыын немесе оңай    X    қыын.

### i. Қазақ тілі:

пайдалы	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	пайдасыз
әүенде	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	қалыпты
әдемі	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	әдемі емес
оңай	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	қыын
жұмсақ	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	қатты
дамыған	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	дамымаған
маңызды	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	маңызсыз
белгілі	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	белгісіз
заманауи	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	ескірген
құнды	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	құнсыз
мәнерлі	<u><u><u><u><u>X</u></u></u></u></u>	мәнерсіз

# Striving for linguistic independence? The Armenian language in post-Soviet Armenia: language policy and language planning

If a child gets an education in a different language [different from the mother tongue] since his/her childhood, he/she thinks in that language. For example, those who graduated from a Russian school think in Russian, and this threatens the preservation of their national identity.

— M. SARGSYAN, quoted in Abrahamyan 2010

## I. Introduction

The linguistic changes and developments implemented by governments, state officials and governmental institutions or agencies can be categorized according to the theoretical linguistic framework of language policy and language planning (henceforth LPP). Language policy is conceived as political institutional intervention into language use, while language planning reflects the deliberate attempt to change linguistic behaviour.

Hornberger (2006) and Haarmann (1986) suggest the following LPP types, which may be usefully deployed in describing Armenian LPP:

- a. Prestige planning focusing on attitudes towards language(s)
- b. Status planning focusing on the use of language(s), i.e. the allocation of domains of language(s) in a given speech community
- c. Acquisition planning focusing on the users of a language, i.e. improving opportunities or incentives to learn language(s)

- d. Corpus planning focusing on the language itself, i.e. relating to the adequacy of the form or structure of a language

Decisions and measures of language policy and language planning reflect the actual ethnosocial setting of a state, since its political leadership may choose either to protect and promote the titular (state) language or explicitly to control and curtail other languages. Observing Armenian language policy since independence, one can see that the main aim for the new state was to have a well-developed and vital Armenian national language, and to reduce the influence of Russian in all domains as far as possible. Russian was, however, not considered an 'enemy' language, as is sometimes said about the Baltic or Central Asian post-Soviet republics. The measures and decisions taken in Armenia clearly aimed at weakening the linguistic vitality and functions of, and consequently also proficiency in, the Russian language in the new Armenian Republic. On the one hand, the language policy of the Republic of Armenia illustrates the state's striving for independence from Russia by linguistic means. On the other hand, changes in language policy in the last two years mirror the economic and political need for good relations with Russia, and this is also expressed by linguistic measures and concessions. The Russian language is still used in the Republic of Armenia, but its role, its status and its vitality cannot be compared to its standing before the fall of the Soviet Union.

Before proposing an approach to Armenian LPP based on a sociolinguistic theoretical framework, I provide a brief historical perspective on the status of Modern Eastern Armenian (MEA) and Russian in Armenia.

### *1.1. Historical sketch of the language situation in Armenia and the development of Modern Eastern Armenian*

Armenian is classified as an independent branch of the Indo-European family of languages. Modern Eastern Armenian (MEA) and Modern Western Armenian (MWA) represent the two literary varieties of Modern Armenian. These have developed as separate literary languages since the eighteenth century. The divergence of Armenian into two major dialectal

blocks, Eastern and Western, reflects historical and political factors in the history of the Armenian people, as much as linguistic developments (Dum-Tragut 2009).

The history of Modern Eastern Armenian is interwoven with the changing status of Russian as a consequence of Tsarist Russian and then Soviet interests in promoting Russian language and culture in Transcaucasia. The development of Modern Eastern Armenian is traditionally subdivided into four major periods which reflect historical and sociopolitical changes in Armenia:

- a. Formation period or Early Modern Eastern Armenian (early eighteenth century to mid-nineteenth century)
- b. Pre-Soviet period (mid-nineteenth century to 1922)
- c. Soviet/Soviet Armenian period (1922–1991)
- d. Post-Soviet period (1991 to date)

Table 1 Modern Eastern Armenian and its interrelation  
with Russian/Soviet language policy

	Formation period	Pre-Soviet period	Soviet period	Post-Soviet period
	Early modern Armenian	Standardization	Standardization and impact of Russian; orthography reform 1922–1924/1940	Standard literary Armenian, puristic tendencies
Centre of LPP	Moscow, Tiflis	Tiflis, Moscow, first Armenian republic 1918–1920	Transcaucasian SFSR (1922–1936); Soviet Armenian Republic (1936–1991)	Republic of Armenia

Status of Modern Armenian	Development of standard opposed to Classical Armenian	Development of literary language	Official language of Armenian SSR; ‘Russian + 1 bilingualism’	State language of the Republic of Armenia
Russian / Soviet policy	Covert Russification: spontaneous; administrative	Overt Russification <i>obrusenie</i> , mainly from 1885	Overt Russification during Stalin era; late 1970s new boom of Russian	No official influence

#### 1.1.1. FORMATION PERIOD

The vernacular of the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire was described in the first half of the eighteenth century in Mxit’ar Sebastac’i’s seminal ‘Grammar of Modern Armenian’ in Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> This variety was conventionalized to ‘pre-standard Western Armenian’ by another Mekhitarist father in Venice in 1866.<sup>2</sup> The main efforts to create and standardize the eastern Armenian vernacular, however, took place only in the mid-nineteenth century, outside of Armenia.

The Nersesyan-School in Tiflis (founded in 1814) and the Łazaryan-Institute in Moscow (founded in 1815) became the centres of the standardization of Eastern Armenian.<sup>3</sup> The dialect of the central Ararat plain, the city dialect of Aštarak,<sup>4</sup> was chosen as the basis for the MEA literary

- 1 Also Mxit’ar of Sebaste. Founder of the Armenian-Catholic congregation called ‘Mekhitarists’ in 1701.
- 2 Aytēnean, A. 1987 (reprint of 1866): *K’nnakan k’erakanut’yun ašxarhabar kam ardi bayeren lezvi*. (Critical grammar of Ašxarhabar or Modern Armenian) Erevan: Erewani hamalsarani hratarakč’ut’yun.
- 3 Until the nineteenth century education was in the hands of the Armenian clergy. During the first decades of the nineteenth century many schools were opened throughout Transcaucasian Armenia including, from the 1850s, regular public three-year elementary schools with instruction in Armenian (Suny 1997: 117–118).
- 4 The leading role of the dialect of Aštarak is commonly explained by the fact that the founder of the Nersesyan-Institute in Tiflis, Nersēs Aštarakec’i, came from the small town of Aštarak.

language. The first book in MEA was written in 1840 by Xač'atur Abovyan,<sup>5</sup> but was immediately banned both by the Armenian clerical elite and the Russian censor for its ‘anti-Russian stance’ and only published posthumously in Tiflis in 1858.<sup>6</sup> Schoolbooks in this newly created normative Eastern Armenian were also banned. It is interesting to note that the first Armenian standard as developed by the scholars of the Nersesyan School was not accepted; on the contrary, they were persecuted by the public authorities of Tsarist Armenia.

#### 1.1.2. PRE-SOVIET PERIOD

This period at the end of the nineteenth century is usually termed *grapayk'ar*, the time of the conflict between a revival of Classical Armenian and the rise of Modern Eastern Armenian.

Again it was in Tiflis that the first texts written in Modern Eastern Armenian appeared in the weekly periodical *Ararat* in 1850. St Palasanean in Tiflis published the first grammar of Modern Eastern Armenian in 1870.<sup>7</sup> It was the accepted norm until M. Abelyan's pioneering writings from 1906 to 1912.<sup>8</sup>

5 The historical novel *Verk' Hayastani* (*Wounds of Armenia*) was the first Armenian secular novel written in the new Eastern Armenian variety. Before writing the novel, Abovyan also tried to write a comparative grammar of Classical Armenian and the newly codified Modern Eastern Armenian in 1839–1840. Abovyan is also regarded the most powerful advocate of the new Armenian variety.

6 Suny, R. G. 1997: 118f. Passages of this novel like the following were removed by Russian censorship: ‘If you are Russian, speak Russian. If you are Turkish, speak Turkish. The Armenian language has its own words ... and if you know your language, if you speak your language, the Russians will snatch the very bread from your hands. They will send you to Siberia.’

7 Palasanean, St 1870. Ėndhanur tesut'yun arewelahay nor gravor lezvi hayoc (*General theory of the new literary Eastern Armenian language*), Tiflis. Palasanean, St 1874. *K'erakanut'yun mayreni lezvi* Tiflis.

8 Among these writings of M. Abelyan: Abelyan, M. 1965. *Hayoc' lezvi tesut'yun*. Erevan: Haykakan SSH GA hratarakč'ut'yun (*Theory of Armenian Language*). Abelyan, M. 1974. *Aşxarhabari şarabyusut'yun*. Erker, Z. 291–572. Erevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakč'ut'yun. (*Syntax of Modern Language*).

During the last decades of the nineteenth century the Russian Empire turned against Armenians and their growing sense of nationalism as a result of the promotion of Armenian language instruction and use. In these decades the national minorities of the Russian Empire were heavily exposed to overt linguistic *obrusenie* (Russification). Armenians living in the Russian Empire had experienced covert Russification since 1800: non-Russians were assimilated into the Russian cultural community; the legal, administrative and military fields were russified. Overt Russification, in cultural and linguistic terms, dates from 1885, when Prince Dodukov-Kosakov, Governor of Transcaucasia, ordered the closure of all Armenian schools and their replacement by Russian schools. Although this decision was reversed only a year later, it triggered anti-Russian sentiments among Armenian intellectuals (Suny 1997a: 129–130).

Modern Eastern Armenian stands in opposition to many spoken dialects and particularly to Classical Armenian, which was still used in church and clerical domains. One of the main aims of Armenian nationalists on the eve of the Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Empire (the so-called Hamidian massacres, 1894–1896) and of the First World War was the establishment of Eastern Armenian as the normative literary language. Armenians were not only fighting for their political independence, but rather for their survival and for the survival of their main ethnic reference point: their homeland, their people and their language.

One should bear in mind that the rigid political demarcation in the Armenian settlement areas between Ottomans, Russians and Persians had an impact on the spread and use of the new literary variety. The political demarcation line gradually became a distinct linguistic demarcation line between two literary standards of Modern Armenian. Linguistically, this period is characterized by the ongoing conventionalization of the vernacular and even of dialectal features in the newly created standard. By conventionalizing these typical features of the eastern Armenian vernacular as a written standard, the already existing linguistic divergence with Western Armenian grew even more.

### 1.1.3. SOVIET PERIOD

During Soviet times, the Armenian language acquired new functions. As the official language of the Armenian Soviet Republic, it gained in importance in various domains of everyday life and administration. The language policy of local leaders was directed at strengthening Armenian as the main means of communication in the Soviet Republic of Armenia, but also as the official language of all Armenians in the world. Modern Eastern Armenian was thus positioned in opposition to the still very prestigious Western Armenian of the western non-communist diaspora, which local Armenian linguists characterized as a seriously moribund language.

These pro-Armenian measures were compromised, however, by Moscow's policy of Russification, particularly during the Stalinist era. The Education Law of 1938 formalized the role of Russian in the Soviet Union; Russian became compulsory for all Soviet school children and students. Thus, the percentage of Russian-medium schools and of Armenians studying through Russian grew steadily. Despite the fact that Eastern Armenian had secured its position as the quasi-official language of Soviet Armenia, in many domains it was threatened by Russian, particularly in the very sensitive domains of education, science, public administration and the military. Russian became the second language in the Republic of Armenia. Up until the end of the 1980s, most ethnic Armenians were more or less bilingual. The education system was based on a Russian framework, and in fact, high proficiency in Russian was a precondition for access to higher education. Furthermore, the educated Armenian elite often preferred to speak Russian rather than Armenian. On the other hand, in 1978 the Soviet government's plan to remove the clause that established the local language as the official state language in the Constitution of Armenia was met with protests and a new wave of Armenian nationalism (Suny 1997b: 374).

The change in linguistic functions as a result of the spread of Armenian to new domains of use on the one hand, and the inescapable influence of Russian both from a functional and linguistic point of view on the other, had a strong impact on many linguistic features of Soviet Armenian. One of the far-reaching reforms during the Soviet period was the Soviet orthography reform of 1922. This reform severed the link between the written

standards of MWA and MEA by abandoning historical, i.e. etymological, writing and the classical letter *viwn*. Some of the mistakes of the early reform were corrected in the second reform in 1940, but the gap between the orthographic norms of Soviet Armenian and those of the Armenian literary language(s) outside of Armenia remains. The lexicon was also affected by a wide range of loan words from Russian, by popular loan translations, and by internationalisms transferred into Armenian through Russian. Changes also evolved in morphology and syntax, triggered by internal linguistic factors such as typological tendencies, but also external linguistic factors such as language contact and pro-Russian language policy (Abrahamyan 1973).

#### 1.1.4. THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and with Armenia's political independence, political leaders brought the Armenian language question to the fore. The Armenian language became the centre of attention, not only of linguists, but also of historians and politicians. It is not surprising that the Armenian Law on Language was introduced in the same year (1993) as the establishment of the State Language Office.<sup>9</sup> In the shadow of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and attendant economic problems, Armenia was confronted with major demographic changes: ethnic Armenians and other ethnic groups who had lived in Armenia during the Soviet period or even before emigrated in very significant numbers; there was an influx of refugees from Karabakh and Azerbaijan. It was considered important to encourage and strengthen the re-awakened sense of Armenianness by means of a language policy and of language reforms that would lead to the dominance of Armenian and the weakening of Russian as a second language.

9 For specific goals and tasks of this office, see H. Zakaryan (1996): 'The Language Law of the Republic of Armenia and Problems of All-Armenian Language Policy'. In Sakayan, D. (ed.). *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Armenian Linguistics* pp. 355–360, Delmar, New York: Caravan Books. The National Inspectorate of Language succeeded the State Language Office in the 2000s; it is directly responsible to the Armenian Ministry of Education and Science.

The post-Soviet period may be subdivided into the first decade, characterized by rigorous pro-Armenian and anti-Russian movements, and the current second decade, which has seen a gradual return to Russian and a more language- and even minority-sensitive educational policy.

Almost twenty years after the implementation of the Language Law and other language reforms, Armenian in Armenia has again changed its socio- and ethnolinguistic status and some of its linguistic features.

## 2. An approach to a typology of Armenian LPP

Given that both language policy and language planning are generally grounded in the specific linguistic culture of an ethnic group (or nation), one might expect that the ‘actors’ of Armenian LPP would attempt to modify and influence the set of linguistic behaviours, conditions of language education, language attitudes, prestige setting and ideological landscape.<sup>10</sup> In Armenia, these endeavours may be summarized in the following keywords:

- Linguocentrism
- De-Russification
- State-promoted monolingualism
- Linguistic purification

<sup>10</sup> R. Cooper’s (1989: 45–98) accounting model of language planning defines actors as those institutions or persons attempting to influence language behaviour by means of language planning, such as formal elites, influentials, counter-elites, non-elite policy implementers. More generally, Cooper (1989: 98) asks, ‘What actors attempt to influence which behaviours of which people for what ends under which conditions by what means through what decision making process with what effect?’

Table 2 LPP categories in Armenia

	Keyword	Language policy	Language planning activity
Prestige	Linguocentrism	Law on language	De-Russification Armenian monolingualism Holy language ideology
Status	De-Russification State-promoted monolingualism	Constitution Law on Language Law on Education Law on Minorities	De-Russification State-promoted monolingualism Influence on language of minorities and diaspora
Corpus	Linguistic purification	Law on Language Law on Education	Purism Conservatism
Acquisition	State-promoted monolingualism Linguocentrism	Constitution Law on Language Law on Education Law on Minorities	Banning of Russian as language of instruction Reinstatement of Armenian as language of instruction Regulation of minority language teaching

### 2.1. Prestige planning and 'linguocentrism'

Since Armenian independence in 1991, language has played a substantial role in nation-building processes. Prestige planning, that is to say strengthening the prestige of a language by stressing its value for a nation as a crucial part of its ethnic identity, is an integral part of status planning.

Fishman's ethnicity criteria – the 'holy trinity of ethnicity: holy land, holy people and holy language' (1989) – are very close to the current concept of the ethnicity of Armenians in the Republic of Armenia.

For Armenians the historical dimension and the myth of a common origin have always been crucial. Representations of this myth are sustained by ethnogenetic speculations and even the falsification of archaeological, historical and linguistic facts. So, the Gamkrelidze/Ivanov (1995) hypothesis located the fatherland of all Indo-Europeans in the territory populated by ethnic Armenians and thus lent credence to the ancient roots of Armenians

in their territory.<sup>11</sup> The next stage in this narrative is the invention of the Armenian alphabet in 405 AD, leaving aside readings of Urartian cuneiform inscriptions as proto-Armenian (Ayvazyan 1986: 30–31).

The formation of a new national identity for Armenians in the Republic of Armenia is deeply connected to the Armenian language and is reflected in national language policy. It was the primary goal of post-independence language policy to re-establish Armenian as the single official and state language of Armenia in the newly founded Republic of Armenia. The first step was to declare Armenian as the one and only official language of the Republic of Armenia, as given in Article 1 of the Language Law (March 3 1993): ‘The Armenian language, which serves all the spheres of life of the Republic, shall be the state language of the Republic of Armenia. The literary Armenian language shall be the official language of the Republic of Armenia’.<sup>12</sup> This policy aimed to standardize the language and invigorate ethnic culture and values. One of these ethnic values requires ethnic Armenians to speak Armenian as their first language, regardless of geographical origin. The ratification of the Language Law (1993) extends this ethnic duty to all Armenian citizens without regard to ethnicity.

## *2.2. De-Russification policy – status planning*

Considering the relative ethnic homogeneity of Soviet Armenia (see below, 2.5), where just 1.5 per cent of the population were of Russian origin, in contrast to the Baltic or Central Asian Soviet Republics, where ethnic Russians constituted a large portion of the population, the anti-Russian movement of the 1990s needs to be explained. What and whom was the Armenian de-Russification policy directed against?

<sup>11</sup> Their hypothesis is based on real or supposed lexical loans but disregards morphological data altogether.

<sup>12</sup> *Orenk’ë lezvi masin* 2004 15 ed., Erevan, p. 5. This law was confirmed in the constitution of 1995, Chapter 1, Article 12 ‘The state language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian’. <<http://www.parliament.am/parliament.php?id=constitution&lang=eng#1>>, accessed 10 April 2011.

The Soviet education system was explicitly aimed at extending the teaching of Russian to non-Russian nationalities from the very beginning of its existence. The following political decisions taken during the Soviet period were the most prominent:

- At the end of the 1920s the Soviet authorities abandoned the policy of nativization [коренизация; *korenizatsiya*], which strove to educate the indigenous people in order to incorporate them into the Soviet (administrative) apparatus, and Russian was declared the best means of communication for the Soviet people (язык межнационального общения; Russian as *lingua franca*).
- From 1938 it became compulsory to teach Russian in non-Russian schools (Russian as school subject).<sup>13</sup>
- The principle of compulsory education in the native language was abolished in the 1958–1959 educational reforms: parents could decide which school to send their children to, i.e. to a Russian-medium or to a so-called national school, where the medium of instruction was the local language. This led to the decline and even loss of national languages (Russian as language of instruction).
- After the late 1970s, particularly under Brezhnev, language policy favoured Russian with the goal of establishing Russian as the common language of Soviet society (Russian as first/second language).

Thus, starting from 1938, and particularly after 1958, Russian gradually became the second official language of Armenia. It was used in everyday life, but also in the mass media, TV and radio. It was the first ‘foreign’ language taught in Armenian-medium schools, but also the language of instruction in Russian-medium schools. University teaching, public administration, banking and the military were mainly Russian language domains. Signs, road signs and street names appeared in Armenian and

<sup>13</sup> «Об обязательном изучении русского языка в школах национальных республик и областей», resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks) (1938).

Russian, sometimes even more often in Russian than in Armenian. Thus, the omnipresent Russian had the status of second language *in sensu strictu*, for ethnic Armenians and particularly for the ethnic minorities living in Armenia. The minorities were mainly educated in Russian and only to a limited extent in their minority language.

#### 2.2.1. RUSSIAN AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Russian had the status of a second language in the Republic of Armenia. One might conclude from this that Armenia had a bilingual population during the Soviet era. Indeed, Russian-Armenian bilingualism is considered part of the linguistic reality in Armenia, particularly during the second half of the Soviet era. This Soviet Armenian bilingualism encompassed, however, a whole spectrum or continuum of bilingual proficiency, from relatively monolingual speakers of Armenian to highly proficient bilingual Armenians who functioned in both languages. The varying proficiency levels were a function of the urban/rural divide, of gender and of levels of education.

#### 2.2.2. RUSSIAN AS A FIRST LANGUAGE

Russian was without doubt the first language of the ethnic Russian minority, including the Molokans.<sup>14</sup> Russian was also the first language for many members of other ethnic groups that had stopped using their ethnic language and/or only had restricted proficiency in their ethnic language. Russian also became the preferred, and even first, language of many ethnic Armenians. Though some considered Russification through centralized Soviet power

<sup>14</sup> The presence of an ethnic Russian minority in Armenia dates from the inclusion of Eastern Armenia in the Russian Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Molokans are members of an ‘Old Ritualist’ sect who do not adhere to the doctrines of the Russian Orthodox Church. In the nineteenth century Tsarist Russia deported these so-called heretics from central Russia to the Caucasus and Armenia. A more substantial influx of Russians to Armenia occurred only after the establishment of Soviet power.

a kind of linguicide of Armenian, a certain stratum of Armenian society had come to identify with Russian. On the whole these were people with wealth, as well as members of the cultural elite (*intelligentsia*) who had been educated in high prestige Russian-medium schools and used Russian in everyday life. For a period in the late 1980s it was fashionable to speak Russian instead of Armenian. A good command of Russian eased access to higher education and promising careers – this in turn encouraged Armenian parents to send their children to Russian-medium schools.

This sociolinguistic setting left its trace in the linguistic features of Armenian during the Soviet period, particularly in the Armenian lexicon, but also in the pronunciation of initial consonant clusters and even in syntax. At the collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenian nation-builders and linguists were confronted with a more or less bilingual society, in which Russian had the higher social prestige and in which Armenian had been influenced by Russian at all linguistic levels to such an extent that even today the generations that were educated in the Soviet period still switch quite freely between the languages and do not recognize Russian elements in their Armenian for what they are.

This scenario brings us to the crucial motivation for the initial anti-Russian language policy in newly independent Armenia. The Armenian language acquired the following functions:

- a. an instrument of independence and secessionism
- b. a means of cultural purification
- c. a means of sociopolitical struggle against Russian-speaking Armenians

In summary, the early anti-Russian language policy served mainly to strengthen the use and the position of Armenian in the Republic of Armenia and to keep the formerly dominant and privileged sections of society from talking Russian. In other words, the main policy was directed against Russian-speaking Armenians. It was the status of Armenian, i.e. those aspects of language use that reflect primarily social issues and concerns, that was the focus of de-Russification.

### *2.3. Acquisition planning – state-promoted monolingualism and linguocentrism*

The anti-Russian strategy informed Armenia's education policy during the first years of independence. From about 1990, all first-grade children started their education in Armenian-medium classrooms; in 1993 Russian-language schools were banned. The banning of any language other than Armenian as the language of instruction in general education was the priority of acquisition planning in the first decade of Armenia's independence. Acquisition planning is here understood as the measures by which the formal and functional role of a language are regulated in society, with particular respect to its importance as the language of education, science and religion. This is predicated on the assumption that a language gains in importance and prestige if it is accepted as the language of instruction, science and high culture.

The following laws and reforms chart the development of acquisition planning in recent years:

- Article 35 of the Republic of Armenia Constitution (1995) provides that a) all citizens have the right to education; b) secondary education in public schools is free; c) every citizen has the right to access to higher or other professional education on a competitive basis<sup>15</sup>
- The 'Law on Education' (14 April 1999) reformed the education system based on constitutional principles. It has been adjusted and amended in line with changing educational priorities from time to time
- A government decree (May 2000) approved national standards for general education and regulates standards in national schools
- The National Plan for Education Development 2001–2005, approved by Parliament in June 2001, provides a framework for progressive development in the field of education, now conceptualized as a priority area in nation building and socioeconomic development
- Twenty-eight amendments to articles in the Law on Education were adopted in 16 August 2001

<sup>15</sup> Article 35 of the 2005 Constitution of the Republic of Armenia.

Armenian political leaders and the public soon realized the inadequacy of the early language policy. Almost ten years after the implementation of the Law on Language and the closing down of Russian-medium schools, this policy proved to be out of sync with the sociolinguistic reality in Armenia. The anti-Russian movement had caused discontent and helplessness in many social strata, not only in ethnic and linguistic minority groups. Native speakers of Russian and specialists in various scientific fields, mainly in the natural sciences and language teaching, were quick to discover the deficiencies resulting from the abrupt transition of the education system to Armenian: a shortage of trained teachers, and the lack of adequate teaching material and curricula in Armenian. The change from a predominantly Russian-medium to an exclusively Armenian-medium education system caused Armenia a serious loss, not only in financial but also in demographic terms. The education system has only recently begun to recover from the effects of the early language policy with the emergence of the first generation of teachers and university lecturers raised and trained exclusively in Armenian. The relation to Russian has also recovered: people now believe that Russian is an essential means of communication, that it is still the *lingua franca* with all successor states of the former Soviet Union, that it is the language of many books written in the last century and that it is the language that opens doors to another, non-Armenian world.

### 2.3.1. RECENT LINGUISTIC MOVEMENTS

Since 2003, Russian is again taught as a second language in Armenian schools. Russian-medium schools have even been re-established in Armenia, and not only for minorities. Minority schools have become more or less trilingual now. But the laws of the early 1990s have changed the use of the languages, their status and prestige and proficiency levels in minority language communities.

The anti-Russian and pro-Armenian LPP was debated in the Armenian media. In April 2010, when the Armenian government passed legislation allowing languages other than Armenian to be used as languages of instruction in institutions of general education, this met with unexpected resistance from prominent public figures, civic groups and political opponents.

The public raised concerns over the vitality and future survival of Armenian (Kartashyan 2011). Some argued that this bill would jeopardize the status of Armenian as the country's sole official language, while others stressed more pragmatic concerns such as the recruitment of trained teachers and the lack of adequate teaching material. The bill was approved by a considerable majority in the Parliament on 22 December 2011, and signed into law by the President of Armenia on 19 January 2011 (Manukyan 2010).

#### *2.4. Corpus planning – purification*

Two other aspects of Armenian LPP are further evidence of an anti-Russian movement: purism and conservatism. Both are aspects of linguistic corpus planning, and include reforms in orthography or prescriptive rules on vocabulary, pronunciation or style.

Some linguists regard linguistic purism as one of the dominant socio-linguistic principles of the Armenian language since its earliest history. With the exception of the linguistically active period of Middle Armenian (the thirteenth century), and all the contact-induced lexical, morphological and syntactic innovations, Armenians have always tried to keep their language pure of foreign influence. This is particularly true for the lexicon: even during the translation boom in the fifth century which left deep marks in the Armenian lexicon, translators and authors used to loan-translate foreign words or create neologisms instead of simply borrowing lexemes. This calque principle is one of the oldest puristic principles in Armenian language history and is being continued today. Following the independence of Armenia, purist linguists have tried either to reintroduce archaic or obsolete words from Classical Armenian or to create loan translations. This is an important item of Article 3 of the Law on Language (2004): 'In official conversations citizens of the Republic of Armenia shall be obliged to ensure the purity of language'. It is also evidenced in the denomination of aspects of modern life in the fields of banking and economics, computing and technology. Whereas 'purified' Armenian terms are used in the mass media and in school books, English terms are commonly used in the vernacular.

This purism, also often termed ‘translation mania’, can also be found in paradoxical and absurd neologisms. Moreover, puristic tendencies can be observed in education: in school books and during lessons pupils are taught to keep their language clean from foreign influences, and not to use dialectal or vernacular words, which are often of Turkic origin. The State Language Office and its successor, the National Inspectorate of Language, assume responsibility for keeping Armenian free from foreign influences ‘to preserve the originality and to ensure the free and unconstrained development’ of the Armenian language (Zakaryan 1996: 359).

Linguistic conservatism is also a popular corollary of puristic language policy. This is particularly observable in the gap between spoken Armenian and the written standard. Colloquial Armenian has continued linguistic trends from a typological point of view and shows conventionalized features of agglutination on verb forms or productive flectional forms that cannot be found in and significantly deviate from normative literary Armenian. It has also incorporated many features of the languages with which it is in contact, i.e. the spoken and written varieties of Western Armenian and of Iranian Eastern Armenian. All school grammars and officially approved grammars simply overlook these linguistic facts and are conservatively prescriptive. Linguists retain their conservative Armenian grammar tradition and are not open to other methods and approaches of linguistic description. Conservatism is observable particularly in the education sector, where children are told to keep even their spoken language clean from colloquial Armenian, and not to use ‘grammatically incorrect forms’ in spoken or written language. Everything that deviates even slightly from the prescriptive rules as given by conservative grammars is regarded as incorrect and bad language.

## *2.5. Minority languages – status, prestige and acquisition planning?*

Interpreting the aphorism attributed to Gandhi – ‘A nation’s greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members’ – somewhat liberally, Armenia can be measured by how it treats its national minorities. National language policy can furthermore be determined by the ethnic composition

of the country's inhabitants and the sociolinguistic setting. The territory of Eastern Armenia has always been a relatively ethnically homogenous region: ethnic Armenians represented 93.3 per cent (total number 3,083,616) of the population of Soviet Armenia according to the last Soviet census of 1989, and 97.8 per cent (total number 3,145,354) according to the first census of the Republic of Armenia in 2001. Though the Constitution of Armenia guarantees that '[p]ersons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to the preservation and development of their traditions, religion, language and culture' (2005: Chapter 2, Article 41), the minority issue has never been a part of Armenian state policy. Leaders of minority factions claim that there is still no comprehensive minority policy. Armenia may be regarded as a state that definitely tolerates and protects its minorities, but does not promote them.

The early anti-Russian policy had terrible linguistic consequences for the Russian-speaking minorities of Armenia. The educational reforms of the early 1990s abolished Russian-medium schools overnight. The school system was transformed from an ideologically Soviet and Russian-language-based system to an Armenian nationalist and Armenian-language based one. A number of Armenian minorities lost their school systems as the minority schools had to change their curricula from Russian to Armenian. Interestingly, none of the politicians or linguists thought about the consequences of an overhasty school and language reform: the lack of adequate teaching material in Armenian, the lack of teaching methods in Armenian and the shortage of teachers and instructors trained in Armenian. These shortcomings affected the minorities much more than the ethnic Armenians themselves. While there was public controversy, the policy ended in what Abrahamian terms 'a programmatic victory of Armenian language and identity in educational policy' (1998: 22).

Looking back at the demographic changes and mass migration of the 1990s, one might speculate that the emigration of many minority groups had its roots in the language policy and subsequent educational reforms. Indeed of almost 52,000 Russians in Armenia in 1989, only 15–16,000 remained after the closure of Russian schools. Y. Yakovenko, the vice-president of the association '*Rossia*', commented on the mass exodus of Russians from Armenia in an interview in 1991: 'The Russians and other

minority groups simply saw no prospects for continuing their children's education in Armenia' (Petrosian 2005). A recent ethnic minority, Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan, who speak predominantly Russian with a rather limited proficiency in Standard Armenian and who were educated mainly through Russian, was also affected by the language policy. Tens of thousands of these Azeri Armenians were effectively barred from working in any state-run organization because of their poor command of Armenian.

Table 3 Comparison of data on the ethnic distribution of the population in Armenia from the censuses of 1989 and 2001

Year	1989	2001
Total	3,304,776	3,213,011
Armenians	3,083,616 (93.3 per cent)	3,145,354 (97.8 per cent)
Azeris	84,860 (2.6 per cent)	0 (0 per cent)
Yezidis	51,976 (1.6 per cent)	40,620 (1.3 per cent)
Russians	51,555 (1.6 per cent)	14,660 (0.5 per cent)
Assyrians	5,963 (0.2 per cent)	3,409 (0.1 per cent)
Ukrainians	8,341 (0.2 per cent)	1,633 (0.05 per cent)
Kurds	4,151 (0.1 per cent)	1,519 (0.05 per cent)
Greeks	4,650 (0.1 per cent)	1,176 (0.04 per cent)
Others	9,664 (0.3 per cent)	4,640 (0.1 per cent)

The Language Law, though guaranteeing 'free usage of languages of national minorities' (Article 1) and the 'right to organize general education in their native language' (Article 2), led to social and ethnic inequalities in the RA in the first years of independence and kept many minority children from higher education. But what about the minority schools in Armenia today?

Current Armenian LLP and minority language policy may be summarized as follows:

- Minority languages are taught as part of educational programmes
- Minority languages are taught only in Russian-medium schools

- Higher education is not available in minority languages other than Russian, and to some extent Kurdish
- All RA citizens are obliged to know and use the official state language, Armenian

The Armenian government guarantees and financially supports education in minority languages. Primary school education in minority languages is available at the request of parents: a request for seven children is normally considered as sufficient, five for the Assyrian speech community. The same is true for secondary education. The teaching of minority languages is regulated by Armenian law – they can only be taught in Russian-medium schools or Russian branches of Armenian schools, where Russian is the language of instruction.

There is no professional training of minority language teachers in Armenia; there are many issues concerning teaching materials. The official Armenian LPP allows the minorities to use their languages in private; it even permits the teaching of these languages, but on a selective basis only. It seems minority languages are tolerated as long as they do not threaten Armenian culture and its values.

### *2.6. Diaspora – status planning*

One should also look at another aspect of the language policy and the Language Law in the RA, as part of status planning. As already mentioned above, all inhabitants of Armenia have to know Armenian and to use it in official contexts, where previously Russian would have been used. The nationalistic aspect of the language policy even affects Armenians living abroad.

Western Armenian was the prototypical language of the traditional Armenian diaspora, i.e. in Europe and in the countries of the near east. Eastern Armenian was only spoken in Armenia and its neighbouring regions. Since the independence of Armenia and the mass exodus of Armenians to all corners of the world, Eastern Armenian has entered the traditional diaspora communities and is gradually ousting and endangering Western

Armenian. As the official language of the homeland of all Armenians it has come to be regarded as the Armenian language. Eastern Armenian not only has more domains and functions, but also a much higher prestige than Western Armenian. This has turned into a real problem for the future maintenance of Western Armenian.

Official Armenian language policy and ideology seem to support this kind of 'linguistic fratricide' since it postulates that the RA 'shall promote the preservation and dissemination of the Armenian language among Armenians residing outside its borders' (Article 1), and 'shall also promote unification of orthography of the Armenian language' (Article 1). In this way, Armenian language policy actively impacts on the linguistic and social settings of Armenian communities outside of Armenia.

### 3. Conclusion

There is still a mismatch between legislation and LPP as it functions at a practical level, in language-learning-related decisions, particularly regarding the linguistic situation of the minorities in Armenia. Armenian LPP is a type of language policy and language planning that is primarily shaped by an excessive emphasis on language as the defining characteristic of ethnicity and nationhood.

This emphasis privileges Armenianness. Many language political decisions aim at a form of ethnic self-awareness or of functional ethnocultural autonomy. Multilingualism in Armenia, along with multiple Armenian varieties, has positioned policy and public opinion against the perceived 'overdose' of foreign languages in the intended monoethnic and monolingual setting in Armenia. This 'linguaphobia' has also affected language teaching. This quotation from Zakaryan (1996: 358) – 'Armenia should be uni-lingual, i.e. all her citizens must have a command of Armenian, this being the mother tongue of all Armenians living in Armenia' – reflects Armenian LPP's promotion of ethnic monolingualism.

I conclude with a telling a quotation from Lavrenti Mirzoyan, the Chief of the State Inspectorate for Language of Armenia:

The Republic of Armenia legislation, as well as the Law on Language, clearly stipulates that in the Republic of Armenia, the official language is literary Armenian. Today, there is no need to give another language special status. (12 November 2009, T'ert')



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