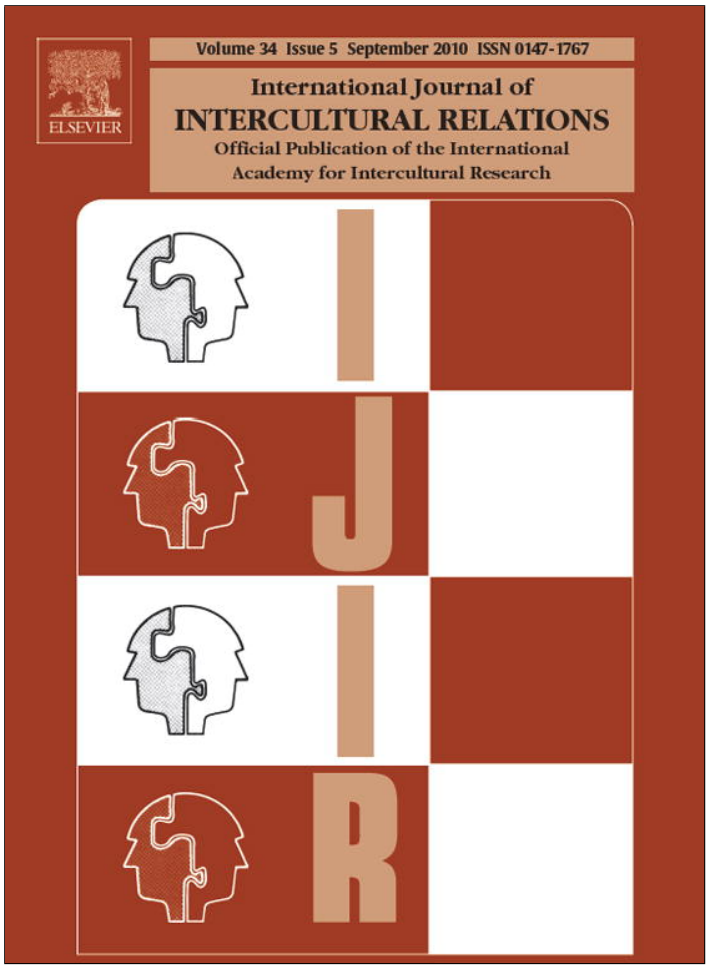

International Journal of Intercultural Relations 34 (2010) 516–526

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Intercultural Relations

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel

Cultural identity and perceived success among Israeli immigrants: An emic approach

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Accepted 21 November 2009

Keywords:
Cultural identity
Acculturation
Adaptation
Success
Immigrants

ABSTRACT

This study proposes an emic conceptualization and measurement of identity and adaptation following immigration, which assesses both constructs in terms of the immigrant's own criteria—and not according to standardized external parameters. 337 Israeli immigrants completed the group characteristics questionnaire with relation to their minority ("Russian"), majority ("Israeli"), and ethnic ("Jewish") identities, as well as the perceived success questionnaire. Results revealed that people who perceived their immigration as successful exhibit higher levels of Israeli identity than those who perceived their immigration as unsuccessful. We found that unsuccessful immigrants were characterized primarily by a marginalization orientation whereas those who perceived themselves as successful showed primarily an integration orientation followed by one of assimilation. Positive valences of the Israeli identity, but also negative valences of the Jewish identity, were related positively to success. Finally, we learned that newcomers with high levels of Russian identity are likely to define success in terms of competence, whereas immigrants who have high levels of Israeli identity tend to characterize success in terms of belonging. Results are explained in light of the special contribution of the new conceptualizations and methodologies to the understanding of cultural transition processes and outcomes.

1. Introduction

Cultural transition usually involves dramatic changes in all life areas; as a result, many immigrants find immigration a challenging experience. While some overcome their initial feelings of being overwhelmed, others remain frustrated and distressed years after their immigration. This paper aims to explore the differences in aspects of cultural identity between two types of newcomers: those who consider their immigration to be successful and those who perceive their immigration as unsuccessful.

Issues of identity and adaptation are central to the study of the processes and outcomes of cultural transition from the perspectives of social and cross-cultural psychology (Deaux, 2006; Liebkind, 2006). As to identity, most of the current studies are based on a bi-dimensional model of identity and acculturation, according to which immigrants have to redefine both their minority identities and their identifications with majority society and culture. Posing the two issues simultaneously generates a bi-dimensional framework that defines four types of acculturation attitudes: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 1990). The assimilation attitude reflects a strong orientation towards, and adoption

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0147-1767/$ – see front matter © 2009 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.11.010

of, the majority culture with a relinquishing of ties to the former (and now minority) culture. The opposite orientation is that of separation, which represents a strong allegiance to the minority culture, together with a detachment from the new culture. Integration involves the identification with, and adoption of, components of both the minority and majority cultures. Finally, the marginalization attitude is characterized by a rejection of, and/or lack of involvement in, one's own minority culture, as well as in the culture of the larger society. Berry's model of acculturation attitudes is not worded in terms of identity; we prefer, however, to conceptualize the four options as distinct immigrant's identity orientations, each representing a possible combination of old and new identities (for a similar model see also Hutnik, 1991).

Two major measurement methods have been proposed for the assessment of identity and acculturation attitudes within the framework of the bi-dimensional model (see review by Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2006). The two-statement approach suggests to study acculturation using two separate scales, one representing orientations toward the majority culture and the other representing orientations towards the minority culture; the scores on the two scales are then combined in order to classify individuals into one of the four acculturation strategies. In the four-statement method, the orientations towards each of the four strategies are assessed by separate items (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). More recently, Arends-Toth and van de Vijver (2006, 2007) suggested a method for computing scores on each of the four acculturation strategies on the basis of the scores obtained from the two separate scales. According to their proximity procedure, each of the four attitudes is represented by a prototypical point in the space. The Euclidean distances between this ideal score of each of the four acculturation attitudes and the score obtained for an individual give the status on each of the acculturation attitudes. The procedure enables thus the computation of a person's score on all the four acculturation attitudes (Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2007).

Adaptation of immigrants has been defined as the process of "fitting in"—to function successfully in the new environment (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). Two distinct aspects of adaptation following cultural transition have been identified by Ward and Kennedy (1994). Socio-cultural adaptation is based on the culture learning approach and reflects the ability to engage in constructive interaction with a different culture. Psychological adjustment facilitates the individual's sense of well-being, positive appraisal of situations and general satisfaction with life.

Extensive research has examined aspects of identity and adaptation among immigrants, and of the relationships between the two constructs. According to a recent summary by Ward (2008), a wide array of studies consistently confirm that the majority and minority dimensions of identity are independent (e.g., Ben-Shalom & Horenczyk, 2003) and that the bicultural (integration) strategy – defined by high identification with both cultures – is the one most preferred by migrants (e.g., Berry, Phinney, Kwak, & Sam, 2006; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Roccas, Horenczyk, & Schwartz, 2000), although some studies report domain specificity in this preference (e.g., Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2003; Navas, Rojas, Garcia, & Pumares, 2007). Integration has been also shown to be associated with the most adaptive outcomes, including psychological and socio-cultural adaptation (e.g., Sam & Berry, 1995).

Our study will examine differences among the group identities held by the immigrants, and the extent to which these identities predict perceived adaptation (or success) following cultural transition. The study proposes a new approach to the conceptualization and measurement of identity and adaptation following cultural transition grounded in a quantitative *emic* perspective, one that assesses both constructs in terms of the immigrant's own criteria—and not in an *etic* way according to uniform criteria posed by the researcher using standard research instruments. This approach places emphasis on the individual's personal constructions or representations of identity and adaptation.

1.1. Cultural identity

Group identity is a complex and multi-faceted construct. Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) classified the various domains of collective identity. Self-categorization, for example, reflects the extent to which one identifies as a member of the social group. Another central identity component is evaluation, which refers to the positive or negative attitude that a person has toward a specific quality of the group (or many of them). While most of the group identity elements are defined and measured using fixed and objective criteria, a few studies addressed the subjective perception of the individual or the self prototypically (e.g., Cross, 1991; Sellers, Rowley, Shelton, Smith, & Chavous, 1997; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998).

Our emic perspective on group identity is based on the notion of *cultural identity*, conceptualized by Ferdman (1990, 1995) as one's individual image of the behaviors, beliefs, values and norms – in short, the cultural features – that characterize one's group(s), together with one's feelings about those features and one's understanding of how they are (or are not) reflected in oneself (Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000). The first aspect of cultural identity, then, is the construction of the in-group and its characteristics—features which can vary across persons and subgroups. Two individuals may rate their membership in a group to the same extent, yet each describes the group's cultural features very differently. The second aspect of cultural identity refers to the individual's feelings about the cultural features he or she ascribes to the group. This evaluative facet of cultural identity bears resemblance to the valence of ethnic identity, defined by Herman (1989) as "likes and aversions" for the various facets of the group. The third aspect of cultural identity is the individual's view of the extent to which the group characteristics are reflected in the self.

The group characteristics questionnaire (GCQ, Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000) was developed as a tool for assessing aspects of the cultural identity construct. Respondents to this instrument are requested to specify, for each of the cultural categories of membership, features which they see as describing a typical member of the group. Later, they are asked to go back to the features listed for each of these cultural groups and to rate the extent to which each description or characteristic applies to

them or describe their selves. An identity score can be computed for each cultural group, reflecting the extent to which the individual perceives him/herself in terms of the characteristics attributed to the group. In addition, the instruments allows for the examination of the proportions of positive and negative features used to portray the cultural groups. Thus, the GCQ can serve not only for the assessment of subjective group prototyping (content and self-attribution of the different characteristics) but also for the evaluation of the collective identities (positive vs. negative).

1.2. Perceived success

Adaptation following cultural transition will be emically conceptualized in this study in terms of *perceived success* (Benish-Weisman, 2009), defined as the extent to which the migration process is seen by the immigrant as having met his or her individual criteria for adjustment. Following our emic approach, we prefer to employ the concept of success, rather than adjustment or adaptation, since success is likely to be the term better understood and mostly used by the individual when assessing his or her degree of adjustment to the new acculturative context. As with cultural identity, our approach assumes group and individual variations in the construction of the criteria for success; perceived success will thus be contingent on those criteria.

Previous research has shown that criteria for success can vary among cultures. For example, different cultural groups were found to evaluate success in school in different ways (McInerney, Hinkley, Dowson, & Van-Etten, 1998). Furthermore, the definition of success can also vary in terms of gender. It was found (Motlagh, 1996) that women, specifically Mexican women, define success in term of self-esteem, happiness, and sharing time with significant others, in contrast to the masculine view of success, which emphasizes status and financial wealth. With regards to perceived success following cultural transition, similar findings were found in a study that examined the experiences of immigrants from the United States in Israel (Walsh & Horenczyk, 2001). Two major types of immigrants were identified: the "belonging type" for whom the successful immigration process involved feelings of belonging to place and people in the new country, and the "independence achiever type" for whom successful immigration meant professional achievement, acquiring status, economical independence, and ability to function independently in the environment. In Walsh and Horenczyk's study, the "belonging type" group was found to include women immigrants only, whereas almost all of the male immigrants fitted the "independent achiever" type.

1.3. An emic examination of identity and perceived success

"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences". This famous saying by W.I. Thomas implies that people behave according to their own views of reality. As indicated earlier, much socio-psychological work in transcultural migration focuses on the relationship between identity and adaptation; in most studies, both constructs are conceptualized and measured following an *etic* approach, on common items and scales, and according to objective criteria. We would like to suggest that a more accurate prediction of adaptation from measures of identity will be achieved by using emic conceptualizations and operationalizations of both constructs. We also believe that this theoretical and methodological perspective will provide us with a more comprehensive and rich understanding of the immigrants' experience.

In this study we explore differences in cultural identity configurations between two types of immigrants – those who perceive their immigration as successful and those who do not – using a quantitative emic approach. First, we examine the patterns of the various immigrants' cultural identities using the new conceptualization and methodology (the group characteristics questionnaire). We will assess comparatively the strengths of the cultural identities followed by an examination of the acculturation strategies derived from Berry's (1990) bi-dimensional model. Our emic approach will also allow us to examine identity patterns in terms of the valence (positive or negative) of the attributes provided for describing the various cultural groups. The strengths and valences of the cultural identities will be then called upon to predict adaptation—also emically conceptualized and measured in terms of perceived success. More specifically, we will examine the extent and ways in which these identity features differentiate between immigrants who perceive their experience as successful and those who construct their immigration as unsuccessful. We predict that a bicultural integrationist strategy (with an advantage to the national Israeli identity) will tend to characterize the immigrants who see their experience as successful, whereas unsuccessful immigrants will report lower levels of ethnic and national identities and an overall pattern of marginalization. We also hypothesize that newcomers who experience their immigration as successful will also be characterized by an Israeli identity constructed in positive terms. Finally, we will explore relationships between the cultural identities and the different criteria for successful immigration.

1.4. Israeli immigrants from the former Soviet Union

This study examines patterns of cultural identity and perceived success among adults who immigrated into Israel from the former Soviet Union (FSU). The population under study consists of individuals who emigrated following the political and economic crisis that befell the FSU after the collapse of the Soviet regime. This massive immigration of the 1990s had a tremendous effect on Israeli society, with new immigrants constituting 11.2% of the Israeli population (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

The immigrants form the FSU brought with them considerable educational and occupational resources. Sixty percent of immigrants have at least a college diploma, compared to 30% of the overall Israeli population. The number of engineers and

doctors doubled in Israel as a result of immigration. However, most immigrants do not work in their original occupation (Leshem & Lissak, 2000).

Although immigrants from the former Soviet Union (''Russians,'' as they are called by non-immigrant Israeli society), have successfully entered Israeli society in many domains (e.g., political, cultural), the precise nature of their acculturation into Israeli society remains open to debate. Some studies argue that the immigrants self-segregate from the Israeli society, keeping their Russian-language, cultural institutions, and community organizations (Al Haj, 2002; Benish-Weisman, 2007; Kimmerling, 2004; Lissak, 1995). Others find that immigrants hold primarily a bicultural strategy; that is, they preserve a Russian identity while adopting also an Israeli identity (Adler, 2004; Horenczyk & Ben-Shalom, 2006; Rosenbaum-Tamari & Damian, 2004).

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

The sample consisted of 337 immigrants (200 women, 137 men) from Russia and the Ukraine, who immigrated to Israel between 1990 and 1995 (length of stay in Israel in years: $M = 14.7$, SD = 1.3). Their ages ranged from 41 to 65 (working age) ($M = 52.7$, SD = 5.7). All had post-secondary education. The sample was assembled from various geographical areas and types of locations (central and peripheral cities, urban settlements and cooperative Israeli settlements). Potential participants were located through lists maintained by Russian libraries, community centers, immigrants' associations and municipalities; those agreeing to participate were then asked for additional friends and acquaintances (''snowball sampling''). The sample can be seen as fairly representative of the population under study. Almost all the participants were employed at the time of the study in a wide variety of professions, but most of them not in the same occupation they held before immigration, although not necessarily in one of lower status than the previous one.

2.2. Procedure

A questionnaire was administered personally to the respondents by specially trained research assistants of Russian origin. It was presented in the Hebrew language, and the research assistants offered their help in translating sections of the questionnaire into Russian, upon request. Completion of the questionnaires lasted approximately 1 h. The questionnaires were administered in settings familiar to the participants (home, work) or other places convenient to them.

2.3. Questionnaires

The research instrument consisted of four sections:

1. *Demographic information:* gender, occupation in Israel, previous occupation in the FSU, etc.
2. *The success questionnaire* included questions designed to measure the participants' subjective feelings of success. The questions were holistic, i.e., they referred to the immigration experience as a whole and not to different aspects of it. Using Likert-type scales, participants provided an overall rating of their own immigration experience on four questions: in the first question the response scale ranged from 1, indicating that the immigration story was ''very unsuccessful'', to 8, ''very successful''. A second question asked participants to compare their own immigration experiences with those of others. Scale ranged from 1 (''my immigration story was very unsuccessful compared to other immigration stories'') to 6 (''my immigration story was very successful compared to other immigration stories''). The third question is a combination of two items: first, participants were simply asked: ''Was your immigration story successful?'' They responded either yes (1) or no (−1). Their answer was multiplied by the degree of certainty, on a six-point scale, they assign to their previous yes-no response. Scores on these questions thus ranged from −6 (unsuccessful—very sure) to 6 (successful—very sure). The fourth question (reversed item) was aimed at allowing the expression of negative feelings toward their immigration experience, and was formulated as follows: ''Many immigrants feel that their immigration experience was unsuccessful, to what extent do you feel the same?'' The response scale ranged from 1 (not at all) to 6 (very much). The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) among the four questions was 0.77.[1]
3. *Perceptions of successful immigration:* An open question asked the participants about their views of successful immigration. The answers were classified by two independent coders into three variables: competence, belonging and well-being. Following Walsh and Horenczyk (2001), the *competence* category included criteria related to personal achievement in the new society, marked by success and independence—mostly in terms of material and financial goals. Examples of this category are ''employment in a good job'' or ''enjoying high status''. *The belonging category* was defined as the connection of the immigrants to people and/or places. It contains criteria such as feeling of being rooted in – and related to – one own

[1] The terms ''non-success'' and ''unsuccessful'' were preferred during data collection and throughout this paper, due to their ''softer'' connotation as compared to more blunt terms such as ''failure.'' We assumed that respondents would feel more free to attribute themselves ''non-success'' rather than failure, in light of the evidence showing the tendency of people to evaluate themselves as above average (e.g., Svenson, 1981; Weinstein, 1980), and the tendency not to locate themselves on a the negative side of self-evaluation scales (Schwarz, Knäuper, Hippler, Noelle-Neumann, & Clark, 1991).

social environment, and also elements which refer to a sense of caring about – and looking after – family and friends. Examples of this category are "enjoying the company of friends after the immigration", or that "members of our family feel happy in the new country". The final category was of *well-being* or the emotional state of the immigrant. Examples of this category are "feeling self-confidence" and "enjoying internal peace". This question allowed for multiple responses: An immigrant could define successful immigration, for example, both as having a profitable job and as living close to family members. There was 89.8% of agreement between the raters. Disagreements between raters were brought for final decision by a third judge. For every participant we summed the number of times that a specific category was mentioned; the values for each category ranged from 1 to 6.

4. *The group characteristic questionnaire* (*GCQ*) (Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000). This semi-structured questionnaire assesses cultural identity conceptualized as the extent to which characteristics perceived as central features of the cultural group are seen as characterizing the self. A major strength of this method is the wide range of cultural identities that can be simultaneously addressed. In this study we assessed the strength and perceived content of three cultural identities assumed to be relevant to the participants: "Jewish," "Israeli," and "Russian" (this label is commonly attached to all immigrants from Russian-speaking countries, and was accepted as self-definition also by our Ukrainian respondents). First, the respondents are requested to specify, for each of these three identities, up to seven features (characteristics, behaviors, values, and/or norms) which they think describe best *a typical member of the group*. Most participants mentioned four to five features. In the second phase, we ask respondents to go back to the features listed for each of these three cultural groups and to rate the extent to which each description or characteristic is seen as applying to them, on a seven-point scale ranging from one ("doesn't describe me at all") to seven ("describes me to a great extent"). The individual's score on each of the three cultural identities was computed as the mean of the extent to which each of the characteristics attributed to the specific group was seen as characterizing oneself.

The group characteristics questionnaires allows also for the examination of the content attributed by the individual to his or her cultural identities. The different characteristics of each identity were classified into three categories – negative (such as tactless, unintelligent), positive (such as self confident and smart) and neutral – by two raters, both Russian immigrants (due to possible variation between cultures in the perception of negative and positive qualities). There was an 88.6% of agreement between the judges. Disagreements between raters were brought for final decision by an external judge. Due to the very low frequency of the "neutral" category, the results will be presented only for the negative and the positive characteristics. For each of the three identities, we computed scores for negative and positive characteristics attributed to the group, Due to differences among respondents in the number of characteristics listed for each of the identities, we computed the scores as the proportions of positive/negative characteristics out of the total number of characteristics provided.

2.4. Data analysis

In order to reach a better understanding of the immigrants' cultural identities patterns we will first perform analyses of variance to compare the strengths of the cultural identities, and to explore the distribution of the acculturation strategies. Second, based on our emic approach, we will also compare the cultural identities in terms of the valence (positive or negative) of the attributes provided for describing the various cultural groups. We will then test, using discriminant function analysis, our predictions regarding the extent and ways in which strength and valence of each of the identities help to differentiate between two types of immigrants: those who perceive their experience as successful and those who construct their immigration as unsuccessful. Finally, we explore the patterns of correlations between the strength of cultural identities and the different criteria for successful immigration.

3. Results

3.1. Strength of cultural identity

A one-way within-subjects ANOVA revealed differences in the strength of the cultural identities ($F[2,335] = 30.12$, $p < 0.001$). Three *t*-tests (with Bonferroni corrections) were conducted in order to further examine the patterns of differences among the cultural identities. Results revealed significant differences between the Jewish identity and the Israeli identity ($t[336] = 7.01$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.44$) and between the Russian and the Israeli identities ($t[336] = 5.89$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.39$). As shown in Table 1, Israeli identity was significant weaker than both the Russian identity and the Jewish identity. No differences in strength were found between the Russian and the Jewish identities ($t[336] = .86$, $p = 0.39$, n.s.).

Table 1
Means and standard deviation (in parentheses) of identities and proportions of positive and negative features.

Identity	Score	Proportion positive	Proportion negative	Proportion positive/proportion negative
Jewish	4.33 (1.92)	0.66 (0.27)	0.25 (0.24)	2.64
Russian	4.23 (1.8)	0.55 (0.29)	0.38 (0.28)	1.45
Israeli	3.57 (1.57)	0.42 (0.27)	0.53 (0.27)	0.79

3.2. Acculturations strategies

Following the results obtained for each of the identities separately, we proceeded to the examination of acculturation strategies in the whole sample, based on the bi-dimensional model (Berry, 1980, 1997, 2001). Following one of the suggestions by Ward and Rana-Deuba (1999), we classified the respondents into the acculturation categories as defined by the Russian (minority) and Israeli (majority) identities, since these are the two major identities involved in the identity definition and redefinition among immigrants in Israel (Horenczyk, 1996). A cut-off point was set for the Russian and the Israeli identities at the mid-point (4 on a 7-point scale). Results reveal that 30% of the sample exhibit an integration profile (high on both identities), 30% of the respondents a separation pattern (high on Russian identity and low on the Israeli one), 16% of the sample showed an assimilation profile (high on Israeli identity and low on the Russian one), and 24% of the sample showed an marginalized orientation (low on both identities).

3.3. Positive and negative cultural identity features

A 3×2 two-way within-subjects ANOVA was conducted on the proportion of characteristics listed (out of the total number of responses), with cultural identity (Jewish, Russian and Israeli) and valence of the attributed features (negative and positive) as within-subjects factors.

As it seen in Table 1 an interaction was found between the cultural identity factor and the valence of features (negative/positive) ($F[2,303] = 104.2$, $p < 0.001$). Subsequent t-tests – with Bonferroni corrections – revealed that for the Jewish identity there were significantly more positive features as compared to negative features ($t[315] = 14.43$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.57$); the same pattern was found for the Russian identity—more positive than negative features ($t[321] = 5.02$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.55$). An opposite pattern, however, was obtained for the Israeli identity: respondents listed more negative as compared to positive features ($t[322] = -3.65$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.4$).

3.4. Success and cultural identity

After the overall look at the sample, we proceed to examine the extent to which the strength and valence of the various identities contribute to the differentiation between (subjectively) successful and unsuccessful immigrants. For that purpose, we set firm criteria to define the groups: only participants with extreme scores on all four of the success questions were included. In this way we created two relatively small but clearly defined groups: immigrants who perceived their immigration as successful on all four questions ($n = 61$), and immigrants who experienced their immigration as unsuccessful on all four questions ($n = 28$).

We then conducted a discriminant analysis, with strength of the three cultural identities predicting membership in the two success groups. Discriminant function analysis was used since this method is particularly suited for identifying and mapping the complex identity patterns differentially characterizing successful and unsuccessful immigrants. The overall Wilk's lambda was significant ($\Lambda = .85$, $\chi^2[3,N = 89] = 14.11$, $p = 0.003$), indicating that the predictors differentiate significantly among the two success groups. An examination of the standard discriminant function coefficients shows a relatively large positive coefficient of Israeli identity (0.79), and moderate coefficients for Jewish identity (0.18) and for the Russian identity (0.26). The discriminant function is thus characterized by high Israeli identity and moderate Jewish and Russian identities. The group means on the discriminant function suggest that high Israeli identity – and moderate Russian and Jewish identities – are clearly related to perceived success. Those who perceive themselves as successful score markedly higher on the discriminant function ($M = 0.29$) than those who perceived themselves as unsuccessful ($M = -0.62$). When predicting membership in perceived success groups on the basis of the strengths of the cultural identities we were able to classify correctly 70% of the individuals in our sample. In order to take into account chance agreement, we computed a kappa coefficient and obtained a value of 0.34 ($p = 0.001$), a moderate value.

3.5. Acculturation strategies in the success and non-success groups

In order to test the hypothesis that people who perceive their immigration as successful will be characterized by an integrationist acculturation strategy, while people who perceive their immigration as unsuccessful will be characterized by a marginalization orientation, we computed quantitative scores on each of the acculturation strategies on the basis of the separate scores for the Russian and Israeli identities. This was done using the proximity approach proposed by Arends-Toth and van de Vijver (2006) described earlier. According to this procedure, the two dimensions of cultural identity (Russian and Israeli) were seen as defining a two dimensional space, and ideal scores were set for each acculturation strategy: for example, if the x-axis represents Israeli identity and the y-axis represents the Russian identity, both on 7-points scales, then the ideal assimilation point will be located on the "7" value on the x-axis and the "1" value the y-axis. The respondent's acculturation score is then located on the bi-dimensional space based on his or her scores on each of the two identities (derived from the group characteristics questionnaire). The score on a specific acculturation strategy is computed on the basis of the Euclidean distance between his or her acculturation score on the bi-dimensional space and the respective ideal point. For each of the strategies, a high distance score reflects low endorsement of the acculturation strategy.

After computing the four acculturation strategies for each individual we conducted a discriminant analysis to predict membership in the success and non-success groups based on the scores on the four acculturation strategies. The overall Wilk's lambda was significant ($\Lambda = 0.8$, $\chi^2[4,N = 88] = 17.93$, $p = 0.001$). This result indicates that the predictors (acculturation strategies) differentiate between the success and non-success groups. The discriminant function shows a relatively high integration distance coefficient (0.88), a moderate assimilation distance coefficient (0.44), a relatively low separation distance coefficient (0.14) and a very low marginalization coefficient (−0.63). Since the measurement method proposed by Arends-Toth and van de Vijver (2006) conceptualizes and computes acculturation strategies in terms of distances, with high distance scores representing low strength of acculturation strategy, we will interpret the discriminant function as reflecting high marginalization, weak separation, relatively low assimilation and extremely low integration. An examination of the group means in the discriminant function shows that those who perceived themselves as unsuccessful score high on this discriminant function ($M = 0.7$), whereas those who perceive themselves as successful score low in the discriminant function ($M = -0.33$). In other words, unsuccessful immigrants are characterized primarily by a marginalization orientation and those who perceive themselves as successful appear characterized primarily by an integration orientation followed by an assimilative one.

When predicting membership in the perceived success group on the basis of acculturation strategies, we were able to classify correctly 71.6% of the individuals in our sample. In order to take into account chance agreement, we computed a kappa coefficient and obtained a value of 0.34 ($p = 0.001$), a moderate value.

3.6. Success and positive and negative cultural identity features

In order to enrich our understanding of the role played by of the different features of the cultural identities in the prediction of perceived success (i.e., membership in the perceived success group), we conducted an additional discriminant analysis with the proportions of positive features of the three identities as predictors. The overall Wilk's lambda was again significant ($\Lambda = 0.8$, $\chi^2[3,N = 75] = 15.18$, $p = 0.002$). This result suggests that the proportion of positive features attributed to the identities differentiate between the successful and non-successful groups. The standard discriminant function shows a relatively high negative coefficient for the positive features of the Israeli identity (−0.59), a relatively weak coefficient for positive features of the Russian identity (0.22), and a relatively high positive coefficient for positive features of the Jewish identity (0.44). The discriminant function is thus characterized by low positive features of Israeli identity and high positive features Jewish identity.

The group means on the discriminant functions suggest that high positive features of Israeli identity – and relatively low positive features of Jewish identity – are related to perceived success. Those who perceive themselves as successful score markedly lower on the discriminant function ($M = -0.80$) than those who perceived themselves as successful ($M = -0.27$). When predicting membership in perceived success groups on the basis of the proportion of positive features attributed to the groups, we were able to classify correctly 66.67% of the individuals in our sample. In order to take into account chance agreement, we computed a kappa coefficient and obtained a value of 0.26 ($p = 0.017$), a moderate value.

3.7. Success definition and cultural identities

We finally set to explore the ways in which the emic criteria for success are related to the strength of cultural identities, also conceptualized and measured in emic ways. We thus computed, for the whole sample, Pearson correlations between the three definitions of success (continuous variables of competence, belonging and well-being) and the strength of the three cultural identities. As shown in Table 2, strength of Israeli identity was found to be related to success perceived in terms of belonging, whereas Russian identity was found to be related to the perceived success criterion of competence (a weak but statistically significant relationship).

Table 2
Pearson correlations between the definitions of success and cultural identities ($n = 337$).

	Success definitions		
	Competence	Belonging	Well-being
Israeli identity			
Pearson correlation	−0.08	0.15	0.07
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.16	0.007	0.22
Russian identity			
Pearson correlation	0.15	−0.006	−0.04
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	0.9	0.51
Jewish identity			
Pearson correlation	−0.04	0.06	−0.03
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.47	0.26	0.63

4. Discussion

This study examined the relationship between cultural identity and immigration outcomes from an emic perspective. Both constructs were conceptualized and measured in terms of the individual's identity contents and success criteria. First, by looking at the general sample we found that the majority of our respondents were split between the integration and separation acculturation strategies (see Berry, 1980, 1997, 2001). We also found that the Jewish identity was characterized by more positive, as compared to negative, valences, and the same pattern was found for the Russian identity. An opposite pattern, however, was obtained for the Israeli identity: more negative, as compared to positive, valences characterized the Jewish cultural group. Second, an examination of the relationship between success and cultural identity revealed that – in line with our hypotheses – people who perceived their immigration as successful show high levels of Israeli identity and moderate levels of Jewish and Russian identities, as compared to people who perceived their immigration as unsuccessful. From the acculturation strategies perspective, we found that unsuccessful immigrants are characterized primarily by a marginalization orientation while those who perceived themselves as successful exhibit primarily an integration orientation followed by one of assimilation. In terms of identity valences, positive valences of the Israeli identity were connected positively to success as predicted, but also negative valences of the Jewish identity were positively related to perceived success. Finally, results showed more competence definitions of success following immigration among immigrants high in Russian identity and more perceptions of success in terms of belonging among newcomers exhibiting high levels of Israeli identity. Since the current study proposes a new methodology to assess cultural identity and immigration outcomes, we will explain the results obtained in our study primarily in light of the special contribution of this methodology.

4.1. Cultural identity strength and identity valences—general sample

We found that the Israeli identity was weaker than the Russian and the Jewish ones and that the most frequent acculturation categories were integration and separation, i.e., bicultural immigrants and immigrants who kept their former Russian identity but preferred not to adopt the new identity.

In the public Israeli sphere, the immigrants from the FSU are often seen as a self-segregated group within Israeli society. As noted by Al Haj (2002), it is frequently claimed that immigrants make considerable efforts to preserve their "cultural uniqueness" within a "Russian bubble" (Kimmerling, 2004). According to this view, these newcomers strive to create a "cultural enclave" (Lissak, 1995), one that includes "Russian" cultural organizations, Russian-language media, and community organizations. These views were partially supported by the findings of our study, showing a relatively high frequency of the segregation acculturation strategy.

Our findings, however, provide also partial support to suggestions regarding the prevalence of a bicultural acculturation orientation among this group of immigrants. In a recent survey (Adler, 2004), adult newcomers were asked about the extent to which they feel Israeli or "members of their group of origin". More than 65% of the respondents chose a bicultural option, whereas the mono-cultural responses (Israeli or "member of my group of origin") were selected only by 31% of the participants. A study that followed FSU immigrants during the five first years since their arrival reports that the newcomers tend to socialize primarily within their fellow immigrants, but the frequency of interactions with Israeli nationals increases with time (Rosenbaum-Tamari & Damian, 2004). This study concludes that FSU immigrants consider it important to preserve their culture of origin, but they also attach great importance to their involvement in Israeli society. Two studies have examined acculturation orientations among adolescent immigrants from the FSU in Israel. In their study of students residing in boarding schools for immigrant youngsters, Ben-Shalom and Horenczyk (2000) found a clear preference for the bicultural orientation; *integration* scores were significantly higher than those on the *separation* scale. A similar pattern emerges from the responses of the FSU immigrants within the Israeli sample of the comparative ICSEY study (Horenczyk, 2003): integration was the most strongly endorsed attitude.

The fact that our study shows relatively preference for both strategies – separation and integration – can be attributed to our emic conceptualization and methodology. The common way to measure majority and minority identity is by asking general questions, usually assessing the overall affective attitude of the individual toward the group. Due to the tendency of people to report belongingness to groups (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), this methodological approach will tend to elicit relatively high positive levels of identification with the various cultures and cultural groups. As a result, the integration strategy is likely to be overrepresented. We would like to argue that these methodologies fail to confront the individual with a concrete image of the group (as constructed by the individual him/herself) and to assess identification with the group in terms of the fit between the individual self-image and the image she or he attributes to the group. It is reasonable to expect that such a conceptualization and measurement of group identification – as introduced in this study – will tend to be less biased and hence less positive. This can explain the relatively low levels of cultural identities (means of 3.57 and 4.33 on a 7-point scale) and the relatively high frequency of the marginalization category, obtained in our study.

As expected, there were more positive than negative valences listed for the relatively highly valued identities (Jewish and Russian identities) as opposed to the less valued identity (Israeli identity) which was characterized by more negative valences as compared to positive ones. It is noteworthy, however, that although almost half of the sample adopted the Israeli identity to certain extent (scored above the mid-point on this identity), the contents of the Israeli identity are generally perceived in relatively negatively light.

4.2. Cultural identity, acculturation, and success types

Our findings characterized clearly the two types of immigrants—the successful and the unsuccessful ones. We found that people who perceive their immigration as successful show high levels of Israeli identity compared to people who do not perceive their immigration as successful, and that unsuccessful immigrants were characterized primarily by a marginalization orientation while those who perceived themselves as successful characterized themselves primarily by integration orientation followed by assimilation.

These results are consistent with earlier findings. Previous research related a marginalization strategy to maladjustment and reduced levels of well-being (Berry, Phinney, Kwak, & Sam, 2006; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). Schmitz (1994), for example, found the marginalization strategy to be positively connected to "psychopathology," as measured using the psycho-social stress inventory. Marginalization was also positively related to depression, poor self-image, and psychological symptoms among immigrant youth in Norway (Sam & Berry, 1995). The same results were also found in a sample of FSU immigrants in Israel (Ben Shalom & Horenczyk, 2004).

On the other hand, immigrants who adopt a bicultural identity orientation report less psychological distress. Among South Asians in the USA, for example, integration scores predicted lower overall acculturative stress (Krishnan & Berry, 1992). In a study of immigrants in Germany, Schmitz (1992) found that integration was associated with reduced levels of both neuroticism and psychoticism. The same results were found among Israeli adolescents who immigrated from the FSU (Ben-Shalom & Horenczyk, 2000). It has been suggested that in complex societies made up by multiple social and cultural networks, the sense of being grounded (LaFromboise, Hardin, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993) in more then just one culture is likely to enhance the individual's ability to cope with the stress and difficulties involved in cultural transition.

Some studies provide also evidence for a relationship between endorsement of the assimilation strategy and well-being, particularly within an assimilative context, as we found in the current study (Ben-Shalom & Horenczyk, 2006). Within a contextual approach to acculturation, it has been claimed that the context is likely to affect the extent of adoption of certain strategies, as well as their adaptive value (Birman, Trickett, & Buchanan, 2005). Such an ecological approach would suggest that perceived success is contingent on the fit between the context and the individual acculturation strategies. We would like to propose tentatively that the Israeli acculturative context is seen by some of the successful immigrants as pluralistic and diverse (calling for an integration strategy), and by other successful immigrants as assimilative and homogeneous (thus calling for an assimilative orientation).

The group characteristic questionnaire provides an opportunity to look beyond this familiar picture. At the same time as results revealed that positive valences of the Israeli identity were connected positively to success, it is the negative valences of the Jewish identity that were positively related to perceived success. The finding regarding the Israeli identity can be explained in light of the former findings, that is, since the Israeli identity is stronger in the success group, it also contains more positive valences. The result concerning the Jewish identity, however, is surprising. As we mentioned, the Jewish identity was rated the highest in the success group, but it seems to contain relatively high proportions of negative components. We offer three explanations for this finding. The first points to the assimilative Israeli atmosphere and the prevalent attitude of Israelis toward Diaspora Jewishness. Within the Jewish-Israeli "secular" environment, the Israeli identity was often defined (especially close to the creation of the State of Israel) as opposed to Jewish non-Israeli identity. While the former is perceived as positive, strong and bold, the later is perceived in an ambivalent way or even negative and weak (Almog, 1998). In our study, the immigrants that report successful adaptation to the Israeli society seem to have adopted the secular Israeli-born (Sabra) ruling narrative in which the Israeli identity is perceived as positive and the Jewish identity is perceived as negative. The second explanation points to the former Soviet society, where the Jewish population was perceived as different and alienated from Russian majority society (Katayeva, 1994). Large segments of the population even exhibited anti-Semitic attitudes and behaviors toward the Jews. It can be suggested that successful immigrants have largely internalized the pre-migration negative attitudes by the majority society toward their Jewish identity. Coming to Israel provide to them the opportunity to relate positively to another majority identity in the new context, namely, the Israeli identity. The third explanation concerns the perception of the non-successful immigrants. As we saw, about 70% of the Jewish valences were positive in the non-success group as opposed to a more balanced picture in the success group. We propose that the unsuccessful immigrants may have a nostalgic look on their past including their former identity (the Jewish identity). The unsatisfying and depressing life in Israel paints the past in glamorous light.

In sum, the new emic methodology, which provides a way to look at the valences of each identity, offers the opportunity to go beyond the regular measures of cultural identities' strength and of acculturation strategies. By revealing the content of each cultural identity, we were able to uncover the nuances and the fine details of the nature of cultural identity. Future research should compare the proposed emic approach to more traditional etic approaches to the conceptualization and measurement of group identity and adjustment. Eventual discrepancies between the patterns obtained using the two kinds of methods are likely to provide us with valuable insights as to the subtleties of the individual and social construction of both identity and adaptation.

4.3. Cultural identity and success criteria

The emic methodology introduced in this study provided us also with a rich classification of criteria for success that might reflect different needs and motivations. Our results revealed some interesting relationships between those criteria for

success and strength of cultural identities: belonging definitions of success are positively correlated with Israeli identity and competence definitions with Russian identity. As to relationship between belonging criteria for success and strength of Israeli identity, it can be suggested that immigrants who see success in term of belonging might be more eager to adopt the new Israeli identity. The opposite causal interpretation, however, is also plausible: immigrants who adopt the new Israeli identity come to value the belonging and relatedness to life in Israel and as a result they may tend to define success in terms of belongingness.

We also found a correlation between Russian identity and the competence criteria of success. It has been suggested that post-communist societies and cultures have gradually adopted value priorities that tend to emphasize individual's pursuit of goals and personal achievement (Drnáková, 2006; Schwartz, Bardi, & Bianchi, 2000). It would seem that immigrants who maintain high Russian identification apply these emerging societal and cultural norms to their construction of criteria for success in their new country.

These last findings suggest that immigrants should not be seen as a uniform group, but rather as heterogeneous and diverse. The mapping of different criteria for success after cultural transition should inform the way in which responsible institutions deal with newcomers. For example, people who construct successful immigration in terms of having a good job and a nice apartment are not likely to benefit from Israeli gatherings and social activities as much as newcomers who wish to belong and relate.

Our study put forward emic conceptualizations and methodologies for the analysis of group identity and adaptation following cultural transition, operationalized in terms of cultural identity and perceived success. We were able to show the potential of such a perspective for a richer and more accurate analysis of the identity and adaptation processes involved in migration. As indicated earlier, the emic approach proposed in this paper is likely to lead also to an improved examination of the relationships among these two constructs.

Future research should expand the scope and depth of our conceptualizations, findings, and preliminary conclusions. Larger samples will allow for the inclusion of additional variables – such as length of stay in the new country and gender – that may affect perceived success following immigration or moderate the relationship between perceived success and cultural identity, conceptualized in emic ways. Larger samples would also yield more respondents in each of the two clearly defined groups—those of successful and non-successful immigrants (as defined by their own criteria).

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by Scholion, Interdisciplinary center in Jewish studies, The Cherrick Center, The Harvey L. Silbert Center for Israel Studies, and The Shaine Center for Research in Social Science, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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