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## ***From the President***

The 14<sup>th</sup> biennial EARA conference in Izmir/Çesme promises to be the event of the year for EARA members and adolescent researchers in Europe and beyond. There's a lot of good news to share about the conference. We had the highest number of submissions ever: 35 Symposia, 177 oral presentations and 90 posters, and the reviews of the submission showed them to be of very good quality. We will have internationally renowned scholars such as Laurence Steinberg, Christiane Spiel, Susan Branje, Deborah Capaldi and Nebi Sümer and many others giving key notes and presenting symposia. Also there will be four preconference workshops (Writing Articles for English journals, *Evaluating Intervention/Prevention Programs, Advanced Longitudinal Approaches for Modeling Individual Development, and Working with longitudinal data with SEM*), organized by EARA members from all parts of Europe. Luckily our grant application to the Jacobs Foundation for young scholars to be at the preconferences was awarded, so we were able to select 23 of them to be there. Indeed, Figen Çok and her team have been doing very good work.

EARA members have been working hard in teaching the upcoming generation of young researchers. Our former president, Peter Noack, successfully organized the Second Workshop for young researchers of adolescence in Latin America in Chile in the fall of 2013, and Marcel van Aken and Susan Branje will host the next EARA/SRA summer school in June 2014 at Utrecht

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University, the Netherlands. At this moment the EARA/SRA summer school committee is preparing the 2015 school. We were happy that two new EARA members were able to join the committee: Jaap Denissen from Tilburg University, the Netherlands, and Jeff Kiesner from Padua University, Italy. Lauree Tilton-Weaver, one of the prominent members of the committee stepped down. Together with Sheila Marshall, Lauree has been the driving force behind the EARA/SRA summer schools. Thank you Lauree, especially for writing the successful grant proposal for the second series of schools, and for laying out the guidelines for the summer school committee.

EARA will renew the Studies in Adolescent Development series published by Psychology Press. I would like to thank Leo Hendry, Marion Kloep and Inge Seiffge-Krenke for editing the series in the past years and am happy to announce that we found new editors for the series. Susan Branje, Lauree Tilton-Weaver and Loes Keijsers will serve as editors for the coming years and are already working on a first volume to be published. I think that we are in a very good position to make this series a success. From the EARA publications listed in our newsletter, I learned that EARA members are becoming increasingly visible in the international journals and especially also in the top tier journal in developmental science. Our society really knows about adolescents and adolescent development and is able to make this knowledge visible across the globe. Recent figures about the readership of our home journal, the Journal of Adolescence, underscore my observation. Do you have any clue how many JOA articles were downloaded in 2013? I was stunned to learn that this number was 640.287! Indeed, we have an audience!

As for the dissemination of knowledge I'm also happy to announce the panel on the International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies (ICDSS) at the EARA conference. The panel discussion is designed to introduce the new Consortium to the members of EARA, and to seek input from EARA members. The panelists (Stephen Russell, past-president of SRA, Rainer Silbereisen, past-president of ISSBD, Luc Goossens, past-president of EADP and

myself will introduce the mission and visions of the ICDSS, including its potential for strengthening international perspectives on developmental sciences, and potential for life span perspectives that enhance otherwise life-stage focused expertise. I look forward to see you in Izmir/Çesme!

Best wishes,  
Wim Meeus  
Adolescent Development Utrecht University  
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### ***Inquiries***

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# ***Special Issue: Growing up in a Multicultural Society***

***Isabelle Albert*** (University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg)

Migration constitutes a key issue in many societies today (UNFPA, 2006). People from all over the world move to foreign countries in search of work, better economic conditions, and for many other reasons. This is especially relevant for many European countries, as along with the European integration process, labour migration and mobility in the European Union are incessantly increasing.

Offspring of migrant families undoubtedly face a special situation: they might be confronted with different values and expectations of socialization agents in different contexts, notably in their families characterized by the culture of origin and in school as representative of the host country culture, as well as among peers and friends with different cultural backgrounds (Padilla, 2008).

If we consider the fact that adolescence is a very special phase in life with many crucial developmental tasks and transitions such as identity development, social development and multiple requirements in formal education (Steinberg & Morris, 2001), the question arises of what it means for adolescents if the process of acculturation is added to all this as a further task they have to deal with (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006).

Luxembourg might be seen as a very special acculturation context due to its small size, high rate of foreigners, and multilingualism. Of the 549,700 inhabitants in Luxembourg, 45.3% are foreigners (Statec, 2014). Among these are permanent residents as well as expatriates working for international enterprises and a large share of officials working for the EU institutions. Most foreigners come from other EU countries: Portuguese constitute by far the

largest immigrant group in Luxembourg with currently 90,800 residents of Portuguese nationality, i.e. 36% of all foreigners. Large-scale immigration of Portuguese immigrants to Luxembourg started in the late 1960s/early 1970s due to the increased demand for workers in the industrial sector (Beirão, 2010; Willems & Milmeister, 2008) but also a more recent immigration flow to Luxembourg can be noted. Further foreigners are French (37,100 residents), Italians (18,800), Belgians (18,100), Germans (12,700), British (5,900), Dutch (4,000) as well as people from several other European countries (altogether 27,000); finally, 34,500 foreigners come from non-EU countries. Moreover, a high number of commuters from the neighbouring countries (France, Germany, and Belgium) are present on the labour market. Furthermore, there are three official languages in Luxembourg, namely French, German and Luxembourgish. All this makes of Luxembourg kind of a sample case for Europe.

The present special issue focuses on several key themes with regard to growing up in a multicultural society such as multilingualism in the context of school instruction, development of national and cultural identity, aspects of integration as well as issues of psychological counselling for adolescents from migrant families. We start with a closer look at the specific context in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, subsequently enlarge our view to other European countries and close with a more general perspective.

The first contribution by Gabrijela Reljić (University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg) tackles the important question of whether *mother tongue is important for school instruction of language-minority children?* Starting from the observation that language-minority children often perform significantly lower than their native counterparts in school, three studies are reported. The first compares reading and mathematics performance of language-minority children in two countries, Serbia and Luxembourg and confirms earlier findings of a performance gap between language minorities and native peers. In the second study, several possible predictors for

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emergent literacy are analysed, showing that earlier skills in vocabulary, phonological awareness and mathematics at the age of 5 are related to later reading skills at the age of 7. Finally, a meta-analysis on several European studies is presented which showed the positive effects of bilingual programs (instructing children in both their mother tongue and the second language) are effective for children's academic achievement. Altogether these three studies demonstrated the high importance of language issues for academic performance, and multilingual school programs are recommended as an opportunity to improve school performance of children from migrant families.

In the second contribution, Elke Murdock and Dieter Ferring (University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg) investigate *On being bicultural in a multicultural society*. Drawing on a sample of  $N = 204$  middle adolescents visiting the European School in Luxembourg - which according to the authors "represents a European microcosm within the multicultural context of Luxembourg" -, this study analyses the roles of different kinds of experienced culture contact and the development of cultural identity. Mainly, four different categories of cultural self-definitions were found: mono-cultural, blended, giving one nationality with the addition to live in Luxembourg as well as a category of more complex self-definitions. One important aspect on how the culture contact situation in a multicultural context is experienced seemed to be if parents are of the same or of mixed nationality. In sum, the results show that second culture exposure does not necessarily, but only under certain conditions, lead to a bi-cultural orientation.

The third contribution by Andreas Heinen and Helmut Willems (University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg) on *Youth transitions and integration in a multicultural society* gives a broad overview on what it means for youth from immigrant families to grow up in the multicultural society of Luxembourg. The authors focus thereby on two perspectives, namely adolescence as a phase of transition with specific developmental tasks and adolescence as a moratorium. Selected

empirical data for Luxembourg are provided with regard to four different dimensions of integration, namely structural integration (education, employment), social integration (friendship, peer group), cultural integration (language, normative orientation), and identity integration (sense of belonging to the host society). The authors conclude with specific ideas on chances and challenges for society, politics and research regarding the integration of immigrant youth in a plural and multicultural society.

In the fourth article, Lidia Correia (Centre de psychologie et d'orientation scolaires - CPOS, Luxembourg) takes a more practical perspective when reflecting on *Migration, adolescence and family myth: a fragile balance? Clinical evolution and today's reality observed in Luxemburg*. She focuses on Portuguese speaking immigrant families living in Luxembourg and in need for psychological counselling. First of all, she notes an increase in single parenthood or parents in marital crisis which might have a negative effect on adolescents' successful acculturation process. Also, the role of specific family cultures (including family specific rules and regulations about how to relate to each other) which might sometimes be very rigid, is tackled and suggestions are presented on how one might re-establish communication between family members if they are "stuck in a family myth". Finally, the risk of a double marginalization of adolescents who separate both from family and from school, is addressed and recommendations on how to reintegrate adolescents in these two different authority systems are presented.

With the fifth contribution by Virginie Avezou-Boutry (Université Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense, France) and Colette Sabatier (Université de Bordeaux, France), we take a look at our neighbour country France and the perspective is enlarged to intergenerational relations in migrant families. This article with the title *Parenting in a bicultural context is a multilevel complex task. A study of Moroccan second-generation early adolescents and their mothers living in France*, starts with the observation that immigrant parents face a difficult task regarding the socialization of their children: on the one hand, they might



try to transmit to their children values from their culture of origin, on the other hand they might be interested in encouraging their offspring's adaptation to the values and demands of the host society in order to develop important competencies needed in the new environment. The focus of the present paper is on this dual process of enculturation (ethnic and French) on adolescents' cultural identity in a sample of  $N = 96$  Moroccan early adolescents (at the age of 12) and their mothers living in France. Apart from ethnic and French identity of both mothers and offspring, several direct and indirect dimensions of enculturation are assessed such as cultural behaviour, cultural teaching and maternal goals as well as quality of the parenting relationship. Results underline the importance of family climate – in particular, a positive parent-child relationship which allows for identity exploration and its endorsement - for the development of national identity.

Finally, Jaan Valsiner (Aalborg University), Giuseppina Marsico (University of Salerno) and Maliina Lyberth (Aalborg University) provide *A look from cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics*. They add a rather uncommon and new perspective when they argue that each person might be treated as a culture (personal culture) and that therefore any society is in the first place multi-cultural (as opposed to uni-cultural). They provide some concluding thoughts about how the task of growing up in a multi-cultural society might be tackled successfully by the new generations.

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## **1. Is Mother Tongue Important for School Instruction of Language-Minority Children?**

***Gabrijela Reljić***

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### Introduction

Imagine you are a Pakistani child who has just been introduced to her first English class. She comes to the class, sits at her place and receives a text that begins with the following sentence: “She sent off to the very best seed house for five bushels of lupine seed.” (Cooney, 1982, p. 21; cited in Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). If you are a native speaker you would know that words are composed of sounds, that there are important grammatical rules, that one bushel is approximately 36.4 litres and that a lupine is a flower. Now, if you are a Pakistani child who does not speak English the very same sentence would look like this: “Xxx xxxx xxx xx xxx xxxx xxxx xxxxx xxx xxxx xxxxxxxx xx xxxxxx xxxx.”

Both children are taking the same class with the difference that Pakistani child

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needs to learn both the school subject and the second language at the same time. It is important for language-minority children to understand school instruction from their early years. Language-minority children are those whose language is different and less represented to the language spoken in the country in which they live. For example, those children may be Pakistani in England, Portuguese in Luxembourg, Turkish in Germany, Hungarians in Serbia and so on. The PISA results from the year 2000 up until now showed that language minorities performed significantly lower than their native peers in reading and mathematics (OECD, 2000, 2006). On average, they were one year behind. In Luxembourg, for example, more than 30% of language minorities performed below the basic level in reading which is a worrying fact since reading and mathematics are the base for their school success (OECD, 2010). The results of PISA 2012 study showed that Luxembourg ranked 30<sup>th</sup> in reading, and that language-minorities performed significantly lower than their native counterparts (OECD, 2012).

### Psycholinguistic Theory

According to the psycholinguistic theories, language-minority children learn better when they are instructed in both their mother tongue and the second language (Cummins, 2000). The author underlined that the better foundation in mother tongue, the better development in other languages. Without instruction in their mother tongue, children might be at the academic disadvantage; thus, mother tongues should not be abandoned. Bilingual programs are doing exactly that: instructing language minorities in both their mother tongue and the second language. In order to explore this complex reality, three studies were conducted. The aims of the studies were threefold: (1) to investigate the reading and mathematics performance of preschool language-minority children in Luxembourg and Serbia (Study I), (2) to identify predictors of early literacy (Study II), and (3) to conduct a meta-analysis which is a quantitative synthesis, on the effectiveness of bilingual programs in Europe in

promoting the academic achievement of language-minority children (Study III).

### Study I

The first study was about the reading and mathematics performance of language-minority children in two countries, Serbia and Luxembourg. Reading and mathematics are of paramount importance for children's school success, their graduation from school, going to the University, annual income, well-being, cultural and political participation and so on (OECD, 2010). In this study, the aim was to investigate how language minorities are performing in two different school systems. The samples consisted of 159 children from Serbia and 174 children from Luxembourg aged 4 to 6. In Serbia, in a longitudinal study, children were followed for 18 months and where their reading and mathematics performance was tested three times. In Luxembourg, this was done only once. The test used was called PIPS (Performance Indicators in Primary Schools; CEM, 1994) and this test measured early reading, mathematics and socio-emotional development of children. The results showed that Roma and Hungarians performed significantly lower than Serbs and other minorities in reading. In mathematics, Roma had the lowest scores. This may be due to the fact that 92% of their parents finished only primary school and here we may have an impact of the low socio-economic background. In Luxembourg, Portuguese performed significantly lower than Luxembourgers and other minorities in both reading and mathematics. However, in two specific sections: vocabulary and rhyming, Luxembourgers outperformed not only the Portuguese but all other 15 minorities. For example, in vocabulary, Luxembourgers achieved 79% of correct answers, Portuguese 33% and other minorities 56% (out of 90%). In addition, in vocabulary, Luxembourgish children outperformed language-minority children, both Portuguese and other minorities in vocabulary with the large effect size ( $r = 0.67$ ), indicating that the impact of language was a substantive finding (explaining 67% of the total variance). The effect size in vocabulary between Luxembourgers and

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Portuguese was very large ( $r = 0.76$ ; explaining 76% of the total variance). This is an alarming finding since vocabulary is the most pertinent predictor of literacy (e.g., Lonigan, Burgess, & Anthony, 2000; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997) and literacy and numeracy are the base for the academic achievement of children.

### Study II

The second study was about the predictors of emergent literacy. This study discovered that mathematics and their mother tongue were the most significant factors among children from Serbia. Children who were not tested in their mother tongue at the age of 5 scored significantly lower than their peers at the age of 7. Also, children who scored high in mathematics at the age of 5 scored high in reading at the age of 7. In Luxembourg, the most significant factors were children's gender, vocabulary, phonological awareness and mathematics. Children, girls in particular, who scored high in vocabulary, phonological awareness (words are composed of sounds) and mathematics scored high in reading. These children were Luxembourgers. Thus, it is of the utmost importance to act in the preschool years in order to break the circle of possible academic underachievement as some studies show that good progress in the earliest years is the most important and still detectable at the age of 11 (Tymms, Jones, Albone, & Henderson, 2007).

### Study III

The third study, which was on the European level, was a meta-analysis, a quantitative synthesis, on the effectiveness of bilingual programs in Europe. If there are performance gaps in reading and mathematics, and if we know which factors influence children's reading scores, the aim was to investigate whether bilingual programs, the ones that are instructing children in both their mother tongue and the second language are effective for children's academic achievement. Indeed, this study showed that bilingual programs, in which language-minority children are instructed in both their mother tongue and the second language, are more effective than the

submersion program where children are instructed only in the second language, in promoting their academic achievement. An effect size of 0.23 showed that, on average, language minorities in bilingual programs performed 20% higher than language minorities in submersion programs in reading (Cooper, 2009). This was the first meta-analysis in Europe, supporting bilingual education and confirming findings from the previous meta-analyses in the United States (Greene, 1998; McField, 2002 [cited in Krashen & McField, 2005], Rolstad et al., 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2003, 2005; Willig, 1985). Bilingual education works and should be presented to the Luxembourgish and Serbian educational policy since education that children understand well brings a decline in drop-out rates and a reduction in costs which is extremely important for the economic competitiveness of the country (Grin, 2003). Also, it reduces frustration, low confidence, prejudices, discrimination and psychological damage (Ramirez, Perez, Valdes, & Hall, 2009). Having said that, one has to be aware that multilingual environments such as Luxembourg are complex in their essence – some children are being confronted with even more than three languages sometimes. However, multilingual education is built on the bilingual education and every complexity brings an opportunity for more development.

### Conclusion

From the first study we know that there are performance gaps between language minorities and native peers in reading and mathematics. In Luxembourg, all language minorities, including Portuguese and other 15 minorities, performed significantly lower in vocabulary and rhyming. From the second study we know that specifically vocabulary and rhyming (phonological awareness) were the most significant factors for children's reading scores along with gender and mathematics. This is important because reading and mathematics are the base for children's academic achievement. In Serbia, these factors were mother tongue and mathematics. Mathematics and reading are related since they are both cognitive

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processes based on decoding symbols. The third study served as a recommendation. If we know that there are performance gaps and if we know which factors are the most significant for children's reading performance, what about the effectiveness of bilingual programs that instruct children in both their mother tongue and the second language? The third study showed that bilingual programs are more effective than submersion programs, the ones that are instructing children only in their second language, for language minorities' academic achievement. This is true for both Europe and the United States.

### Limitations

Future research should involve more children in longitudinal and intervention designs and focus on including a wider scope of factors such as socio-economic background of the children, proficiency in mother tongue, cognitive processes such as working memory, motivation and socio-educational context.

### Practical Implications and the Follow Up

These three studies gave an opportunity for breaking possible underachievement in schools in Serbia and Luxembourg. Some studies showed that good progress in the earliest years is the most important and is still detectable at the age of 11 (Tymms et al., 2007). Thus, it is of the utmost importance to act as soon as possible in the forms of longitudinal and interventions studies and introduce early bilingual programs in both countries.

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## **2. On being bicultural in a multicultural society**

***Elke Murdock & Dieter Ferring***  
(University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg)

### Introduction

Even within a globalizing world, Luxembourg takes an exceptional position with a foreign population of 44 % country-wide and rising to 68 % in the capital. The country is trilingual and all three official languages are spoken throughout the country. Following WW II Luxembourg played a leading role in the European

unification process and the Grand Duchy became host to several European Institutions. On the initiative of officials of the European Coal and Steel Community and supported by the Community's institutions and the Luxembourg Government the first European School (Ecole Européenne, EE) was established in Luxembourg in 1953. The European school system was created "to bring into being a united and thriving Europe" by educating students "side by side, untroubled from infancy by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures ... without ceasing to look to their own lands with love and pride." (Schola Europaea, n.d.) The founding fathers of Europe hoped that students will grow up "feeling that they belong together and become in mind Europeans." EEs are divided into different language sections, representing the member states of the European Union. The EE thus represents a European microcosm within the multicultural context of Luxembourg. Students experience different forms of second culture exposure – from birth, by having mixed nationality parents, by having moved to a different country and given the multinational composure of Luxembourg and the EE, in their daily lives. How do these different forms of culture contact affect the choice of acculturation strategies? According to the Acculturation Complexity Model (ACM, Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006) exposure to a different culture can lead to bicultural orientation or an assimilated/ separated mono-cultural orientation. According to the model, the choice of strategy will depend on feeling accountable to a single or a mixed audience and the amount of dissonance felt between the different value systems. Bi- or multiculturalism has been defined as the experience of having been exposed to and having internalized two or more cultures (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2007) or as simply as those who self-label or group-categorize that reflects their cultural pluralism (Benet-Martinez, 2012). Benet-Martinez and her colleagues have proposed the construct of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) which captures the degree to which «biculturals perceive their mainstream or ethnic cultural identities as

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compatible and integrated vs. oppositional and difficult to integrate» (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002, p.9). Persons scoring high on BII perceive two identities as compatible whereas those low on BII perceive two identities as oppositional. BII encompasses two separate independent constructs namely perceptions of distance vs. overlap and perceptions of conflict vs. harmony (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005).

The present research investigates the role of different types of culture contact experiences and the impact on the choice of acculturation strategy. Children growing up with mixed nationality parents are accountable to a mixed audience from birth and we expect that these students are likely to self-identify as bicultural. Most students attending the EE can be described as *Third Culture Kids* (TCKs, Pollock, van Ruth, van Reeken, 2009) in the sense that they spend a significant part of their lives outside the parents' passport culture. Their stay in the current host country is not permanent. There are low accountability pressures to the host country, thus identification as mono-cultural is expected, despite the widespread opportunity for second culture exposure.

### Method

Given the importance of "self-labeling" as one measure of biculturalism, a self-definition measure in form of the following question was included: "When people ask you 'What is your nationality?' How do you answer the question?" To assess how different nationalities are organized and experienced, an adapted version of the Bicultural Identity Integration Scale Version 2 (BIIS-2R) (Huynh & Benet-Martínez, 2010) was used. The original scale, which includes 20 items on a 5 point Likert Scale, measures 2 dimensions: Harmony vs. Conflict and Blendedness vs. Separateness. Example items include "I feel that my cultures complement each other (H)" vs. "I find that my nationalities exclude each other (C)" or "I would describe myself as a mixture of two or more nationalities (B)" vs. "In daily life I keep my nationalities separate (S)". The Scale was originally designed for immigration-based acculturation, focusing on two cultures and had to be adapted to

allow for more than two nationalities and for the experience of the TCKs. Two items were therefore added tapping into the feeling of "Belonging". One item read "I am always the foreigner".

An extensive demographic section covering language competence use, length of stay in Luxembourg, nationality of parents etc. was also included as well as questions relating to behavioral aspects such as spending time with people from different language sections/ people outside school. Questionnaires were made available in the three vehicular languages English, French and German and the students could choose freely between these. Permission to conduct research had been granted by the EE II and parental consent forms had been distributed prior to the survey. The questionnaires were administered during 2<sup>nd</sup> language classes by a psychology student.

The sample consisted of N = 204 secondary students (years S4 and S5), of which 110 were male. The mean age was 15.2 years with SD = 0.84. All language sections of EE II (Danish, English, French, German, Greek and Italian) were included in the sample but the children represented a much wider range of nationalities, as well as their parents. For mothers, 44 different countries of birth were given and 32 for fathers. Just under half of the students (48%) have parents of different nationalities and 48% of the students were born in Luxembourg. In the demographic section, 51% stated having one nationality, 38% two and 10% more than two nationalities. Language competence is high with all students speaking a minimum of three languages; the mean number of languages stated was four.

### Results

Conforming to the hypothesis, there is a strong association between parents of mixed nationality and the students' self-definition as bi or multi-cultural. The multicultural self-definitions were grouped into different subcategories: The largest category is made up of what we called "Blended" students who added nationalities (English *and* Danish), provided stroke identities (Portuguese – Korean, Franconéerlandaise) or gave detailed percentages (2/4 Luxembourger, 1/4

German, 1/4 Italian). A second group stated their nationality and made reference to living in Luxembourg, usually in the form of a “but” statement (from Malta, but I live in Luxembourg). A further group made additional references to their origin such as “Welsh, descendant from Scotland”. Finally, a small group (n = 3) gave very complex answers such as “An Afro-European who feels American.” The latter two groups were combined and the self-definition measure thus results in 4 broad categories: Mono (52%), Blended (34%), Nationality plus Lux (9%), and origin/complex (5%). A Chi square test shows that there is a highly significant association between country of birth of parents (same vs. different) and the self-definition of the students as Mono, Blended, Nationality plus Lux or the origin/complex group:  $\chi^2(3, n = 203) = 86.9, p < 0.01$  and Cramer’s  $V = 0.65$  (large effect. 74% of the students with parents the same nationality self-classified as “mono-cultural” (I am Czech). Of the mixed parents students, 65% can be found in the blended group. As measured by the BII scales, the “blended” students experienced their nationalities as harmonious, blended and low in conflict. The “mono”- students also expressed low conflict as well as the complex/ origin group. The “nationality plus” group had significantly higher conflict scores than the other three groups, coupled with lower scores on harmony and blendedness (see Figure 1).

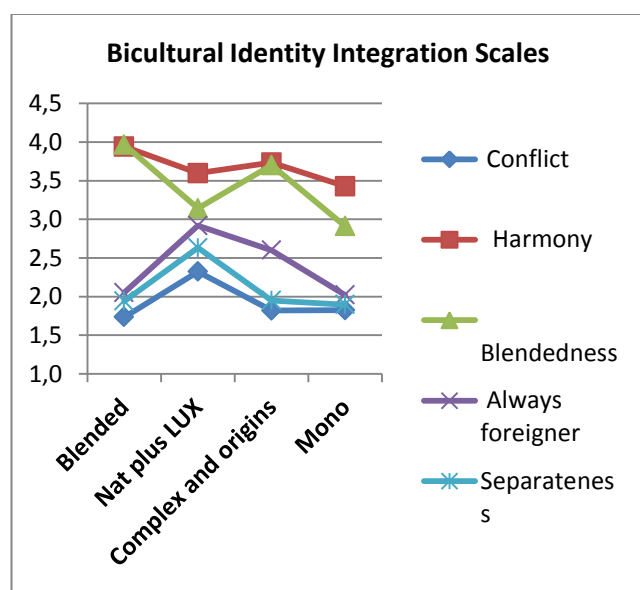


Figure 1. BII ratings of students in different subcategories of multicultural self-definitions

### Discussion

The results show that second culture exposure alone is not a sufficient condition for bi-cultural orientation. As postulated in the ACM, accountability to more than one culture plays a key role which can be assumed to be the case for children raised by mixed-nationality parents, who express a binational orientation. For the “blended” and “complex/ origin” students in our study having more than one nationality is a source of pride and self-enhancement. The level of reflection and perspective taking was high as is exemplified by the self-definition of a 14 year old student “I am half German, half Italian -sometimes the other way round, depending on the situation, the place or the person I am talking to”. These students resent being forced into one category and demonstrate that “old” models of nationality don’t suffice in today’s globalized world. The “nationality plus” students, who in the majority have mono-national parents feel dissonance. The culture contact situation is experienced as a source of conflict. Those students don’t experience the benefits of biculturalisms and don’t have the sense of belonging that the mono-cultural students express. They are caught between both worlds – their current state could be described as *moratorium* (Marcia, 1993). The culture contact situation provoked reflection (exploration), but commitment is vague at this stage and their orientation could go either way –as mono or bicultural. Further research is required to investigate which individual difference factors triggered reflection concerning the second culture exposure in these students while other students remain mono-cultural. The founding fathers had hoped that students would become “in mind Europeans”, but the students do not self-identify with this meta-category at least not in the form of spontaneous self-definition. However, some of the students lead the way in terms of going beyond dated expressions of mono-nationalism and provide reflected bicultural self-definitions as a matter of course.

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## 3. Youth transitions and integration in a multicultural society

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### Conceptual framework: Transitions to adulthood and integration

From a sociological perspective youth as a life phase is mainly characterized by processes of socialization and individual development on the one hand and the managements of transitions to adulthood on the other. Transitions to adulthood are related to young people's development of social and economic independence and their societal integration and participation. Transitions have changed substantially over the past decades: they are postponed, de-standardized and supposed to be rather subject to individual choice than the result of prescribed patterns (Bynner, 2005; de Valk, 2011). Hurrelmann (2006) (with reference to Havighurst, 1972, who introduced the concept of developmental tasks) distinguishes four domains of transition: (1) the development of intellectual and social competence (in order to achieve the occupation role), (2) the ability to enter a relationship (in order to fulfil the partner and family role), (3) the ability to use the market (in order to enter the consumer role) and (4) the development of a system of norms and values (in order to assume the political citizen role). From a functionalist point of view, these tasks form the key dimensions for societal integration. Young people have to assume certain social roles in order to maintain the continuity of the society. But in the perspective of a theory of action, social roles also form the key elements for the individual development. Young people are considered to be active agents and "navigators" (du Bois-Reymond, 2009) that call the offered social roles and role behaviours into question and develop them further.

These theoretical concepts form an important reference for the migration and integration research as well. Since the developmental tasks refer to an individual life-course perspective, the focus of migration and integration research is rather on the institutions and the participation of



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young migrants. Based on the scientific discourse (Esser, 1980; Hoffmann-Nowotny, 2000) in the field of migration research Willems, Filsinger and Rotink (2009) define four main dimensions of integration: structural integration (education, employment), cultural integration (values, normative orientation, language), social integration (friendship, peer group), and identity integration (sense of belonging to the host society).

The present article takes up some of these dimensions in order to describe the situation of young migrants in Luxembourg. It presents selected empirical data for the Grand Duchy and focuses on the different dimensions of integration.

### Migration and the ethnic heterogeneity of the young generation in Luxembourg

Children and young people in Luxembourg grow up in a context of cultural and ethnic diversity. Compared to other European countries, Luxembourg shows the highest share of inhabitants with a foreign nationality (about 43% have no Luxembourgish citizenship; Peltier, Thill, & Heinz, 2012). This situation has to do with the strong immigration that began at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the context of the increasing demand of workforce within the expanding Luxembourgish steel industry (immigrants came primarily from Italy). The immigration has reached a second peak in the 1970s when other migrants (primarily from Portugal) came to Luxembourg in order to work in the services and construction sector (Scuto, 2009, Zahlen, 2012). In the last few decades an increasing number of highly qualified immigrants from other European states and from Luxembourg's neighbouring countries have come to Luxembourg ("transnational upper-class"). Thereby migration itself has changed. In addition to the permanent, one-off relocation of a person's life centre (the type of migration that the majority of conventional integration approaches explicitly address), temporary, repeated, and bi- and multi-local forms of migration (transmigration, transnationality, cross-border commuters) are coming increasingly to the fore (Pries, 2010). These are also and especially of importance to Luxembourg.

Migrants constitute a very heterogeneous group in terms of professional qualifications, social anchoring or social positions. Immigrants of Portuguese nationality are, in comparison to the population of Luxembourgish nationality and other migrant groups, less qualified and accordingly often employed in sectors with low qualification requirements (Hartmann-Hirsch, 2007). The migration status is highly related to socio-economic resources and thereby the societal position as well.

As a result of the migratory movements of the past decades, young people with Portuguese nationality represent the largest group of young people with a foreign nationality. One in five youths in Luxembourg is a bearer of Portuguese nationality, followed by a much smaller percentage of young people from neighbouring countries (France, Belgium and Germany) and young people from the former Yugoslav countries and Italy. However, immigration is by no means a finished process; a large number of young people are still immigrating to Luxembourg every year. Young people of Portuguese and French nationality form the largest group and non-EU immigrants represent also a high share (almost one in five of the immigrants) (Willems et al., 2010).

### Unequal opportunities within the educational system and the labour market

On the level of structural integration, the entry into professional life constitutes one of the most important steps for young people in order to attain autonomy. Job entry is highly related to the educational attainments, which have gained of importance during the past decades. In the context of the "knowledge society" and "knowledge economy" most of the newly created jobs require an (high) educational degree.

A closer look at the existing data for Luxembourg shows that young people of Portuguese and former Yugoslav nationality attain lower educational degrees than other groups. These migrants leave school earlier and this is why most of them start their professional career much earlier as well. The labour market situation is rather difficult for

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a comparatively high share of them. It becomes obvious by comparing some key employment indicators. With regard to unemployment or precarious working conditions these groups show considerably higher rates (Willems et al., 2010). These difficulties are primarily related to the increasing qualification expectations on the one hand, and the comparatively low qualifications of these groups. In contrast, young people with Luxembourgish nationality and other foreign nationality with a higher endowment in resources (especially young people from northern European countries and of French, German or Belgian nationality) are comparatively more successful in education and in the labour market. They have fewer difficulties to find appropriate jobs and due to their higher qualifications they get much easier access to higher professional positions.

The findings indicate that opportunities within the Luxembourgish school system to attain a high educational degree and to make a smooth transition into the labour market are obviously strongly related to nationality and far from being equally distributed. Thus on the level of structural integration strong segmentation tendencies between the different immigrant groups and young people of Luxembourg nationality can be observed.

#### Shared values and attitudes as a common basis for cultural integration

Childhood and youth are the life phases where values are transferred from the older generation and developed further by the next generation. Values represent the central elements that strongly influence young people's behaviour and aspirations. But they also form the basis for mutual understanding in everyday life and a central dimension for the analysis on the cultural integration of young people.

The evidence for Luxembourg shows that the general value orientation of young people in Luxembourg is quite similar to other Western European countries. Meyers and Willems (2008) demonstrate for Luxembourg that young people show high post materialistic values (individual fulfilment, independence) and also pragmatic-materialistic values (earning,

secure job). The authors come to the conclusion that young people's value orientation is characterized by a synthesis of both post materialistic and materialistic values. With regard to the nationality, some differences can be observed. Meyers and Willems present three value clusters that form the main body of their analysis. The clusters encompass: (1) values of individual fulfilment and individualism (2) pro social values and (3) hedonistic values. In the first cluster Luxembourgish (55.5%), former Yugoslavian (54.2%) and French (51.4%) young people show the highest share. The cluster of pro social values is most important for young people with Italian (34.5%) and Portuguese (26.1%) nationality whereas in the third cluster (hedonistic) Italian (14.5%) and Portuguese (14.4%) young people are represented the highest. Whether the findings highlight some differences regarding the value orientation of the different migrant groups, they can be described as comparatively low.

This is also due to the fact, that most of the migrants share a similar religious orientation. The large group of Portuguese immigrants is mostly catholic. In this point Luxembourg is different from other countries where people from other religious backgrounds represent the majority (France, Germany, and Belgium). So in Luxembourg there is rather a high consensus regarding the main values and attitudes of young people of different origin.

#### Leisure time: between segmentation and social integration of young migrants

Leisure time activities are important for young people not just to regenerate, but they also provide opportunities to meet and interact with mates of different origins and thus are expected to foster social integration. Besides the private and domestic activities, young people are offered a number of activities within the extra-scholar institutions in Luxembourg (sports clubs, youth clubs/centres, musical/choral societies, etc.).

The findings for Luxembourg show that in general, a high share of young people take part at the activities of these clubs and societies (European Commission, 2011). However, young people with a foreign

nationality are strongly underrepresented in most of the clubs. A survey in the Southern region of Luxembourg showed that more than half of the young people with a Luxembourgish nationality stated themselves to be member of a club (52.3%) whereas the share of youngsters with Portuguese nationality is considerably lower (22.9%) and the share of young people from Yugoslav countries (43.7%) or other countries (37.4%) too (Boultgen, Heinen, & Willems, 2007). Further differentiations by type of the club show that the youth clubs, the scout's movement or the musical societies are dominated by Luxembourgish members whereas the youth centres are highly frequented by young immigrants. Sports clubs (especially football) are rather mixed regarding the nationality of its members (Boultgen et al., 2007).

Most of the extra-scholar institutions in Luxembourg are highly segmented by nationality, even though the access to these clubs is minimally restricted and in general they are open for everybody. The promotion and reinforcement of contacts between groups with different origins, an important objective of these clubs, is just partly achieved and the potential has not yet been fulfilled.

#### Future challenges for society, politics and research

Growing up and living together in a plural and multicultural society brings with it numerous challenges but also new opportunities and potential.

One important challenge for society and politics is the integration deficits on the structural level of education and labour market. The strengthening of educational attainment of young migrants within the educational system constitutes the key factor with regard to their successful school careers and smooth transitions into employment and stable working conditions.

A second challenge addresses the enormous integrative potential of the civil society's organizations and clubs. Because immigrants are significantly underrepresented here, the opening of these institutions towards young migrants and the support of their engagement presents another important future challenge.

Finally, regarding youth research, it is obvious that research on the successful integration of migrants hardly exists in Luxembourg. Therefore it would be of great importance to realize systematic research on this subject in order to get reliable data on the key dimensions and factors influencing successful integration.

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#### **4. Migration, adolescence and family myth: a fragile balance? Clinical evolution and today's reality observed in Luxemburg**

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(Note. This text has been translated from French to English by Milena Kaufmann and Isabelle Albert)

Luxembourg is undoubtedly a receiving country which is often idealised (Cellule de coordination du Centre de Psychologie et d'Orientation Scolaire [CPOS] et du Service de Psychologie et d'Orientation Scolaire [SPOS], 2011). Every year, the migration flow increases, and multilingualism reflects a multicultural society which is the source of many dreams. The first step towards a project that creates a balance in this situation is to acknowledge the legitimacy of these dreams - which are full of ideals for young people and their families. Dreams and ideals can have both reassuring and restraining functions in the migration process. Educational, social and professional success involves the individual, the family, as well as collective issues (*Migration et santé mentale des adolescents*, 2009).

However, in today's society with its opportunities and restraints, where environments and points of reference are changing continuously and where economic instabilities go hand in hand with uncertainty of the future, numerous researchers and mental health professionals are searching for an answer to the question of how migrants can be integrated. The following psychological processes are often mentioned:

- The term of acculturation refers to psychological change due to migration (Van de Vijver, 2011). Adolescents who are in contact with several different cultures need to show a certain psychological flexibility in order to be able to healthily reconcile their relationships to the host society and their relationships to their family of origin, and in order to build a balanced identity (Güngör, 2011).



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- Individuation refers to identity building strategies and to differentiation and adaptation strategies which adolescents adopt when dealing with their family or with their host country. These strategies help them reduce tensions that emerge due to cultural differences (Malewska-Peyre, 1985).

- Integration has a specific meaning for each and every family member: one has to consider identity as a composition of multiple belongings, acknowledging the particular contributions of two different worlds. This might mean for some to live in one world and belong to another, preserving one's own identity and simultaneously becoming someone else (Métraux, 2011).

Let us first take a look back on the past: The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has been a country of immigration for more than a century (Correia, 2000). This is due to a lack of workforces in the labour market, starting with an urgent need for workers in the fast growing iron and steel industry, in the building and construction sector, as well as more recently in the new emerging industries and international services.

According to the data from the population census in February 2011 (Heinz, Peltier, & Thill, 2013), the proportion of the foreign population in Luxembourg has increased by 35% since 2001 and has reached 43.04% of Luxembourg's total population today, with the Portuguese being the largest group of immigrants, representing 16.08% of the total population.

According to the statistical data of the national education study in 2009/2010, 16.5% of the children listed in the first four cycles of basic education (4 to 12 years old) are born outside of Luxemburg. For 54.2% of children in basic education, Luxemburgish is not the language they commonly speak at home (*Scolarisation des enfants étrangers*, n.d.).

The Portuguese immigration flow started in the 1960s/1970s (Correia, 2000). Back then, the newly arriving immigrants were mainly male. However, most of them were joined soon afterwards by their wives and their offspring, if they had any. Today, we can still observe a migration of families and young adults to Luxemburg, but the family compositions tend to be different. In line with numerous sociological and

psychological studies on changing family forms in many societies today, divorce and separation, for instance, have to be considered. These transformations might bring along perturbations affecting the family structure and thereby creating new dynamics, such as single parenting, which concerns most often the mothers, or the emergence of blended families.

Let us now have a look at the notion of family myth. According to Robert Neuburger (2002), family myth refers to the construction of a family-specific reality. This reality includes a specific culture, codes, rules, values, and a specific definition of the relationships between family members. This myth has a structuring function for the family; it is shared by its members and contributes to identification processes and family cohesion.

The most common family myth among Portuguese migrant families tends to be based on economic and educational success. This "success" might have an impact on identity building and might include courage, hard work, flexibility and self-transcendence. However, if the existing family myth is too powerful and not adapted to the reality of the host country, it can easily cause distress. If, on the other hand, the existing family myth is developable and flexible, it might help to create a balance and thus allow individuation of the family members.

In our clinical practice – characterised by frequent encounters with lusophone families (Portuguese, Brazilian, and Cape Verdean) - we have noticed a constant increase of the proportion of single parent families arriving to Luxemburg. Let us consider the sample of 28 families who had their first psychological counselling session between January 2013 and January 2014, and who have arrived to Luxemburg in the last two years. Among these families, the following specific observations could be made:

- There were 7 single parent families with mothers migrating to Luxemburg together with their children. We note here either a paternal disengagement or the existence of a distance to the father who stayed in the country of origin and whom the children visit during school holidays.

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- 2 single parent families with fathers migrating to Luxemburg with their children, and maternal disengagement or absence.

- 3 families where the parents migrated to Luxemburg together, but separated after migration. The children live essentially with their mothers.

- 2 children of Cape Verdean origin who migrated to Luxembourg separately from the parent they had lived with up to that point in order to stay with their other parent who has been living in Luxemburg for years (see also Blanchard, 2005; Wojtkowski, 2005)

Further characteristics considering this sample:

- 5 families with parents currently experiencing a marital crisis.

- 2 families with one child being institutionalised.

It should be noted that the term child(ren) is a simplification. The subjects' age in this sample varied between 12 and 20 years.

If we consider adolescence as a period of increased psychological vulnerability (Moro, 2004) and take into account that the amount of single parent families with migration background is constantly increasing – including the whole complexity underlying these changes in terms of spatial-temporal reference and family structure – the question arises of how family myth and possible other factors might interfere with the adolescent integration process.

There are several clinical and psychotherapeutic measures that can help families at risk to move on when “stuck” in a family myth. We list two of these methods below:

- Provide a secure environment for the family and thus allowing each and every family member to tell their story and to express relational issues, which can sometimes be painful to verbalize (Métraux, 2004). The genogram and life stories are techniques used to improve the family members' (adolescents, parents and siblings) mutual understanding - which they might have lost along the way - and to co-construct a new collective family life story. This method increases flexibility of the family myth and favours its further

development, allowing the integration of each family member's view.

- Some adolescent migrants might show signs of psychological distress (Moro, 2010), such as deviant behaviour, mental disturbances, school failure (Bruni, 2007), dangerous behaviour and many other symptoms indicating an urgent need for help or intervention. In this case, it is necessary to explore the hypothesis of a double marginalization. An adolescent caught between two completely different authority systems - like family and school (Duvillié, 2001) which might differ in their values or even be mutually disqualifying - tends to abandon both worlds. This might again lead to unification and an alliance between the two systems. To stop this vicious circle, it is necessary to restore the mutual recognition between adolescents and their parents, between adolescents and school as well as between parents and school.

Certainly, we could expand our reflections and questions on these issues, which remain inexhaustible. In other words:

...the story continues...

To conclude, looking into the past and the present is important as it fosters the loyalty to origins, shapes the present and influences future dreams.

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**5. Parenting in a bicultural context is a multilevel complex task. A study of Moroccan second-generation early adolescents and their mothers living in France**

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**Colette Sabatier** (Université de Bordeaux, France)

Parenting in a multicultural situation is a challenge for most immigrant or ethnic minority parents. What are the best practices in order to provide children the opportunity to adapt in the society, to feel confident in themselves and to be anchored in their parent's culture? In this paper, our purpose is to examine the question of

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parenting in a dual context with Moroccan mothers (first and second generation) and their adolescent born in France in the first grade of secondary school and to suggest some hints for its exploration.

Parents as well as school and social professionals may experience this issue as a dilemma that challenges both the adaptation of minority youth and the harmony of host societies. In 1943, Child in his seminal book pointed out the difficulties second-generation adolescents may face. He concluded that the discontinuity between the host society culture and values and those of the immigrant families is an inevitable source of misadaptation. Erikson (1968) pointed out similar problems for identity quest. However, other researches, with big samples including many groups and countries provided alternative information and indicate that this question is far more complex. Overall, there are ample evidences that immigrant adolescents adapt well in the host societies (Aronowitz, 1984, Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Sabatier, 1999). Most of them when compared with host peers with shared living areas and comparable socioeconomic status are more adapted, an observation called the "Immigrant paradox" (Sam et al, 2008). Then the issue is to understand why some second generation adolescents are adapting well while others fail to adapt. Parenting and ethnic enculturation appear as key issues, a concern already pointed by Lewin (1948).

Because immigrant parents have chosen to immigrate for the betterment of their own and their children's lives, they try to adapt by seeking a balance between the need for cultural continuity within the family and the need to meet to the new environmental demands and constraints (Camilleri & Malewska-Peyre, 1997; Sabatier, 1991). There is evidence that for the benefit of the children, parents try to transmit to their children cultural and familial points of reference and to embed them in a cultural social network of meaning. At the same time, they encourage future expectation in accordance with the values and demands of the society of settlement and to promote the development of competencies which are useful to be fully

adapted, at least at the economic level (Ramirez & Cox, 1980; Youniss, 1994). The aim of this paper is to examine the role dual process of enculturation (ethnic and French) on adolescents cultural identity, a topic that received scant attention from researchers.

Family ethnic socialization has given rise to many definitions and assessment measures (Hughes, D., Rodriguez, J., et al., 2006; Romero, Cuéllar, & Roberts, 2000). Some authors have focused on transmission of values and attitudes, some on cultural lifestyles, behavioral components such as food, language, and contextual components such as home decoration and ethnic density of the neighborhood, whereas few others considered that parents may want to influence their children with deliberate messages or expect that children adopt their own views and identity. We propose that socialization and enculturation toward both cultures in parallel occur through direct and indirect, explicit and implicit, long-term and short-term process that may be organized in two main layers that may be sub-divided such as (1) modeling through (1a) their identity and values behaviors and (1b) customs at home, or (2) deliberate teaching of transmission of values and attitudes, in open discussion with adolescents about cultural and racial topics (2a) either in short term perspective or (2b) has some expectation for acculturation at a long term. Because, parenting styles foster a context favoring the acceptance of parental influence and the exploration of identity (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985; Sabatier, 2008), transmission of family values and behavior towards own culture and host culture may be facilitated or moderated by a more empathic and less authoritarian climate (Schönpflug, 2001).

### Method

Participants: 96 Moroccan young adolescents (12 yo) and their mothers participated in this study, among them, 74 are second-generation and 22 third-generation.

### Measures

Ethnic and French identity of adolescents and of mothers are assessed by a single question for each identity.



Direct and indirect dimensions of enculturation include three layers (a) cultural behavior (language, friends, and usage of media), (b) short term explicit enculturation through deliberate cultural teaching, (c) long-term explicit enculturation through maternal goals for adolescent's acculturation along three options integration, separation and marginalization as described by Berry (2005).

Measures of quality of parental relationship including the three dimensions warmth, dialog with each parent and conflicts with mother.

### Results

As our objective was to identify patterns of influence in a bicultural context, we adopted a twofold approach. In the first fold, the influence of mothers on each identity is examined with two hierarchical stepwise regressions, one for each generation. In the second fold, based on a cluster analysis in order to capture different styles of adolescents' cultural identity, we evaluated if these styles are related to different patterns of parenting and cultural socialization.

With regards to the influence of direct and indirect enculturation strategies on each cultural identity, regressions indicate that mothers transmit both French and Moroccan identity with a substantial weight but with different patterns for each generation. Both enculturation strategies (direct and indirect) and family climate appear as crucial elements of this socialization process. French identity is sustained by explicit enculturation, in the short term for second generation (teaching French culture) and as a long term goal (goal for integration) for third generation. In contrast, conflicts with mother appears as an obstacle that impedes the endorsement of the French identity. Ethnic identity is sustained by implicit enculturation (anchorage in Moroccan culture for second generation, identity for third generation). Dialog with parents may act as a transmission belt but this role is complex and subtle: dialog with father lowered the Moroccan identity for the second

generation, in contrast, dialog with mother sustains it for the third generation.

With regards to identity patterns of adolescents, the cluster analysis has identified three patterns, bicultural (64%), Moroccan-only (20%), and marginal (16%). ANOVAs reveal that mothers of the three identity groups have distinct features and characteristics. Compared to others, mothers of the bicultural group endorse a high level of Moroccan and French identity, teach both Moroccan and French culture and expect their children to adopt attitudes of integration. Mothers of the marginal group have a lower level of Moroccan identity but also have fewer conversations with their children and poorer Moroccan and French short-term explicit enculturation. While in the Moroccan-only group mothers and adolescents have a higher level of conflict. Mothers are embedded mainly in the Moroccan culture with few contacts with the French society.

*Table 1 Mother's influence on French and Moroccan identity along generations*

		□
<b>French identity</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> generation	R <sup>2</sup> = .315	
Teaching French culture		.296*
Conflicts		-.342**
3 <sup>rd</sup> generation	R <sup>2</sup> = .636	
Acculturation goal for integration		.339*
Conflicts		.705***
<b>Moroccan identity</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> generation	R <sup>2</sup> = .252	
Interest for news of Moroccan community in France		.333**
Usage of Moroccan language		.427***
Dialog with father		-.376*
3 <sup>rd</sup> generation	R <sup>2</sup> = .682	
Moroccan identity		.339*
Usage of French language		-.359*
Dialog with mother		.360*

### Discussion

Parenting in a multicultural context is a complex task with two main dimensions, enculturation towards the main society between two cultures and enculturation towards the own group culture. This study

contributes to the knowledge of the process and indicates that parents are effective in the transmission of the dual-faceted identity. Explicit short term and long-term enculturation processes, but not implicit processes, sustain French identity and in contrast implicit processes such as behavior (language and interest) or identity, but not explicit processes sustain ethnic identity. But above all, the family climate is a key process for both generations and both facets of identity.

One of the specific contributions of this study is to underline the role of the combination of enculturation towards the host society on one hand and of an easy-going relationship with parents on the other hand in the endorsement of the national identity. The quality of relationship has an important weight. A point seldom examined by researchers. The quality of the family climate provides the context for exploration of new identity and its endorsement: Providing clues for its endorsement (even if parents prefer to keep their own identity and do not identify to the national identity), while managing for a good adolescent-parent relationship, and facilitating the autonomy of the child and the cultural distance from parents. The endorsement of the national identity is not against parents as the seminal works for Child (1943) and Erikson (1968) suggested but in harmony with parents. This is consonant with Cooper's work on identity (Cooper, 2011; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985).

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## **6. A look from cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics**

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**Giuseppina Marsico** (University of Salerno, Italy) and

**Maliina Lyberth** (Aalborg University, Denmark)

Labels tell the story of oppositions. When we hear the term “multicultural society” its immediate opposite is seen as “unicultural society”. Yet both of these are our constructions. Any society is necessarily multi-cultural as culture—from the viewpoint of cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics (Valsiner, 2014) that treats each person as a culture (personal culture). As

long as any society consists of more than one person, it is multi-cultural. A unicultural society would be a society containing one person.

This argument is—admittedly—strange. From our common sense this seems to be a contradiction in terms. “Culture” is supposed to be referencing some form of collectivity. It does—in common sense, and for cross-cultural psychology. Yet it does not for the new part of general psychology—cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics. Here *culture* is a part of the *psyche*—in fact the most important, higher-level organizing part. It governs our feelings, thinking, and acting within the environment. It leaves traces—body decorations, architectural constructions, war devastations, etc. Culture is central to the human *psyche*—even if we compare nobody with anybody. We can observe culture in our personal need—one could say obsession—of using forks, knives, chopsticks, napkins in our eating, and pre-fabricated toilet paper rather than local newspaper in its aftermath.

Obviously this perspective differs cardinally from the notion of “culture” as it is used in common sense practices. The reason why the opposition unicultural <> multicultural has become used in the social sciences of today has its roots in social ideologies. It is the negotiation of power relations between social groups within a more general unit (called “society”) that feeds into the need to talk about multi-cultural societies. So—children grow up in the middle of a social environment that includes multiple social power groups of divergent goal orientations. How can they make sense of the varied demands representatives of such groups communicate to them?

Consider the ritual of telling the parents of a child - with the child present, listening but not speaking—in an Italian school (for details, see Marsico & Iannaccone, 2012): The teacher says—your son must spend more time on mathematics! The parent retorts—I want my son to enjoy life (which may mean—playing football rather than doing homework). The encounter takes place on the territory of the school—a power advantage for the teacher. Yet the message can be counter-acted, and it

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is—externally or internally. The powerful “social others” can be circumvented. They can demand anything from us—but they cannot live our lives! Yet they force our children to do mathematics on the school premises rather than sell snacks in the street, or stocks on internet. The power holders can enforce the ways in which the powerless are involved in situated activity contexts. Yet—“being involved” includes “being bored”—and our capacities of imagination allow us to go beyond the borders of here-and-now to the realm of there-and-then. Imagine an Italian boy in a mathematics class whose thoughts are all on the football field.

Now—the Italian scenario described above would count as *unicultural* in our ordinary discourse. It becomes *multicultural* in that discourse if symbolic objects from another society happen to be brought into the scene. How can the self-beautification efforts of young French girls of North African descent and limited devotion to their parents’ religious-cultural backgrounds be turned into a national controversy about religious symbols in the French schools, human rights, and so on (see Bowen, 2007). Multi-cultural society is one that operates by the nice saying by George Orwell—“all animals are equal but some are more equal than others.”

And this may be the cruel reality of “growing up in multicultural society”. No matter what, the parents are in a power role in relation to their children. Schools assert dominance over families—yet making them believe they are collaborating companions. Inviting the family in its own territory, the school builds a temporary platform *suspended* in this “space in between” where the parents are asked “to climb” by making the children succumb to the social rules of the institution. This resembles a “balcony” which functions like a border, shaping the intersubjectivity between parents as person and teachers as person within the interobjectivity of family- school relations and making some interactions possible while excluding others (Marsico, 2013).

More generally-- political groups stigmatize one another. Colonizing powers persuade the colonized not only to accept their dominance but to feel less equal than

they. It has taken Greenlandic society long time to overcome the suggested inferiority complex of “not being civilized” that their colonial masters propagated. That is--if the Greenlandic society has even overcome it. The relationship between Danes and Greenlanders is to this day is very close, both for political and kinships reasons. In such relations, both possible tensions and mutual unity can emerge, depending on how values become attached to specific, often mundane, aspects of everyday life. What is considered to be of value is a complex of Greenlandic and Danish cultural features. Eating raw fish can be “low-culture”—or “high culture” – marker. Sashimi-eaters are certainly not inferior to those who gnaw down grilled steaks. Vegetarians do not make a superior—or inferior—social caste. They just do not eat meat.

The message is clear. Culture in scientific terms cannot be “high” or “low”—the evaluative feature that is so usual in our common sense has no place in cultural psychology. This does not mean that the phenomena of growing up in a multi-cultural (read: culturally divergent) societies do not involve hierarchical relations. They do—in fact, the notion of hierarchical organization is a given in any self-organizing system. But such hierarchical order of complex phenomena needs to be analyzed in ways that are free of meta-level values. Values run rampart within the functioning of the hierarchy, but our understanding of the hierarchy the analysis is values-free. *The level of the phenomena (values-based) and the level of the model of these phenomena (values-free) belong to two distinct classes of human domains of operation.* Everyday life and scientific explanation cannot be fused with one another, but they are coordinated in an asymmetric manner.

How would the Italian drama of school performance results be an example of this general claim? Both the teacher and the parent act in their communication with each other based on their assumptions of value. Our analysis of that event, however, is distant from both values represented in the phenomena. It involves (a) registering the discordant value orientations, (b) analyzing the negotiation process, and (c) trying to find out what can be generalized from this



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event, by the child. By studying the very concrete event of the contact points between school and family it becomes possible to understand what happens in this intercontextual space and how these kinds of human experiences are culturally organized (through semiotic mediation and symbolic actions). The balcony metaphor (which indicates the liminal position of the school between the family life and the wide world out there) is an exemplification of what we can learn questioning the crossing boundaries condition, moving from the concrete phenomenon to a wider level of theorization about the institutional culture and the way it regulates our human activities as a students, parents or teachers.

We all generalize—use signs for that—and transfer the generalized meaning into new situations that come our way, as it need be. All this assumes the imaginary position of the child. The child is set up as the silent spectator of the duel—yet one towards whom the messages are oriented. For the child, the “multicultural society” begins from this little encounter. Or— a Greenlandic child asks “Mummy, do Danes have better jobs because they speak loud and talk a lot?” Contrasts feed into our construction of generalized meanings—a major point to be taken from cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics—which guide human feelings about themselves and their worlds. The interests of various social powers is to “capture” that process for their interests—thus, multicultural society is potentially enhancing the frictions and conflicts within it, through expecting children to pick up value-laden expectations of the power holders. Even the *interstitial space* between family and school is a real minefield mirroring (and sometimes intensifying) all the societal inequalities and the opposing standpoints on immigration, multiculturalism, integration etc. Living in close contact—as the globalized world of today is becoming a reality—increasing, rather than decreasing the opportunities for new social conflicts. Yet the arenas for such conflicts now are of greater variety—not only fights of neighborhood gangs or warrior groups with one another, but also the dramas of court battles, telenovelas, and

lamentations about the world at large on TV screens.

Growing up in a multi-cultural society is a new task for new generations-- a task of finding new ways to buffer against the opportunities and invitations to ever new divergences that may end up in stigmatization, conflict, and—ultimately—destruction. If cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics can contribute to the question of how growing up under these conditions happens, it can be in the area of developing new buffering techniques to de-escalate the triggered mutual animosities. In this respect it works against many interests of many power groups in what we call “society”— as the focus is on *semiotic resistance* to social demands and suggestions, rather than that of acceptance of the given pressures of internalization and appropriation.

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# *XIV EARA conference in Çeşme/İzmir*

**Submitted by**

**Figen Cok** (TED University, Ankara Turkey).

WELCOME TO EARA 2014  
CONFERENCE

Dear EARA Members,

Our 14<sup>th</sup> EARA Çeşme Conference is approaching. We are getting prepared to host all of you with pleasure in our country. We received quite a good number of submissions and it seems the conference participation will be high. The keynotes, invited symposia, round table discussion and preconference workshops are excellent and we are thankful to all colleagues who will contribute to the conference. We will have a special session for introducing International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies (ICDSS) chaired by Luc Goossens and introduced by our president Wim Meeus.

The full program will be announced by mid-July. However, for now it looks sessions will start at 8.30 in the morning and ends about 18.30 in the evening.

Our conference organization is offering a great tour program for visiting famous Ephesus and lively city of İzmir before or after the conference days. This is a well-planned guided program. Although Ephesus and Çeşme are close to each other, due to route and unique geography of the region, it is not easy to get Ephesus directly from the conference venue. So we encourage those of you who is interested in to take the tour. You are welcome to contact our organization secretariat for any possible inquiries regarding your visit to Turkey.

For social program, we will have adolescent dancers and musicians for the opening ceremony showing examples from Turkish culture. On September 4<sup>th</sup>, we plan to take you to **Alaçati** a nearby town to conference venue, which is famous for its architecture, vineyards and windsurfing. The gala dinner

is planned as a typical Turkish night with food and music. During your stay in Çeşme, it is our hope that you have a good time and enjoy the climate and region. I would like to remind you to bring your swimsuits for taking advantage of wonderful Aegean sea. Looking forward to seeing you soon!

## *From the Student and Early Career Network (SECNet): Students and Early Career Network (SECNet) Activities at the EARA conference*

**Submitted by Elisabetta Crocetti,**  
Utrecht University (The Netherlands)

Dear EARA members,

The *EARA Student and Early Career Network (SECNet)* is organizing a number of events at the upcoming EARA conference in Turkey with the aim of providing young scholars with opportunities for scientific exchange, information, and networking.

The social SECNet program includes a *welcome reception* on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and the *SECNet dinner* on September 4<sup>th</sup>. The scientific SECNet program consists of a *conversation with the editors* meeting to learn more about the publishing process (this event will take place on September 4<sup>th</sup>). Furthermore, three *SECNet best poster awards* will be granted to the best posters presented by doctoral students. Doctoral students can apply for the SECNet best poster award by June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 following instructions available at <http://www.eara2014.org/secnet-best-poster-award>. Winning doctoral students will be announced during the EARA conference and will receive an award certificate and a two-year free membership in the EARA.

Furthermore, a *SECNet community meeting* to meet other students and early career

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professionals, to share new ideas, and to learn about the EARA/SRA summer school is scheduled for September 5th.

For more information about SECNet activities at the EARA conference and future updates you can visit the conference website:

<http://www.eara2014.org/program/young-scholars-secnet>

We look forward to seeing you at the EARA conference!

Your SECNet committee  
Hebbah Elgindy  
Shannon Snapp  
Elisabetta Crocetti  
Katharina Eckstein  
Constantina Demetriou  
Aysenur Ataman  
Cyrille Perchec

## ***EARA Publications***

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