Lesson 5. Immigrants Social Integration Processes (II).

Read the following fragments, coming from the reading cited below:

This paper reports some of the main findings from a large international study of the **acculturation and adaptation of immigrant youth** (aged 13 to 18 years) who are settled in 13 societies (*N*= 5,366), as well as a sample of national youth (*N*= 2,631). The study was guided by three core questions: *How* do immigrant youth deal with the process of acculturation? *How well* do they adapt? Are there important relationships between *How* they acculturate and *how well* they adapt? Cluster analysis produced four distinct acculturation profiles: ***integration*, *ethnic national*, and *diffuse*.** Factor analysis of five adaptation variables revealed **two distinct forms of adaptation: *Psychological* and *sociocultural.*** There were substantial relationships between how youth acculturate and how well they adapt: those with an integration profile had the best psychological and sociocultural adaptation outcomes, while those with a diffuse profile had the worst; in between, those with an ethnic profile had moderately good psychological adaptation but poorer sociocultural adaptation, while those with a national profile had moderately poor psychological adaptation, and slightly negative sociocultural adaptation. This pattern of results was largely replicated using structural equation modeling. Implications for the settlement of immigrant youth are clear: youth should be encouraged to retain both a sense of their own heritage cultural identity, while establishing close ties with the larger national society.

With respect to our first question, *how* immigrant youth live in their new intercultural setting, early research had assumed that immigrants would inevitably be absorbed into the receiving society, in a unilinear, unidirectional process (Gordon, 1964). However, beginning in the 1970s, Berry (1974, 1980) proposed that there are two independent dimensions underlying the process of acculturation: individuals' links to their cultures of origin and to their societies of settlement. These links can be manifested in a number of ways, including preferences for involvement in the two cultures (termed acculturation attitudes), and in the behaviors that they engage in (for example, their language knowledge and use, and social relationships). A similar bidimensional proposal was made by Phinney (1990), who argued 306 that there were two independent dimensions underlying people's cultural identity; individuals may have independent identities with respect to their cultures of origin and to their societies of settlement. This **bidimensional conception** has been presented frequently in the literature (e.g. Berry, 1997). In this framework, two issues are raised: the degree to which people wish to maintain their heritage culture and identity; and the degree to which people seek involvement with the larger society. When these two issues are crossed, an acculturation space is created with four sectors within which individuals may express *how* they are seeking to acculturate. ***Assimilation*** is the way when there is little interest in cultural maintenance combined with a preference for interacting with the larger society. ***Separation*** is the way when cultural maintenance is sought while avoiding

involvement with others. ***Marginalisation*** exists when neither cultural maintenance nor interaction with others is sought. ***Integration*** is present when both cultural maintenance and involvement with the larger society are sought. In sum, the first goal of this study was to seek evidence that *how* youth acculturate corresponds to this bidimensional view, and to test the model that defines these four ways of acculturating. The second goal of the study was to examine *how well* immigrant youth are adapting to their acculturation experience. We are guided by the view developed by Ward (1996) that there are two distinct ways of adapting to acculturation. The first, termed ***psychological adaptation***, refers to personal well-being and good mental health. The second, ***sociocultural adaptation***, refers to the individuals' social competence in managing their daily life in the intercultural setting. We expect to find evidence to support this distinction between these two forms of adaptation. Moreover, we examine whether immigrant and national youth differ in their levels of adaptation.

Our third, and core, issue was whether **the variable ways of acculturating are related to differing levels of adaptation**. Previous studies (reviewed by Berry & Sam, 1997) concluded that there is a relationship between the *how* and *how well* questions. Given the evidence from earlier studies (Berry, 1997; Howard, 1998; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997), we expected that the combined involvement with both the national and the ethnic cultures, rather than involvement with either one, would be the most adaptive mode of acculturation and the most conducive to immigrants' well-being. At the same time we expected that orientation toward the ethnic culture would be a better predictor of psychological adaptation than orientation toward the national culture, whereas the latter would be a better predictor of adolescents' sociocultural adaptation (cf. Oppedal, Røysamb, & Sam, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). Beyond these three issues, we explored the possible role of perceived discrimination in guiding the choices of how to acculturate and in limiting successful psychological and sociocultural adaptation. Studies have shown that perceived discrimination is negatively related to immigrant adaptation (Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000; Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou, & Rummens, 1999); thus we expected this factor to impact negatively on immigrant youths' adaptation.

Acculturation is a process that takes place over time. Although we did not have longitudinal data to examine changes with time, we were able to examine differences among groups of immigrant youth with different lengths of residence in the new society. We expected that with longer residence, youth would be more likely to be integrated into their country of residence. Finally, demographic factors may also play a role. Age, gender, religion, and the socioeconomic status of the family have all been identified as possible sources of variation (Berry & Sam, 1997). There is also some evidence that the ethnic composition of the immediate neighborhood may be important in the ways immigrants acculturate and adapt (Galster, Metzger, & Waite, 1999; Myles & Hou, 2003; Neto, 2001).

The immigrant youth came from 26 different cultural backgrounds and lived in 13 countries (see Table 1). We distinguished settler societies (Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, and the United States of America) from countries with fewer and more recent immigrants. In each country we sampled both national and immigrant youth. We attempted to sample the same cultural group in as many societies as possible, but there is wide variation in the groups studied because of the different immigrant groups that live in each country.

The questionnaire assessed a wide range of variables related to acculturation and adaptation. Measures were either developed for the project or taken directly or with some modification from existing scales. For most scales response options ranged from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The psychometric properties of most scales were established in the present study and are reported in Table 2. This table also contains information on the number and source of the items.

Acculturation Attitudes. This scale assessed four acculturation attitudes: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalisation. The items concern five domains of life: cultural traditions, language, marriage, social activities, and friends. For example, the items in the social activities domain include four questions: "I prefer social activities which involve both [nationals] and [my ethnic group]" (integration); "I prefer social activities which involve [nationals] only" (assimilation); "I prefer social activities which involve [members of my own ethnic group] only" (separation); and "I don't want to attend either [national] or [ethnic] social activities" (marginalisation).

Cultural Identity. *Ethnic identity* was measured with items assessing ethnic affirmation (e.g. sense of belonging, positive feelings about being group member). A sample item is "I feel that I am part of [ethnic] culture." *National identity* was assessed with measures of national affirmation and the importance of one's national identity. A sample item is: "I am happy that I am [national]."

Language Proficiency and Language Use. The scale for ethnic language proficiency inquired about a person's abilities to understand, speak, read, and write the ethnic language. An example: "How well do you speak [ethnic language]?" Answers were given on a 5-point scale from *not at all* (1) to *very well* (5). Proficiency in the national language was assessed with the same self-report questions, but with respect to the national language. Language use refers to the extent to which adolescents use either their ethnic language or the national language when talking with their parents or their siblings. Their communication practices were measured on a 5-point scale running from *not at all* to *all the time*. Higher scores express a relatively more frequent usage of the national language. *Ethnic and National Peer Contact.* The two scales assessed the frequency of interaction with peers from one's own ethnic group, or from the national group. An example is: "How often do you spend free time with peers from your own ethnocultural group?" Participants responded on a scale ranging from *never* (1) to *very often* (5). *Family Relationship Values.* This scale consisted of two subscales. Ten items assessed attitudes towards parental authority (henceforth *family obligations* ; e.g. "Children should obey their parents"). Four items assessed the extent of acceptance of children's autonomy, which we refer to as *adolescents' rights* (e.g. "When a girl reaches the age of 16, it is all right for her to decide whom to date").

Perceived Discrimination. This was assessed with immigrant youth only. The scale assessed perceived frequency of being treated unfairly or negatively or being teased, threatened, or feeling unaccepted because of one's ethnicity (e.g. "I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background"). Participants responded on a scale ranging from *never* (1) to *very often* (5).

Psychological Adaptation. Psychological adaptation was measured with three scales: life satisfaction, self-esteem, and psychological problems. *Life satisfaction* was measured with a five-item scale which assessed the overall degree of adolescents' satisfaction with their lives. A sample item is: "I am satisfied with my life." The scale has been tested among diverse groups, such as adolescents and college students, and has shown good psychometric properties (see Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). *Self-esteem* was measured using Rosenberg's (1965) 10-item self-esteem inventory. A sample item is "On the whole I am satisfied with myself." The scale for *psychological problems* measured depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms. A sample item is: "My thoughts are confused."

Sociocultural Adaptation. Sociocultural adaptation was assessed using scales for school adjustment and behavior problems. A sample item of the scale for *school adjustment* is: "I feel uneasy about going to school in the morning." Two sample items of the scale for *behavior problems* are: "Cursed at a teacher" and "Purposely destroyed seats in a bus or a movie theatre". A 5-point response category ranging from *Never* to *Several times in the course of a 12-month period* was used.

We refer to the resulting clusters as *acculturation profiles*: an *ethnic* profile (including 22.5% of the sample), a *national* profile (18.7%), an *integration* profile (36.4%), and a *diffuse* profile (22.4%). All adolescents for whom we had complete data (N = 4,334) fit one of the four profiles.

The ***ethnic profile*** (shown in Figure 1a) consisted of 975 adolescents who showed a clear orientation toward their own ethnic group, with high ethnic identity, ethnic language proficiency and usage, and ethnic peer contacts. They endorsed the separation attitude and scored low on assimilation, national identity, and contacts with the national group. Their support for family relationship values was well above the average. They represent young people who are largely embedded within their own culture and show little involvement with the larger society.

The ***national profile*** (shown in Figure 1b) included 810 adolescents who showed a strong orientation toward the society in which they were living. As can be seen in the figure, their profile is almost a mirror image of the ethnic profile. These adolescents were high on national identity and on assimilation and very low on ethnic identity. They were proficient in the national language and used it predominantly. Their peer contacts were largely with members of the national group, and they showed low support for family obligations. These adolescents appear to exemplify the idea of assimilation,
indicating a lack of retention of their ethnic culture and identity.

Berry, J.W.; Phinney, J.S.; Sam, D.L. y Vedder, P. (2006): Immigrant Youth: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation. ***Applied Psychology: an International Review*****,** ***55*** **(3), 303–332.**

Exercise

Compare the different ways the terms regarding “Social Integration” are used in Berry (2006). Are the same concepts described before (Lesson 4)?