

**UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ**

**HALF -ARAB, HALF -FINNISH EXCEPTIONAL THIRD CULTURE KIDS:  
ADAPTING TO LIFE IN FINLAND**

**A Pro Gradu Thesis in English**

**by**

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2008**

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA  
KIELTEN LAITOS

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HALF ARAB, HALF FINNISH THIRD CULTURE KIDS:  
ADAPTING TO LIFE IN FINLAND

Pro gradu- tutkielma

Englannin kieli  
Kesäkuu 2008

109 sivua + 2 liitettä

Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää taustoiltaan puoleksi suomalaisten ja puoleksi arabien, ns. kolmannen kulttuurin lasten (TCK) sopeutumisprosessia Suomen oloihin ja identiteetin muutoksia sopeutumisprosessin aikana.

Tutkimusmateriaalina käytetään 14 puoleksi suomalaisen ja puoleksi arabin vastauksia kysymyslomakkeissa esitettyihin kysymyksiin, jotka antavat tietoa kattavasti: sopeutumisesta Suomeen, perhesuhteista, identiteetin muodostumisesta sopeutumisprosessin aikana, kielitaidosta, sekä siitä miten he itse kokevat olevansa kolmannen kulttuurin lapsia.

Tulosten analysoinnissa käytetään laadullisen tutkimuksen sekä määrällisen tutkimuksen menetelmää. Tutkimukseni osoittaa, että positiiviset tekijät, kuten jonkinasteinen suomen kielentaito, kulttuurintuntemus, vierailut Suomessa sekä ystävyys- ja sukulaissuhteet ennen Suomeen muuttoa auttavat sopeutumista samoin kuin monikulttuurisuus, avoimuus ja sosiaalisuus. Tärkeää on myös ettei ole liian suuria ennako-odotuksia.

Negatiiviset tekijät, jotka hidastavat sopeutumista, ovat kansainvälisen koulun käyminen ja kansainväliset ystävät, jotka puhuvat englantia, jolloin suomenkielen omaksuminen on vaikeampaa, mutta toisaalta kansainvälinen ympäristö on pehmeä lasku uuteen kulttuuriin.

Tutkittavani ovat kaiken kaikkiaan sopeutuneet hyvin ja heillä on positiivisia kokemuksia Suomeen sopeutumisesta. He kokevat kahdessa maassa asumisen rakentavana kokemuksena ja etuoikeutena.

Heidän maailmankatsomuksensa on laaja-alainen, ja he ovat oppineet tulemaan toimeen erilaisten kulttuurien sekä ihmisten parissa. Varttuessaan he ovat oppineet arvostamaan omaa kulttuuriaan ja kokemuksiaan rikkautena, kun nuorempana sen sijaan monet halusivat sopeutua nopeasti ympäristöönsä ja kieltää toisen puolen identiteettiään. Ne heistä, jotka ovat tulleet teini-ikäisenä vanhempiensa tahdosta eivätkä omasta tahdostaan on sopeutuminen ollut vaikeampaa.

Suurin vaikutus sopeutumiseen on oma positiivinen asenne ja perheen tuki sekä suhteet entisiin ystäviin ja maahan, jolloin on mahdollista säilyttää molemmat identiteetit ja sopeutua vaivattomammin kulloiseenkin ympäristöön.

Tämä ryhmä edustaa poikkeuksellista kolmannen kulttuurin lasten ryhmää, koska he eivät ole matkustaneet maasta toiseen kuten tyypilliset kolmannen kulttuurin lapset, vaan ovat muuttaneet kotimaastaan toiseen kotimaahansa. He eivät ole matkalaukkulapsia. Tämän tosiasian perusteella voi sanoa, että nämä lapset ovat sopeutuneet melko hyvin Suomen oloihin joskin jonkunlainen ulkopuolisuuden tunne on säilynyt.

Asiasanat: exceptional third culture kid, cross-cultural adaptation, identity, acculturation.

## CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2. DEFINING THIRD CULTURE KIDS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
2.1 The Concept of the TCK .....	8
2.2 Common characteristics of TCKs.....	9
2.3 Exceptional Third Culture Kids (ETCKs).....	10
<b>3. CULTURE</b> .....	<b>14</b>
3.1 Concepts of Culture .....	14
3.2 The Hofstede Model of Cultural Dimensions.....	17
3.3 Finnish values vs. Middle Eastern values of Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon .....	19
3.4 Multiculturalism .....	21
<b>4. CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND ACCULTURATION</b> .....	<b>23</b>
4.1 Concepts of Cross-cultural Adaptation.....	23
4.2 Models of Cross-cultural Adaptation .....	24
4.3 Concept and model of Acculturation.....	29
4.4 Acculturation Stress/ Culture Shock .....	31
<b>5. CROSS-CULTURAL IDENTITY</b> .....	<b>33</b>
5.1 Concepts of Identity .....	33
5.2 Self-Identity .....	34
5.3 Social Identity.....	35
5.4 Cultural Identity .....	36
5.5 Identity and Language.....	37
5.6 Multicultural Identity .....	40
5.7 TCK Identity .....	42
<b>6. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURE OF STUDY</b> .....	<b>45</b>
<b>7. DATA DESCRIPTION</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<b>8. TRANSITION AND ADAPTATION</b> .....	<b>56</b>
8.1 Transition to Finland.....	56
8.2 Adaptation to Finland.....	58
8.3 Discussion .....	62
<b>9. ACCULTURATION</b> .....	<b>68</b>
9.1 Fitting In.....	68
9.2 Relational Patterns of ETCKs with their surrounding culture .....	71
9.3 Discussion .....	72
<b>10. CROSS-CULTURAL IDENTITY</b> .....	<b>79</b>
10.1 Home Country.....	79

10.2 Identity and Language.....	80
10.3 Finding Identity .....	82
10.4 Discussion .....	85
11. CONCLUSION.....	92
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	99
Appendix 1: THE EMAIL.....	110
Appendix 2: THE QUESTIONNAIRE .....	111

**List of Tables**

TABLE 1. Differences between TCKs and ETCKs .....	11
TABLE 2. Common characteristics of traditional TCKs and ETCKs .....	13
TABLE 3. TCKs' relationship to surrounding dominant culture (Pollock and Van Reken 1999) .....	43
TABLE 4. Background information on ETCKs.....	53

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this age of globalization, growing up in more than one culture has become quite the norm. Whether it be for employment, educational or other personal –related reasons, as the number of families moving outside their home country increases, the more children find themselves living amidst many cultures. These children who come from different parts of the world share the experience of a “paradoxical world” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 8) in which migration and adaptation processes affect and help mold their growing and complex identities. Therefore, each of these children is referred to as a *Third Culture Kid* (TCK),

“A person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationships to others of similar background.” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 19)

One, however, must take into account that the experiences of the TCKs range widely. Pollock and Van Reken (1999) have fully covered and examined the phenomenon and nature of the TCK experience and everything relating to the TCK field; nevertheless, they still have not, as they themselves claim, “begun to look fully at the many possible variations in the TCK’s world”. (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 187) They have succeeded in providing detailed examples and some valuable information on the different subcultures of expatriates; however, they have not specifically addressed exceptional TCK experiences. Moreover, in general, not much research can be found on exceptional TCKs in comparison to research (i.e., Van Reken, 1988; Hill Useem and Cottrell, 1993; Hill Useem, 1999; Storti, 1990; Glicksberg-Skipper, 2000; Pearce, 2002; Britten, 1998) carried out on typical TCKs, a term originally coined by Dr. Ruth Hill Useem (1999), the founder of TCK research.

Although ETCKs have many similar characteristics and experiences to typical TCKs, several reasons can be found as to why they do not exactly fit in the same group. Therefore, I have coined the term “exceptional third culture kids” (ETCKs) to represent a subgroup of third culture kids (TCKs), who to some extent differ from typical TCKs. At this point, it must, however, be noted that the aim of this current study is not to focus on the differences between TCKs and ETCKs.

The present work will examine the adaptation and acculturation of half-Arab and half-Finnish ETCKs to Finland as well as their identity transformation in relation to their adaptation experiences. Through the examination of the data, the study aims to explain how the ETCKs juggle with two or more cultures, whether or not they are able to attain cultural balance, as well as how they build and keep a connection to both the Western as well as the Eastern culture- adapting to the Finnish culture, yet at the same time, maintaining their Arab culture. While Pollock and Van Reken's (1999) book on third culture kids aroused my interest in the subject, being an ETCK myself, my initial motive for examining half-Arab and half-Finnish ETCKs came from my own personal experience of moving to Finland and finding cultural balance.

Moreover, due to the fact that *TCKs* is still quite a new phenomenon in Finland, there is a lack of research that focuses on the identity and acculturation of half-Finnish TCKs to Finland. Only some research (i.e., Karjalainen, 2003; Tikka, 2004; Reinikainen et al. 2005) has been carried out on TCKs; however, they include traditional full- Finnish TCKs (often missionary kids) who have emigrated from Finland or who have returned to Finland (returnees). Other research can mainly be found on ATCKs (Adult Third Culture Kids), immigrants (full foreigners and their children who may have been born in Finland) and biculturals living in Finland (i.e., Valtonen, 1998; Heikkilä and Peltonen, 2002; Aksoy, 2004; Järvenpää, 2002). Thus, as not much research can be found on ETCKs in general, and much less attention has been given to half-Finnish ETCKs who have moved to Finland, this study will contribute to research fields including acculturation of immigrants to Finland, children of mixed marriages as well as to the research field of TCKs.

As the number of foreigners moving to Finland is increasing, the more the country is changing and gradually moving towards a multicultural society. A large number of these foreigners that have moved to Finland also include half-Finnish ETCK children whose Finnish parent has at some point emigrated from Finland, married a foreigner, and has eventually returned to the country. Some of the Finnish parents may have also decided to send their children to Finland, for instance, to continue their higher education, to pursue a career, and /or to find their Finnish roots. Thus, as the number of intercultural marriages between Finns and foreigners outside of Finland grow, the more half-Finnish ETCKs there will be who may eventually move to Finland and

become part of the Finnish society. According to Statistics Finland, the number of foreigners residing in Finland has risen a great deal (26, 255 foreign people in 1990 to 132, 708 foreign people in 2007). (Tilastokeskus, 2008). Every year around 2,000-3,000 Finns marry a foreign person. (Memni and Muranen, 2004)

The study first begins by introducing the terms *Third Culture Kids* and *Exceptional Third Culture Kids*. An explanation including tables will be provided for understanding the differences and similarities between them. In the following chapters, the concepts and theories of culture, cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation and cross-cultural identity will be discussed. A sub-chapter on language in relation to identity is included as well. Research methods and the procedure of the study will form the next part of the thesis, followed by the data description and the analysis. In the analysis, three main themes, adaptation, acculturation and identity will be examined. Under each theme, factors which affect and contribute to the adaptation, acculturation and identity of the ETCKs will be discussed. The summary of the findings and suggestions for further studies will make up the final section of the thesis.

The data of the present study has been collected through a detailed questionnaire consisting of 86 questions (see appendix 2). The respondents included Half-Finnish and half-Arab ETCKs, who have moved to Finland from the Middle East at some point in their lives and have lived in Finland for at least four and a half years. The questions that they were required to answer dealt with their experiences of adaptation and acculturation into the Finnish society, their identity transformation and language skills during the processes, as well as their feelings of belonging to the TCK world. By answering the questionnaire, the ETCKs were able to reflect on their identity in addition to their adaptation and acculturation experiences.

## 2. DEFINING THIRD CULTURE KIDS

In this chapter, the concept of ETCK will be introduced. However, in order to understand ETCKs, as they are seen as a subgroup of TCKs, it is essential to first explain the concept of the TCK. The history and the common characteristics of TCKs will be thoroughly discussed.

### 2.1 The Concept of the TCK

The term *third culture* was first coined in the 1950s by two social scientists known as Drs. John and Ruth Hill Useem who had traveled to India to study Americans living and working there as foreign service officers, technical aid workers, businessmen, missionaries, educators and media representatives. During their stay in India, the Useems also met expatriates from other countries and became aware of the fact that “each of these subcultures [communities of expatriates] generated by colonial administrators, missionaries, businessmen, and military personnel-had its own peculiarities, slightly different origins, distinctive styles and stratification systems, but all were closely interlocked.” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 20) Realizing that the expatriates had formed a separate lifestyle that was different from either their home or their host culture, but one shared in that setting, the Useems defined the home culture from which the adults came from as the first culture; the host culture where the family lived (in that case, India) as the second culture; and the shared lifestyle of the expatriate community as an *interstitial culture* (“culture between cultures”), naming it the third culture. They also called the children who had grown up in that interstitial culture *third culture kids* (Ibid.).

According to the Useems, TCKs cope rather than adjust, becoming both ‘a part of’ and ‘apart from’ whatever situation they are in. One must, however, remember that the Useems coined the term in the 1950s when most Western expatriates lived in specific communal systems (i.e., missionary compounds, business enclaves and military bases.) In those days it was quite easy to identify a ‘visible’ local expatriate community, whereas, today hardly any expatriates live in such defined communities. Moreover, many even have their children attending local schools instead of sending them off to boarding schools as was often done before. Due to the fact that there are not many well-marked expatriate enclaves anymore, some see the terms *third culture*



and *third culture kid* as misnomers. “How can there be a culture if people don’t live together?” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:21) According to Dr. Useem “no concept is ever locked up permanently; they change as we get to know more, while at other times concepts change because what happens in the world is changing.” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 21) In one of her more recent reports on a survey of adult TCKs, Dr. Useem used *third culture* as a generic term to refer to the *lifestyle* “created, shared, and learned” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:21) by those who come from one culture and are in the process of relating to another one as well. At the same time, in that article, Dr. Useem also defined TCKs as “children who accompany their parents into another society.” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:21) In this case, such definitions are justifiable since culture in its broadest term has been defined as “a way of life shared with others” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:21); therefore, TCKs in different countries, whether or not they have grown up in an expatriate community, all belong to the third culture, sharing similar life experiences of living in and among different cultures. (Ibid.)

## **2.2 Common characteristics of TCKs**

As mentioned earlier in the introduction, according to Pollock and Van Reken, a *Third Culture Kid* (TCK) is

“A person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationships to others of similar background.” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:19)

In their opinion, these members of the third culture have many characteristics in common that make them unique. For instance, they are usually raised in a ‘genuinely’ cross-cultural world and are used to a highly mobile world whether they themselves or those around them are constantly moving from one place to another (coming and going). In addition to the scenery changes, they are used to people in their lives always changing. (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 19-23)

It must be noted, however, that although, these characteristics are true for almost every third culture person, the degree to which TCKs differ from their host culture,

enjoy a privileged lifestyle, identify with their organizational system as well as expect to return to their home country varies; all depending on the reasons as to where and why their families have moved outside their home country. (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:22-23)

Other common characteristics which Pollock and Van Reken categorized into four groups include: 1. *Distinct differences*: Many TCKs are raised in countries where they are physically different from the local people around them. This difference is a major aspect of their identity. Nevertheless, even when the physical appearances are similar to those from their host or home culture, TCKs still have a different perspective of the world when compared to their peers. 2. *Expected repatriation*: TCKs, unlike immigrants, usually return permanently to their home country. 3. *Privileged lifestyle*: Throughout history, members of the military, missions, the diplomatic corps and the employees of international businesses have always been part of an elitist community. These members are familiar with special privileges, also known as “systems of logical support or perks” (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:22-23), which are bestowed upon them by either their sponsoring organization or the host culture or by both. For example, diplomatic families are provided with chauffeurs to drive their children to school or to other places. Even if perks are not provided, they have other privileges such as worldwide travel from one place to another at the expense of the sponsoring agency. 4. *System identity*: Members of the third culture community are more aware than their peers of the fact that their community represents something greater than themselves (i.e., God, their company or their government). Jobs are closely linked to the behavior of the adults and their children as they are expected to positively reflect the standards and values of the sponsoring agency (Ibid.).

### **2.3 Exceptional Third Culture Kids (ETCKs)**

In this study, the term *Exceptional TCK* has been coined to explain a subgroup of TCKs, who differ to some extent from typical TCKs. Although ETCKs have some similar characteristics and experiences with those of typical TCKs and belong to the *third culture*, they, nevertheless, do not exactly fit in the same group. Unlike TCKs, ETCKs have not spent a significant part of their lives outside their parent’s home country/countries as they have only lived in two countries (i.e., Palestine and

Finland- moving from Palestine to Finland), both, being one of their parent's home country (parents are from two different countries). High mobility in the sense of moving from one country to another every few years is not a common characteristic. Whereas typical TCKs eventually return to their passport country or their parents' home country, experiencing reentry shock, ETCKs, on the other hand, only experience culture shock as they have moved to one of their parent's home country Finland, where they have not lived before.

While TCKs are full foreigners (both parents usually come from the same country) in the host country, ETCKs are not seen as full foreigners in either country that they have lived in or are currently living in, as they are 'half local' and (almost) live like locals. In addition, since they are only half foreigner and only one of their parents (or none of their parents), who eventually married a local, used to work for a sponsoring organization, ETCKs do not really fit into an elitist subculture community and do not have a system identity either. The next table based on my perceptions introduces the major differences between TCKs and ETCKs.

TABLE 1. Differences Between TCKs and ETCKs

BACKGROUND	HIGH MOBILITY	DEVELOPMENTAL YEARS SPENT OUTSIDE OF PARENT'S HOME COUNTRY	BELONGING TO A SUBGROUP-SYSTEM IDENTITY	TYPE OF FAMILY	EXPECTED REPATRIATION	FOREIGNER OR LOCAL
<b>TCK</b>	High Mobility is a common characteristic	They spend their developmental years outside of their parent's home country due to both or either one of their parent's jobs (sponsoring organization)-living in a host culture/country during those years	They belong to a subgroup (e.g. military brats, missionary kids)  Have a system identity + status	In most cases, both parents come from the same country	They eventually return to their original home country as in their parent's/parents' home country /ancestral culture They experience re-entry culture shock	Foreigners due to their ethnic origin, even if they are born or raised in the host country

<b>ETCK</b>	Spend most of their lives in one or two countries	They do not spend their developmental years outside of their parent's home country (but rather in one of their parent's home country), even if they have moved to another country during their developmental years, it is still the other parent's home country – always living in one of their parent's home country	They do not belong to a specific subgroup, such as with missionaries because they are half or part local  No system identity- more complicated	Parents always come from different countries	They do not experience repatriation; therefore they do not experience re-entry culture shock  In this case, they move to Finland, the other parent's home country; since they have not lived there before, they experience culture shock instead of re-entry culture shock.	They are 'half local' or live like a local; however, they are always half foreigner as well
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At this point, one may then wonder how this group of people could even be defined as *TCKs*. As mentioned above, in the 1950s, Dr. Useem (1999) defined *third culture kids* as being those who have grown up in the *interstitial culture*. Due to the fact that 'visible' local expatriate communities are more rare these days, the meaning of *third culture kids* has somewhat transformed. As Dr. Useem has claimed, "no concept is ever locked up permanently" (Pollock and Van Reken 1999: 21); they change as we get to know more and as the world, in general, changes. In addition, Dr. Useem herself has defined the third culture as a generic term to discuss the *lifestyle* 'created, shared, and learned' by those who are from one culture and are in the process of relating to another one. (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:21) Furthermore, Pollock and Van Reken agreeing with these statements, also claim that although elements from each culture are assimilated into the life experiences of the TCK, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. (Ibid.)

ETCKs, in this sense, like TCKs, create a *third culture*, combining elements from two cultures (Finnish and Arab cultures) into a third one. Their *third culture* can also be created from having attended an international or an American school through which they were affected by the American/British culture, as well as from partly belonging to the missionary community subgroup, for example, since one of their

parents is/was a missionary. Both TCKs and ETCKs build relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. They belong everywhere and nowhere at the same time, sharing a kind of cross-cultural lifestyle and multicultural experience. This lifestyle and experience expands their worldview and helps them to become more tolerant of other cultures. The only people who truly understand them and with whom they are able to identify are those of similar background.

The next table summarizes the common characteristics of traditional TCKs and ETCKs based on Pollock's and Van Reken's (1999) TCK research as well as on my own perceptions.

TABLE 2. Common Characteristics of Traditional TCKs and ETCKs

<b>COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADITIONAL TCKS AND EXCEPTIONAL TCKS</b>	
1.	Expanded world view
2.	Knowledge of several languages - multilingual
3.	Have built cultural bridges
4.	Rootlessness – 'belonging everywhere and nowhere'
5.	Restlessness
6.	Cross-cultural lifestyle to some extent
7.	Multicultural Experience
8.	Create an own mixed culture – culture 1 + culture 2 = culture 3
9.	Belong to some kind of subgroup/s / partly belong to some subgroup/s
10.	Sense of belonging with others of similar background rather than just with 'shared ethnicity/race'

Coming from two cultures and belonging to a subculture, the backgrounds of the ETCKs have a significant affect on the way they adapt to Finland and on their identity as they try to find cultural balance and a place to fit in. However, in order to understand the adaptation and acculturation experiences of the ETCKs as well as their identity transformation, cultural theories and different adaptation approaches need to be examined. Thus, the next chapters will focus on cultural, cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation theories, beginning with the concept of culture. In addition, approaches on identity and linguistic skills in relation to their adaptation will be discussed.

### **3. CULTURE**

Different views and approaches of the broad concept of culture will first be introduced in this chapter. Next the cultural differences between the Middle East (specifically Arab countries) and Finland are compared and contrasted in accordance with Hofstede's (1997) model of cultural dimensions. In addition, to obtain a deeper understanding of the differences between Middle Eastern culture and Finnish culture, Lewis's (2005) and Zaharna's (1991, 1995, 1999) views on Finnish people and Middle Eastern people (referring to those specifically from Arab countries including Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon) are also taken into account. Lastly, as the ETCKs have lived in a multicultural environment the concept of multiculturalism will be briefly discussed.

#### **3.1 Concepts of Culture**

Culture is a complex, abstract, multidimensional and pervasive concept that functions as an all-encompassing form for living. (Porter and Samovar 1994:12) It aids in the transition from the womb to our new life in a predictable world and enables us to make sense of our surroundings. It provides us with structure, and to lack culture, is to lack guidelines (Porter and Samovar 1994:12).

Being a broad term, *culture* has been conceptualized in various ways by different scholars and anthropologists (Kim and Gudykunst 1988:102). Since the origin of the discipline in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, anthropologists have been debating and discussing different conceptions of culture. In general, anthropologists have used the term culture to describe a group of people who have certain aspects of life in common. In search of a more precise definition, however, one can find almost as many if not more definitions as there are anthropologists. The definitions range from an "all-encompassing" phenomenon to specific descriptions listing nearly all human activity. (Samovar, Porter, and Jain, 1981)

As this study, however, concentrates on the adaptation and acculturation of the ETCKs to Finland and their identity transformation during the processes, concepts of culture understood in the context of cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation have been taken into account. In addition, other concepts of culture referred to in this

study include the understanding of culture in relation to identity, cross-cultural interaction as well as globalization. As Kim and Gudykunst (1988), mention, definitions of “culture” should capture the experience of participants.

Geert Hofstede (1997), who claims that people are programmed the way computers are, explains culture as a process to which each human being is subjected to from birth, describing it as, “the collective programming of the mind.” (Hofstede 1997:5). Throughout their lives and especially during their childhood, every person acquires certain patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. These patterns of thinking, feeling and acting are *mental programs* and the social environment, where one has grown up in and gained life experiences, is the basis of the mental process of a person. (Hofstede 1997: 4) The programming, with the help of parents and teachers, provides children with the tools for successful interaction in their culture, and in each society and culture, children are given a different set of instructions (e.g., what is right and wrong) that are equally valid in every environment. Therefore, culture, which is partially shared by people who live or have lived within the same social environment, where it was learned, can also be seen as a system of collectively held values. (Hofstede 1997:5)

Trompenaars, as Hofstede, also underlines the collective nature of culture. He defines culture as “the way in which a group of people solve problems.” (Trompenaars 1995:6) Trompenaars divides culture into three layers- the Outer Layer, the Middle Layer and the Core; in order to understand a culture, the layers must be peeled off just like with an onion. He defines the outer later, as the explicit layer which culture is primarily associated with - the manifestations of a culture, its artifacts and things that can be observed (e.g. food and language). The middle layer refers to the norms, values (internal) and morals (external) that a community holds. The morals and values structure the way people behave in a specific culture, however, although their influence is observable, they are not visible. The inner layer of a culture, which consists of basic assumptions, rules and methods for dealing with problems that may be faced, is defined as the core /implicit layer. In order to successfully interact and work with other cultures, people must understand the core of the culture onion. (Trompenaars 1995:6)

Triandis, who has attempted to define the ‘cornerstones’ of cultural differences, has introduced the concept of “subjective culture”, or a “characteristic way of perceiving its social environment common to culture” (Triandis 1972: viii) His approach to culture is based on the broad definition provided by Herskovits (1955:305): “culture is the human-made part of the environment”. According to Triandis culture can be split into material/objective and subjective cultures. The subjective culture, which is defined as “a society’s characteristic way of perceiving its social environment (Triandis 1972: viii, 3) includes the world view, stereotypes, norms, attitudes, role perceptions, values, ideals and perceived relationships between events and behaviors. The material/objective culture includes artifacts and objects of a culture. The most important elements of culture include: unstated assumptions, habits of ‘sampling’ information from the environment, standard operating procedures, ideas in relation to aesthetics, and the way people should live with others. These elements are shared among those who are able to communicate with each other and are passed on from one generation to the next (Triandis, 1972).

Parson and Shils (1962:8) refer to “cultural patterns” which include “systems of ideas or beliefs...systems of expressive symbols... [and] systems of value orientations” (Sheldon 1962: 40). According to them, in a community, cognitive phenomena are communicated through ideas, beliefs, symbols and values and due to the presence of cultural differences, people tend to make judgments according to their own cultural standards. This tendency to see one’s own cultural ways and views as “right” and others as “wrong” is referred to as *ethnocentrism*. All societies are ethnocentric to some extent (Herskovits, 1973); however, anthropologists attempt to steer in the other direction – the direction of cultural relativism, which proposes that we evaluate the behavior of others in the context of their own culture in order to understand them. (Geertz, 1973; LeVine 1984: 67-87, Hofstede 1997:21)

As globalization and immigration have become more of a norm, recent definitions of culture focus more on its dynamic dimension, and how culture shapes rather than how it is shaped. In response to changes in the environment, cultures, which are living entities, are constantly evolving. Through invention, which is defined as “the discovery of new practices, tools, or concepts that most members of the culture eventually accept” and diffusion, or borrowing from another culture, ideas and



products evolving within a culture, produce change. (Porter and Samovar 1994: 5-8, 14) In addition, factors such as different life events and psychological characteristics or interactions between cultures in bicultural or multicultural contexts, can also arbitrate cultural influences. (Ibid.)

Furthermore, meanings of culture change, “as increasingly we no longer belong to a set society based in a certain place, but to a global cultural supermarket from which we, to some extent, pick and choose who we are.” (Matthews 2000:121-156) Since culture is a learned phenomenon, according to Smedley, “individuals and groups can and do change their ethnic or cultural identities and interests through such processes as migration, conversion, and assimilation or through exposure to modifying influences” (Smedley, 1993, as quoted by Carter and Qureshi 1995: 241).

### **3.2 The Hofstede Model of Cultural Dimensions**

Founded on his IBM study in 72 countries, Hofstede developed a model that identifies four primary dimensions to differentiate cultures. The first one, known as Power Distance, focuses on the degree to which power, wealth and prestige are equally or unequally distributed in a culture. In high power-distance cultures, formal hierarchical relationships are the norm, and only positive emotions and respect is shown to authority figures. Arab countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine ranked 7th) are considered high power-distance cultures. In low power-distance cultures, which include Finland (ranked 46th) and Israel (ranked 52nd), equality, mutuality, interdependence, opportunity and personal development are emphasized. Nonverbal behavior is not structured along class lines, and mutual respect between superiors and inferiors is the norm. (Hofstede 1982: 94-95; Hofstede 1997: 24-29)

The second Collectivism-Individualism dimension, which is fundamental in distinguishing Eastern cultures from Western cultures, refers to the roles of the individual and the group. It refers to the extent to which individual interests and concerns prevail over the interests and concerns of the groups, and vice versa. This dimension also explains the way people live (e.g. alone, with extended families), their values and how they communicate verbally and nonverbally. In individualistic cultures (e.g. Finland), the focus is on freedom, personal development, individual rights, privacy, looser relationships and self-realization, which are reflected in their

nonverbal behavior. Meanwhile, collectivistic cultures (Arab countries) value group behavior as well as interpersonal connection and focus more on tradition and/or religion, on consensus and closer family ties/relationships between individuals. Arab traditional values include: respect for elders, who are seen as the foundation of family cohesion; family loyalty (including obligation to family); and collectivism. For instance, honor or shame is collective, affecting the entire family and especially restricting the place of women; therefore, it is crucial that reputation is protected. (Hecht, Andersen and Ribeau 1989:170) Finland is ranked 17<sup>th</sup>; Arab countries are ranked 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup>; and Israel is ranked 19<sup>th</sup>. (Hofstede 1997: 50-53)

The third dimension of societal culture, gender orientation - masculinity vs. femininity, refers to the distribution of roles between genders and to the value placed on traditionally male or female values. Masculinity stands for a society in which gender roles are distinct and men who dominate a significant portion of the power structure and the society (male domination over females); in such a masculine society females in comparison to men are supposed to be more tender, modest and concerned with the quality of life (Hofstede 1991:262; Hofstede 1997:80-85). Femininity, on the other hand, stands for a society in which there is a low level of differentiation/ discrimination between genders. Females are treated equally to men in all aspects of the society. (Hofstede 1991:261) Feminine cultures value relationships in addition to quality of life and stress on compassion, equality, nurturance and emotionality. Meanwhile, masculine cultures value assertiveness, ambition, competitiveness and the accumulation of wealth and material possessions. Arab countries are considered masculine societies, while Finland, where females and males are treated more equally, is considered as a feminine society. (Finland is ranked 17<sup>th</sup>; Arab countries are ranked 26/27<sup>th</sup> and Israel is ranked 19<sup>th</sup>) (Hofstede 1997:50-57). According to Lewis (2005:144 -145), the position of women, who are seen as strong-willed, in Finland (both society and business) is quite superior to that of women in Arab countries.

The fourth dimension is defined as Uncertainty Avoidance. This dimension refers to the level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity within the society and points out the extent to which a culture programs its members to feel uncomfortable/ comfortable in unstructured, novel situations. In addition, it refers to a man's search

for Truth. Uncertainty avoidance cultures have a low tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, which leads to a rule-oriented society. Furthermore, on the religious level, there is a strong belief in the one absolute Truth and people within these cultures are considered contemplative. (Hofstede 1997:113-125) Uncertainty tolerant cultures, on the other hand, are more tolerant towards changes and different opinions; they are less threatened by ambiguity and uncertainty. (Finland is ranked 31<sup>st</sup>/32<sup>nd</sup>; Arab countries are ranked 27<sup>th</sup> and Israel is ranked 19<sup>th</sup>). (Hofstede 1982: 97-99)

### **3.3 Finnish values vs. Middle Eastern values of Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon**

For a long time, Finnish culture has been isolated to some extent, developing distinct characteristics that include mainstream Nordic and some European cultural aspects. (Lewis 2005:58-59) Finnish people tend to value peacefulness, nature, and qualities including honesty and individuality. Principles such as equality, and ideologies such as liberalism are encouraged in the Finnish society (Lewis 2005:58- 63). The state church of Finland is the Lutheran church, and the vast majority of Finns are Evangelical-Lutheran. However, since society in Finland has secularized to some extent, the role of the church and religion seems to be more reflected in annual traditions rather than in everyday lives. (Kääriäinen, 2002) A typical Finnish family is structured around a nuclear family, with the extended family living apart. After high school, most young people begin to seek independence and move out of their parent's homes. (Andersen 1999: 89-90)

When it comes to communication, Finns like are restrained, hesitant, deferential and cannot “lose face” under any circumstance. (Lewis 2005:67) Just as every else, they want to be liked; nevertheless, Finns do not try to charm. They are very modest and always seem to portray themselves as unfortunate, when in reality they are quite the opposite. Due to their introvert nature, Finns tend to be more straightforward and quiet, preferring to hide their emotions to some extent in public. (Lewis 2005: 58-63, 151). When conversing, Finns also tend to stand further apart and to maintain a non-hostile communication situation, although neither speaker is subordinate, they avoid using eye contact after introducing themselves. (Lewis 2005: 78,151).

The origins of traditional Palestinian, Egyptian and Lebanese values, on the other hand, are rooted in Arab culture. (Zaharna, 1999) Arab culture is a “being-oriented”

culture in the sense that identity rests on social structures and fixed relationships (Zaharna 1991: 87-98; Zaharna, 1995). The first, most significant social structure is the family. The family is seen as the focal point of social existence, and even extended families may live together, in the same building or in the same neighborhood. Most young people still live with their families until they get married. In addition to social structures and fixed relationships, self-definition is also based on natural entities such as land. The place of “origin” (not place of birth) is a primary relationship in self-definition, just as the common Palestinian expression goes, “my land is my identity.” (Zaharna 1991:87-98; Zaharna 1995:241-255) In the Arab societies, religion is also linked to strong ethical values and is seen as an important part of everyday lives. (Barakat1993:6-42). Islam, being the dominant religion, is a major influence on the societies (Egyptian society- mostly comprised of Muslims and a few Christians; Palestinian and Lebanese societies - composed of several different religious groups- largest groups including Muslim, Christian and Druze) as a whole. (Zaharna, 1999)

Arabs are quite social people, easy to approach and often gesture as they talk. Without question, they use gestures, theatrical expression and their hands more expressively than Finns do to the point where they may even look like they are overreacting. (Lewis 2005: 76,161-162) Arabs stand quite close to their conversational partner as well and speak in a loud voice which may sound like they are aggressive and angry all the time. (Lewis 2005: 58-63, 151) In multi-active Arab countries, where power distance between people is greater, speakers will maintain close eye contact until they have finished delivering a message. (Lewis 2005:78) In addition, most Arabs always seem to be ready to boast of their connections, showing that they are willing to make them available to those they makes friends with.

Moreover, each culture has a different conception of time. While Finns are monochronic, accomplishing tasks one at a time in the order of priority, Arabs, on the other hand, are polychronic, carrying two or three conversations at the same time and often interrupting each other. (Lewis 2005:143, 155). Thus, as one can see, according to Lewis (2005, 129-130), Zaharna (1991) and Hofstede’s (1991, 1997) dimensions, the values and attributes of Finnish people are almost diametrically opposed to those of the Arabs of the Middle East.

### 3.4 Multiculturalism

”Multiculturalism” has been a much debated concept; therefore, various definitions and terms in relation to it can be found. The concept of multiculturalism has most often been explained as an ideology rather than a description of some specific society/culture. It has also often been associated with “society”, implying that in one society/nation, different cultural groups of equal status exist (e.g. one majority culture and several minority cultures). A multicultural society, as Professor Crick wrote, is made up of a diverse range of cultures and identities. It emphasizes the need for a continuous process of mutual engagement and learning about each other with respect, understanding and tolerance. Parekh (2000: 147-152), further explains that multiculturalism does not simply refer to numerical plurality of different cultures, but rather a community which creates, guarantees and encourages spaces for different communities (at their own paces) to grow in. At the same time, these communities interact and enrich the dominant culture. A new ‘consensual culture’ is also created, in which everyone maintains their own identity and recognizes reflections of their own identity. Thus, as Rosado (1996:2) has defined,

“Multiculturalism can be seen as a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution with an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society.”

Although some nations have adopted official policies of multiculturalism; the conditions of cultural diversity and degrees of tolerance and acceptance, nevertheless, vary from country to country. (Inglis, 1996) Several common terms that have been used to describe multiculturalism in different countries include: “melting pot” (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970), which refers to the belief that immigrants of different cultures or races are socially and culturally blended, forming an integrated society (Israel is considered a melting pot); “mosaic” (Gibbon, 1938), when several different cultures and languages coexist, all of the cultures may practice their own beliefs and speak their own languages; and “assimilation” (Gordon, 1964), which refers to the process of integration in which different cultural groups become part of a larger community. Thus, a more homogenous society is created. In the process, the original identities of the cultures are lost. (Rosado 1996:6)

Supporters of multiculturalism see it as a form of civil rights of cultural groups founded upon the ideology of equality of cultures, which will lead to interculturalism (beneficial cultural exchange). They also argue that diversity should be seen as a positive force for the nationhood and cultural identity of a society. Critics of multiculturalism, on the other hand, see it as an official policy that has been forced upon them without their consent, and the discordant ideology could eventually undermine national unity, leading to the formation of cultural ghettos. In addition, some claim that although the multicultural policy has been adopted in some countries, racism, bias, stereotyping and other problems linked to cultural references still exist. (Bibby 1990:23-26,103)

Many different views can be found on this specific concept, and several supporters as well as critics have voiced their opinions. However, as McNeill (1986) has stated, multiculturalism will not disappear but remain for good, especially when people begin to appreciate and accept their differences in a global and urbanized society, despite its vulnerability to disruptions.

As children grow up, the learned “national” concepts become their core beliefs and are reflected in their behavior. These “national” concepts are almost impossible to discard, and as individuals interact with their compatriots, they realize that the closer they stick to the rules of their society, the more accepted and comfortable they feel. Individuals from one culture may, therefore, regard the beliefs and behaviors of those from other cultures as strange because they differ from their own. (Lewis 2005: 54-55) Parental and educational training, genes, societal rules and language enable them to see as far as to the limit of their horizon. Nevertheless, they can widen it to some extent, for example, by living in other countries or by learning foreign languages. (Lewis 2005: 93) Moreover, living in a multicultural country may also help some look *beyond* their horizon. However, in order to understand the way people react and adapt to other cultures, the concepts of cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation need to be examined; thus, these concepts are discussed in the next chapter.

## 4. CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND ACCULTURATION

This chapter introduces the concepts of *Cross-Cultural Adaptation* and *Acculturation*. Models that have been proposed for explaining both concepts will be discussed, after which, another sub-chapter will concentrate on culture shock or as Berry preferably refers to as acculturation stress.

### 4.1 Concepts of Cross-cultural Adaptation

*Adaptation* has been defined as a generic term to describe the psychological changes and eventual outcomes of individuals experiencing acculturation. (Berry 1997:6, 13) Three types of adaptation may be distinguished: sociocultural (refers to a person's behavioral competence for survival in the physical surroundings of the new environment); psychological (refers to a person's psychological and physical well-being, which includes a clear sense of cultural identity, good mental health and contentment); and economic adaptation (refers to having a good job and being effective). (Berry 1997:14; Ward 1996: 127)

The level of adaptation, however, depends on several factors, i.e., personal motivation, host culture attitudes; therefore, the outcomes vary from one person to another and from poor to good adaptation. (Berry 1997: 13-14; Gudykunst and Kim 1992:217) According to Berry et al. (1988) adaptation can be classified into three strategies: adjustment, reaction, and withdrawal. Adjustment refers to the reducing of the conflict between the behavior of an individual and the new environment in addition to the change of behavior in order to meet the demands of the new environment; Reaction occurs when an individual changes his or her behavior to retaliate against the new environment; while withdrawal refers to the reducing of pressure caused from the environment. Berry notes that the only realistic strategy for an individual in the process of adaptation is the adjustment strategy.

Pruitt (1978: 90-118), on the other hand, explained adaptation as having two components which include adjustment and assimilation. Adjustment means that an individual is able to cope with his or her environment sufficiently in order to be content, comfortable, and without problems. Assimilation means that an individual is able to interact freely with the natives of the host culture and accepts their culture.

Adjustment is treated as a component of adaptation in both of these definitions (Hannigan, 1990). Anderson (1994: 293-328), however, clarifies the difference between the terms *adjustment* and *adaptation*. Adjustment refers to satisfaction or reduction of short-term situations, while adaptation refers to long-term survival (for both individuals and groups). As Hannigan (1990:91) reviewed the different definitions of other researchers, he came to the conclusion that adaptation is a broad term including both concepts of assimilation and adjustment. He postulated that adaptation consists of cognitive, attitudinal, behavioral, and psychological changes that an individual who lives in a new culture experiences.

The concepts of ‘adaptation’ and ‘adjustment’, which have quite similar meanings, are commonly used in cross-cultural literature. Adaptation; however, is more broad in both concept and process and is defined more specifically as cross-cultural adaptation in the domain of intercultural encounters. Therefore, cross-cultural adaptation refers to adjustment in a situation in which individuals come into contact with new cultures. As the long-term adaptation and the outcomes of the ETCKs’ acculturation to Finland will be examined, ‘adaptation’ and more specifically ‘cross-cultural adaptation’ will mainly be referred to in this study

#### **4.2 Models of Cross-cultural Adaptation**

Several researchers have developed different models of cross-cultural adaptation, which differ in their emphasis on personal development, identity, learning, affecting variables and stress-coping strategies in the adaptation process. A few of these theories will be introduced; however, for the purpose of this study the main focus will be on Kim’s (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation. Moreover, some other researchers’ (Sykes and Eden, 1987; Fontaine, 1986; Ying and Liese, 1991; Klineberg and Hull, 1979; Armes and Ward, 1989; Furnham and Boschner, 1986; Schmitz, 1995; Black and Gregersen, 1990; Searle and Ward, 1990; and Otmane et al. 2005), findings, which are relevant to this study and provide more angles to view cross-cultural adaptation from, are taken into account. These findings will be referred to in the analysis of the ETCKs as well.

Bennett and Bennett (2004) have introduced a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity on the basis of cognitive psychology and constructivism. The model was



created to explain the reactions of people to cultural difference during cross-cultural transition on a continuum of six stages - from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Ethnocentrism means that the culture of the individual is seen as central in the sense that the individual views the new culture from the perspective of his own culture. Ethnorelativism, on the other hand, refers to the awareness, acceptance and the ability of the individual to adapt to the new culture, in terms of changes in attitudes, formation of cultural identity and intercultural sensitivity. These six stages of 'increasing sensitivity to cultural difference' include: denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration. (Bennett and Bennett 2004:146-157).

Various scholars have also explained adaptation, and more specifically cross-cultural adaptation as a growth/learning process. In these studies, cross-cultural adaptation is viewed as a linear movement towards successful psychological and social adaptation, measured by the increase in the levels of social and cultural integration (i.e., Kim's (1988) stress-adaptation-growth model).

Although several different cross-cultural adaptation models have been presented, many of them, however, as Kim (2001:26, 2002) claims, argue past each other, with very little mention of the existing relations between them. Kim (2001, 2002) also argues that most of the previous studies have been built on the linear-reductionist assumption, and focus on the notion of cause-and-effect; therefore, failing to explain a number of other factors and their interrelationship in the cross-cultural adaptation process. In addition, she argues that although some of the studies take some cross-cultural communication comparisons and differences into account, they still fail to describe the process as a whole (Kim 2001: xii).

Kim (2001, 2002) offers a more holistic approach to cross-cultural adaptation by introducing a multidimensional structure model to explain the factors/mechanisms that contribute to the differential degrees of adaptation among people (Kim 2001:92). Her structural model of cross-cultural adaptation in which sociological, anthropological and psychological factors of the adaptation process are integrated, is based on an open-system perspective. In other words, the importance of intercultural communication and the ongoing reciprocal relationship between the individual and the environment is emphasized. (Kim 2001:32) During the process, several different communication processes take place with the host culture as well as with its actors.

Moreover, in contrast to some former studies, in which learning is viewed as a stage, Kim's (2002) study presents learning as individual transformation. According to her, in addition to learning during the adaptation process, individuals, also engage in communication within a culture. In her model, Kim has combined several existing conceptions as well as included the phenomenon of intercultural communication (Kim 2001:36-38, 71-72).

The adaptation model presented by Kim consists of six dimensions, and, each of the dimensions which facilitate or impede the cultural adaptation process of the individual, affects, and is affected by the other dimensions. The first dimension of personal communication consists of the *host communication competence* which represents the core and the 'engine' of the adaptation process of the individual. As individuals begin learning and internalizing new communication patterns as well as unlearning their original cultural communication patterns, their host communication competence begins to increase. The second dimension of *host social communication* which is closely associated with host communication competence, refers to individuals taking part in interpersonal and mass communication activities within the host culture (Kim 2001:143, 85-87). Through *ethnic social communication*, the third dimension, strangers experience interaction with their ethnic community, which also involves experiences of their home cultures. These personal and social communication dimensions also interact with the conditions (host environment receptivity towards foreigners, conformity pressure as well as ethnic group strength) of the new *environment* (fourth dimension).

Some Finnish studies (Jaakkola, T. 2000; Liebkind 2000; Pitkänen 1999; Valtonen 1999) have revealed that interpersonal communication relationships that immigrants to Finland have with ethnic groups and with Finns promote their adaptation process. According to Kim (2001: 125), foreigners tend to be easily drawn to coethnics for interaction and social activities. Only after some time, they begin interacting and building more ties with local people, replacing some of the former ethnic ties and incorporating these new ties into their personal networks. While some researchers such as Sykes and Eden (1987: 42-59) found that fellow nationals are the most significant source of support, others (Furnham and Bochner, 1986), on the other hand, argue that relationships with host nationals tend to be more effective. Berry

(1997:25), who has referred to several studies, however, claims that a person can benefit from both the support of host nationals as well as that of co-nationals. While host nationals can guide and support a person in learning the skills to survive in the new environment, co-nationalists help in reducing acculturation stress. Moreover, Fontaine (1986) and Ying and Liese (1991) have also emphasized the necessity of retaining old ties with people from their former home country. They claim that although old ties do not provide sufficient support for overcoming the obstacles that may be faced during the transition and adaptation process, they, nevertheless, provide at least some emotional support.

Societies that have accepting attitudes towards foreigners, supporting communication between hosts and foreigners, facilitate adaptation, whereas societies that do not have very open attitudes towards foreigners impede adaptation. Foreigners in such societies may face discrimination, prejudice, or even hostility, thus complicating their adaptation as they may hesitate to make contact with the host nationals (Berry 1997: 17, 25; Gudykunst and Kim 1992: 225-226.) For example, in multicultural societies acculturative stress is found to be less predominant in comparison to “unicultural” societies. (Berry 1997: 16-17) Furthermore, according to Klineberg and Hull (1979) and Armes and Ward (1989)’s reports, those who have unfavorable opinions of host nationals are more likely to experience depression than those who have favorable opinions.

The fifth dimension of Kim’s model comprises of three predispositions factors that also influence the potentiality of the adaptation process of the individuals. They set the boundary for personal and social interactions and activities of the individual. The three predisposition factors include: preparedness for change, ethnic proximity, and adaptive personality (Kim 2001: 82-83).

- 1.) In relation to preparedness, foreigners who have prior cross- cultural knowledge and/or experiences that may have also been facilitated by cross-cultural training tend to have more realistic expectations of the adaptation process; therefore, they have better chances for a smooth transition and adaptation (Searle and Ward, 1990; Kim, 2001). The preparedness of the sojourner/immigrant is also influenced by the circumstances under which the transition itself takes place. (Kim 2001: 82-83)

- 2.) Ethnic proximity refers to the degree of similarity or difference of the sojourner's/immigrant's ethnic (internal and external) characteristics in comparison to the ethnic characteristics of the host nationals. Schmitz (1995) reported that immigrants who came from cultures that differed greatly from the host culture showed more signs of acculturation stress than those who came from similar cultures. Relevant variables that may account for the differences include: value system, religion, family structure, language, and life style habits. (Schmitz, 1995; Searle and Ward 1990:440-464) Salient characteristics, especially physical attributes which add to the "foreignness" or "standing out" quality of the stranger, however, easily forms a 'psychological barrier' between the stranger and the local people, making it difficult for the stranger to ease into the host social milieu. (Kim 2001:83- 84)
  
- 3.) Adaptive personality includes three specific attributes: openness, which is the willingness of individuals to make changes in themselves by expanding their knowledge on cross-cultural transition and the new host environment; strength, which refers to the strength that individuals have in order to face and deal with new transitional, intercultural and adaptation-related challenges in the host society; and, positivity, which promotes optimism, encourage the acceptance of different kinds of people and builds the self-esteem of sojourners/immigrants. (Kim 2001: 85-86) Strangers with these attributes are better equipped than others to develop host communication competence, make essential adjustments in themselves, as well as facilitate their intercultural transformation and their adaptation process with persistence and flexibility (Zenner, 1991; Kim 2001:85).

According to Kim (2001, 2002) individuals also experience adaptive changes towards an ongoing process of (sixth dimension) *intercultural transformation*. These changes entail becoming more functional in the host culture, becoming psychologically healthier, and developing an intercultural identity- forming the outcome of successful cross-cultural adaptation. The development of intercultural identity involves individualization and universalization. Individualization refers to the development of an emerging self, leading to a clear sense of selfhood viewed by the individual and others around him or her in addition to well-being in terms of greater self-acceptance and self-esteem. Universalization, on the other hand, involves the understanding of others who are different and respect for universal principles and values. (Kim 2001: 183-199) Furthermore, Otmane et al. (2005: 257-272) claim that the longer foreigners stay in the host community, the more they are able to interact

with the locals. Thus, they are provided with the opportunity to learn about the host culture, make local friends and learn basic survival skills, becoming more comfortable in the new environment and accepting some aspects of the host culture.

### **4.3 Concept and model of Acculturation**

During the 1960s the interest in the topic of acculturation expanded to the cross-cultural psychology field, and within this broad field, acculturation has become one of the most researched areas (Berry, 1990). In general, the concept of *Acculturation* has been used when discussing long-term adaptation, referring to both individuals as well as groups. On the group level, it is defined as culture change, resulting from the process of contact between two different cultures. On the individual level, *acculturation* is often defined as “the change or process of individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who take over traits from another culture” (Marden and Meyer 1962: 35).

As the process of acculturation takes place over time, several changes such as: cultural, sociological and psychological in addition to economical, physical, biological, and political, occur. In this case, groups and individuals acculturate in different ways that may also include consequences. The result of the process may either be ‘relatively’ stable or continue to change ‘in an ongoing process’ (Berry 1990a: 201-234). Factors that influence the process of acculturative adaptation include: personality characteristics (i.e. attitudes, coping strategies, cognitive styles, sociability, anxiety, and sensation-seeking). (cf. Schmitz 1992c: 117-132; Furnham and Boschner, 1986). Other primary factors at the individual level include: specific characteristics of the immigrant (age, sex, status, and personality traits), acculturation experiences in the past and the phase of acculturation. Significant variables at the societal level include: nature of the host society, nature of the acculturating group, status, social support networks and type of migration. (Berry et al. 1987: 491) Moreover, the nature of staying abroad, whether voluntary or involuntary, also has a great effect on the level of adaptation (Berry, 1997; Gudykunst and Kim, 1992).

Several researchers have proposed that in order for successful acculturation (on the individual level) to occur, positive psychological (internal, personal, psychological outcomes) and sociocultural (relationships between the individual and the new

sociocultural context, acquisition of the appropriate social skills, and behaviors to deal with daily activities) adaptation are required. (Berry, 1997; Ward 1996:127) For the purpose of this study, the acculturation model proposed within cross-cultural psychology by Berry and his colleagues (i.e., Berry et al., 1989) will be examined. According to Berry, immigrants settled in the host society must confront two basic issues: (1) “Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's identity and characteristics?” And: (2) “Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with the larger society?” (i.e., Berry et al., 1989). In his model these two dimensions of cultural change are crossed, resulting in four acculturation attitudes (i.e., Berry et al., 1989), also referred to as acculturation strategies (i.e., Berry, 1997a), which immigrants can adopt: Integration, Assimilation, Separation and Marginalisation.

- 1.) Integration: The integration strategy reflects a desire to maintain key features of the immigrant cultural identity while having relationships with members of the host society.
- 2.) Assimilation: The assimilation strategy is characterized by the desire of the immigrants to adopt the culture of the host society while rejecting their own cultural identity.
- 3.) Separation: Immigrants who adopt the separation strategy try to maintain all features of their own cultural identity while rejecting relationships with members of the majority host culture.
- 4.) Marginalization: Finally, marginalization characterizes immigrants who reject both their own culture (often because of enforced cultural loss) and lose contacts with the host majority (often because of exclusion or discrimination).

Integration, as Berry (1997:17) notes, is the most preferred and most successful way. Berry's (1997) acculturation framework, which is largely based on his two-dimensional acculturation strategy and acculturative stress models, (i.e., Berry et al., 1989), has been recognized as one of the most comprehensive frameworks. His framework combines cultural-level, psychological-level phenomena, as well as structural and process features of acculturation. Berry's model explicitly distinguishes between the cultural and the social dimensions, and acknowledges their relative independence of each other (Lie kind, in press).

Although ‘acculturation’ has been defined and explained in so many ways, poor conceptualization in acculturative research has become evident. Terms including *adjustment*, *adaptation* and *assimilation* have been used interchangeably with the

term *acculturation* (Searle and Ward, 1990) and have been considered interdependent in relation to the process of change when two different cultures come into contact (Sayegh and Lasry 1993: 98-109). Researchers have also not agreed on the way that individuals develop along these two dimensions of acculturation – the degree of maintaining the original culture and the involvement in the new culture (Berry and Sam 1997: 291-326). Other problems with the use of *acculturation* include ambiguity in the affect of culture on human behavior as well as ambiguity in the decisive factors for successful acculturation. (Phinney and Flores 2002: 320 - 331). As the ETCKs' cross-cultural adaptation, their acculturation strategies and identity changes are examined in this study, the concept of *acculturation*, in terms of long-term adaptation will be referred to as well.

#### **4.4 Acculturation Stress/ Culture Shock**

Culture is often taken-for-granted as people assume that the habits, codes, customs, values and understanding of their particular culture are the “norm”. Not until they move to another country do they become aware of the contrast between their culture and the culture of the foreign country, which causes stress known as “culture shock”. A widely used term now, “culture shock” was first introduced by Oberg (1960) in relation to the negative emotional states (i.e., confusion and stress) experienced by foreigners due to the loss of familiar cues.

The emotional and psychological-related adjustment process has been described and illustrated through different models, the most popular ones including the “U”- curve, which is presented by Lysgaard (1955), and the “W” –curve model, which is an extension of the “U” curve introduced by Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963). The “U”-curve theory begins at a high point during which foreigners feel positive and excited then declines to the bottom of the curve as they experience depression and frustration. At the final phase, they begin to recover and feel positive again; thus, adapting to the new culture. The “W” –curve model refers to a second U-curve adjustment during which the expatriates experience another culture shock, known as “re-entry shock” or “reverse culture shock”, when they re-enter their home culture. Many researchers do not agree with the “U”-curve. In fact, researchers, such as Ward (1996, et al., 2001), Furnham and Bochner (1986:132), have found the support for

the theory to be weak and overgeneralized. Recent literature has also revealed that the U-curve theory is inadequate to explain the different intercultural experiences of immigrants/sojourners. Ward et al., (2001) note that although the theory addresses psychological adjustment, it does not include levels of sociocultural adjustment and identity changes which result from contact with culture. Ward et al. (2001:80-81) also explain that, “in contrast to ‘entry euphoria’, sojourners/ immigrants suffer the most severe adjustment problems at the initial stages of transition when the number of life changes is the highest and coping resources are likely to be at the lowest.”

Although, the concept of “culture shock” is widely used, it has been criticized by some researchers. For example, Berry (in press) and Adler (1987:24-25) claim that the term *shock* is too strong to describe the range of feelings experienced as one enters a new country. Therefore, Berry has suggested that the term acculturative stress be used instead. The concept is also criticized for its connotation of the new culture being the main cause of shock instead of the interaction between people from different cultures (Berry, in press). Other researchers including Brislin and Yoshida (1994) as well as Adler (1975), on the other hand, have pointed out that culture shock can also be seen from a positive point of view. For instance, it can be seen as a learning experience, which will lead to cultural awareness and self-development. (Adler 1975:14-19) Some research on the adaptation of expatriates has also suggested that the ones who experience severe acculturative stress in the beginning of their encounter with a new culture will have the most successful results in adapting to the new culture (Kealy, 1988). Moreover, Adler (1997) notes that the expatriates who are experiencing culture shock are becoming active participants within the host culture instead of ending up isolated in an ‘expatriate ghetto’.

As various mechanisms and factors are at play when it comes to adapting to a different cultural milieu, people, are bound to face identity transformation. Especially those, whose cultural identity differs to a great extent from the host’s identity, experience a significant change. Moreover, the level of exposure to acculturative influences has an affect on their identity as well. Identity, which is understood as a dynamic state, plays a major role in cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation, and in order to understand its complexity, it is essential to examine the concept of identity in greater detail.



## **5. CROSS-CULTURAL IDENTITY**

Various approaches to identity have been introduced to explain this multiple and complex concept. In this chapter, some of these approaches will be discussed, and concepts including self-identity, social identity, post-modern identity, cultural identity, and multicultural identity, which are relevant to this study, will be defined. As language is closely associated with one's identity, variables that affect a multilingual's identity will also be taken into account, after which the TCK's identity will be examined.

### **5.1 Concepts of Identity**

Identity is a complex, multidimensional and dynamic concept that is composed of several different identity domains. Some of these identity domains include: cultural, ethnic, racial, national, gender, personal, religious and familial identities which influence each other and intersect to form the identity of an individual. Furthermore, these individual identities are influenced by collective/ group identities as well. The individual may either already be ascribed with a membership 'badge' or may voluntarily self-identify with them (Ting-Toomey 1999: 25-36). As De Vos and Ross (1982) have mentioned, the function of identities is to define rules of behavior and conduct, creating a moral commitment and reinforcing a sense of common origin.

Identities differ in their scope, the extent of their broadness and their generalizability. (Collier and Thomas 1988: 113) For instance, while nationality is broad in scope and applicable to many people, personality, on the other hand, is narrow in scope and applicable to only specific persons. Identities, depending on the situation, also differ in salience and intensity. (Ting-Toomey 1986, 1993:72-111) The change in intensity is observable through communication with others, as people define their own identity in different strengths and as the context and the conversational partner both affect the sense of identity of a person (Collier 1996: 39-40). Our sense of identity; therefore, depends on the context and the people in that particular context. (Collier and Thomas 1988: 114) Seelye and Wasilewski (1996:104- 110) supporting this view, point out that the social environment is one major contributor to the values of an individual, and as long as the individual remains in contact with others in the society, their relationships with them affect the self of the individual. Nonetheless, as Pollock and

Van Reken (1999) have noted, maintaining cultural traditions and holding onto memories from the heritage culture has an affect on one's identity as well.

Identities can also be further formed, negotiated, modified and challenged via contact and communication with others (McCall, 1976; Scotton, 1983). De Vos and Ross (1982) have suggested that identities are negotiated through a process in which the self is contrasted with others, and one's group is contrasted with other groups. The process of negotiating identities, however, becomes more complex as individuals realize that the other person is culturally different. Opinions, meanings, norms and stereotypes about other cultural groups, which have been passed down and included in one's cultural identity are then negotiated and modified during intercultural contact (Ting-Toomey 1986:113-126).

Hall (1996:4) notes that identity is a fragment and a forever- changing concept. Whether individuals experiences migration or not, their multiple identities, which as Grossberg (1996:89) claims are unstable, still undergo change due to their dynamic nature and their part in the life cycle of progressing events. However, migration further complicates the situation as it involves the physical removal of the individual from the familiar cultural, geographical and relational environment, which together form the foundation of the individual. According to Adler (1981) cross-cultural transitions lead to changes in the identity of a person, and Kim (2001:190-191) also explains that identity change is necessary as well as inevitable for successful cross-cultural adaptation to a new environment. The key elements of forming an identity are similarity and difference. An individual has to recognize a difference between him- or herself and the others as well as identify with a specific group with which he or she recognizes as having similarities. (Brück 1988:79; Hall 1996:4)

Nevertheless, Friedman (1994:95) who has presented a modern approach (or post-modern approach) to identity, suggests that one can, in fact, also see him-or herself as an independent whole without having to relate to any specific society.

## **5.2 Self-Identity**

Many theories on the self and identity have been based on the symbolic interaction approach first introduced by Mead (1934), who has emphasized the dynamic relation

between the personal self and the social world. For example, Harré (1998) claims that the self, although closely connected to the social world and one's cultural identity, should be understood in terms of distinctiveness, autonomy, as well as continuity. In other words, the individuals are able to visualize, act as well as reflect on their activities independently of external and internal influences. Harre, refuting the Cartesian reification of the concepts of "mind" and "self", presents a model of a Person in which he has distinguished three facets of self (Self-1, Self-2, Self-3). Self 1 refers to the singularity aspect of self; Self 2, refers to the totality of personal attributes as well as beliefs of the person about him or herself. And Self 3 is the self that is presented in public. (Harré 1998: 74-75, 177) Together these different concepts interact and serve as tools with which humans construct, sustain and alter their identities in dynamic situations; thus, forming the concept of 'self'.

Giddens (1991), in turn, discusses self-identity as a reflexive project and a continuous process of narrative identity construction. Individuals are seen as active agents, who create and reflexively interpret their own identity into a biographical narrative. They integrate and organize their life experiences in the external world with the narrative of their own self development, creating a personal lifestyle. And as there are several lifestyle options to choose from, they can prepare for the future by constructing, revising and reconstructing their life plans in accordance with their self biography (Giddens 1991:52- 81 -86, 186).

### **5.3 Social Identity**

The social identity theory, first developed by Tajfel (1978, 1986) and his colleague Turner, refers to the social part of identity, which results from social group membership. As a person interacts with others, instead of acting as a single individual, she or he is representing an entire group of people; therefore, interacting on a personal level and as a member of a specific group. According to the theory, group membership leads to the formation of in-group or self-categorization (Turner, 1982) that favor the in-group over the out-group, in terms of ('us' vs. 'them'). Once individuals have achieved group membership, they seek to gain self-esteem as well as a positive sense of self by comparing attributes of his or her in-group to those of an out-group (Tajfel, 1978). Hence, as the theory suggests, membership of groups, as well as categories form an important part of the self concept of a person.

## 5.4 Cultural Identity

While social identity refers to comparisons made by people within their own societies, cultural identity, on the other hand, requires comparisons to be made with one's own group as well as with an outside group. (Collier and Thomas 1988:114) Therefore, cultural identity is often discussed in terms of similarity and difference.

Hall (1994: 392-403) relates the development of cultural identity to the approach of culture introduced by Giddens. Since culture is defined as a shared way of life; thus, cultural identity could be explained as a collective feeling of "oneness" that people with a shared heritage and history hold in common. In accordance with this view, Hamers and Blanc (1989: 119), further claim that as certain similar cultural features are used by the members of a specific group to categorize themselves, the cultural identity of the group becomes salient.

Every individual is socialized within a larger cultural membership group, and our cultural identities may be so impregnated that we do not even realize the importance of our cultural membership 'badges' until we encounter major cultural differences. (Ting Toomey 1999: 30-31) Salience of cultural identity, which refers to the strength of affiliation people have with their larger/dominant culture, is usually a "taken-for-granted phenomenon." And if our cultural identity salience strongly influences our self-image, we will most likely practice the norms, behaviors and interaction scripts of our ethnic culture. On the other hand, if our cultural identity salience does not strongly influence us, most likely we will practice norms and practices of our "own inventions." (Ting-Toomey 1999: 30-31) Harman (1999:61); however, explains that as people contrast themselves and others, which affects the extent of the strength of their identity, they must find a balance between themselves as individuals as well as the group that they are a member of.

Cultural identity, as Hall (1994:394) has explained, can also be seen as a concept of "*being and becoming*" in the sense that it has both a past and a future, constantly being transformed by a continuous play of history, culture, and power. Hamers and Blanc (1989:121) claim that due to the fact that people experiences different stages in their lives, the identity development of individuals, being dynamic in nature, can

change throughout their lives. In addition, the strength /intensity in which people define their identities changes according to the situation. Various factors that affect and contribute to the cultural identity construction include: people (Singer 1998:5), skin color, physical appearance, racial traits, language use, education, peer groups, institutional policies, mass media, and self- appraisal factors. In accordance with these claims, Laneheart (1999) more specifically notes that family, culture and friends, as well as social networks that people form are also extremely important in the construction and shaping of their identities. Furthermore, identities may overlap and tension between the identities may occur during identity negotiation.

### **5.5 Identity and Language**

According to Laneheart (1999: 212), language is closely linked to the cultural identity of a person. As cultural identity consists of linguistic and cultural features, in order to maintain cultural identity, a person must maintain his or her language. Seelye and Wasilewski (1996: 54-55), also emphasizing the close link between language and group identity, state that whereas language brings people together, it builds boundaries between them as well. Thus, in order for a person to be part of a specific culture and not be left outside of it, she or he must know the language as well as the ways of using the language. In this case, language learning can also be seen as a process of integration into society, during which children and adults adopt the social norms and shared meanings of their language groups that shape their identity (Schieffelin and Och 1986: 163-191) Furthermore, Wardhaugh (1987:5), points out that the connection between the expression of identity and language can be clearly seen when a state-mandated shift occurs in language because this change implies a necessity for change in identity.

Although much research has been carried out on language and its effect on one's identity, multilingualism is a relatively new field of study, and the links between language and culture, mental processes, and social status are still being examined. Multilingualism refers to a phenomenon that is associated with a community, where two or more languages are used or to an individual who uses two or more languages; thus, a multilingual person can be explained as an individual who is capable of using (actively or passively) and communicating in two or more languages. The terms

bilingual and trilingual; however, are used more frequently to describe specific situations in which two or three languages are used. (Garland, 2007)

As comparative testing and longitudinal studies are difficult to administer with three languages, not much research has been carried out on trilinguals. (Barron-Hauwaert 2000: 1). Only a few case studies of trilingualism (i.e., Widdicombe (1997) on code-switching and Byram (1990) on models of trilingual education (Foyer project) in Europe) can be found, however, they are limited in number and scope. In addition, due to the fact that the studies are ineludibly linked to the languages they describe, argument over generalizations made in the context of one country or language that cannot be replicated are inevitable. Nonetheless, the increase in mixed marriages and in other families that have moved to foreign countries for different reasons has recently drawn more attention to multilingual matters (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:1, 2; Nullis, 2001).

Although an individual may be highly proficient in two languages, his or her communicative competence in the languages may not be balanced – one language dominates over the other one. (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:1) Trilinguals, however, have it more difficult than bilinguals when it comes to learning and keeping up with all languages as three languages cannot be “balanced”. One or two languages may always be at risk of becoming “underused or passive”. (Garland 2007: 47-8) A trilingual child may even become limited in any one language and lose fluency and depth in his or her native language. This usually happens with those who come from non-English-speaking countries and attend international schools (English being the language of instruction). Peer group learning is also very strong from age three on, particularly at school, and usually after a child begins preschool, the language of the social world becomes dominant over the mother’s language. The child may begin to answer a parent in the language of the preschool or even refuse to respond altogether. (Tokuhama-Espinosa 2003:135) Nevertheless, the attitudes of parents also have a great impact on early child bilingualism/trilingualism (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:10).

According to Harding and Riley (1986), the mother is usually given the responsibility for the child’s bilingual ability. In addition, since statistically, the father in the average family, spends less time with the child, the language input is

unbalanced from the start. Especially, in trilingual families who may easily be at risk of losing one or more parental cultures to the country culture, it is essential for parents to assert their language and cultures in more or less equal doses. Parents, however, need the help and support of society, in order to be able to provide a second language to their children. (Cunningham-Andersson and Andersson 1999:85)

All multilinguals, have some kind of *language order*, and the most fluent one is considered the “first” language. While bilinguals may have equal usage of each language, for a trilingual the choice of first, second or third language depends on the person they are talking and/ or the circumstances. In this case, chunks of vocabulary can be missing in one or more languages due to lack of input as well as opportunity for use in meaningful situations. The trilingual also uses each language to suit the current situation, which may also have an affect on their language order. For example, the language of the school may become the first language since the child spends a large part of his or her day there. (Tokuhama-Espinosa 2003: 132) The language of communication between the parents should also not be underestimated since the language most used at home could affect the language order of the child as well. (Cunningham-Andersson and Andersson1999)

Many bilinguals/trilinguals also tend to switch language in a conversational episode or even in mid-sentence. This practice is described as *code-switching, mixing, borrowing, interference, or language overlap*. Code-switching is used for many different reasons. According to Gysels (1992), in some cases, it has to do with wanting to express loyalty to more than just one cultural group, while in other cases it is used when there is lack of proficiency. Disagreeing, Romaine (1995:162-165), notes that code-switching is often used when a person wants to emphasize or qualify a message, while Grosjean (1982:149-157) says that people can use code-switching to include or exclude others from a conversation. Gardner-Chloros (1991), on the other hand, claims that code-switching occurs when family members of different generations get together. Although some level of interference in the use of one or two languages may be seen, not much research can be found that points to a specific pattern of language selection. (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:1) Nevertheless, recent research has shown *code-switching* to be a normal and an important part of a bilingual/trilingual child’s development. (Tokuhama-Espinosa 2003:133, 147)

Barron-Hauwaert found that children who attended International schools mixed languages more often than those who attended local schools. The diversity of nationalities in multilingual schools most likely provides an environment in which it is more normal and accepted to mix languages for communication. It may also be hypothesized that children who have lived in a country where two or three official languages are spoken (i.e. Israel) will more likely mix languages due to being surrounded by more than one language (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:5, 6).

## **5.6 Multicultural Identity**

In addition to being affected by language, the identity of every person is also influenced by culture and society that structure his/her values, mold his/her views of the world and shape his/her responses to experiences. In the twentieth century; however, due to the ‘interweaving of cultures’, globalization, intercultural communication and culture exchange, the process of identity formation for some has become more complicated. The identifications, world views and orientations exceed the boundaries of their native cultures, and their commitments are more focused on a larger vision of the global community. (Adler 1998: 225)

Various concepts which include “international”, “transcultural”, “multicultural” or “intercultural” have been introduced to define a person whose ‘horizons’ transcend his or her own culture. Although the terminology may seem to differ to some extent, all the definitions, however, point to a person who is psychological and socially able to deal with multiplicity of realities and whose identity encompasses many different life patterns. Due to this unique social-psychological style of self-processing, this new type of person has been called multicultural. According to Adler (1998: 227-228, 234), a multicultural person embodies “a core process of self-verification that is grounded in both the universality of the human condition and the diversity of cultural forms.” Instead of being defined for example, by his or her profession, place of residence, languages he or she speaks, the number of personal contacts made and the number of countries visited, the multicultural person is recognized by his or her outlooks, broad worldviews, openness to experience and the interweavingness of life that is seen through his or her thoughts and action. (ibid.)



Adler mentions three characteristics that specifically distinguish their style of personality from the traditional cultural identity. Firstly, the multicultural person can be seen as psychoculturally adaptive. He or she has no clear boundaries between self and other personal and cultural contexts that have been encountered. Secondly, the identity of the multicultural person is mobile, fluid and susceptible to change, capable of freely negotiating new formations of reality; thus, the multicultural person is neither totally a part of nor apart from his or her culture. (Adler 1998: 228) Thirdly, she or he retains indefinite boundaries of the self. During the whole process, the multicultural person, however, is mindful of his or her primary cultural reality background. When it comes to adaptability and adjustment, just as any other person, the multicultural person must also negotiate the difficulties of cross-cultural contact, and to successfully function and negotiate between cultures, she or he must continuously modify his or her frame of reference, become aware of structures of groups as well as maintain a clear understanding of personal, ethnic and cultural identifications. Due to his or her flexible identity, the multicultural person is, nonetheless, able to relate to many different contexts without being fully 'encapsulated' or alienated from any given culture. (Adler 1998: 234-235; 242)

Although there are many positive sides to the dynamism and flexibility of the multicultural person, such unique psychocultural pliability does not come without its tensions/stresses. Adler has introduced five of these tensions/ stresses: Firstly, the multicultural person is vulnerable. She or he maintains indefinite boundaries and form, becoming susceptible to confusion between the profound and the insignificant, the visionary and the reactionary. Secondly, the multicultural person's identity may easily become "diffused". (Erikson, 1968) His or her loyalties and identifications are in a constant flux. (Adler 1998:237 238) Thirdly, the multicultural person can suffer from a loss of sense of authenticity. His or her personality may easily disintegrate into fragmented personalities. Fourthly, the multicultural person can easily move from one identity experience to another one without committing values to real- life situations. Fifthly, the multicultural person may adopt an attitude of 'existential absurdity' for psychological and philosophical refuge. She or he may mock the lifestyle of others who are different, hiding behind cynicism that protects his or her insecurities. (Adler 1998: 237- 340)

ETCKs are seen as multicultural in the sense that they are neither totally a part of nor apart from their cultures. Their identities are flexible, and their horizons exceed the boundaries of their native cultures. However, as ETCKs are a subgroup of TCKs, it is necessary to discuss the TCKs' identity in order to understand the ETCK's identity transformation during the adaptation process to Finland.

### **5.7 TCK Identity**

Pollock and Van Reken claim that "TCKs are raised in a neither/nor world. It is neither fully the world of their parents' culture (or cultures) nor fully the world of the other culture (or cultures) in which they were raised." (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:6). In fact, if a TCK were asked the question of where home is, she or he would probably not be able to answer that question with one word.

Finding *cultural balance*, which is that "almost unconscious knowledge of how things are and work in a particular community", (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:42), is extremely essential for TCKs. When there is an absence of cultural balance, and TCKs travel from one place to another, they are obliged to learn and relearn the basic rules of survival in each country; therefore, having a difficult time finding security and stability in their lives (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:42). Although the TCKs' experience with different cultures may be complicated and tips the cultural balance, many researchers point out the positive aspects of crossing cultures. According to Storti (1990:95), Brislin (1981:292) and Osland (1995:78-79, 129-130), as expatriates must deal with values, beliefs, norms and behaviors that they find strange and are important and essential to the host culture, the examination of their own value systems is encouraged. Self-discovery, becoming world-minded as well as tolerating differences are only a few of the changes that take place in situations where people confront different cultural values. Nevertheless, most TCKs, naturally, want to fit in somewhere. TCKs realize that they are different, and many try hiding those differences.

One of the highlights of Pollock's and Van Reken's (1999:53) theoretical framework is the four relational patterns TCKs may have with their surrounding culture. The first relational pattern is known as the "foreigner-look different, think different"

pattern, in which the TCK differs from the majority of people surrounding them in both appearance and thinking style. The second relational pattern is referred to as the “hidden immigrant-look alike, think different” pattern, in which the TCK may not be physically distinguishable from the surrounding population and yet may think differently. In the third relational pattern, the “adopted-look different, look alike” pattern, the TCK may not share the typical physical characteristics of the surrounding population, however, he or she has assimilated their worldview and behavior; and finally in the fourth “mirror-think alike, look alike” pattern, the TCK shares both physical similarities and ways of thinking with the surrounding population. Each TCK belongs in one category or another and can switch to different ones when moving from country to country. Many typical TCKs in the host country belong in the adopted category since they try their best to fit in although it is obvious that they are not native. Most of these same TCKs who eventually return to their parents’ homeland are also known to be “hidden immigrants”. Since everybody in the “home” culture expects the TCKs to act like themselves, the TCKs who look like the rest of the people in the community, try hard to fit in and act like everyone else (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:53-55). The next figure presents the relationship of TCKs to their surrounding dominant culture.

TABLE 3. TCKs’ Relationship to Surrounding Dominant Culture  
(Pollock and Van Reken, 1999, 53)

<b>FOREIGNER</b>	<b>HIDDEN IMMIGRANT</b>
Look <b>different</b> Think <b>different</b>	Look <i>alike</i> Think <b>different</b>
<b>ADOPTED</b>	<b>MIRROR</b>
Look <b>different</b> Think <i>alike</i>	Look <i>alike</i> Think <i>alike</i>

Although TCKs may not always seem to know which community they fit in, they, however, feel most comfortable with other TCKs. As Pollock and Van Reken (1999:31) have pointed out, a stranger with the same experience understands a TCK better than others. ETCKs feel confused about where they fit in as they are also raised in a neither/ nor world. The only people who seem to understand them are others of similar background. Nevertheless, while some ETCKs prefer to blend in, others prefer to stand out, and the relational patterns ETCKs have with their surrounding culture may differ to some extent from those of typical TCKs. The relation pattern categories that the ETCKs fit in will be further examined in the analysis section of this study. However before moving onto the analysis of the ETCKs, the research methods and the procedure in which the data was collected will first be discussed.

## **6. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURE OF STUDY**

This chapter presents the methodology and the research procedures utilized in this study. The data collection and analysis methods will be explained and critically discussed. All of the different problems that have arisen during the process of analyzing the material will also be taken into account.

A questionnaire (see appendix 2) was created to assess the participants' cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation to Finland as well as their language skills and their identity transformation in relation to those experiences. The questionnaire (see appendix 2) consists of 86 questions, which are categorized under six themes: 1.) Background, 2.) Languages, 3.) Adaptation and Transition, 4.) Fitting In, 5.) Identity, and 6.) Third Culture World. Each section includes 10 to 20 questions, all of which covered various factors that may have affected the participants' cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation and identity transformation. The last section, which emphasizes TCK issues, however, consists of only 5 separate questions. The questionnaire includes various types of questions such as: open-ended questions, yes and no questions, multiple-choice questions, scalar questions as well as essay or short-answer questions. Some of the questions were also repeated from different perspectives in order to cover the respondents' cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation experiences from as many angles as possible. Short and simple instructions as well as a few concepts were provided on the first page of the questionnaire. In addition, the issue of anonymity of the participants was mentioned as well; false names were used by the author in order to respect the privacy and to protect the identity of the participants.

Gathering participants was quite a challenge in the sense that it was difficult to find half-Finnish and half-Arabs ETCKs who fit the criteria for my study. Although, I had a few friends who were able to answer the questionnaire and who were able to contact others with similar backgrounds as well, there still remained a shortage of participants. Through an acquaintance of my mother, I was able to get in touch with an Arab pastor, who was kind enough to provide me with the contact information of some of the members of his congregation. I contacted nine different families by phone and explained the idea behind my thesis. I also sent them the questionnaire

and a short explanation of the criteria for the study via email (see appendix 2) so that, only after seeing the questions, they could decide whether or not they were willing and/or able to take part in my study. Most of the families in which one parent is Arab and the other Finnish, however, had very young children (ranging from 1-13 years) who were unable to answer the questionnaire.

In addition, several of my acquaintances also suggested that I post a message in a magazine called *SixDegrees*, which is a free English language magazine that offers information on interesting multicultural issues. The magazine is distributed in 22 cities around Finland. Thus, I sent an email to the editor of the magazine, asking if it would be possible to post a message about my research in their magazine or on their website so that I could perhaps be able to reach more candidates for my study. However, due to the length of the questionnaire, they claimed that it was not possible. The web master for the International Cultural Centre Caisa, on the other hand, whom I contacted via e-mail, gave me the permission to post my message in their InfoBank. InfoBank is a web service which provides useful information for immigrants living in Finland. I, nevertheless, did not receive any answers. At that point, I decided to contact some well-known Arabs who work for international organizations in Finland. Through them, I was able to contact four more half-Finnish and half-Arab ETCKs who were willing to answer my questionnaire. As mentioned above, all of the participants were first approached by phone and a couple by e-mail (see appendix 1). The questionnaire was then sent to all of the participants by post or by e-mail, depending on the preference of the respondents. The first questionnaires were sent by post in the summer of 2006, and the last one was sent by e-mail in the fall of 2007. The respondents were provided about a month to a month and a half time to answer the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was written in English; however, the participants were able to choose whether they wanted to answer in English or in Finnish. Half of the informants speak English as their mother tongue, while the other half speaks Finnish. Those who speak Finnish as their mother tongue, claim that English is their second language, except for one, who listed English as his third language in the questionnaire. All of the informants, answered in English except for two of the males, aged 23 and 25, whose quotations were translated to English by the author.

Their mother tongue is Finnish; yet, they understand English quite well and consider it as their second language. In acquiring a new language, people usually learn to understand the language first before developing the skills to actually speak it. Although, the two male respondents were unable to explain their experiences and opinions in English, from their answers it can be assumed that they had understood the questions. Nonetheless, people are naturally able to express themselves more clearly in their mother tongue in comparison to other languages, even if their skills are high in those languages.

The aim of this study is to gather in-depth information on the ETCKs' cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation to Finland as well as on their identity transformation in relation to those experiences. Therefore, to provide a more complete picture of the research, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches has been adopted. Although the purposes of qualitative and quantitative data differ, they can also be seen as complementary. In fact, combining both methods, may lead to a more fruitful outcome. (Green, Caracellie and Graham, 1989) The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods for examining the same phenomenon is referred to as trilingulation. (Denzin 1978: 291) In evaluation, triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative data is used in order to provide a more holistic interpretation of the data. (Kummerow, 2000) Steckler et al. (1992) have introduced four models of combining quantitative and qualitative methods in health education research. The first model consists of qualitative methods that support and help the development of quantitative instruments (i.e., focus group is used in the questionnaire construction). In the second approach, qualitative results are used to help explain the findings of a predominantly quantitative study, and in the third model, quantitative results contribute to the interpretation of primarily qualitative findings (i.e., during a session, focus group participants fill out survey questionnaires). The fourth model consists of equally used and parallel qualitative and quantitative methods to cross-validate; both contributing and building upon the results of each other.

In this study, a quantitative tool was used to gather qualitative data, and in most part, a qualitative approach was taken to analyze the data. A (quantitative) questionnaire with both (qualitative) open-ended questions and (quantitative) closed –ended

questions were used to gather (qualitative) in-depth information on the experiences of the participants and (quantitative) data that can be applied to the ETCK group as a whole. As only a questionnaire is used to analyze the same phenomenon instead of multiple methods, triangulation is not exactly practiced in this study. However, as both open-ended questions and close-ended questions were included in the questionnaire, the participants were provided with room to interpret and explain their views in relation to their experiences. Thus, their responses yielded rich insights on cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation and identity that can widen the understanding of the findings.

In order to understand how these approaches complement each other, their differences as well as their weaknesses and strengths must first be defined. Qualitative research is usually linked with the perspective of science as ‘lived experience’, whereas quantitative research is often associated with the idea of science as ‘an objective truth’. According to Mahoney and Goertz (2006: 230), in explaining the outcomes, qualitative analysis focuses on the “effects of causes”, while quantitative analysis deals more with the “causes of effects”. Quantitative measures are short and concise, the analysis being systematic and standardized. Qualitative measures, on the other hand, are longer and detailed. The responses, in this case, are neither standardized nor systematic.

Qualitative methods include three kinds of data collection: Open-ended, In-depth interviews, direct observations and written documents such as personal diaries, and open-ended written items on questionnaires. Direct quotations can be seen as the ‘raw data’ of qualitative analysis, leading to a forum of explanations and meanings in the sense that the respondents reveal their basic perceptions, thoughts, experiences and emotions. Thus, to some extent, it allows the researcher to understand the world as the respondent perceives it. The object of qualitative analysis is to capture and seek the understanding of peoples’ experiences (‘uncontrolled phenomenon’), through in-depth analysis of detailed narrative descriptions.

Conversely, quantitative methods involve the analysis of numerical data and statistical inference that determine the relationships between particular variables. The data is usually measured and analyzed by the use of a questionnaire or a survey. This



research method makes the summarization, organization and comparison of standard items more easy, precise, and reliable than the qualitative analysis methods. While open-ended questions are common in qualitative research, closed questions are usually associated with quantitative research; a combination of both kinds of questions, have been adopted for this particular study (Lanham, 2000; Adler and Adler 1994: 377-392).

Qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis methods both have many positive attributes; however, weaknesses can also be found. Although rich in-depth data is generated through qualitative methods, the data gathering and analysis can be quite tiring and time-consuming. Moreover, the findings cannot be applied to a larger population, and the results, which are not tested, may be recognized as invalid. Quantitative analysis methods produce reliable and quantifiable data, but when the phenomenon proves to be too difficult to measure, problems arise. Another weakness of quantitative methods has to do with human behavior being decontextualized in the sense that the situation is separated from the 'real world setting.' The effects of significant variables, which may not be included in the statistics, are also disregarded. Thus, while a few reliable and generalizable statistical inferences (quantitative) in this study are drawn from the close-ended answers, they are enriched by a more in depth description of the participant's own experiences in the open-ended answers (qualitative). In this case, open-ended questions, which allow for more flexibility, helps attain a more realistic view of the participant's experiences. The participants are able to explain their views and opinions as well as to provide and uncover new information.

Combining different research methods allows the researcher to ensure higher reliability of data and build on the strengths of the methods, therefore, minimizing some of their weaknesses. (Reichardt and Cook, 1979) For instance, as the quantitative method leads to pre-determined outcomes, therefore, it can be compensated by the qualitative method of exposing new information and even new research themes. On the other hand, while drifting from the main objectives of the research may be a weakness of the qualitative method, it can be compensated by a quantitative method of presenting a clear research problem and laid out themes.

In this study, an interview (qualitative) may have been more fruitful than a questionnaire (quantitative), as it allows people to tell their stories, researchers to ensure that the participants understand the questions the way they are intended to, and allows the researcher to probe for more details if necessary. Although by using a tape recorder, more information could have been pumped out of them, due to the sensitivity of the subject, some of the respondents would have most likely refused to take part in the study. Some of them already felt uncomfortable in discussing their identity in the first place. In answering a questionnaire, the respondents were able to have more time to reflect on their past experiences and answer at their own pace and in their own comfortable environment. An interview situation demands rather quick responses. In addition, since some of the respondents lived as far as Rovaniemi, the questionnaire, which is somewhat less intrusive in general, was seen as a more reasonable tool than a face-to-face interview for gathering the data instead.

The questionnaire of 86 questions was quite extensive and time-consuming; therefore, a few, especially males, may have left out some important details from their answers for some of the questions as they did not thoroughly answer all of them. In an interview, the respondents could have mentioned experiences that were important to them. They may have revealed other information of relevance and significance (i.e., unanticipated issues, new factors or themes) that I may not have taken into account when constructing my questionnaire. In this case, new questions could have been added on the uncovered issues and helped expand the research. The questionnaire consisted of a large number of questions since the same ones would have been included in an interview. In that sense, the amount of time taken to answer the questionnaire may not have been that much longer than if an interview had been conducted. Some of the questions on the questionnaire have been repeated in order to cover their experiences from as many different angles as possible as well as to attain more clear and accurate answers and opinions. Participants were provided with enough time to answer the questionnaire, and if they had problems meeting the deadline, they were able to ask for an extension of the time limit.

In order to cover certain specific points relevant to the thesis, the questionnaire somewhat restricted the answers by guiding and directing them to some extent. In answering specific questions, the informants did not have to ponder too much on

which particular experiences were of significance to note. Young respondents, who may not answer questions with clear answers unless asked specific, straight-forward ones, were taken into consideration as well. Although the method of free essay writing including themes and questions for guidance could have been utilized instead, most likely some information that is relevant for the analysis would have been left out from their answers. The respondents were able to choose the length of their answers. They were able to add or leave out different experiences which in their opinion may/ may not have contributed to the formation of their identity and affected their adaptation and acculturation to Finland. It was of great importance to have those specific questions answered in order for me to carry out my study.

Being an ETCK, myself, who has moved to Finland as well, I have some understanding of the other participants, the experiences and factors that may affect their identities and adaptation to Finland. Meanwhile, it was also important to remain objective. Remembering the fact that the experiences and the factors affecting adaptation and acculturation to Finland differ from person to person, various factors/ variables from cross- cultural research were included. The point was to look at the respondents' identity, adaptation and acculturation experiences from several different angles so as to attain a fuller picture of how the participants perceive their identity and how they experienced their transition and adaptation to Finland.

It is often assumed that qualitative interviews are more subjective than most quantitative ones in the sense that the researchers choose the specific quotes and examples to report. However, the same can be done with a questionnaire. Researchers can choose certain quotes in their study. Some may also argue that a respondent may not answer frankly to some of the questions in a questionnaire. Yet, it can be just as difficult to prove that some participants have answered truthfully in an interview. In comparison to an interview, with the questionnaire, the respondents had more time to truly reflect on their past experiences. However, as the participants may not be able to recall certain significant incidents in their lives or some specific aspects of their adaptation that may have been noteworthy, it is difficult to capture the actual truth of some events. Nonetheless, after having answered the questionnaire, most respondents thanked for the 'flashbacks'. As Patton (1987) claims, quotations "reveal the respondents' levels of emotion the way in which they

have organized the world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions perceptions”.

Since many factors are at play when it comes to cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation and identity transformation, which is considered a highly personal matter, it was difficult to uncover the phenomena. In addition, it must be taken into account that experiences vary from one person to another. Moreover, the informant group is limited in size, and somewhat homogenous in the sense that the majority of the participants come from the same country, Palestine. Therefore, this study cannot yield completely valid results that are applicable to other half-Arab ETCKs who come from other Middle Eastern countries. Nonetheless, it must be noted that as the number of half-Finnish and half- Arabs ETCKs who have moved to Finland from the Middle East and who are currently living in Finland is considerably small, it was quite difficult to find sufficient participants. Only three of the participants originally come from Egypt and two of them from Lebanon. The background of these ETCKs, however, will be further discussed in the next chapter.

## 7. DATA DESCRIPTION

This chapter introduces some general background information on the ETCKs. A table including some information on their nationality, their language skills, the schools they have attended, their age of transition to Finland and years spent in the country, can also be found.

The participants for this study included fourteen half-Arab and half-Finnish ETCKs, (eight females and six males), who have moved to Finland during different periods in their lives. The participants were between 14 and 31 years old when the data was collected. However, during the time of their transition, their ages ranged from 1 to 17 years. The first participant moved to Finland in 1983 and the last one moved in 2002. All of the interviewees have a Finnish mother and an Arab father, except for two of the females, who have it the other way around, a Finnish father and an Arab mother. While most of the participants are half-Finnish and half-Palestinian, three of the males are half-Israeli Arab (Arab citizens of Israel, but identify as Palestinians), two of the males and one female half-Egyptian, and another two of the females half-Lebanese. All of them are currently living in different cities around Finland; all the way from Rovaniemi to Helsinki. Nearly half of the participants are students, two studying in high school and four at a university or polytechnic; the other half are working. The following table introduces some more background information on the ETCKs.

TABLE 4. Background Information on ETCKs

Participants	Nationality	Languages spoken at home	Schools in former country & or in Finland	Age of transition to Finland & years spent there	Language used in Higher Ed. and/ or work life
1. Ned (M)	Egyptian/ Finn	Finnish & English	I International school/ English	11 years/ 5½ years	
2. Teri (F)	Lebanese/ Finn	Finnish & Arabic	Finnish school	1 year/ 24 years	Finnish at uni and poly

3. Eva (F)	Palestinian/ Finn	Finnish, Arabic & English; now only Finnish	Finnish school	10 years/ 15 years	Finnish/ English & Swedish at college/ Finnish at work
4. Cay (F)	Palestinian/ Finn	English & Arabic	International school/ English/ French	17 years/ 11 years	English & Finnish at business school, uni & at work
5. Mat (M)	Palestinian/ Finn	Finnish, Arabic & Finnish, later only Finnish	International school / Finnish school	14 years/ 21 years	Arabic & English at uni; Finnish at work
6. Tye (M)	Palestinian/ Finn	Finnish and before also Arabic	International school/ Finnish school	8 years/ 21 years	Finnish at work and at college
7. Sal (F)	Palestinian/ Finn	Arabic & English	International school/ Finnish school	17 years/ 9 years	English at uni
8. Will (M)	Israeli/ Palestinian/Finn	Arabic & Finnish	International School	16 years 18 years/ 18 years	Finnish & English at poly/ Finnish at work
9. Ela (F)	Israeli Arab/ Finn	Arabic & Finnish	International school/ German School Finnish/ school	11 years/ 19 years	Finnish at poly
10. Amy (F)	Egyptian/ Finn	Finnish & English	International school/ English	11 years/ 5½ years	
11. Joe (M)	Israeli Arab/ Finn	Finnish ,Arabic & English- learned to understand	Finnish school	1 year 24 years	Finnish at uni and work
12. Rya (F)	Palestinian/ Finn	Finnish & English	Finnish school	1 year/ 24 years	Finnish at Poly
13. Jen (F)	Israeli Arab/ Finn	Finnish & Arabic	Finnish School	2 years/ 19 years	

14. Dan (M)	Egyptian/ Finn	Finnish/ English and some Arabic in the beginning	International school/ English	17 years/ 5½ years	English at Inter- national poly, Finnish at work
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Naturally, due to several factors (i.e., age of transition, years spent in Finland, language spoken at home and used at school) the ETCKs varied to some extent in their adaptation and identity transformation experiences. However, the key objective of this study is not to separately assess each one of the ETCKs' adaptation and identity change experiences, but rather to identify and examine the realities of the cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation and identity change of this specific group of people. Moreover, the strategies and possibilities of the outcomes of their adaptation and identity transformations are examined as well.

Thus, in the following chapters, with the help of cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation and identity theories mentioned in the earlier chapters, the ETCKs' experiences in relation to their adaptation and acculturation to Finland and identity transformation are analyzed and discussed under three themes. These themes include: 1.) transition and adaptation, 2.) acculturation and 3.) cross-cultural identity. Their language skills, specifically in relation to their identity and their acculturation experiences will be examined as well.

## 8. TRANSITION AND ADAPTATION

In this chapter, the transition and adaptation experiences of the ETCKs will be analyzed and discussed. The level of one's adaptation is conditioned by several factors. Therefore, in order to determine the ETCKs' degree of adaptation, various significant factors, which have been drawn mainly from Kim's (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation, have been taken into account. Thus, the preparedness, expectations, former knowledge of the Finnish culture and support networks of the ETCKs during their transition to Finland will be examined. In addition, other aspects of their cross-cultural adaptation such as social networks, adaptive personality, the length of stay, nature of staying abroad, ethnic proximity and gender differences are included as well.

### 8.1 Transition to Finland

For nearly all of the ETCKs, it was either a family decision or their parent's choice to move to Finland. The reasons for the transition, however, varied from family to family. While a few moved in search of job/ educational opportunities, some moved due to the political situation in Palestine. Still, others migrated for personal family reasons such as divorce. Cay and Sal were the only ones who moved to Finland by their own choice, to begin their university studies; nonetheless, they also mentioned that the decision was made with the guidance of their parents.

Before moving to Finland, each of the ETCKs had at least some kind of connection to the country and to the Finnish culture. Most of them traveled to Finland during their summer vacations to visit their family and friends. While living in the Middle East, they kept in contact with their Finnish relatives. And, as Ned mentioned, all of the ETCKs also had visitors from Finland, who visited them from time to time.

We visited almost every summer, we visited friends and relatives in Finland. We also had visitors from Finland once in a while, and they brought all kinds of goodies from there. (Ned)

In addition, many of them have had a few half- Finnish as well as full- Finnish friends, mostly missionary kids, since they were babies and tagged along with their mothers to the Finnish *naistenpiiri* (Women's Bible study) or to church at the Finnish



missionary center. Cay, Mat, Tye, Will and Ela attended the same international school where many of the Finnish missionary families sent their children. Some of their missionary friends, however, traveled back and forth between the countries, leaving the Middle East for a few years before returning again. Most of the ETCKs still keep in contact with at least one of their Finnish childhood friends.

Moreover, several of the ETCKs took Finnish lessons at the missionary center and attended Finnish camps organized for locals, missionary kids and others, whose parent/s used to work there. Another way that many of the ETCKs, excluding Cay and Sal, kept a connection to Finnish culture was through maintaining Finnish traditions and customs at home. Mostly Finnish food was cooked and traditional Finnish holidays were celebrated. Cay and Sal only sometimes attended traditional Finnish parties.

We celebrated vappu in Palestine, decorated the house with serpentines, made sima; also cooked Finnish food during Christmas. (Dan)

Although the ETCKs were quite familiar with the Finnish culture and traditions before their transition to Finland, none of them, with the exception of Sal, Jen and Will, were prepared for the changes. Will claimed that being familiar with Finnish customs and moving back and forth between the countries helped him to be somewhat prepared. Nevertheless, some of the other ETCKs who had moved back and forth between Finland and the Middle East as well still felt that they were unprepared.

Most of the ETCKs claim that their transition to Finland happened quite suddenly, to the extent that even their parents did not have time to acknowledge the effects of the change. Ela explained that since her family was not originally planning to stay in Finland for longer than a year, and as the plans changed, she gradually began to adapt to the country without her parents realizing the effects of the change on the entire family.

Our moving to Finland almost 17 years ago was in a way sudden, and originally we had planned to go back to Jerusalem after 1 year, but the Persian Gulf changed our plans naturally. My parents probably didn't realize the enormous effect this change would be. (Ela)

None of the ETCKs expected anything particular from moving to Finland except for Amy, Cay and Dan. Amy expected the winter and the Finnish people to be less cold, Cay expected a “new life in an open and free society”, whereas, Dan, expected Finland to be a more conservative country. While the expectations of Cay were fulfilled, the expectations of Dan and Amy were not. To their surprise the Finnish winter is very cold, and Finnish people are liberal and somewhat cold as well.

As changes take time to adjust to, especially unexpected radical ones, four of the ETCKs did not expect to adapt quickly.

I didnt expect to adapt so quickly because our plans changed radically. No, I was not prepared for this big change at the age of 11. My whole social circle was in Jerusalem, so the adaptment would take much time. (Ela)

The rest of them, on the other hand, expected the opposite. Eva explained that as a social person she would not have a difficult time intermingling with Finns. Cay also claimed that since she is easily able to adapt to other countries, she would not face any major obstacles or problems this time either. Meanwhile, Tye, who moved to Finland at the age of 8, noted that as he was so young at the time of the transition, he could not even comprehend the enormity of such changes. Furthermore, Jen also pointed out that host receptivity has an effect on how a person adapts. However, one’s own attitude has a more significant impact on the pace of adaptation to a new situation/ country.

There are some difficulties at school because other kids’ prejudice but that can happen in every culture. I supposed I was prepared for it and my own attitude helped to improve the situation. (Jen)

According to the ETCKs, their parents were also, to some extent, unsure of what was to be expected, as they had been gone for so many years. In fact, the parents, themselves, may have experienced their own kind of culture shock known as re-entry culture shock (Fontaine 1983) According to Fontaine (1983) re-entry culture shock refers to the shock experienced by those who return to their home country after having lived several years in another host country.

## **8.2 Adaptation to Finland**

Only five of the ETCKs claimed that their parent/s were supportive during the transition and adaptation process, also helping them to realize that they might face culture shock. Nevertheless, the ETCKs explained that although their parents were

supportive, they were only able to help to some extent as they are not fully capable of understanding how the ETCKs feel.

.....as they are not TCK themselves, they could not anticipate many of the issues.  
(Cay)

A few of the ETCKs also received some help from their Finnish relatives with whom they have a close relationship. The rest of them, excluding Cay, are only somewhat close to their Finnish side of the family. Cay, on the other hand, hardly keeps in contact with them. Yet, she was the only one who mentioned that she received some support from her friends. When Cay first moved to Finland, her Finnish TCK friends helped her immensely. In addition, her family back in Palestine was supportive as well.

The most difficult aspect of moving to Finland for most of the ETCKs was the fact that they had to leave their friends, relatives and the familiarity of their surroundings. Dan found himself in another world.

The most difficult part was realizing that I am in a different world than I was in for 17 years. (Dan)

Making new friends in Finland also proved to be somewhat difficult for a few of them. According to three of the ETCKs, Finns are not open in the sense that they are (to some extent) reserved and unapproachable. In that case, as Cay pointed out, it was much easier to build friendships with foreigners.

....incredibly difficult with Finns. This was confirmed when I moved to the UK for one year and made more English friends that I had Finnish in 3 years. (Cay)

As the rest of the ETCKs consider themselves quite social, many of them, in general, found it quite easy to make friends in Finland. In addition, as Tye and Dan wrote, due to the fact that Finns find foreigners exotic and their backgrounds interesting, it was easy to find friends. Other reasons that made the transition difficult included: the Finnish language, the cold weather and the lack of diversity as Cay explained.

Surprisingly enough, it was the lack of diversity that was difficult to handle as opposed to a different culture or people. (Cay)

For Ela, the situation was further complicated when she realized that her family had decided to stay in Finland and not return back home as had originally been planned.

The hardest thing was to realize that we had to settle down there and not move back to Jerusalem like we had planned. (So I just expected to have a fun and nice “holiday” for 1 year with my relatives and go back home) (Ela)

Half of the ETCKs miss their former home country from time to time, especially after each visit and during holidays. They miss their friends and family, the Arabic food, the culture of Arab hospitality, the weather as well as the atmosphere in general. Dan and Ela expressed their feelings.

Everytime I leave my home country its sad, because a big part of my heart is still there. One never forgets his/her roots, at least I don't. (Ela)

I really miss the friends and the atmosphere every time I go there; it is an identity crisis, there where I am not I feel homesick for. (Dan)

Meanwhile, the other half hardly think about it. All of the ETCKs keep in contact with their relatives in their former home country. However, some visit and stay in touch more often than others. Cay, Dan, Amy and Ned visit their former home country nearly every summer, Jen visits every few years, Ela every 3-4 years and Will once every year or two. Joe, Tye and Teri visit less often; it has been eight years since Tye last visited his former home country. The first time that Eva visited her former home country, after moving to Finland was in 1990, and the second time was in 2006. She hopes to visit more often now. As Cay described, for some of them it is “Like therapy for the soul”.

Although Arab culture and Finnish culture differ to a great extent, none of the ETCKs thought that they would experience culture shock. Yet, the change in the beginning of the adaptation process did come more or less as a culture shock for a few of them.

..... a cultural shock definitely. Finnish and Arabic cultures are like night and day. I felt that coming to Finland at the age of 11 and entering school here was like coming to a “jungle”. (Ela)

While some of the ETCKs experienced culture shock when they moved to Finland, Cay revealed that she was more shocked by the lack of diversity rather than by the new culture. Moreover, none of them seemed to have been traumatized by their

transition to Finland, except for Dan, Cay and Tye who said that they encountered some trauma. Dan further elaborated:

I encountered a little bit of trauma in a way- trauma of leaving a home that was secure for a new world that was so different from the one you were brought up in.  
(Dan)

The only one who felt that she had to learn many new basic cultural rules when she first moved to Finland was Cay.

...there were many social behaviors that had to be learnt: spatial distance, quietness, mannerisms, etc. (Cay)

The rest of the ETCKs, especially those whose fathers were not around were quite familiar with many of them as their mothers have upheld some of the Finnish traditions and cultural values at home. These ETCKs were raised in very 'Finnish homes'. Thus, unlike typical TCKs and many immigrants, who are usually offered orientation classes, none of the ETCKs even considered such courses before their transition to Finland. In fact, the majority claimed that they did not have a need for those courses. Cay was the only one who said that she would have attended if she had been offered any. Interestingly enough, none of the ETCKs mentioned anything about orientation courses offered at the university, as it is usually compulsory for foreign students. Nevertheless, as Dan pointed out, in a way, each day is an orientation class in itself, and there is nothing more useful than having practical classes everyday.

When the ETCKs were asked whether or not it was more difficult for females than for males (coming from the Middle East) to adapt to the Finnish culture (western culture), the opinions were divided. Jen, Tye and Cay agreed that it was more difficult for females to adapt. Ned, on the other hand, disagreed. According to him, as young foreign men are more often targeted by racists than young women, the adaptation process was more difficult for the males. Dark-skinned males, especially, tend to become targets of preconceived racist attitudes held by some Finns. Still, others thought that it was equally difficult for both females and males, but in different ways. Most of the ETCKs claimed that it really depended on various factors, i.e., language skills, cultural background, expectations, values, as well as

skin color. In addition, while Joe suggested value differences, Dan claimed that, in fact, there is no culture and values left in Finland. In his opinion, the lack of culture and values in Finland is what made the adaptation difficult for both females and males.

Luulen, ettei sukupuolella ole suurta roolia sopeutumisessa, mutta ehkä naiset sopeutuvat paremmin, koska arabikulttuuri on aika mieskeskeinen, kun taas suomalainen kulttuuri yksilö- ja tasa-arvokeskeinen.

[I do not think that gender has a large role in the adaptation process, but maybe females adapt more easily, because Arab culture is quite male-dominated whereas in a Finnish culture, equality and individualism is valued.] [All translations made by present author] (Joe)

Arab culture has its restrictions on life, principles that are followed, in Finland there is not culture left, once you move to Finland you are not obligated to clash into a culture. All what is left is your own self-conscious. That is why I think a male/female coming from Finland and moving into the Arab culture is twice as hard. Arab culture demands and Finnish doesn't. Westerners do not understand values other than their own life. Arab culture grabs you into a world where your respect is gained by the way you represent yourself. (Dan)

From the ETCKs, however, only two females and two males who moved to Finland after the age of 11 found it somewhat difficult to adapt in the beginning. Cay shared her experiences.

Family and social values differ and became a source of loneliness and misunderstanding. With time, I have learnt to mimic the behaviors and adapt. (Cay)

The rest of the ETCKs found it only slightly difficult to adapt. Sal explained that her international background and good expectation management have helped her to adapt easily.

### **8.3 Discussion**

Schmitz (1995) has reported that the more different the host culture is in comparison to the immigrant's native culture, the more acculturative stress will be experienced. In addition, Kim (2001: 83-84) also claims that a stranger with cultural values and norms that are highly compatible with those of the natives, will help him or her find the culture less stressful and to adapt more easily. According to Lewis (2005), Hall (1969) and Hofstede (1997), the values and attributes of Finnish people are almost diametrically opposed to those of Middle Eastern Arabs. Nevertheless, as most of the

ETCKs, especially those raised in very 'Finnish homes', have been somewhat familiarized with the Finnish culture, they did not have a very difficult time in adapting to the different customs. Cay, whose father is Finnish, was the only one who felt that she had to learn many new cultural rules and traditions when she first moved to Finland. As Harding and Riley (1989) have pointed out, statistically, the father in the average family spend less time with the child than the mother does. In this case, since Cay did not spend much time with her father, she did not learn many Finnish traditions at home in comparison to the other ETCKs who learned them from their mothers.

Prior cross-cultural knowledge and cross-cultural training are closely associated with realistic expectations, which in turn have an effect on the level of one's acculturation stress. (Black and Gregersen 1990) People whose expectations are not met often tend to feel frustrated and stressed out. Although none of the ETCKs had any cross-cultural training, their prior knowledge of Finland as well as prior experiences in traveling to Finland/other countries, have somewhat helped the majority to have realistic expectations. Therefore, it may be assumed that these ETCKs experienced lower levels of acculturation stress than those whose expectations were unfulfilled.

While a few of the ETCKs did not expect to adapt quickly as changes always take time, others claimed that due to their experiences of living in other countries (Cay), sociability (Eva) and positive attitude they were expecting the adaptation process to go quite smoothly. According to Kim, positivity and openness, two of the three specific attributes of adaptive personality, help people to be better equipped to develop host communication competence, make essential adjustments in themselves, as well as facilitate their intercultural transformation with persistence and flexibility. (Zenner, 1991; Kim 2001:85-86)

None of the ETCKs expected to face culture shock. However, the transition to Finland came more or less as a shock for most of them. Although their familiarity with the Finnish culture may have helped ease their adaptation process, integrating into a new society and especially to a very different one has its challenges. In fact, Brislin (1981) explains that culture shock is a natural and an inevitable process during cross-cultural transitions. And as Ela described, Finnish culture and Arab

culture are like night and day; while it is one thing to visit a country, it is quite another to live there. People are bound to face some changes when they move to a new country and encounter unfamiliar (in the ETCKs' case somewhat unfamiliar) values, beliefs, behavioral norms and customs. They must adapt to the new environment, which involves adjusting to the different weather, food, language, natives and a different life style. They must also be able to take part in various social activities, coping with daily life in general. Moreover, students must adapt to the new school/ polytechnic/ university environment which includes adjusting to the academic standards and social demands of the new school.

Whereas most of the ETCKs found it somewhat challenging to adapt to the Finnish culture, some of them, who used to live in Palestine, found it even more difficult to adjust to the lack of diversity in Finland. Israel is a multicultural country, which is made up of various ethnic and religious groups, and although some of the ETCKs resided on the Palestinian side (i.e., Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem) as they have lived along side Jews and other ethnic groups, they are accustomed to the diversity. Some of them have also attended international schools and churches as well as carried out other social activities on the Israeli side. Most of them consider the city center/ downtown to be on the Israeli side of Jerusalem.

In addition to considering diversity as a norm, some of the ETCKs who moved to Finland at later ages are also accustomed to religion being an important part of everyday life. In the Arab societies, religion is closely linked to strong ethical values. (Barakat 1993: 6-42) Islam, which is the dominant religion, is a major influence on the societies as a whole, (Zaharna, 1999); nevertheless, nearly all of the ETCKs come from Christian homes or have a Christian mother. Therefore, it was easier for them to adapt Finland, which is considered a Christian country than it would have been for Muslims. Yet at the same time, although the vast majority of Finns are Evangelical-Lutheran, society in Finland has secularized to some extent. And the role of the church and religion is mainly reflected in annual traditions rather than in everyday lives. (Kääriäinen, 2002)

Furthermore, while Arab culture is a collectivistic culture which focuses on tradition, religion, consensus and close family ties, Finnish culture, on the other hand, is an



individualistic culture which values freedom, individual rights, privacy and looser relationships. Since Finnish society has become quite secularized, values have become materialistic, and an individualistic lifestyle has become the norm. As Dan noted, there seems to be no culture left in Finland. In the Finnish society, everyone is more or less independent, mainly concentrating on their own personal development. In general, individual interests and concerns prevail over the interests and concerns of groups. (Hofstede 1997: 50-53) They also seem to have looser family ties in the sense that after turning 18, they are independent and move out of their parents' home. They are not obligated to stay at home and help take care of the family until they get married and start their own families.

In an Arab society, there are restrictions and principles that need to be followed. Group interests and concerns prevail those of the individual. Self-definition is based on social existence and fixed relationships. The first, most social structure is the family. Thus, family loyalty (including obligation to family) is important. The way one represents him-or-herself (image and decisions made) affects the entire family. Honor or shame is collective. (Hecht, Andersen and Ribeau 1989:170) Most young people, especially females, still live with their families until they get married (Zaharna 1995:241-255) In this case, according to Dan, it would, in fact, be even more difficult for a person to move from an individualistic country (i.e., Finland) to a collectivistic one (i.e., Lebanon, Egypt and Palestine/Israel) rather than the other way around.

Most of the ETCKs claimed that the adaptation process to Finland, in general, was just as difficult for both females and males alike. Though, the factors that helped facilitate or impede the adaptation of both sexes differed to some extent. For instance, the gender orientation of both countries had more of an effect on the adaptation of females in comparison to the adaptation of males. As Joe pointed out, Arab culture is quite male-dominated, making it easier for females to adapt to a culture in which equality and individualism is valued. In Finland, females who are seen as strong-willed are more or less treated equally to men in all aspects of the society. (Hofstede 1991: 261; Lewis 2005: 144) Therefore, their position in Finland is quite superior to that of women in Arab countries. (Lewis 2005:144 -145) In addition, Ned noted that racism tends to be more often targeted toward males,

especially those with darker features, than females, affecting their motivation to adapt on some level. Enar, a network of European NGOs working to combat racism in all EU Member States reported that males make up 70 % of the victims of racism, the largest group including young men, ranging from 15-24 years.

Another factor that has an effect on one's adaptation is preparedness. (Berry 1997; Gudykunst and Kim 1992; Kim 2001: 82-83) Kim (2001) explains that the preparedness of the foreigner is influenced by the circumstances under which the transition itself takes place. For some of the ETCKs the transition to Finland happened quite suddenly as it was not originally planned, thus, making the adaptation process somewhat more difficult in the beginning. As only a few of the ETCKs mentioned that their international backgrounds, visitations to Finland and their familiarity with the Finnish culture helped them be prepared to some extent, it can be assumed that their background and former connection to Finland did not have enough of an impact on their preparedness.

In addition to preparedness, according to Berry (1997), Gudykunst and Kim (1992), the nature of staying abroad, whether or not it is voluntary, also has a great affect on the level of motivation and overall adaptation of a person to a new country. The ETCKs, whose parents made the decision to move to Finland, were somewhat less motivated in the beginning than Cay and Sal, who made the decision of moving to Finland by themselves (though with the guidance of their parents). Especially those who made the transition during their teenage years had a difficult time with the decision as they were at the point in life, in which, already concerns about the self and identity transformation are most salient. Eventually, however, as the ETCKs built their social networks, adapted to the language and the culture as well as in general adjusted to life in Finland, they seemed to be just as satisfied as Cay and Sal.

One of the most important factors in the societal level that helps facilitate the adaptation process is having social support networks. Although their parent/s helped them, as Ned, Amy and Cay claimed, since they are not fully capable of understanding how ETCKs feel, they were only able to help them to some extent. Pollock and Van Reken (1999) state that a stranger with the same experience understands a TCK better than others. Nevertheless, having friends and especially

family, who are at least supportive during the transition and adaptation process are associated with healthy adaptation.

Since most of the ETCKs are more or less social, it was quite easy for them to make friends. Yet, as Cay, Amy and Will have come to realize, it is more difficult with Finnish people than with other foreigners due to the fact that they are not very open. As Lewis (2005) also notes, while Arabs are quite social people and easy to approach, Finns, are often introverts in nature and tend to be more quiet. On the other hand, some Finns find foreigners intriguing, making it somewhat easier to build friendships with them. In this case, though, according to Cay, friendships may not last very long as foreigners remain interesting for only a short period of time. ETCKs who were surrounded by international people, naturally, tend to have more international friends, whereas, the ETCKs surrounded by Finns have more local friends. Meanwhile the ones, who came into contact with both, have built friendships with both Finns as well as with international people.

As people adapt to a new country and way of life, they gradually begin to feel at home. However, just as people differ in their level of adaptation, they also vary in the length of time that they begin to feel at home. In order to assess one's acculturation level, various factors must be taken into consideration.

## 9. ACCULTURATION

In this chapter, the focus will turn to the ETCKs' acculturation to Finland. In assessing the ETCKs' acculturation, a number of primary factors at the individual level such as personality characteristics, sex and age as well as significant factors at the societal level such as nature of the host society (host receptivity), nature of the ETCKs, their status, and social networks will be considered. In addition, Berry's (et. al 1989, 1997) acculturation strategy model and Pollock's (1999) relational patterns with the surrounding environment will be utilized to measure their level of acculturation. The extent to which the ETCKs maintain their cultural values learned from the Middle East and the extent to which they seek out and participate in the Finnish society will be examined. The effect of their former knowledge of the Finnish culture and their multicultural backgrounds on their acculturation process will also be analyzed and discussed.

### 9.1 Fitting In

During their first year in Finland, nearly half of the ETCKs mostly had Finnish friends, while, Dan, Amy and Cay had more international ones. Eva and Ned had both international and local friends. Some ETCKs, especially those who lived in a multicultural environment and attended international schools in both countries, feel more at home with international people. On the other hand, those who have moved to Finland at a young age and attended Finnish schools feel more at home with Finns. The rest of the ETCKs feel at home with both.

Nearly half of the ETCKs agreed that attending school/university/work with other international students has helped them to feel more at home and to adapt to Finland more easily.

...I work for an international Finnish company- it was for this very reason that I applied there. It makes an enormous difference to have colleagues who are international. I have and always will feel more comfortable with international people. (Cay)

However, when they were asked whether or not a school/university/polytechnic environment, in general, helps people to integrate into a new society more quickly than a work environment, the majority claimed that both have their benefits.

I am not sure- the university allows for more freedoms and social expression than a work place, but that can also bring out the cultural differences more. At work, all employees are treated and expected to act the same so that can help in the acceptance process quicker. (Cay)

The only ETCK who thought that the school environment may be more beneficial in the integration process was Jen.

Education is highly regarded in Finland and the system mirrors Finnish society. (Jen)

Ela explained that if people had international co-workers with whom they could identify, they would have an easier time fitting in the new society. Maintaining elements and habits from the Arab culture has helped the ETCKs feel more at home as well. Each of the ETCKs, except for Joe, keeps some Arab traditions alive so that they will not lose touch with the Middle East. They all eat Arabic food at home, and some listen to Arab music. Will, Jen and Ela also keep up some feast traditions, especially during Christmas and Easter. As Will noted it is important not to forget one's own roots.

Whereas half of the ETCKs felt more Finnish after a year in Finland, others with the exception of Dan and Mat, claimed that the process took longer. Many of them felt more Finnish only after having lived there for several years (3 years -). According to Ned, the level of familiarity with the culture makes a difference and as Cay noted, knowledge of the language, familiarity of the city one lives in and establishing oneself occupationally also have an effect on whether or not a person feels at home in some country.

I feel more Finnish ' because I understand the Finnish culture better. I will never feel like a full Finn though. (Ned)

I speak the language and know the city I live in. I have also established my work in Finland. If any of these were missing, the answer could easily be no. (Cay)

Although most of the ETCKs claim to feel more Finnish now, Ela and Dan, who have lived in Finland for several years, still seem to identify more with their Arab side.

I consider myself more Arab than Finnish. My temperament and liveliness is from my Arab side. I don't feel more Finnish after 17 years living here. (Ela)

Now I feel less Finnish, just because there is a want to be an Arab. (Dan)

Most of the time, the majority of the ETCKs are treated as Finns. Some of them believe that their outward appearance affects the way that they are treated. Others explain that it depends more on their behavior as well as on the person they are speaking to, whether or not they are familiar with the ETCK's background. Finns may sometimes even forget that the ETCKs are not full Finnish, expecting them to understand everything and to act the same way as natives do. Amy explained that due to her Finnish features, people tend to easily forget that she is only half Finnish. Ned also pointed out that specifically Finnish family friends often tend to forget that he may not understand everything. Other ETCKs, however, are not sure of the reasons as to why people forget that they are not full Finns.

This happens much too often. They almost always do but I am not sure if this is because I have adapted so well that they forget that I am only half Finnish or because they don't expect different. (Cay)

At the same time, some Finns also treat the ETCKs as foreigners and are quite surprised to hear that they are half Finnish. For instance, Ned is seen as a full foreigner due to his skin color. He also does not speak the language as fluently as natives do. On the other hand, Ned pointed out that Finnish people are not necessarily surprised these days as there are many half Finns as well as other dark-skinned immigrants, who consider themselves Finnish, residing in Finland.

Most of the ETCKs do not mind the fact that Finns are surprised to hear that they are foreigners. On the contrary, Tye finds it amusing and Cay mostly feels pity for them as they do not know any better. The rest of the ETCKs only sometimes find it annoying as they still are partially Finnish. Will and Jen explained that it depends on the way Finns ask about their background and on their attitude towards foreigners in general- whether or not they belittle foreigners. Since most Finns are quite interested in the ETCKs' background, many of them tend to ask questions about the Middle East and Arab culture. Amused by their surprised expressions and questions, none of the ETCKs seem to be bothered by their curiosity either. Although, as Cay explained, it can get tiring after some time because no matter how much you explain, they cannot truly understand you anyway. Nevertheless, it is important for ETCKs to be able to share about their other side and to feel accepted.

Sometimes, because no matter how much you explain, you know that they don't really understand. But it does feel like they are more accepting of your difference when they show curiosity. (Cay)

I do not mind answering questions about my culture- there is nothing bad in that. It just shows that they are interested, which is good. Its important to let them ask. (Ela)

## 9.2 Relational Patterns of ETCKs with their surrounding culture

When the ETCKs were asked what the most obvious thing is that sets them apart from other Finns, the answers of the ETCKs varied. Half of them mentioned their appearance; a few said their behavior and social skills, and a couple pointed to their accent, which reveals the foreigner in them. Dan included his expressions and comments, while, Eva and Tye claimed that their names give them away. Jen and Ela also explained that their perspectives in life set them apart.

My roots are in Jerusalem, I have lived half of my life there. Therefore I have different perspectives in life, because I have seen what its like to live among three monotheistic religions and cultures. (Ela)

Whereas some ETCKs do not mind standing out, others, prefer blending in. According to Dan and Tye, it depends on the situation and the period in life. In Mat's case, on the other hand, it has to do with lack of communication. Blending in was especially important for many (i.e., Joe and Jen) during their teenage years. As they have grown older: however, they have begun to appreciate and feel more proud of their Arab side.

Lapsena, maksimissaan viisitoistavuotiaana, tunsin jonkin verran häpeää erilaisuuteni vuoksi. Lapsena yritin varmaan kätkeä sen, että olen puoliksi arabi....Olen nykyään ylpeä ollessani puoliksi suomalainen ja puoliksi Israelin arabi.(Joe)

[When I was a child (at the max 15 years old), I felt somewhat ashamed of being different. When I was a child, I probably tried to hide the fact that I was half - Arab...These days, I am proud of being half -Finnish and half- Israel Arab.] (Joe)

It doesn't bother. At the moment there are many nationalities at my school. When I was younger, I perhaps tried to blend in but today I don't mind at all being different. (Jen)

Conversely, Mat and Will try to blend in now more than they ever did before. Ela, Ned, Eva and Amy are the only ones who do not try to blend in at all. And Ned, whose skin color gives him away, is the only one who does not even have the option

of blending in. Half of the ETCKs see themselves living in Finland in the future. Meanwhile, the rest of them wrote that there is a high possibility that they will live there, but the doors are open. As Joe mentioned, he sees himself living in Finland; however, Israel is an alternative option. Amy also noted that perhaps after seeing the world first, she would settle down in Finland.

### **9.3 Discussion**

As the majority of the ETCKs were already familiar with at least some Finnish traditions and spoke the language quite well, it was not too difficult for them to connect and interact with the locals. However, as the ETCKs came into contact with international people, whom they could identify with and who, in general, were more open and more approachable than typical Finns, it was easier for them to build friendships with other foreigners residing in Finland. ETCKs who have lived in Finland for many years, having moved there at a young age and who have attended Finnish schools, naturally, feel more at home with other Finns than with foreigners. On the other hand, those who have moved to Finland more recently, have attended international schools and had international friends in the Middle East, feel most comfortable with other foreigners. As it is only human nature to seek familiarity, people tend to be easily drawn to others of similar backgrounds.

According to Kim (2001:125), new immigrants/sojourners tend to be easily drawn to coethnics for interaction and social activities in the beginning. (Coethnics in the ETCKs' case include: half-Finnish and half-Arab immigrants, as well as other ETCKs, TCKs, international and multicultural people, with whom they share a common background). And only after some time they begin interacting and building more ties with local people, replacing some of the former ethnic ties and incorporating these new ties into their personal networks. Seeking interaction with co-nationals, as Gudykunst and Kim (1992:125) note, nevertheless, is important in the sense that co-nationals can provide them with help and support. Some researchers such as Sykes and Eden (1987) found that fellow nationals are the most significant source of support, while others (Furnham and Bochner, 1986) have argued that relationships with host nationals tend to be more effective in relation to some forms of sojourner adjustment.



The more foreigners interact with the locals, the more they will learn about the culture and the language, helping them to integrate into the society and life in the host country. Yet, at the same time, interaction with other foreigners, whom they can relate to, can be very helpful as well. Foreigners who understand newcomers can provide useful advice and assistance, this kind of support being especially significant during the initial period of adjustment. Berry (in press, 1997:25) claims that a person can benefit from both the support of host nationals as well as that of co-nationals. While host nationals can guide and support a person in learning the skills to survive in the new environment, co-nationals help in reducing acculturation stress. In support of this view, some Finnish studies (i.e., Jaakkola, T. 2000; Liebkind 2000; Pitkänen 1999; Valtonen 1999) have also revealed that interpersonal communication relationships that immigrants to Finland have with ethnic groups as well as with Finns both promote their adaptation process.

In order to come into regular contact with locals as well as to learn and understand the way a new society works, it is important for foreigners to be part of a local social environment (i.e., a work place or a school). As Kim (2001) has explained, host social communication, including interpersonal and mass communication activities, in general, is closely associated with host communication competence, which in turn facilitates the adaptation process. However, as to whether the work environment or school environment makes it is easier to adapt to the new culture and to integrate into the new society is debatable. Both have their benefits as several of the ETCKs have pointed out. It all comes down to their acceptance and integration. For instance, at work, everyone is more or less treated and expected to act the same way; therefore, all employees are seen as equal. Although, in this case, the ETCKs would fit in with other Finns, according to Ela, it would be even more beneficial to have international co-workers with whom one could identify.

On the other hand, as education mirrors Finnish society, a school environment may help a person to integrate into the society more quickly. Nonetheless, whether the school is international or Finnish as well as the time of year during which a person begins his or her school year makes a difference. The ETCKs who transferred to international schools in Finland had an easier time adapting to the new environment than those who transferred to Finnish ones. Yet, in the long run, ETCKs who

attended Finnish schools integrated into the Finnish society more quickly than those who attended international ones. And those who began at a new school in the middle of the year took a longer time to adapt and acculturate in comparison to those who started in the beginning of a school year. In addition, the university provides more room for freedom and social expression. Although due to the fact that foreigners have various perspectives, cultural differences are bound to surface.

While it is crucial that ETCKs learn about the Finnish culture and integrate into the new society, it is just as important to maintain elements and habits from the Arab culture to help them feel more at home in Finland. Fontaine (1986) and Ying & Liese (1991) have emphasized the necessity of retaining old ties with people from one's former home/ other home country. They claim that although old ties do not provide sufficient support for overcoming the obstacles that may be faced during the adaptation process, they do provide at least some emotional support. All of the ETCKs, excluding Joe, maintain some Arab traditions at home, keep in some contact with their relatives in the Middle East and visit their former home country from time to time so as to not lose touch with the Arab culture. Those who have moved to Finland more recently visit their former home country quite often, whereas, ETCKs who have moved to Finland at a young age and have lived in the country longer only visit sometimes.

Meanwhile, it seems that the older people grow, the more they want to return to their roots. Many of the ETCKs who hardly cared to visit before are planning to visit more often. Eva has only recently started keeping in touch with her Arab side of the family. As Will claimed, it is important not to lose one's roots. A significant factor that is associated with the frequency of their visitations is the kind of relationship the ETCKs have with their relatives and friends in the Middle East. Having divorced parents may also have an effect on a few of the ETCKS' connection to their former home country.

Although it is easy for people to forget that Amy is not full Finnish, as she looks native, some Finns may also forget that the other ETCKs are not full Finns due to their native-like languages skills and/or their (culturally appropriate) behavior. Nevertheless, as the ETCKs are indeed only half-Finnish, their behavior, accent,

features, perspectives and/or social skills, differ, to some extent, from those of typical Finns, sometimes revealing the foreigner in them. As Jen, Dan and Cay emphasized, the way they are treated depends on their behavior and on the person they are speaking to. ETCKs who have darker features and who have lived in Finland for only a few years, seem to be more often excused for their 'mistakes' than those who have lighter features and have lived in Finland for several years.

Kim (1997:409) claims that host environment receptivity towards foreigners affects the foreigner's interaction with the hosts. Societies that have accepting attitudes towards foreigners, supporting communication between the hosts and foreigners, facilitate the adaptation. Societies that do not have very open attitudes towards foreigners impede the adaptation. Foreigners in such societies may face discrimination, prejudice, or even hostility, thus, complicating their adaptation as they may hesitate to take contact with the host nationals. (Berry 1997: 17, 25; Berry in press; Gudykunst and Kim 1992: 225-226) As mentioned before, more than half of the ETCKs claimed that they do not mind being treated as foreigners just as long as Finns do not belittle them. Most of the ETCKs have only encountered minor racism, which did not have a significant impact on their acculturation process.

Whereas some people do not mind standing out and embrace their differences, others try to hide, preferring to blend in. In the ETCKs' case, the majority do not mind being different; however, the ones who are able to blend in, occasionally do so as it is only natural for people to want to fit in somewhere. As some of the ETCKs have claimed, whether or not they want to blend in, depends on the situation and the stage of life that they are in. ETCKs, especially the ones who have attended Finnish schools, preferred blending in when they were in their teens, so as to not draw too much attention to themselves. As they have grown older, these same ETCKs have begun to embrace their differences. They do not have a need to conceal the Arab side of their identity anymore. Those who attended international school in Finland did not have blend in at all as they fit in with the rest of the students of various nationalities. On the other hand, Mat and Will, who have lived the longest in Finland, prefer blending in now more than they ever did before. According to them, it has nothing to do with not embracing their other half, but rather, with eventually wanting to fit in and finding their own place. Moreover, while some ETCKs are able to blend in,

others, whose features, behavior, accent and/or perspectives somewhat differ from those of typical Finns, i.e., Cay's accent and Ned's dark features, do not even have the option of blending in.

Pollock and Van Reken (1999:53) have introduced four relational patterns that TCKs may have with their surrounding culture: 1) the "foreigner-look different, think different" pattern, 2) the "hidden immigrant-look alike, think different" pattern, 3) the "adopted-look different, look alike, and 4) the "mirror-think alike, look alike" pattern (see Table 3). When moving from one stage in life to another or from one country to another, E/TCKs belonging to one or two categories can also switch to other categories. Although nearly half of the ETCKs have darker features than typical Finns, due to the fact that they have lived in Finland for over 10 years and are familiar with the cultural norms, they are able to blend in to some extent. As mentioned above, several of them do not mind being different, but blend in when possible; thus, switching back and forth between the "foreigner-look different, think different" category and the "adopted-look different, look alike" category. (Pollock and Van Reken 1999:53)

Others (Tye, Teri, Rya, Eva) who have also moved to Finland at very young ages and have lived nearly all their lives in Finland mainly belong to the "adopted-look different, look alike" category. Those who have lived a shorter period of time in Finland, are familiar with the cultural norms as well, however, their features and their way of thinking still differ to some extent from the majority of the people. These ETCKs (Ned, Dan, Cay, Sal) still only belong in the "foreigner-look different, think different" category. Nevertheless, in the future, they may switch to the "adopted-look different, look alike" category. The only ETCK who looks Finnish but thinks differently is Amy, who according to Pollock's and Van Reken's (1999) patterns belongs to the "hidden-immigrant- look alike, think different" category.

Kim (2001) claims that salient characteristics, especially outstanding physical attributes which add to the "foreignness" or "standing out" quality of the stranger, easily forms a "psychological barrier" between the stranger and the local people, making it difficult for the stranger to ease into the host social milieu. However, in the ETCKs' case, due to the fact that they are half-Finnish, familiar with the Finnish

culture and speak the language, they did not experience any major ‘psychological barrier’. Nonetheless, they are sometimes treated as foreigners and will never fit right in.

Otmane et al. (2005) claim that the longer a person stays in the host community, the more she or he is able to interact with the locals, providing him/her the opportunity to learn about the host culture, make local friends, learn basic survival skills, become more comfortable in the new environment and accept some aspects of the host culture. While four of the ETCKs felt more Finnish after having lived in Finland for at least three years, three of the ETCKs felt more Finnish after one year in Finland. Others, including Dan and Mat claimed that even after several years they still do not feel more Finnish; Ela and Dan, on the other hand, added that they actually feel more Arab now. In order to not lose touch with their “Arab side”, they consciously or unconsciously end up reinforcing the Arab half of their identity.

The length of stay is closely linked to attitude and motivation. Half of the ETCKs see themselves living in Finland in the future, and the rest of them see it is a high possibility. Thus, those choosing to stay in Finland are much more motivated to learn about the host culture, attain basic survival skills, build a social network and accept different aspects of the host culture (Otmane et al. 2005) than those planning to leave the country at some point.

Although various factors (i.e., knowledge of the Finnish culture prior to transition, social network (Finnish or international people), language skills and the extent of maintenance of Arab traditions and connection to the Middle East) contribute to the ETCKs’ acculturation, perhaps the most significant factor that has an effect on their acculturation level is their attitude. As a couple of the ETCKs themselves have mentioned, attitude plays a significant role in the adaptation and acculturation process; it really depends on the attitude of a person whether or not she or he makes the decision to try to fit in, accept the changes, and make Finland his or her new home.

One of the major changes during cross-cultural transitions involves identity transformation. The longer the person stays in the new country, the more his or her

behavioral, emotional, and cognitive outlooks will change. However, the extent of the identity change, which is interlinked with fitting in and feeling at home, varies with several factors. And all of these factors must be taken into account in order to understand the identity change experienced by ETCKs.

## 10. CROSS-CULTURAL IDENTITY

This chapter will concentrate on the ETCKs' identity transformation in relation to their adaptation and acculturation to Finland. Theories on cultural identity and multicultural identity as well as Pollock and Van Reken's views on identity will be utilized in the assessment of the ETCKs' identity experiences. These experiences are addressed in terms of their challenges in finding 'home', fitting somewhere, belonging to a subculture, and balancing their identities. Factors including language which has a significant role in forming one's identity will be discussed as well.

### 10.1 Home Country

When the ETCKs were asked to define the term 'home', the majority explained it as a place where the family resides, where you can be yourself as well as the place where you can feel most comfortable and safe at.

While some of the ETCKs see the country that they have grown up in as 'home', others consider both of their parents' native countries as 'home'. For instance, some ETCKs refer to Palestine/Israel as their home country. Ela and Cay consider Palestine/Israel as their birth country and childhood country. These ETCKs, however, also consider Finland as their home country or current home country. Amy, Ela and Ned explained.

Israel is my home country, but because I don't have a house, somehow Finland is, too. I have lived here for a while now (Amy).

Very difficult question. I feel I have two homes, one in Israel and one here in Finland. I refer to Israel, my birth country. At the moment Finland is my home country, even though I have a strong bond to my birth country. I fit in in both countries. (Ela)

Israel is my home country because I have lived there so long. Finland is also my 'home country' in a way because my family is here and I know the language, but at the same time it's not exactly because I am dark. (Ned)

ETCKs who have moved to their mother's homeland at a young age only refer to Finland as their home country. Naturally, those who have lived in Finland most of their lives, feel that they fit in better there than they do in Israel/Palestine/Lebanon/Egypt. Yet, others, who have also moved to Finland at a young age as well as those

who have moved there after graduating from high school and have settled in quite well fit in both countries. For Ned, on the other hand, the situation is more complicated. He considers Palestine to be his home country as he has lived in that country most of his life, but as he does not speak Arabic and followed Finnish traditions at home, he does not seem to fit in with the locals. At the same time, due to his skin color, he is seen as foreigner in Finland as well, thus, not perfectly fitting in his mother's native country either.

I stand out. Israel is the place where I fit in the most because I have lived there so long, and I was born there. I would fit in Finland if it wasn't for my color, but in Israel I fit in because I look the same as everybody, and I attended an international school. Everybody almost knows English there. (Ned)

## **10.2 Identity and Language**

Language is a central feature of one's identity, and is also often seen as the only way of better understanding of a culture (Storti, 1990). In order for a person to be part of a culture, she or he must maintain his or her language/s. (Seelye and Wasilewski 1996:54).

During their years in the Middle East, nearly all of the ETCKs spoke Finnish with their mothers. Only Cay, Sal and Mat mentioned that they hardly spoke or heard the language at home. Half of them have also taken Finnish lessons at *Suomi koulu*, "Finnish school". *Suomi koulu* is organized by Finnish mothers, married to locals in Israel/Palestine/ Lebanon, for their half- Finnish children so that they may learn and keep up their Finnish language skills. In addition, all of the ETCKs were also able to practice the language with their Finnish and their other half-Finnish friends. Thus, as one can see, most of them knew the language quite well before their transition to Finland.

All of them speak Finnish quite fluently now and feel comfortable in speaking the language with natives. Only Cay, who hardly knew any Finnish when she first moved to Finland, felt somewhat uncomfortable in the beginning. Now, after having had some lessons at the University of Helsinki and having been able to practice the language with Finns, she speaks Finnish fluently. As the ETCKs were asked to rate their Finnish language skills (now) from 1-10, most of them rated it as 7/8, while Jen



rated it as 10, Ela as 9 and Tye also as 9; all three of these ETCKs have lived in Finland for over 17 years.

When it comes to their Arabic language skills, most of the ETCKs who hardly have a chance to practice their Arabic in Finland, rate it as average or a bit below average. As a few of the ETCKs switched to Finnish schools after moving to Finland and did not have their fathers around anymore, they stopped speaking Arabic at home. Others, whose fathers were not around in the Middle East either, were already struggling to maintain their Arabic language skills before their transition to Finland. These ETCKs hardly speak or understand Arabic. Instead, they use Finnish, which they have learned at home and English, which they have learned at school, code-switching at times and mixing them, creating what is known as *Finglish* (Nisonen, 1920 cited in Tuominen 2004). Meanwhile, Teri and Joe spoke Arabic well in their early childhood, however, as they hit their teenage years, they refused to speak the language. Nevertheless, due to the fact that their father continued speaking the language to them they have, recently, picked it up again. Only Will, Ela and Jen, who continuously speak Arabic at home, rate it as 7/8/9.

After many of the ETCKs began attending International schools, they switched to speaking English at home. Especially the ETCKs, who had siblings in the same school or parents who communicate with each other in English, adopted the language spoken at school and began using it at home. Sal and Cay, on the other hand, already learned English at home since their Finnish father spoke to them in English rather than in Finnish. ETCKs who moved to Finland after graduating from international schools in the Middle East as well as those who continued their studies at international schools in Finland, still continue to speak English (in addition to Finnish) at home. On the other hand, ETCKs (Will, Ela) who have attended Finnish schools and have lived in Finland for over 10 years, have switched back to speaking Finnish with their siblings.

Most of the ETCKs define their mother tongue by the language in which they express themselves best, whereas, some ETCKs define it as the first language that they have learned. Still others, such as Cay, define it as the language they have learned from their mother. ETCKs who have lived in Finland since they were very

young and have learned Finnish at home and at their schools consider Finnish to be their mother tongue. The mother tongue of a person can also change at some point in his or her life. Eva considered Arabic to be her mother tongue before moving to Finland; however, after having lived in Finland for some years and having spoken the language at home and at schools, she now considers Finnish to be her mother tongue. Dan, Ned, Sal and Mat have also learned Arabic and/or Finnish at home, which used to be their mother tongue, but after attending an international school for some years, their mother tongue switched to English. Moreover, Ela and Will claim to have two native languages. Ela, who also studied in an international school, considers both Finnish and English as her native languages. And Will considers both Arabic and Finnish as his native languages –the languages in which they can express themselves best.

### **10.3 Finding Identity**

Some ETCKs claim that they do not really fit in anywhere. Yet, as Cay, Sal and Dan have noted, a multicultural/TCK, person has no boundaries and is able to make his or her home anywhere.

I believe that when one is multicultural such boundaries do not exist...norms and rules change in defining ones identity. (Sal)

I don't really fit in anywhere, but at the same time we TCK are the pioneers that build their own home somewhere where they have enough friends and support to do so. (Dan)

According to a few ETCKs (Ned, Amy, Ela, and Cay), it is also somewhat easier for a half-foreigner to adapt to and fit in a multicultural country, i.e., Israel rather than a unicultural one, i.e., Finland (to some extent). Other ETCKs including Eva and Dan disagreed.

both require adaptation equally, although the social situation is more disheartening in Finland.” Yes, especially when you are homesick and would like some social acceptance (it is easier to fit into a multicultural country). (Cay)

not really, it would be better for those to live here, being half foreigner in Palestine means that you are a foreigner, a person who can escape to a better world whenever you feel like doing so. They never accept you totally, but the younger generation is changing. Finland is a better fit for me though because of the language ability. (Dan)

The rest of the ETCKs thought it made no difference whether or not the country was multicultural. In fact, as Eva, Sal and Will noted, multicultural diversity, is only found in the international schools and not in the population of Israel. Ned and Mat also pointed out that every year Finland is becoming more and more multicultural.

In addition to having parents from two different countries, the majority of the ETCKs have also lived in a 'bubble' subculture-like environment in their former home country with other children who are considered TCKs. To some extent, Jay, Amy, Ela, Will and Dan have been part of the Finnish missionary center where their mothers used to work and where they spent much of their time with other Finnish missionary kids during their early childhood.

...when I was younger I played at the Finnish center with many other missionary kids, the bubble was pretty closed until I started school. (Dan)

Each of the ETCKs also took part in international gatherings/ Bible studies that were set up for foreign/Finnish mothers in Israel, during which all of the children played together. Furthermore, they all attended international schools with other students who came from different cultural backgrounds (including TCKs and MKs).

At the Anglican International School I grew up in a multicultural and multilingual environment (Ela.)

Amy, Ned, Dan and Cay have also been part of an international subgroup in Finland.

Yes, at first (was part of an international subgroup in Finland). Partly because I was more comfortable and partly because it was so difficult to enter the Finnish bubble circles that they have. It takes many years to enter a Finnish friendship circle. (Cay)

Nearly all of the ETCKs at times feel like outsiders and misunderstood in the countries they have lived in. As Dan claims, while they can understand and relate to the locals in a way, the locals, on the other hand, cannot ever truly understand or relate to them. Joe and Tye explained that the only place they feel that way is in Israel/Palestine.

Tunnen oloni hieman ulkopuoliseksi Israelissa sukulaisteni parissa siinä mielessä, etten osaa täysin heidän kieltään enkä tunne täysin omakseni sitä kulttuuria.

[To some extent, I feel like an outsider when I am with my relatives in Israel, in the sense that I am not familiar enough with the Arab culture and am not fully able to speak their language either.] (Joe)

As mentioned before, nearly all of the ETCKs who have lived in Finland for quite some time feel more Finnish now. Meanwhile, the rest of them still feel half-Finnish and half-Palestinian/ Egyptian/ Lebanese/Israeli, combining traditions and values from both cultures.

It's confusing sometimes to find the balance between Arab and Finnish cultures. I try to combine good sides from both cultures. (Ela)

All of the ETCKs have taken part in a confirmation camp. Five of the ETCKs have attended an international camp, while the other ETCKs have attended a Finnish one. The majority claimed that it did not affect their identity in any way. Nevertheless, the camp did provide them with a good opportunity to communicate with other Finns and an opportunity to learn more about the Finnish culture. Mat and Cay were the only ones who felt that it helped boost up their Finnish identity as they were able to share a special kind of experience with other Finns.

Attending a Finnish rippikoulu introduced me to a group of Finnish kids that I could relate to at my age. It was the first Finnish experience I could share with others, so strengthened my confidence as a Finn later when I moved here. (Cay)

Most of the male ETCKs have also served in the Finnish army; while three of them claimed that it affected their identity, two of them said that it did not affect them in any particular way; however, they, all, felt somewhat more patriotic after the experience. Dan explained that now he is able to relate to every single male in Finland, and this has somehow strengthened his Finnish identity and helped him to fit in with them.

Whereas most of the ETCKs seem to easily find a balance between their Arab and Finnish side, a few of the ETCKs (Ela, Jen, Amy and Will) sometimes feel confused about their identity and experience a conflict of identities ("Finnish side" vs. "Arab side"). Yet, others seem to identify more with only one side, either their Finnish or their Arab identity, depending on the situation and the country that they are in. For instance, several of the ETCKs have begun to unconsciously reinforce their Arab identity in Finland so as to not lose touch with their other side.

When I am in Finland, I tend to be more Arab in Palestine I am Finnish. (Dan)

No I am not confused about my identity, I am half/ half. Sometimes I feel more Finnish and sometimes I feel more Arab. In Finland I follow most the Finnish

cultural values and in Palestine I follow most of the Arab cultural values. These days I feel more Finnish. (Ned)

When it comes to explaining and describing their identity, some ETCKs explain it in terms of national identity. Others prefer to describe their identity in terms of adjectives. A couple of the ETCKs use both. In addition, while a few explain it in more general terms (half- Arab), several ETCKs chose to describe their identity in more detail (i.e., half-Lebanese). Moreover, while a number of ETCKs go by their home country (the country they were born and raised in), others go by both of their parents' passport countries. The different ways in which people prefer to describe their identity can be seen in some of the ETCKs' comments.

half Finnish and half Palestinian, but when people ask me where I am from I say I am half Egyptian and half Finnish, but Palestine used to be my home and in a way is still my 'home country. (Ned)

My identity is half Finnish and half Arab. My temperament and liveliness, warmness are from the arab side and persistence and certain calmness from the Finnish side. (Ela)

In terms of national identity, as a half Finnish/half Palestinian, although most times I describe my identity in terms of adjectives alone (outgoing, social, happy) Adjectives are understood by all cultures and nationalities. (Cay)

#### 10.4 Discussion

Although the majority of the ETCKs claim to fit in everywhere, some ETCKs feel that they only fit in one country, Finland or Palestine/Israel/Lebanon/Egypt. Still, others feel that they do not perfectly fit in anywhere. Several factors are at play, when it comes to forming their identity and fitting in.

According to Wardhaugh, (1987) as well as Pollock and Van Reken (1999) language is closely linked to the expression of nationality or identity. As Seelye and Wasilewski (1996:54), have pointed out, in order for a person to be part of a specific culture and not be left outside of it, she or he must know the language as well as the ways of using the language. In addition, people may experience changes that cause a shift in their language order and usage, which in turn affects their identity. All multilinguals have some kind of *language order*, and the choice of first, second or third language of the trilinguals, depends on the current situation and/or the person they are speaking to. Moreover, changes may also result in the switching of the order

of the languages. Normally, after a child begins kindergarten (or ‘full-time preschool’), the language of the social world becomes dominant over the mother’s or father’s language. And as Tokuhamma-Espinosa (2003:132) has explained, the language of the school may become the first language since the child spends a large part of his or her day there. A trilingual child may even lose fluency and depth in his or her native language- the language of family roots and personal history. (Tokuhamma-Espinosa, 2003) According to Barron-Hawaert (2000), this usually happens with those who come from non-English-speaking countries and attend international schools (English being the language of instruction).

The majority of the ETCKs have first learned both Arabic and Finnish at home. However, after attending international schools for a few years, they switched to using English more often, which eventually dominated over the other languages. The attitude of the parents also has a great impact on early child bilingualism/trilingualism (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:10). Still, children need a wide range of cultural input from society, although, they will not acquire the knowledge of a culture in the same direct way as they acquire from their parents. (Cunningham-Andersson and Andersson 1999:85) Cunningham Andersson and Andersson, (1999), further, point out that it should not be assumed that children automatically acquire the parental languages since in a “usually one language is chosen for communication between the parents.” As Ela’s and Sal’s parents communicated with each other in English, they did not learn any Finnish from their father. In addition, Harding and Riley (1986) have noted that as the mother is usually given the responsibility for the child’s bilingual ability and, statistically, the father in the average family spends less time with the child, the language input is often unbalanced from the start. Since the fathers of some of the ETCKs such as Tye and Dan were not around often, they were unable to practice their Arabic, and thus, stopped speaking the language, upgrading their Finnish language instead.

The ETCKs’ transition to Finland also had an effect on their language order, especially for those who switched to Finnish schools and were not able to practice their Arabic often. While nearly half of them consider Finnish as their mother tongue, the rest of them consider it as their second language. Due to the fact the Arabic language skills of at least half of the ETCKs have worsened, and since some

of them hardly know any Arabic anymore, to some extent, they feel like outsiders in Palestine/Israel/ Lebanon/Egypt. Otherwise, specifically those who have lived most of their lives in the Middle East and followed Arab (and some Finnish) traditions at home would fit in with the locals.

Moreover, childhood rebelliousness has also contributed to the change in the language order of the ETCKs. During their early childhood or teenage years in Finland, some of the ETCKs avoided using Arabic both at home and in public. They refused to speak the language so that they would not draw unwanted attention to themselves. Instead, the ETCKs often answered in Finnish or in English when spoken to in Arabic. According to Tokuhama-Espinosa (2003:135), peer group learning is very strong from age three on. Particularly at school, children may begin to answer a parent in the language of the kindergarten or even refuse to respond to the language of the parent (Barron-Hauwaert 2000: 4) Since their fathers of a couple of the ETCKs have not given up speaking Arabic to them, and as the ETCKs have eventually outgrown their rebellious phase, they have picked up the language quite easily again. Now, they see that having had the chance to learn several languages is one of the greatest privileges in being an ETCK.

Mixing the languages or code-switching is quite normal for multilinguals as well. Barron-Hauwaert (2000) found that children who attended international schools mixed languages more often than those who attended local schools. The diversity of nationalities in multilingual schools most likely provides an environment in which it is more normal and accepted to mix languages for communication. It may also be hypothesized that children who have lived in a country (i.e., Israel) where two or three official languages are spoken will most likely mix languages. (Barron-Hauwaert 2000:5, 6). Many of the ETCKs tend to code-switch, especially those who attended international schools, between English and Finnish (*Finglish*) as well as between Arabic and English. Code-switching is used for many different reasons, nonetheless, perhaps the most significant reason as Garner-Chloros (1991) claims, is when family members of different generations get together or as Romaine (1995) notes, to emphasize and qualify certain messages.

Another major contributor to the values and overall identity of a person is the social environment. Seelye and Wasilewski (1996:110) have pointed out that as long as the individual remains in contact with others in the society, their relationships with them affect the self of the individual (Seelye and Wasilewski 1996:110). Identity is socially constructed from roles, norms, and expectations of the community in which people participate (Holmes 1997: 203) Other factors that contribute to the transformation of the identity include: peer groups, physical appearance, education, and institutional policies. In addition, as Lanehart (1999:212) has noted, family culture, friends and social networks are also significant in the construction and shaping of one's identity. All these factors also affect the strength /intensity in which people define their identities.

Thus, ETCKs who claim to fit better in Finland than in the Middle East have attended Finnish schools, have lived in Finland for several years, and have built a Finnish social network. These ETCKs do not have a close relationship with their Arab relatives, nor do they have many contacts in Israel/Palestine/Lebanon/Egypt. In addition, they hardly visit their former home country and do not speak Arabic as well as they speak Finnish. Although they feel more Finnish, these ETCKs, nevertheless identify with their Arab side (only to some extent) as well. ETCKs who have lived in the Middle East most of their lives and who resemble the locals there, have also mentioned that they fit better in Finland due to the fact that they have followed Finnish traditions at home, do not speak the language (Arabic) well, and did not have their (Arab) father around. They, however, still maintain Arab traditions and keep a connection to the Middle East, thus, identifying with their Arab side as well.

On the other hand, ETCKs who fit in and feel at home in both countries, have kept in contact with their relatives and friends in the Middle East and in Finland, have maintained at least some traditions from both countries, have equal knowledge of Finnish and Arabic, attended international schools (for at least a few years) and have often traveled back and forth between the two countries. These ETCKs identify with both sides, combining traditions and values from both the Arab culture and the Finnish culture.



At times, several of the ETCKs feel confused about their identity. And some also experience conflicts between their identities, consciously or unconsciously enforcing and identifying more with one side of their identity, depending on the situation and the country that they are in. For instance, some ETCKs feel more Arab in Finland and more Finnish in the Middle East. In other words, so as to not lose their other half, they consciously or unconsciously reinforced their Finnish identity while they lived in the Middle East, and reinforce their Arab identity during their years in Finland. Moreover, a few of the males explained that the army affected their identity as well. After the experience they felt more “Finnish” and could relate to other Finnish males, building a kind of connection with the male society in Finland.

According to Berry (1997: 16-17), acculturative stress is found to be less predominant in multicultural societies than in “unicultural” societies. Foreigners in such societies may face discrimination, prejudice, or even hostility, thus complicating their adaptation as they may hesitate to take contact with the host nationals (Berry 1997: 17, 25; Gudykunst and Kim 1992: 225-226.) In unicultural societies foreigners are pressured to choose between the assimilation, the marginalization or segregation strategy. In multicultural societies, foreigners have more freedom to choose their acculturation strategy, the integration strategy being the most popular one.

As a multicultural country, Israel is more tolerant and accepting of foreigners, whereas Finland is less tolerant; therefore, as some ETCKs claimed, it is more difficult to adapt and fit in a country such as Finland. In addition, having lived in a multicultural country helps people to adapt to other cultures more easily in the sense that they are more tolerant of the cultural values and behaviors of people from other cultures. Nevertheless, Finland is becoming more and more multicultural; especially Helsinki is already seen as quite a multicultural city. Meanwhile, although Israel is a multicultural country with people of diverse backgrounds residing throughout the country, since most of the ETCKs were in more contact with foreigners, attended international schools, spoke English often and followed Finnish traditions at home, they did not fit right in with the locals.

While some of the ETCKs describe their identity in terms of national identity, others, who see themselves as multicultural people, prefer to describe their identity in terms of adjectives. Adler (1998) claims that instead of being defined by their profession, place of residence, “cognitive sophistication”, languages they speak, the number of personal contacts made, the number of countries visited, multicultural people are recognized by their outlooks, broad worldviews, and their openness to experience. The interweavingness of life is seen through their thoughts and action (Adler 1998: 227-228). And since the identity of multicultural people is capable of freely negotiating new formations of reality, they are neither totally a part of nor apart from their culture. (Adler 1998:234-235) Yet, as Kanno (2003: 135-6) has pointed out, people do not have to accept all of a culture in order to belong to it. They can also chose which identity they want to identify more with – in this case, whether they want to be more Finnish or Arab. ETCKs do not have to give up their other identity to live and fit in Finland, keeping their other half intact internally.

In addition to having parents who come from two different cultures, the ETCKs have lived in a 'bubble' subculture-like environment in their former 'home' country. Their *third culture* is created from having attended an international school with other students of various cultural backgrounds as well as from partly belonging to the missionary/international community subgroup, (since one of their parents was/is a missionary and/or a foreigner). Furthermore, the ETCKs create a third culture from combining elements from two cultures (Arab and Finnish) into a third one. Although ETCKs may not always know which community they fit in, they identify and feel most comfortable with others of similar background. E/TCKs belong everywhere and nowhere at the same time, sharing a kind of cross-cultural lifestyle and multicultural experience with other TCKs. In other words, they all belong to the *third culture*, which Dr. Useem (1999) has defined as a generic term to discuss the *lifestyle* “created, shared, and learned by those who come from one culture and are in the process of relating to another one.” (Useem, 1999) Elements from each culture are assimilated into the life experiences of the TCK; however, “the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background”. (Ibid.)

In the long run, most TCKs want to fit in somewhere and want people to understand them. It is only natural for human beings to want to feel like part of a community as

it is part of what defines the identity of a person. Pollock and Van Reken (1999), further, explain that cultural balance in terms of having knowledge of how culture works as well as a feeling of security and stability in life, is essential for TCKs who are raised in a neither/ nor world. It is also extremely important for E/TCKs to be familiar and understand their parents' home cultures as their history is part of their identity whether or not they accept it.

The term 'home' can have many meanings. Some consider the place they have grown up in as 'home'; others refer to both of their parents' native lands as 'home'. Nonetheless, the majority of the ETCKs see it as a place where their families reside as well as the place where they feel most comfortable and safe at. All of the ETCKs, nonetheless, agree that their families made a good decision in moving to Finland as there are more opportunities (e.g. educational) available, and the country is safe in comparison to the Middle East, where political unrest still exists.

## 11. CONCLUSION

The ETCKs' experiences of living in two countries and partially growing up in a kind of subculture have, in general, been quite positive. Especially as they have grown older, they have begun to appreciate these experiences, seeing them more as an advantage than as a disadvantage. Moving and growing up in different countries has enriched their lives, broadened their view of the world and enabled them to easily intermingle with different kinds of people. Furthermore, each of these ETCKs has adapted to Finland quite well, and is happy to be able to explore their 'other half'.

Various factors that have facilitated the adaptation and acculturation of the ETCKs to Finland include: prior knowledge of the Finnish language and the Finnish culture as well as a social supportive network. In addition, factors such as not having too many expectations, being multicultural, open, and at least semi-social have also helped all of them throughout their adaptation and integration processes. Yet, these advantages have not prevented the ETCKs from experiencing culture shock, which, as Brislin (1981) has noted, is a natural part of the adaptation process. Factors that, to some extent, have hindered the ETCKs' adaptation and acculturation include: attending an international school, socializing with international students and using the English language quite often. While these factors may have hindered the rate of change, they provided a 'soft-landing' in the sense, that some of the ETCKs did not have to face several changes all at once but a few at a time to ease their integration into the new culture.

In this study, the majority of the ETCKs found it only slightly difficult to adapt to Finland. Only 2 out of 8 females and 2 out of 7 the males who moved to Finland after the age of 11 found it somewhat more difficult in the beginning. The transition was especially difficult for those who moved to Finland during their early teens and did not have much say in the matter. Since they were already undergoing emotional and physical changes in their lives, more 'disruptions' in their world, in which peer relationships and social activities are the center of everything, may have seemed overwhelming. On the other hand, ETCKs who made the transition after graduating from high school had an easier time in adapting to Finland due to the fact that, although with the guidance of their parents, they made the decision themselves. In

addition, they already had a somewhat more clear sense of their identity than those at their early teens. When younger children move to another country, they see it more of as a great adventure. Nevertheless, such great changes do have an effect on one's identity, regardless of their age.

Although the ETCKs did not receive much help from their parents during the transition and adaptation processes, the sympathy, attention and some kind of understanding that the parents showed, helped them mentally and emotionally. As the most difficult aspect of moving for anyone is leaving friends and familiarity as well as the lack of social networks in the new country; therefore, especially in the beginning, familiar elements from the Arab culture and coethnics, provided some emotional support for the ETCKs. Especially those who had international friends in the Middle East and have moved to Finland more recently, were, naturally, more easily drawn to and more comfortable with international people. However, they did also interact with host nationals, who helped them to learn more about the Finnish culture and helped them to integrate more quickly into the Finnish society. Finland is only somewhat tolerant and open towards foreigners, and Finns tend to be reserved and quiet. Yet, as the ETCKs are social, have lived in a multicultural society and had former knowledge of both the Finnish language and culture, it was not difficult for them to interact and build friendships with the locals.

Several factors influenced the ETCKs' adaptation and acculturation to Finland, however, two key factors that have had a more significant effect on the ETCKs' experiences include: prior knowledge of the Finnish language and the Finnish culture. Unlike most full foreigners who have migrated to Finland, the majority of the half-Finnish ETCKs had the advantage of being somewhat familiar with the Finnish culture and language before the transition. Due to the fact that the ETCKs' mothers, excluding the two whose fathers are Finnish, have upheld Finnish traditions at home, none of them felt that they had to learn any new basic cultural rules. According to Kim (2001), a stranger with cultural values and norms that are highly compatible with those of the natives, will help him or her find the culture less stressful and to adapt more easily. Therefore, although Arab culture and Finnish culture differ to a great extent, since the ETCKs have combined cultural values and norms from both countries, half (or at least some) of their values and norms are

compatible with those of the natives. As most of the ETCKs also knew Finnish before moving to Finland, they were immediately able to communicate with the locals. Thus, they were able practice their language skills and learn more about the Finnish culture, which in turn helped them to adapt and fit into the Finnish society more quickly. The four ETCKs who found it more difficult to adapt to Finland than the rest of them were not as familiar with the Finnish cultural values in comparison to the other ETCKs. They also maintain stronger ties to the Middle East (i.e., hold onto Arab traditions).

Parents greatly affect the language use of children. And as Harding and Riley (1986), note, since the father in the average family spends less time with the child, the language of the mother tends to dominate, leading to an unbalanced language input. Moreover, although parents influence the language order of children, the language of instruction at schools plays a major role as it often tends to take the place of the mother tongue or first language. Due to several languages being used, code-switching also tends to be quite a common speech strategy for ETCKs. In addition to influencing the language order of people, schools have a great impact on their adaptation and acculturation processes to a new environment. ETCKs who have attended international schools in both countries use English most of the time and associate with other foreigners took longer to integrate into the Finnish society than those who attended Finnish schools. Kim (2001) has also stressed on the importance of host social communication, including interpersonal and mass communication activities within the host culture. Taking part in social activities, i.e., taking part in a confirmation camp, attending the university, polytechnic, as well as serving in the army, where they had to interact with Finns and become familiarized with the “Finnish way of doing things” has had a positive effect on the ETCKs’ adaptation and acculturation as well.

According to Kim (2001:83-84) salient characteristics which add to the “foreignness” of the stranger easily forms a ‘psychological barrier’ between the stranger and the local people, making it difficult for the stranger to ease into the host social milieu. Yet, as most of the ETCKs know the language, and at least Helsinki is becoming more multicultural, they did not have a difficult time easing into the new culture. Nonetheless, Finns may be more reserved around ETCKs who are dark,

finding them less-approachable than those with lighter skin color; in this case, perhaps making it easier to build friendships with foreigners. A few of the ETCKs have faced some racism, but, not to the extent that it may have hindered their integration into the society.

Although those with dark features are not able to blend in as easily as the rest of the ETCKs, they do not mind standing out. Even those who are able to blend in seem to embrace their differences (i.e., their behavior, accent, features, perspective and/or social skills that differ from those of typical Finns). However, during their teens, ETCKs who attended Finnish schools preferred to blend in and not draw too much attention to themselves. Teenage years are the most difficult and most significant years as teenagers begin finding themselves, begin making independent choices as well as forming their own values, thus, shaping their own identity. Social activities and friends become an important part of their lives, and the need for acceptance and belonging among peers becomes vital. Fitting in is most crucial at this stage in life. A few of the ETCKs, especially the males, claimed to be somewhat embarrassed by their difference, as they have grown older, they have begun to embrace those differences. These days, the ETCKs do not mind standing out but blend in when possible, switching back and forth between the “foreigner-look different, think different” category and the “adopted-look different, look alike” category (see Table 3.).

Being an ETCK can sometimes be frustrating, as they are misunderstood in both countries and to some extent feel like half foreigners or outsiders everywhere. Yet, at the same time while they feel that they do not perfectly fit in anywhere, they also feel that due to their multicultural background they can easily adapt to any new culture. Having lived in their ‘third culture’ has helped the ETCKs become more multicultural. They are able to combine elements, traditions and values that they have learned at home and in both countries as well as the ones they have learned at school. Having also lived in a multicultural country, to some extent, has helped them to adapt to other cultures in the sense that they have become more tolerant of other cultural behaviors and traditions. Sometimes, the ETCKs feel confused about their identity and their experiences. However, most of them have found a balance between both cultures, combining the elements, traditions and values from each one of them.

More recently, all of the ETCKs have also begun visiting their former home country every once in a while, and uphold at least some Arab traditions at home. By keeping some kind of connection to their former home country, the ETCKs are able to hold on to their other half.

The extent to which a person feels at 'home' and fits in a certain country involves several factors: the length of stay, social network, language skills, ties with former home country and traditions maintained at home. ETCKs who feel at home in Finland have lived there long enough to have built their life in their mother's native land. These ETCKs have a Finnish social network and speak Finnish fluently. Several of them hardly spent time with their father and hardly keep a connection to the Middle East. Meanwhile, ETCKs who have lived most of their lives in the Middle East also fit in Finland better than in their father's native land due to the fact that they have attended international schools, were often in contact with foreigners, spoke English and/or Finnish more fluently than Arabic and did not have their Arab father around. In addition, these ETCKs mostly followed Finnish traditions at home. On the other hand, ETCKs who have upheld some traditions from both cultures and keep in contact with both Arab and Finnish friends/relatives feel at home in both countries.

Furthermore, those who have lived in very 'Finnish homes' abroad felt more Finnish after one year in Finland, whereas the others took longer. Two of the ETCKs also feel more Arab now as well. As ETCKs live in one country, the other half of their identity is reinforced. For example, while living in Finland, the ETCKs tend to place the Arab culture on a pedestal, sugar coating the picture of their former home country. Those who have lived most of their lives in Finland consider it as their home country, and those who have lived part of their lives in the Middle East consider both countries as their 'home' countries. Those who have begun to keep more in contact with their relatives in the Middle East, however, have also begun to see both of their parent's native lands as their home countries. Nonetheless, all of them agree that in the end 'home' is where their families are.

In the end, however, it comes down to two key variables, attitude and motivation that affect the ETCKs' adaptation, acculturation and identity transformation. ETCKs can



decide whether or not they want to accept the changes, adapt and fit in the new society- making Finland their new home. They can choose whether or not they prefer to keep on speaking English instead of Finnish and associate with foreigners more often than with Finns. They can also choose whether or not they prefer to follow and hold on to Arab traditions and values rather than to learn about the Finnish culture. As half of the ETCKs see themselves living in Finland in the future and the rest of them see it as a high possibility, they were much more motivated to learn and accept different aspects of the host culture in order to fit in. All of the ETCKs see two home countries as a blessing. Although they may not always perfectly fit in anywhere, they know that they always have a stable 'home' with their families and know where their roots come from. These ETCKs are aware that they are able to play roles that help them to fit in and blend in some societies. Nonetheless, they have realized that in this case they will only "hide the brilliance of their colors and its uniqueness" (Pollock and Van Reken, 1999). Still, the ETCKs do like to blend in when possible, but when they stick out of the crowd, they accept it as well.

It was essential to bring the ETCK's identity as well as their adaptation and acculturation experiences to light since it is important for people to realize that they do not fit in the same category as other foreigners who have migrated to Finland. At the same time, they also do not fit in the same group as other traditional TCKs. Whereas much research has been carried out on traditional TCKs and on several other groups of immigrants, hardly any research can be found on subgroups of TCKs and on more exceptional immigrants to Finland. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on TCKs and immigration of foreigners to Finland. As more and more E/TCKs move to Finland, it is critical for teachers, psychologists and educationalists to recognize, familiarize and understand them, in order to develop successful strategies for working with E/TCKs. Finnish schools still lack placement and psychology tests that are suitable for assessing the aptitude of half-Finnish E/TCKs, who are neither full foreigners nor full Finns. Adequate support and appropriate special-education services should be provided as well. In addition, this study can be seen as a useful resource relevant for practitioners who organize effective orientation programs for immigrants and for parents who are simply trying to understand their ETCK children. Thus, this study yields valuable information that

can be utilized in various research fields (i.e., intercultural, educational and psychological).

However, as this study only scratches the surface of the adaptation, acculturation and identity transformation of the ETCKs, further studies, including a larger sample and a more detailed analysis are required. A similar kind of study could be carried out on half-Finnish and half-Arab ETCKs who have moved to the Middle East to compare the findings with those of the present study. In addition, it may be useful to conduct comparative studies on the adaptation of other half-Finnish ETCKs to Finland. Moreover, perhaps the same ETCKs could be interviewed again in ten years. It would be interesting to see how the changes of their acculturation to Finland have affected their identity and affected some of the decisions that they have made in life (i.e., the spouses they have chosen for themselves, the values they have instilled in their children, the country that they have decided to live in and the language/s they have chosen to communicate to their children with). In future research, variables such as religion and family which play a significant role in the identity and the acculturation process of the ETCKs should be taken into greater account as well. For instance, regarding religion, it would be worthwhile to find out how much more difficult it would be for a Muslim ETCK to adapt to Finland in comparison to a Christian ETCK.

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Questionnaires including 86 questions were collected from the participants. The material which was sent via e-mail or by post can be found in the appendix.

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**Appendix 1: THE EMAIL**

Hei!

Here's the questionnaire as an attachment.

The thesis is about half- Finnish and half- Arab people who have moved to Finland at different ages and during different periods in their lives.

The questionnaire includes 86 questions about adaptation and acculturation to Finland, life in Finland, language skills as well as identity-related questions.

Your responses will remain anonymous of course, and you may answer either in English or in Finnish. If you have any questions or need more time to answer, please feel free to ask/contact me.

Kiitos paljon ja hyvää viikonjatkoa!

Jos teillä on jotain kysyttävää,

cell #: 040-8487625

email: zayat@cc.jyu.fi, nellyzayat@hotmail.com

Nili Zayat

## Appendix 2: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### “Being Part Of And Apart From”- Downie FINDING YOUR IDENTITY AND MOVING TO YOUR PARENT’S HOME COUNTRY, FINLAND

#### Terms:

**TCK-Third Culture Kid**

**ATCK-TCK who has become an adult**

**ETCK- Exceptional Third Culture Kid**

**MCK- Multicultural Kid**

Please answer thoroughly and clearly! Please feel free to disregard questions that you may find unintentionally offensive and/or that may not concern your experiences.

#### BACKGROUND

1. Sex \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which country where you born in? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is the country you where born in: the host country which has become a home country, one of your parents’ home country, or just the host country?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Status-Occupation \_\_\_\_\_
6. What are your parents’ nationalities? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Your parents’ occupations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How many siblings do you have and how old are they?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. (1) In which countries have you lived in and for how long (during which ages in each country)? (2) Which country do you consider your ‘home country’? (3) Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What school/s have you attended/are attending, where and during which years?

- 
- 
11. Which university(ies)/polytechnic(s) did you attend/are you attending (and where)?

- 
- 
12. What are you studying/what have you studied at the university(ies)/polytechnic(s)?

### LANGUAGES

13. What language/s did you learn first and where did you learn it/them?

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14. What language/s did you speak with your parents and your siblings when you were a child? What about now? If you stopped speaking certain languages with some of your family members, explain when and why that happened. \_\_\_\_\_

- 
- 
15. In what language/s do you communicate with your relatives from both sides of the family? \_\_\_\_\_

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- 
16. What was your mother tongue before and what is it now?

Where did you learn your mother tongue from (since not everybody learns their 'mother tongue' from their parents)?

- 
- 
17. Would you consider yourself : bilingual, trilingual, or multilingual
18. In what language/s do/did you study at your school/s? If you are studying/ have studied at a university/polytechnic etc., in which language/s are you studying/ have studied?



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19. What other second and/or foreign languages did you learn at school and during which years?

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20. In general, how well would you say you know Arabic? Did you speak Arabic to your Arab friends and the local people? Do you still know as much Arabic as you used to? From a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your Arabic now?

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21. Did you know any Finnish before you moved to Finland? If you attended a Finnish school, how did you manage with your Finnish skills? From a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your Finnish now?

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22. (1) How often did you speak Finnish in your home country/in the country you used to live in? (2) Did you take any Finnish lessons before moving to Finland? (3) How often did you have Finnish lessons? How good (from 1-10) would you say your Finnish was before moving to Finland (if you are able to say)? Circle: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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23. Do you speak English or Finnish to most Finns these days?  
What about before, during your first years in Finland?

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24. Have you attended any Finnish camps where you had a chance to practice/learn Finnish and about Finnish culture?

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25. Do you feel comfortable speaking Finnish with native speakers?  
Have you taken extra Finnish lessons after moving to Finland?
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- 
- 
26. (1) Are/were you able to study at a university/polytechnic etc. in Finnish?  
(2) How do you manage with your Finnish at work?
- 
- 
- 
27. Can people tell that you're not a full Finn when you speak Finnish? Do  
you have an accent when you speak Finnish?
- 
- 
28. Are you able to practice your Arabic at all in Finland (at home, with  
friends, cable TV, lessons)? Do you speak Arabic at home in Finland?
- 
- 
- 
29. List all the languages you know (in order from best to worst):
- 

### **TRANSITION AND ADAPTATION**

30. When and why (to work, study, family- related reasons etc.) did you  
move to Finland? \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 
- 
31. (1) Was it your choice to move to Finland, if so, why did you choose  
Finland? (2) Do you think you made the right choice of moving there?  
(3) Do you like living in Finland? Explain:
- 
- 
- 
-

32. How often did you visit Finland before you moved there? Have you always had some kind of connection to Finland (i.e., visiting in the summers) or/ and with Finnish people (emails, friends etc.)? Explain:

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33. (1) Did you have some Finnish/half -Finnish friends in Palestine/Israel/ Egypt/Lebanon? (2) Did you hang out with them often? (3) Do you still keep in contact with them now that you have moved to Finland?

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34. Did your Finnish friends in Finland help you in the adaptation and transition process? Did anybody else help you?

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35. Did you encounter trauma when moving from one country to another?

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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36. Did you feel like you had to learn many new basic cultural rules or were you already familiar with them (because of your parents, Finnish friends or visitations to Finland in the summers)?

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37. Did/Do you find it difficult to adapt/adjust to the Finnish culture because the values that you have learned in your home country differ to a great extent from the values you came/have come to learn in Finland?

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38. Did your parents help you to realize that you might face culture shock, and were they supportive when you made the decision of moving to Finland? Did they help you to understand what was to be expected?

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39. (1) Did you expect to adapt quickly? (2) Why or why not? (3) Did you expect culture shock, and do you think that you were to some extent prepared for it to ? \_\_\_\_\_

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40. (1) Did you expect anything particular from moving to Finland? (2) Were your expectations fulfilled? (3) What was the hardest thing about moving?

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### **FITTING IN**

41. (1) Was it difficult to make friends (in general, at school, at university)?  
(2) Do you consider yourself a social person? (3) Are you usually open to hear about other people's views?

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42. Do you think that attending a university/school helps you to adapt to the Finnish system quicker than if you were to work in Finland?

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43. (1) Did you have more Finnish or international friends during your first

year in Finland? (2) What about now? (3) Do you have some half -Arab or full -Arab friends in Finland?

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44. Do you think that attending a school/university with international students helped you to feel more at 'home'? How about at work, with international people?

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45. Do you think that your Finnish language proficiency helped you to fit in more easily and quickly? \_\_\_\_\_

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46. What helps you to feel more at 'home' in Finland?

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47. Do you feel more Finnish after having lived in Finland for one year? Do you feel more Finnish after having lived in Finland for a few years? What about now? \_\_\_\_\_

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48. (1) Do you think that Finnish people treat you like a Finn or more like a foreigner? (2) Does your outward appearance/color affect the way they treat you? (3) If they do treat you like a foreigner, do you feel annoyed, irritated?/when they are surprised to hear that you are half -Finnish, do you feel annoyed? Explain:

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49. Do they sometimes seem to forget that you are not exactly a full Finn and expect you to understand everything? Do they sometimes expect you to act like a full Finn?

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50. (1) Did/does being different really bother you in school (if you have attended/are attending a Finnish school) or did/do people even notice?  
(2) Did you usually try to just blend in or did you make sure that people realized that you are a bit 'different'? What about now?

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51. What is the most obvious thing that sets you apart from Finns?

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52. Do you feel more at 'home' with Finnish people or with international people or do you feel just as comfortable and at 'home' with both?

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53. Are people in Finland interested in your past or in your home country? Do you mind/does it bother you when people ask all kinds of questions about Arabs and Arab culture?

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54. Do you still sometimes feel homesick?

55. Do you have a close relationship with your family in Finland? Did they help you with the adaptation process?

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56. Do you still keep in contact with your friends and family from your home country/ the country you used to live in?

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57. How often do you visit your home country\the country you used to live in? Are you planning to visit there anytime soon? How do you feel now whenever you visit your (former) home country? \_\_\_\_\_

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58. Do you or/and your family keep up some Arab traditions in Finland so that you will not lose touch with the Arab culture?

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59. Do you see yourself living in Finland in the future?

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#### **IDENTITY-WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DO YOU BELONG?**

60. In your own words define the term '*home*': \_\_\_\_\_

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61. (1) Do you refer to the country that you were born in or/and the country you lived in before you moved to Finland as your 'home country'? (2) What about Finland now? Is it your 'home country' or just your parent's home country where you are living now? (3) Where would you

say you feel most at home (if anywhere)? Do you feel like you fit in anywhere? Explain:

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62. Have you ever heard of the term '*Third Culture Kid*'? What do you think it means? \_\_\_\_\_

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63. Pollock and Van Reken, authors of *The Third Culture Kid Experience* wrote that "a stranger with the same experience understands you (A/TCK) better" than others. Do you agree with this statement? Yes or No

64. Do you sometimes feel like you are misunderstood in both/all countries?

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65. Do you feel that you belong in the same group as other A/TCKs like yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

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66. (1) What do you think about the fact that Finland is not as multicultural as Israel? (2) Does it bother you in any way that Finland is not as multicultural? (3) Do you think that because Israel is so multicultural you 'fit' there even if you are 'half -foreigner'? (4) Do you think you 'fit' there better than in Finland?

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67. (1) Did you have many International friends (some who kept traveling back and forth between countries) while you lived in Palestine/Israel/ Lebanon/Egypt? (2) Did you feel more 'at home' with your local friends



or with your international friends? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

68. Do you think that because Israel is multicultural it has, in a way, helped you to adapt to other cultures more easily?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

69. Were most of your friends in Palestine/Lebanon/Israel/Egypt: A/TCKs, locals, MKs (missionary kids) or a mix of both TCKs and locals? What about in Finland? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

70. (1) Did/do you have many friends who are half- Finnish and half something else? (2) Have you met other people in Finland who are also half -Finnish and half- Arab? (3) Did/do you have a close relationship with them and do you feel 'at home' with them?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

71. Have you lived in a safe 'bubble' subculture-like environment (with other kids who are missionary kids, military brats, MCKs, TCKs or both missionary kids and TCKs) and if you have, in what kind? Explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

72. When you were living in an Arab country, did your parent introduce you to Finnish traditions/customs and did he/she uphold them in the family? (e.g. celebrated Vappu in Palestine, decorated the house with serpentine, made sima ; also cooked Finnish food during Christmas etc.)? Explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

73. Have you taken part in a confirmation camp ('Rippikoulu')? Finnish or international? How did it affect you or did it affect you at all in any way? ('identity-wise'!) \_\_\_\_\_

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74. (1) Did you have to serve in the Finnish army? (2) How has it affected your identity/Finnish identity (3) Do you feel more 'Finnish' after the experience? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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75. How would you explain and describe your identity, if you are able to?

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76. (1) Do you always feel like a little bit of an outsider/'half foreigner' everywhere? (2) Did you ever feel like a little bit of an outsider even in your former home/your parent's home country? (3) Did the locals in your former home/parent's home country see you as a foreigner or as one of them? (4) If you have attended/are attending an international school, did/ do you feel like you fit in with the rest of the students there?

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77. Do you still feel like an outsider in Finland or do you think that Finnish people finally see you as one of them? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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78. After moving to Finland, have you started defending and unconsciously placing Arab culture on a pedestal? Has this ever caused you to have a conflict between your identities, "Finnish side" vs. "Arab side"? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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79. Do you think that it is more difficult for a male/female (coming from the Middle East) to adapt to the Finnish culture (western culture)? Are there some things that you do not agree with in the Finnish culture due to your Middle Eastern (e.g. clashes with the Arab culture) background?

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80. Do you sometimes feel confused about your identity? How do you combine Arab and Finnish cultural values? Do you feel more Finnish or Arab these days? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **THIRD CULTURE WORLD**

81. How have the experiences of moving and growing up in different countries helped you to perceive the world and to intermingle with different kinds of people? \_\_\_\_\_

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82. (1) Do you see having two home countries as a positive thing?  
 (2) Have those experiences enriched your life? (3) Are you proud of being half- Finnish and half -Palestinian/Egyptian/Lebanese/Israeli-Arab?(4) Have you ever been ashamed/embarrassed at some point in your life of being either half- Finnish or half- Arab?

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83. What do you miss most from each country that you have lived in?

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84. In your opinion, would you define yourself as an/a A/TCK, a missionary kid, both, just an MCK, all three of them or an MCK and an/a A/TCK?

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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85. (1) What do you think are some of the advantages and disadvantages of being an A/TCK or an MCK? (2) Do you see it as an advantage or disadvantage? (3) Would you say that your experiences of living in different countries have been positive/ negative? Explain:

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86. Did you have orientation classes before you moved to other countries?

Did you find the classes useful?

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