THE MAKING OF COSMOPOLITAN SELVES:
THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY
OF RUSSIAN-SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS
IN NEW ZEALAND

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II

Abstract

According to the 2006 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2007), more than one-fifth of the New Zealand population is born overseas. Immigrants play an active role in New Zealand economic and demographic growth, with more new arrivals choosing to settle in New Zealand every year. While research into migrant issues is on the rise, the impact of growing cultural diversity on national identity requires further investigation, especially in relation to many ethnic groups underrepresented in social sciences. This thesis presents the research into the issues of identity construction among Russian-speaking immigrants, a group never investigated before in New Zealand and only infrequently elsewhere. The objective of this work is to fill the knowledge gap in this area by providing information on the socio-cultural context of immigration experiences of Russians in New Zealand and investigating the way their identity is constructed through mainstream discourses and in the personal accounts of 21 participants from Wellington.

The nature of this thesis is qualitative and interdisciplinary. The theoretical foundation draws on social constructionism (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1991) and discourse theory (Foucault, 1972; Howarth, 2000). Socio-historically, this scholarship may be located within the broader frames of the postmodern critique of globalization and transnationalism (Bauman, 1998; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). One of the objectives of this research was to apply and evaluate different qualitative frameworks and paradigms in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the issue under investigation. The combination of different analytical methods and techniques included: thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989; Wodak, 1996), positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999), ethnography and narrative analysis (Merriam, 2002).

The first study presents a critical discourse analysis of identity constructions of Russian-speaking immigrants articulated by New Zealand mainstream print media. Consistent with international and New Zealand research on media portrayals of immigrants, the overall representation of this migrant group in New Zealand media follows the general trends of criminalization, homogenization and commodification of immigrants, with the dominant construction of them as a 'problem' to New Zealand society.

Two other studies use in-depth ethnographic interviews as the data collection method. The first interview presents a narrative analysis of a case study of a Russian Jewish woman who has experienced double migration from Russia to Israel and then to New Zealand. Lara's story vividly illustrates the process of social construction in relation to her sense of self in three different cultures. It reveals the interaction between the power of social forces in dictating rules for identity formation and the role of agency in an individual's striving for a coherent sense of self.

The analysis of 20 in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking immigrants in Wellington identifies the most common and salient patterns of identity construction in this group. Many participants report the feelings of identity loss and exclusion, based on their understanding of negative attitudes and wide-spread stereotypes among the host population. While some participants try to negotiate inferior identity constructions assigned to them on the basis of their 'outsider' status, others strive for constructing a new type of identity – cosmopolitan identity – which they locate within the global, rather than any local, context. These findings contribute to the recent developments in social science research in such areas as identity studies, discourse, globalisation, transnationalism and cosmopolitanism.

CONTENTS

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Preface

"*Race/Ethnicity: please mark appropriate box* is a standard item on official forms in the US. No big deal for the majority to tick the box 'Caucasian' or 'White'. But what about the situation where the very notion of 'race' is a sensitive, if not a taboo word, to be referred to indirectly (as in: 'she is dark') but not in terms of political, social or even statistical belonging (as in: 'white voters'). In the Netherlands it is considered morally wrong to register according to 'race'. Even 'ethnic' identification according to a Dutch law introduced in the 1998 (Wet SAMEN) requiring the registration of employees according to their ethnicity, had a short life. In 2004 when this law got discontinued, 30 per cent of organizations still had not been willing to comply. Registering 'ethnicity', in the Dutch case meaning registering whether citizens themselves or at least one of the (grand)parents are immigrants, felt too close to registering something like 'race'. There were also anxieties among ethnic groups about being stigmatized institutionally".

Essed, P., & Trienekens, S. (2008). 'Who wants to feel white?' Race, Dutch culture and contested identities. *Ethnic & Racial Studies, 31*(1), 52-72.

I came to New Zealand several years ago on an Australian passport. Back in Australia it was quite clear to me who I was there, among other Australians. I was an immigrant from Russia who was granted first a permanent resident status and later on Australian citizenship. All the forms I had to fill in seemed to care only about my legal status in Australia (permanent resident or citizen) and sometimes, additionally, about my place of birth.

My nationality in my most recent passport was stated Australian and the place of birth – Moscow, omitting the country I was born in, and by this, making it impossible to distinguish between the capital of the largest country in the world and a small town with the same name in one of the two American states (Idaho or Pennsylvania).

However, when I came to New Zealand, all straightforward identification frameworks delineated for me by Australian officials were suddenly reshuffled and became confusing, as New Zealand authorities requested new identification features from me. While permanent residence and citizenship in Australia both required my written applications to authorities reflecting my 'official' desire to gain one, in New Zealand I became a permanent resident by sole virtue of crossing the border on an Australian passport and deciding to stay here. With a new computer-based tracking system between the countries, my passport was simply scanned on both Australian and New Zealand borders – the operation that did not leave a single mark in it, for me to verify to myself that I am in a different country now.

The ambiguity of my belonging to New Zealand was confirmed later by New Zealand customs who did not want to release my personal belongings sent from Australia unless I provide them with some physical 'evidence' of my permanent status in New Zealand.

But the problems with my personal identification did not stop there. They were actually only starting. 'Tick the appropriate box'. Similarly to my Australian experience, I had to fill in many forms and applications in New Zealand, but each of them, apart from requesting my legal status (permanent resident, citizen, etc.), required from me a category of 'ethnicity', usually offering an incredible variation of choices between the forms. The options in the majority of these forms did not include easy choices of "Australian" or "Russian". Instead, there were so many 'Other' boxes that deciding on which one to choose was similar to solving a puzzle. The difference between these choices, as well as the endless variation between different forms, was confusing. Am I 'New Zealand European' (presumably the closest to 'Australian'), or simply 'European', or 'Other European', or simply 'Other'? And what about Russians who have migrated from the Far East and other Asian regions of Russia – are they also '(Other) European' or 'Other Asian'?

The touch of Australian accent in my English did not help either. I suddenly found it very hard to give a straightforward answer to the question every New Zealander would ask me: "Where did you come from?" And when I did make New Zealand my home, the issue became even more complicated. I did not feel I was solely a Russian, or an Australian, or a New Zealander. Am I a Russian-Australian New Zealander, or somebody else? What about my German ancestry, where does that fit? My identity, previously unquestioned by me, became impossible to explain and

articulate to others. While engaging with the Russian-speaking community in Wellington, I realized that I was not the only one who had to wrestle with ambiguous categories of ethnicity and nationality, as well as the broader sense of self. Many different people whom I met among immigrants, not only from Russia but also from other countries, seemed to undergo similar 'identity crises'. Their incredibly rich and multifaceted experiences shared with me, as well as my personal identity dilemmas, have become an inspiration for this project.

The topic of this research is identity, and the ways it may be interpreted from different angles. The empirical data investigating this topic include two data sets. One is a corpus of newspaper texts taken from New Zealand mainstream media reporting about Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand. The second one consists of interviews with recent immigrants from Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union, now living in Wellington, New Zealand. At the same time, it is necessary to note that the choice of this migrant group is merely a 'convenience sample' among other minority groups in society, as I am myself a Russian immigrant, residing in Wellington. Any other group of people could have been invited to take part in the study on identity formation. The advantage of engaging immigrants is that they have to face the issues linked to their sense of self and identity in a more dramatic way, because they moved from one cultural milieu to another.

The nature of this project is qualitative and interdisciplinary, with main ideas and assumptions grounded in such areas as social constructionist psychology, sociology, cultural/social anthropology, discourse theory, cultural studies, identity studies, immigration studies and various others. To be able to draw on such a variety of fields and methods, I have adopted a rather eclectic approach (Foner, 2003) in terms of combining different theories, methods and points of view. Therefore, I do not aim at producing a comprehensive critique of any field; instead, my intention is to draw on those authors and those works which are relevant for my research question and helpful in the interpretation of the results.

Before going into the details of the epistemological and socio-historic framework underpinning this research, I shall outline my position in relation to the main conceptual units of the argument I am going to present: "meaning" and "metaphor". Any writing is a process of meaning making but there are infinite

possibilities for interpretation and every author chooses their own (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003).

My position fits with the stance that it is impossible to capture meaning in words. According to Derrida (1976), meaning is inherently unstable, always moving as a function of difference and deferral. Meaning can never be 'fixed' within the frames of particular words. As soon as any definition is constructed, meaning escapes it as there will always be a possibility of another representation or re-definition of it. By trying to construct a definition, we find ourselves building the borders between the 'inside' meaning and the 'outside' rest, but as meaning can always be added by other representations in different contexts, these borders do not hold; hence, there can be endless arguments about the 'right' definition for the meaning. In an explanation of Derrida, Lucy (2004) states that, "nothing could be said to have meaning or value in 'itself'… Nothing is independent of its exteriority to other things in a field of spatio-temporal differences, intervals, alterities… To say something *is* is to say that it *differs*" (p. 27, emphasis in the original).

In this regard, there can be no meaning outside the multiplicity of contexts and representations, and the production of meaning is always deferred. This leads to Derrida's (1982) concept of *différance* – 'difference and deferral' at the same time. In an attempt to define something, by assigning particular words for a definition, in order to capture what something is, we straight away mark with this what it is not, through limiting other possibilities for the continual supplementarity, the continual substitution and addition of meanings. To understand what limits definitions produce, one has to attempt deconstructing them by going backwards, undoing the process of their original construction. Through this process, it may be possible to see the multiplicity of meanings and the directions of difference and deferral.

With this in mind, there will be no 'clear-cut' definitions in this thesis; in terms of the meaning-making process, preference is given to numerous explanations and interpretations, as these are less attempting to 'fixate' the meaning but rather to 'deconstruct' it from within a particular context. At the same time, the idea of a 'metaphor' may add to our understanding how meanings get represented in language and how various interpretations function.

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) suggest that meaning is never communicated according to a dominant philosophical and linguistic model about different people

having exactly the same knowledge, assumptions, values and common language, which are built on the postulate of an objective and absolute truth. They argue that meaning is always negotiated, and that we engage metaphorical constructions in relating our ideas and experiences to particular contexts. For that reason metaphor itself, as a metaphorical concept, is one of the most commonly used means of rendering meaning in our lives (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

Two metaphors come to mind in relation to this research: the metaphor of a 'journey' a researcher undertakes during her quest for knowledge, and the metaphor of a 'story' as a final product of this journey. One of the metaphorical concepts developed by Lakoff and Johnson (2003) was "An argument is a journey" (p. 89). The process of constructing an argument is therefore also a journey. This research has been 'moving' through time – over a period of more than four years – and, symbolically, has been also 'moving' through different paradigms of thought, various theoretical and methodological planes, aiming to arrive at a particular destination, hopefully to answer the questions raised at the beginning of this journey. Thus, both the process of developing an argument and formulating it in words have been a journey for me; and possibly the one that has not ended with the completion of this research, but one which I continue on further in my life.

Not only has this project become a significant part of my life during the last four years; it has merged into my life to the extent that some part of my life became inseparable from it. Researching identity not only involved people who took part in the research; the perspective taken by me in this research meant that my personal identity dilemmas have been incorporated in theoretical and methodological choices I have made in the research process. Consequently, interpreting the data and explaining the findings meant constructing a 'story', which was partly the story of my life, following Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) metaphor "Life is a story" (p. 174). For me, this story is not finished with the completion of this thesis, and will not be finished ever, as it reflects my personal journey in search for the meaning of life, through my continuous wrestling with identity dilemmas.

This study follows the postmodern take on identity (Bauman, 1997; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). The theory behind my approach is social constructionism (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1991). Before discussing any issues around the concept of identity and its formation, it is necessary to locate the argument within a particular socio-historical

context and outline the theoretical background for this study based on my reading of postmodernity and social constructionism.

To allow for any sort of interpretation of the meanings created during this research, it is essential to approach them within the whole complexity of our time and from the point of a particular location, which is known as the 'time and space' perspective (Bauman, 1998). In terms of articulating a current moment of 'time', such notions as 'globalization' and 'postmodernity' have to be delineated, while the 'space' may be viewed through the lens of such processes as 'immigration' and 'discourse'. At the same time, all these ideas and processes are very deeply interconnected, and their division into time and space is only necessary to establish coherence within the argument.

Chapter 1 presents a brief and eclectic summary of theoretical and methodological dilemmas and debates around the topics of postmodernity, globalization, immigration, identity and discourse and the ways of interpreting them. It is not aimed at providing a comprehensive coverage of those issues, which would require a much deeper and more extensive treatise, but at creating a backdrop sufficient to proceed with the analysis of the empirical data. After establishing the theoretical framework against which the data will be analysed, this chapter presents an overview of an historical and political context for the study, summarising the current socio-historic situation with immigration into New Zealand and providing some statistical data on Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand. The rationale for studying this population and for the choice of particular methodological frameworks is discussed against the main research question of the project – how the identity of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand gets constructed.

In Chapter 2 I analyze media portrayal of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand based on the data collected from mainstream New Zealand newspapers. The goal of the chapter is to identify and interpret the dominant identity constructions of this minority group produced by the print media. This analysis provides the sociocultural setting for two further studies on identity construction among Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand, presented in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 3 is a case study of immigration experiences of a Russian Jewish woman who immigrated to Wellington, New Zealand, after having left Russia to spend several years in Israel. Her story of repeated migration, and associated identity dilemmas, is analyzed within ethnographic and narrative frameworks using the data

she provided during an in-depth interview. The rationale for approaching the interview data from a single case study perspective lies in providing a coherent and rich illustration and interpretation of the processes underlying continuous identity reconstruction immigrants face. This chapter also discusses the important issues of reflexivity and insider/outsider dilemma within qualitative research and their application to this project.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the data from 20 in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking immigrants residing in Wellington and its suburbs. The aim of this analysis is to identify and discuss the most common and salient themes across the data set illustrating the process of identity construction among the research participants.

Chapter 5 presents an overall discussion of the outcomes of this research evaluating the choice of different methodological frameworks used in the three studies and the justification of the theoretical perspective against which the findings are weighed. I discuss potential contributions of the findings to the body of knowledge in the relevant areas and offer possible applications of them for better understanding of the current problems of our times. This chapter also identifies gaps in current knowledge, both from theoretical and empirical perspectives, and outlines suggestions for further research in the field.

So, the story starts here, and I have tried my best to make it coherent, insightful and meaningful, as well as at least to some extent entertaining. But only the journey through it can reveal whether I have succeeded in making it convincing and inspirational. For me, both my research and the writing process have undeniably been challenging and fulfilling. I hope that the end result will touch and inspire others too.

Chapter 1. Theoretical and Methodological Background

As indicated in the preface, this work is about identity and the ways it can be explored. However, there are a multitude of perspectives from which this issue can be approached. Various social sciences have been delving deeply into the topic of identity and self, especially in recent times, with philosophy, psychology and sociology leading the way (Bauman, 1998, 2004; Derrida, 1976; Gergen, 1991; Giddens, 1991). Within each field different epistemological and methodological frameworks have been engaged, sometimes resulting in opposing views (Ben-Rafael & Sternberg, 2001; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Caldas-Coulthard & Iedema, 2008; Lemke, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Woodward, 1997). The following chapter delineates the perspective from which an issue of identity will be tackled in this research. This perspective draws on such fields and theories as postmodernism, discourse theory, social constructionism, deconstruction, globalization, immigration, transnationalism, and cosmopolitanism. I present my understanding of these concepts in relation to identity issues, followed by an overview of the current socio-historic situation with immigration into New Zealand and the main methodological issues and dilemmas in connection to the theoretical position.

Postmodernity/Postmodern as Theorized by Social Sciences

Over the last few decades, there has been a lot of theoretical and empirical studies focused on identity and relevant issues, in such disciplines as philosophy, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and related fields (Ben-Rafael & Sternberg, 2001; D'Andrea, 2007; Derrida, 1976; Gergen, 1991; Hannerz, 1996; Riggins, 1997; Woodward, 1997). The current work adopts a postmodern perspective on the topics of identity and self (Bauman, 1997; Giddens, 1991; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006; Lemke, 2008). To develop an argument in this direction, it is necessary to discuss the background for this postmodern take on identity, namely, the postmodern itself, or postmodernity, as the scene where contemporary identities are emerging.

Many social scientists contend that we live in the era of 'postmodernity' (Bauman, 1997; Billig, 2004; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006), or what Giddens (1991) called 'late or high modernity'. Without going into problematic attempts of defining

this term, it is sufficient to say that the main difference between postmodernity and the previous period in the development of human thought, termed 'modernity', or 'first modernity' (Giddens, 1991), is the fundamental re-assessment of major ideas and theories about humanity, progress, and the relationships of people with each other and their environment. There has been a significant change, often branded 'the postmodern turn' (Clarke, 2003), in the way many intellectuals suggest we should see ourselves and our place in the world. This has triggered even more serious preoccupation of social sciences with such issues as self, identity and an individual's functioning within different systems of meanings (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Iedema & Caldas-Coulthard, 2008).

As el-Ojeili and Hayden (2006) suggest, the postmodern has emerged as the critique of the modernist infallible belief in progress, as well as the rejection of the assumption that meaning and identity are stable concepts. Instead, the postmodern brings to the forefront such features as difference, diversity, otherness and fragmentation. Along with that, both meaning and identity are conceptualized as being "without sure foundations: they are in flux, in a process of constant change that cannot finally be arrested, and there is nothing *essential* to them (meaning and identity, that is, are constructed and relational)" (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006, p. 35, emphasis in the original).

As a theoretical framework, postmodernism contests rational, positivist scientific method and questions the validity of 'grand narratives' presented as 'real', 'true' and 'right' (Merriam, 2002) which make universal claims to truth and reality 'out there' (Grbich, 2007). In the contemporary world of electronic connections and virtual spaces, it may be argued that 'reality' gives way to 'hyperreality' which is created simultaneously in different parts of the globe (Billig, 2004). From a postmodern perspective, the acceptance of the diversity and plurality of the world allows for multiple interpretations of the same phenomena from different positions. Consequently, the concept of an absolute or universal theoretical framework is rejected in favour of the kaleidoscope of various perspectives utilized for examining social and political issues (Merriam, 2002). In this sense, knowledge is relative and truth is multifaceted, therefore, the search for knowledge gives way to the search of meaning (Grbich, 2007).

Furthermore, the celebration of diversity among people, ideas and institutions in the postmodernist tradition allows the oppressed and marginalized groups, including

ethnic minorities, to find a 'voice' and articulate their 'truth', otherwise silenced by the dominant majority (Merriam, 2002). One of the applications of postmodern research is in the area of deconstruction, which aims at dismantling taken-for-granted, commonsense binary oppositions (for example, male/female, native/foreign) and exposing inequality and power disbalance between different groups in society (Merriam, 2002). Deconstruction accepts the multiple meanings of words (Grbich, 2007), an assumption owing its origin and theoretical development to the writings of Derrida (1976).

Postmodernity therefore creates new, endless variations of meanings which allow for the production of new forms of identity (Billig, 2004). As the postmodern world is becoming more interconnected and interdependent, a new type of culture is developing: from the local ones into a global one, from ethnic or national into transnational. Multiple narratives and new identities are emerging within nation-states under the pressure of global cultural processes (Billig, 2004).

The Cultural Turn

The postmodern development is closely linked to what is termed 'the cultural turn' which in social sciences is timed around the end of the 20th century (Arjomand, 2004; el-Ojeili, 2003). Within social theory, what previously was conceptualized as a social representation of humanity, is now seen as a cultural representation, with the emphasis on increasing complexity and diversity of human activities (Arjomand, 2004; Much, 1995). This 'cultural turn' reflects the shift towards understanding the significance of such issues as meanings, language, identity, and media as essential markers of our postmodern world (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). Jones and Krzyżanowski (2008) suggest that the contemporary problematization of the concept of identity is connected to the 'cultural turn' in social theory, as many central problems in social sciences, such as globalization, nationalism and belonging, the agency/structure debate and others, are seen today as mediated through identity.

It may be argued that this cultural turn had its roots in the idea of discourse and new understanding of the meaning of language in human lives (Barker & Galasinski, 2001). Previously, the dominant conceptualization of language in social sciences stated that language functions only as a medium between people, and that different linguistic systems in various cultures reflect different realities of the world (Harré,

1995). The new paradigm, developed on the basis of the intellectual legacy of such thinkers as Saussure (1974), Austin (1975) and Wittgenstein (1953), entails that all human activity is taking place only through language and para-linguistic acts (e.g. visual media, body language, as well as material products of human life). For example, speech act theory argues that when we are saying something we are also doing something, through the performative nature of language (Austin, 1975). This shift in the approach of social sciences towards theoretical and empirical methods of enquiry was also called a 'linguistic turn' (Howarth, 2000). The development of identity discourse in social sciences in the 1970s coincided with the linguistic turn and occurred in response to the debates around essentialization of meanings (Stråth, 2008).

Consequently, this new paradigm is anti-essentialist in its epistemology, in the sense that there are no 'pure' meanings of any objects or subjects, as the 'essence' assigned to them emerges only through communication of these meanings among people and, therefore, may be relative to particular social and cultural milieux (Shweder, 1990). Any meaning is seen as discursively constructed by people through their interactions with each other, therefore, any culture is constructed through language. In this regard, the 'cultural turn' signalled the new understanding of culture, that is, everything produced by human activity can be considered 'cultural', including various processes across the world (political, economic, social and others) (Barker & Galasinski, 2001).

The relationship between various parts of the material world and the meanings assigned to them may be explained through the concept of representation (Hall, 1996a). Hall argues that while there are events and relations that exist and take place in real life, outside of language, the meanings of these events and relations are constructed within particular linguistic or discursive systems. Hence, the meaning depends on the ways objects and subjects are represented discursively. The fluidity of meaning is therefore relative to the variety of its representations (Hall, 1996a).

Within psychology similar changes were termed the 'turn-to-language' (Tuffin, 2005; Willig, 2001), 'turn-to-discourse' (Parker, 1994), or 'the discursive turn' (Harré, 1995), which gave rise to such new fields as discursive psychology (Harré, 1995), conversation analysis (Drew, 1995), social constructionist psychology (Cromby & Nightingale, 1999), critical psychology (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Tuffin, 2005), cultural psychology (Much, 1995) and others. Within these fields, language was no longer considered merely a medium for human thought, mirroring ideas and actions.

Instead, its function was re-formulated as the production of meanings and the construction of multiple versions of reality (Willig, 2001). Thus, meanings do not exist outside language; they are constructed through linguistic means within various discourses, or via different discursive practices.

Foucault and the Concept of Discourse

The concept of discourse is usually associated with the name of the French intellectual Michel Foucault (1926 – 1984). One of the most commonly cited definitions, iconic in discourse studies, comes from Foucault's work where he identifies discourses as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak … Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention" (1972, p. 49). For Foucault, discursive practices within various institutions and different domains of language have been used to create power relations and establish the ownership of 'truth' with the dominant groups in society. The analysis of particular discourses requires a sociohistorical approach – through 'archaeology' of both recorded and hidden knowledge in history – in order to investigate how meanings have been created and what function they serve as discursive resources (Foucault, 1972).

The concepts of discourse(s) and discursive practices have gained a lot of attention and interest among many social scientists since Foucault (Howarth, 2000). The contemporary state of society is viewed by discourse analysts as a product of multiple discursive acts and practices all people of the world engage in, with some theorists even equating the entire social system to discourse (Howarth, 2000). Multiple manifestations of human activity are now investigated through the lens of discourse, and there are numerous schools of thought and theories that affiliate with discourse as their main scientific paradigm (e.g., Critical Discourse Analysis, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, conversation analysis, discursive psychology, media studies, feminist and gender studies, cultural studies, critical theory, and many others).

The school of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989; Wodak, 1996; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997), for example, focuses on the ways discourses function as ideological systems of meaning that conceal and at the same time reproduce uneven distributions of power and resources among different groups of society. The goal of critical analysts is to deconstruct such discursive practices in order to reveal the

mechanisms used by the powerful to deceive and dominate other groups (Howarth, 2000). Based on Giddens's (1984) formulation of duality of human agency and social structure, Fairclough (1989) argues that social systems and discourses functioning within them form a mutually constituting relationship which can be changed through emancipatory alternatives.

A broader conceptualization of discourse is formulated by those thinkers who situate themselves within the discourse theory. They extend the concept of discourse to all social practices, therefore arguing that, "discourses constitute symbolical systems and social orders, and the task of discourse analysis is to examine their historical and political construction and functioning" (Howarth, 2000, p. 5). From this perspective, discourse analysts should aim at interpreting the meanings produced within socially constructed systems of rules in a particular historical context (Howarth, 2000).

Grbich (2007) notes that there are many various hybrid approaches to discourse analysis currently used in social sciences, some of which only loosely follow the original ideas of Foucault and mainly refer to his body of work as a theoretical foundation. At the same time, the breadth of Foucauldian approach towards the analysis of human life and contemporary society allows for the 'dilution of method', in the sense that discourse analysis can be easily adapted for a variety of disciplines and studies, added to, and mixed with, other techniques, and developed further in response to changing times and ideas (Grbich, 2007).

My research is fundamentally embedded in the discursive approach to analysing different processes of social reality linked to identity issues. Drawing on the Foucauldian legacy, it combines several methodological frameworks for the interpretation of the data (Critical Discourse Analysis, narrative analysis, positioning theory) and examines the meaning of such issues as migration, belonging and identity from a discursive perspective (Caldas-Coulthard & Iedema, 2008; Delanty, Wodak & Jones, 2008).

Social Constructionism

Closely connected to the Foucauldian tradition, and in the critique of the essentialist and realist-positivist conception of the world and human activity, social constructionism has emerged as a philosophical foundation for new meanings

associated with human life and new approaches in social enquiry aimed at understanding these meanings (Tuffin, 2005). The main thesis of social constructionism is that people are products of their interactions with each other and with the immediate environment, both physical and social (Burr, 1995). Nobody and no idea emerges or functions independently. We are all deeply interconnected with each other, and the meanings we assign to various parts of our world, including ourselves, are constructed socially, through discursive practices we all engage in every moment of our lives (Gergen, 1991).

During the process of social construction, though, the discursive and abstract constructs get essentialized and become concrete and real (Stråth, 2008). Therefore, the approach to social analysis grounded in social constructionism should involve a critical element of deconstruction, aimed at revealing the discursive nature of social constructions and the attempts to essentialize them. These deconstructions, in their turn, evolve into parts of new constructions that demand further critical deconstruction, developing into a process that cannot have any final point to it (Stråth, 2008).

Also, various systems of meanings existing in different parts of our world get constructed and re-constructed continuously, depending on interactions and relationships manifesting through discourse. Within these systems of meanings, we do not function independently; we undergo social construction by others, but at the same time, being part of this process, we construct others too (Much, 1995). This creates some kind of *perpetuum mobile* (from Latin: 'perpetual motion'), or state of 'flux' (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006) as, while going through our lives, we keep endlessly constructing meanings around us and get co-constructed by them too. The same discourses which are shaped by particular social practices, in turn, shape social relationships and institutions, placing social agents "always *within* a world of signifying practices and objects" (Howarth, 2000, p. 9, emphasis in original).

Within this perpetual activity of human beings, the issues of self and identity have attracted the attention of scholars in many fields across social sciences (Ben-Rafael & Sternberg, 2001; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Caldas-Coulthard & Iedema, 2008; Woodward, 1997). Previous meanings assigned to these concepts have been re-worked and re-investigated, but the so-called 'preoccupation' with issues of personal and national identity has not subsided (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). This unfading interest may be explained by the significant changes the world population is

undergoing – political, economic, and social – which have intensified in recent times. Before starting any discussion on the topic of identity, it is necessary to locate it within a particular sociohistorical milieu, which will give a possibility to understand the interconnections between various aspects of the issue under discussion – the interconnections labelled 'globalization' across social sciences (Beck, 2000; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006; Scholte, 2005).

Globalization and Cosmopolitanism

On the one hand, postmodernism, social constructionism and recent advances in discourse and cultural studies illustrate the theoretical developments in the way social sciences try to understand and interpret the processes taking place in contemporary societies, revolving around identity and related issues. On the other hand, it may be argued that discussion around such topics as globalization and immigration provides the 'real world' context for the application of the above theoretical conceptions to the issue of identity construction.

From a geo-political perspective, it may be suggested that the end of the previous century has witnessed significant changes in political and social life of different nations across the globe (Castles & Miller, 2003). As many theorists argue, humanity in the beginning of the 21st century has found itself deeply entrenched in the powerful processes often summarized under the term 'globalization' (Bauman, 1998; Beck, 2000; Giddens, 2000; Scholte, 2005). In an overview of the critical theories and various debates around globalization, el-Ojeili and Hayden (2006) suggest that this term has been used so extensively by various writers and thinkers from different schools of thought that the concept itself has entered ambiguity and no longer represents critical analysis of complex processes behind it. The most important feature characterizing it, though, can be seen as increasing 'world interconnectedness' (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006).

The metaphor of a 'shrinking' world (Bauman, 1998), or the 'time-space compression' (Harvey, 1989), is commonly used to convey the idea that people living in different parts of the world become more and more interconnected and interdependent on the actions of each other, with sometimes immediate consequences reverberating across the globe. The metaphors of a 'global village' (McLuhan, 1964) and 'transnational spaces' (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998) illustrate the nature of

relationships between people around the world, entailing the type of community where no-one can exist unnoticed or independently from others.

Giddens (2000) argues that the complex set of global processes, including not only economic changes but also political, technological and cultural, are restructuring the ways people around the world lead their everyday lives. He calls the current state of global society a 'runaway world', in the sense that the fast changes in all aspects of human activity across the world seem impossible to control, bring doubtful benefits and lead to contradictory effects on people's lives. Giddens suggests that such traditional institutions as the nation, the family, and others have been radically transformed by the interconnectedness between different regions and cultures of the world, with serious implications for political, social and cultural life of society. At the same time, the global society becomes more and more cosmopolitan, in the sense that people become aware of different ways of life and different ways of thinking. For Giddens, cosmopolitan tolerance allows for cultural diversity and brings hope for the expansion of democracy.

Delanty, Jones and Wodak (2008) extend the concept of cosmopolitanism beyond mere tolerance and plurality. They argue for the positive recognition of difference and the possibility of political alternatives. This positive view incorporates such new notions as 'global space', 'global citizen' and 'global consciousness' which are meant to pave the way to new approaches of understanding and re-constructing the concepts of self, identities and nationhood (Chandler, 2005). The constructionist argument, that individuals and society are co-created through multiple connections and discursive practices (Gergen, 1991), has been strengthened by new global discourses and current developments in various spheres of political and social life in many countries of the world, as the growing interconnectedness of numerous agents around the world erases distances and boundaries between them (Chandler, 2005). One of the processes responsible for the recent increase of interconnectedness and the emergence of new global or transnational spaces is international migration.

Immigration/International Migration

For centuries, people and whole communities have been moving around the globe (Castles & Miller, 2003; Cohen, 1996). At the same time, these earlier waves of large-scale migration were rather discrete and time-delineated (Suarez-Orozco,

Suarez-Orozco & Qin, 2005). However, the end of the last century and the beginning of this one have witnessed an unprecedented increase in both voluntary and involuntary mass migrations from different regions of the world, which can be characterized as an ongoing flow (Suarez-Orozco, 2003).

The changes occurred not only in numbers of people moving across the globe; the nature of immigration has changed dramatically with the variety of patterns and places of origin and destinations for these mass movements, making a huge impact on the whole global community (Castles & Miller, 2003). Nash, Wong and Trlin (2006) argue that, "The movement of people (voluntary and forced) across borders is an international phenomenon, an expression of globalization with implications for national, economic and political stability and cultural identity" (p. 346). Large-scale international migration has become one of the characteristic features of globalization, due to the continuous need for labour that can be relocated to other parts of the world on demand from the global market (Suarez-Orozco, 2003). A sharp increase in immigration has been an immediate response to the allowances made by countries that require foreign workers to fill in labour shortages (Iredale, Hawksley & Castles, 2003). With this continuing rise in migration, reflected in such metaphors as 'waves' or 'flows', the impact of immigration on both the countries of origin and the recipient countries, keeps increasing (Markowitz, 2004).

With immigration becoming more and more of a global issue, the features that characterize migratory processes include the new ways of identity production which become salient not only for immigrants themselves, but also for the members of host communities affected by the introduction of different cultures and new worldviews (Castles & Miller, 2003). In the era of modernity, the idea of national identity has been conceptualized as managed by nation-states who engaged in various means of controlling the subordination of ethnically diverse populations in order to articulate cultural homogeneity on the basis of a shared identity and the suppression of minority identities (Castles, 2003). At present, though, the power of nation states to formulate their national identity is debated in view of the growing influence of transnational and supranational communities, both geographically bound and existing in virtual space (Chandler, 2005).

Yet, to say that nation-states are being fragmented into transnational communities without borders or implode from the inside (see Beck, 2002) is to reject the reality where most current governments, especially in Western countries, employ

harsh policies aimed at 'tightening' their borders and controlling (that is, restricting) immigration (Billig, 2004). As Billig remarks (2004), "There is no free market of labour in the world, for all states seek to regulate the human flow across their borders" (p. 142). Every Western state possesses enough legal, administrative and military means to restrict (or rather prevent) the inflow of 'outsiders' and to define citizenship. Anti-immigration rhetoric is often deployed to 'protect' national identity from the so-called 'erosion' introduced by the cultural and ethnic diversity in previously fairly homogenous societies (Billig, 2004).

Resnik (2006) suggests that local communities cannot ignore the impacts of the global process of identity production which is introduced by immigrants in their struggle for acknowledgement and social inclusion. The instability of identities is reflected in the processes of constant re-invention of new and old identities and reconstruction of such concepts as traditions and ethnicities. Immigrants destabilize formerly homogenous communities and take an active part in identity production in contemporary societies (Resnik, 2006). But to argue that identities are socially constructed is not enough for the full understanding of this process. It is necessary to investigate how these constructions come to life (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008), through a close and in-depth analysis of some population groups, such as immigrants.

The Contemporary Development of the Concept of Identity

The concept of identity, as understood within this research, is adopted from the constructionist perspective (Burr, 1995; Tuffin, 2005). The position of social constructionism on identity asserts that a person's identity is constructed through various interactions and relationships with others, as well as with the immediate environment (Gergen, 1991; Shweder, 1990). This particular environment includes not only the people and community around, but also spatial and historic characteristics a person finds herself in (Tuffin, 2005). Identities are given (certain) meanings within particular temporo-spatial frames and bear markers of the shared systems of social norms, values, beliefs and traditions characteristic of culture around us (Much, 1995; Shweder, 1990). This idea of 'here-and-now' means that, depending on the various circumstances, involving every event and experience in a person's life, as well as the wider processes in the society, the identity will be subject to change, and identity constructions will bear the traces of the ever changing life around,

therefore making identity relational (Gergen, 1991; Iedema & Caldas-Coulthard, 2008). We reflect the histories of our culture(s), enacting them through our identities, and carry our cultural flags and symbols, passed to us by our predecessors, which we, in our turn, pass on to our successors (Liu & Hilton, 2005; Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005; Webber, 1994).

The concept of identification has been traditionally articulated as a simple process circumscribed around fixed and stable 'selves' which most people believe they are (or are not) (Hall, 1996a; Iedema & Caldas-Coulthard, 2008). Postmodernism critiques this essentialist understanding of identity and self arguing that, while various categories employed in identity politics are often taken-for-granted and uncontested by the majority of society, there is nothing primordial or essential about the way these categories are assigned and re-assigned to different groups of society (Lemke, 2008; Shweder, 1990; Webber, 1994). Instead, there is a continuous process of re-articulation and re-formulation of these categories, which is reflected in the constructionist theory of self (Parker, 1994). A postmodern perspective accepts the multiplicity and hybridity of identity, both in relation to human relationships and to such socially constructed categories as race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender and others (Lemke, 2008). Critical research has asserted that without serious deconstruction or continuous reconstruction, the concept of identity does not yield theoretically or methodologically sound meanings necessary for the critical evaluation of social phenomena (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008). The challenge for social sciences is to illustrate how these processes of social construction take place and what they produce (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008).

Following Butler's (1993) concept of identity performance, Lemke (2008) suggests that identities are performed recurrently and relationally in interactions with diverse others, constituting patterns across time and space. The continuity of identity is maintained through the lived experience of embodied sense of self, while the discursive, relational performance of identity is always subject to change and development. Lemke insists that identities are always contested and present the field of continuous struggle between individuals in their plight to construct themselves according to their desires and social institutions that attempt to control and shape identities in order to conform to cultural stereotypes. He argues that uniqueness and non-conformity is not encouraged by Western culture, with lip service paid to notions of diversity and creative freedom. Only the contact and interaction with radically

different cultures can provide the resources for innovation and creative construction of authentic selves (Lemke, 2008).

If identity is socially constructed, then, it is impossible to take the meaning of different aspects or sub-sets of identity, such as professional or work identity, social, ethnic, gendered identity and others, out of context and discuss them as existing separately from each other (Shweder, 1990). It is also impossible to conceive of any aspect of identity as a 'pure' one, or in its 'pure essence'. Different aspects of identity do not exist in their 'essence', they can only manifest within particular contexts while being discursively constructed through interactions of a person with a sociocultural environment (Shweder, 1990).

Derrida (1976) points out that any meaning does not exist on its own and, therefore, cannot be taken in its 'pure' essence. What something (or somebody) is, is first of all what it is not. Thus, we can define something only by separating it from the rest, or by articulating its difference from other concepts. In this regard, identity of a person is defined through her difference from other people, and each time this person is compared to others, her particular difference from another individual will be a defining feature of this person. For Derrida, identity, as well as meaning, are constructed relationally and any meaning seen as from 'inside' can only be defined from 'outside' through articulating the limits (or difference) of it from other ones 'outside'.

Thus, identity of a person or a group of people always depends on others (or other groups of people). Through the variety and multiplicity of our interactions with each other, different aspects of our identities come to play, so that identity never reaches any fixed or stable manifestation. There are always possibilities for addition of new connections, hence, there is always a 'deferral' to other potential identities (Derrida, 1976).

Among various means of identity construction, binary oppositions are the extreme case of the manifestations of difference and the most commonly used one throughout discursive practices (Pickering, 2001; Woodward, 1997), although other oppositions can be constructed too. For example, within a 'multicultural' concept of society, a particular hierarchy of different 'cultures' may be constructed with more than two parts in opposition to each other. In contemporary New Zealand, the binary of biculturalism, the official cultural policy, places Maori, the indigenous population, in opposition to Pakeha, the descendants of British colonists. At the same time, this

binary is challenged by the increasing numbers of immigrants who are not represented in this bicultural paradigm and, therefore, are missing from the official placement within New Zealand cultural structure (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003).

Derrida (1976) argued for the necessity of deconstructing the traditional binary oppositions which are taken for granted in Western intellectual thought (e.g., good/evil, nature/culture, etc.), in order to reveal how the 'truth' is constructed through the devaluation of the 'inferior' part of these binaries. The discursive constructions of in-groups ('us' or 'insiders') and out-groups ('them' or 'outsiders') entail the oppositional identities, through the strategies of positive self- versus negative other-presentation (Wodak, 2008). When there is a normative stance in the 'proper' or 'right' (therefore, ultimately 'good') identity within discourse, the technique of binary oppositions will create a different identity as a 'wrong/bad' one, the one failing to reach the standard of the 'right' level which gets assigned a de-fault status. Consequently, this 'other' identity may be seen as a 'faulty' one, or the 'deviant/deficient/impaired/handicap' one, falling short of necessary characteristics to qualify for the standard (Pickering, 2001).

The language of binary oppositions is often deployed by the power structures to assert the right of domination over others. Hall (1996a) emphasizes the significance of "*access* to the rights to representation" (p. 442, emphasis in original) of particular groups of society and the necessity to contest the dominant discourses of binary oppositions utilized by these groups for the sake of marginalizing others. For Hall, the struggle against this binary system of representation entails the deconstruction of impassable symbolic boundaries used to normalize the difference and construct the concept of otherness.

The Self versus the Other

In relation to identity formation, this binary system of oppositions is rooted in the concept of the Self versus the Other, as well as the rhetoric of othering in contemporary society (Riggins, 1997). Although the relationship between the Self and the Other has been a subject of discussion in European philosophy since Plato, in the area of social sciences the term 'the Other' has been conceptualized as the 'external' or 'social' Other(s), seen by the Self as different to various degrees. The difference between Self and Other(s) lies at the foundation of personal self-constructions and negotiation of several various identities at the same time. According to Riggins (1997),

"…to develop a self-identity, he or she must generate *discourses of* both *difference and similarity* and must reject and embrace specific identities. The external Other should thus be considered as a range of positions within a system of difference" (p. 4, emphasis in original).

Many theories of identity have been criticized for proposing an overly rigid demarcation between Self and Other which is not reflected in the 'real world' where these categories are subject to contextual change and continuous re-articulation and re-formulation (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008). As the analysis of the rhetoric of othering suggests, any type of difference or deviation from the norm can be presented by those who embrace the notion of Self (or insiders) as an opposition to this norm; consequently, those in opposition may be deemed outsiders or Other(s) (Wodak, 2008). Most critical analysts focus on deconstructing the mainstream discourses of othering which are commonly based on stereotypical homogenization and generalized categorizations of other cultures and various groups of people (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008; Riggins, 1997; Wodak, 2008). From this point of view, the membership in one or another cultural or social group is often forced on a person from outside, rather than chosen voluntarily, which functions as the strategy of othering.

Ethnicity and Race

The notion of identity is often considered to be related, or even reduced, to the in-group/out-group theoretical framework (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). The rhetoric of othering, based on the categorization of people into insiders versus outsiders (or 'us' versus 'them') is illustrated in the debates around the concepts of ethnicity and race which are also closely linked to such notions as nationality and citizenship (Delanty et al., 2008). In political and social discourse, ethnicity and nationalism or ethnic and national identity are often articulated together and are difficult to separate (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). The concepts of ethnicity and race both include references to shared systems of meanings, such as culture, origin, loyalty, social norms, rights and responsibilities.

At the same time, el-Ojeili and Hayden (2006) contend that, due to the extensive critique of biological and physiological frameworks previously applied to the formulation of racial categories, 'race' is often re-framed as 'ethnicity' in contemporary discourses. It may be argued that the term 'race', or the notion of racial differentiation, has fallen out of grace in the age of extended freedoms and democracy

and has become a taboo for politicians, academics and general public, especially since the acknowledgement of crimes of genocide (Wodak, 2008). This gap in discourse has been replaced by the term 'ethnicity' which now is deemed more 'politically correct' and, consequently, is used as a substitute for 'race'. This does not indicate that the meaning of race has disappeared from public discourse. Instead, this signifies that race is now articulated through different terms, such as 'ethnicity', 'cultural origin' and others, while still carrying the same stigma and discrimination markers as before (Flam, 2008). If biological categorization through the concept of race used to exaggerate physical features which created negative stereotypes, 'cultural' categorization in our time reaches the same goals with the help of the notions of 'ethnicity' and 'culture' (Machin & van Leeuwen, 2008).

This conflation of the terms 'race' and 'ethnicity' reflects the new ways of othering, which embody new kinds of racism, such as 'symbolic racism', or 'cultural racism', which Delanty et al. (2008) term 'xeno-racism' as a combination of racism and xenophobia. These recent developments are instigated by the spiralling moral panic and social anxieties in response to globalization and increased immigration into the countries of the West, especially in the nation-states of the European Union (Delanty et al., 2008). Racialized categories applied to all migrants and refuge seekers are deployed to produce a demonized version of the symbolic construction of the Other regardless of cultural origins (Pickering, 2001; Westwood & Phizacklea, 2000).

Similar to the historic constructions of Jews, Italians and the Irish as non-white 'others' among Anglo-Saxon immigrants to the USA, discourses of othering based on racist prejudice have been extended to poor white immigrants from the Eastern European countries (Delanty et al., 2008). The same happened to the Portuguese, Spaniards, Greeks and Italians migrating to Northern and Central Europe who were constructed as 'dark' until migrant groups arriving from outside the European Union, including Eastern Europe, have 'whitened' them (Flam, 2008). The purpose of the strategy to racialize the 'outsider/Other' and cultures in general is in constructing immigrants as representatives of a different race or culture, even when their origins are located within the same geographical area, for example, in Europe (Flam, 2008).

This extreme example of constructing some white migrants as different from the white host population in the countries of the European Union illustrates the dynamic of the process of social construction of such concepts as race and ethnicity, evolved from the biological perspective into a more complicated 'cultural' claim (Shimahara,

2001). While ethnicity may be successfully deployed as a cultural basis for the sense of national identity and solidarity within particular groups (Shimahara, 2001), there is nothing 'primordial' in such constructed categories as race, ethnicity or national identity (Billig, 2004). All these identities get articulated and re-enacted through discursive practices and their boundaries get negotiated within everyday interactions between different groups in society (Shimahara, 2001).

In this vein, the term 'nationalism' has also acquired negative connotations and is not used in public discourse as a neutral or positive notion, due to its transparent link to racism in discourses of difference between the native and the ethnic/racial populations (Flam, 2008). The diverse meanings behind it are now articulated in a 'politically correct' manner within the notion of 'national identity', presented as a valuable aspect of our lives and constructed as an ideal aspiration for individuals within the frames of a nation-state (Billig, 2004). Within the discourse of national identity, some ethnic identities may be positioned as 'good' ones (if the meanings underscoring national identity and particular ethnic identities overlap). If certain ethnic identities (or ethnicities) are constructed as carrying 'different' from (or 'other' than) national identity meanings, they may be seen as incompatible or potentially hostile and dangerous to a nation-state (Pickering, 2001). The use of 'cultural arguments' serves to depict other cultures as a threat to the national integrity (Wodak, 2008). It is the ideology of the national culture, instead of the dominant ethnicity or race, that is used to justify oppressive mechanisms of the superior language, customs and traditions, and to legitimize racism towards some 'whites' and poor groups of the same society (Flam, 2008). Thus, ethnicity and race are socially constructed and may be used in identity politics through manipulation, transformation and forcible imposition of discriminatory ethnic and racial identities, while at the same time presented as if existing primordially and statically (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006).

In his critique of discourses of racism, Hall (1996a) argues that ethnic/racial identities, as well as gender and sexuality, are articulated within dominant discourses as fixed and secured categories. For example, within this fixed categorization, 'blacks' are constructed as the inferior race and denied any diversity or differentiation on the grounds that "all black people are *the same*" (p. 444, emphasis in original). This suppression of real heterogeneity of interests and identities among black people is ultimately the denial of their individuality which simultaneously entails the denial of agency and allows for cultural politics of dominance and marginalization. The

homogenization of blacks also provides additional support for maintaining the logic of binary oppositions between 'us' and 'them', continuously articulated in grand narratives of racism (Hall, 1996b).

The boundaries between 'us' and 'them' are not inherently genetic, as they are usually represented in these narratives, but rather political, symbolic and positional (Hall, 1996b). Grounding ethnicity in difference allows for justification of racial practices to regulate, govern, and marginalize ethnic 'others'. Hall (1996b) suggests refusing the binary of 'black or British', as the difference constructed between these two identities is presented as exclusive and mutually opposed, while failing to allow for any hybrid forms. Instead, he proposes to replace the logic of a binary opposition with the logic of coupling, that is, to replace the 'or' with the 'and', so that one can be constructed as black *and* British.

At the same time, a concept of race or ethnicity alone does not exhaust all of our identities, as other multiple representations of our sense of self, such as gender, sexuality, class and others, play their role in the politics of identification (Hall, 1996b). Ethnicity for Hall (1996b) is also a combination of historic and cultural specificity, as a result of continuous and unavoidable hybridization and 'diaspora-ization', because "we all speak from a particular place, out of particular history, out of particular experience, a particular culture… We are all, in that sense, ethnically located and our ethnic identities are crucial to our subjective sense of who we are" (p. 447).

Thus, all aspects of identity, be that race, ethnicity or gender, or any other feature, have nothing essential or universal in them, but are malleable, plastic, and can be chosen by individuals or imposed onto them by others (Barker & Galasinski, 2001). The examples of successful deconstruction of the biological approach to identity can be seen in the feminist critique which shows that sex and gender are socially and culturally constructed and are not reducible to any biological categories (Segal, 1997). Gagnon and Simon (1973) suggest that sexuality is enacted through the variety of sexual 'scripts' existing in every society which prescribe acceptable patterns for socially scripted behaviour. Similarly, ethnicity is articulated and re-enacted with the help of cultural 'scripts', or cultural symbolic repertoires (Much, 1995), available in a particular sociocultural environment (Shweder, 1990).

This postmodern take on identity, leading to its conceptualization as unstable, fragmented and fractured, subject to manipulation and various games in 'identity politics' (Iedema & Caldas-Coulthard, 2008), was reflected by some theorists as a

'crisis of identity' of our times (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008; Woodward, 1997). Webber (1994) suggests that whole societies or minority groups may undergo a series of identity crises due to the changes in their sociocultural environment. He illustrates this idea with the example of European Jews who struggle to negotiate the external push for assimilation into the majority societies with the desire to preserve their unique Jewish heritage in the atmosphere of anti-Semitic prejudice and discrimination (Webber, 1994).

The plasticity and fluidity of identity seems to be the only constant feature, reflexive of the processes occurring in the contemporary society (Bauman, 1997). In this regard, globalization can be argued to function as one of the contexts, as well as one of the mechanisms, in identity construction. Increasing migration, for example, brings changes in community structure and creation of new cultural meanings (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). Growing diversity of immigrants continuously challenges the existing concepts of race and ethnicity and leads to re-articulation of racial and ethnic identities (De Fina, 2000; Foner, 2003), impacting on the meanings involved in national identity construction (Billig, 2004). This explains the contemporary concern with identity and the 'preoccupation' with identity issues within social sciences (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006), as well as in various political and social milieux around the world (Billig, 2004). Such developments in social sciences as positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999), transnationalism theory (Dunn, 2008; Glick Schiller, 2003; Guarnizo & Smith, 1998), as well as extensive critique of previous conceptualizations of identity (Barker & Galasinski, 2001; Hall, 1996a; Segal, 1997) may provide a foundation for research on migrant identities. While transnationalism theory (Glick Schiller, 2003) examines the process of identity formation from a perspective of contemporary globalized environment and international migration, positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) is concerned with a different aspect of identity construction.

Positioning Theory

The concept of positioning has been developed within the broader framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis which suggests that, "Discourses offer *subject positions*, which, when taken up, have implications for subjectivity and experience" (Willig, 2001, p. 107, emphasis in original). Positioning theory has been outlined in the research of Harré and Van Langenhove (1999) who attempt to conceptualize the

structure within which multiple articulations of identity can be organically combined into a holistic sense of self.

If identity is a whole and indivisible sense of self which may manifest differently in different contexts, always unstable and fluid (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008; Iedema & Caldas-Coulthard, 2008; Tuffin, 2005), is it possible to even talk about separate parts or aspects of identity? There are different opinions held by various authors in response to this question. Harré and Van Langenhove (1999) suggest that two kinds of identity represent the concept of selfhood: personal identity and social identity. Personal identity, or singularity of selfhood, is understood by Harré and Van Langenhove as the sense of embodiment and physical continuity of an individual in space and time. This means that personal identity represents the idea that any person is one and the same individual during her/his life time, allowing for various physiological and psychological changes she/he undergoes over time.

Social identity, or multiplicity of selfhood, according to Harré and Van Langenhove (1999), is the representation of an individual across various interactions with others, reflective of her/his place in different relationships. Social identity embraces various manifestations of the individual in different socio-cultural milieux, including the notions of ethnic, cultural, professional identities and countless others, depending on a particular need elicited by a particular interaction.

Broadly speaking, identity is understood as the ways people see themselves, as well as how they are seen by others. These sides of selfhood – personal and social identity – are both manifested and constructed in discursive practices. However, while personal identity presents as relatively stable, social identity, in its multiplicity of expression, may change considerably depending on the situation, bringing out the idea of 'fluidity' of identity (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999). Both kinds of identity still create a sense of holistic (as contrary to fragmented) self, allowing most people to take their identity for granted, unaware of how much it is influenced by the discursive practices they engage in (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999).

Most people take their sense of self for granted and understand it as their personal stable feature. The manifestation of identity occurs in most cases holistically, without any boundary at which one's personal identity ends and social one starts. Identity cannot be regarded as fragmented and consisting of any discrete parts (professional, ethnic, cultural, and so on), unless, as Harré and Van Langenhove (1999) suggest, a person's sense of self is 'malfunctioning', as in cases of amnesia,

multiple personality disorder or other mental health problems. In such cases, the 'norm' an individual strives for is 'the irreducible self', representing a stable sense of self above any fragmentation/reduction into separate unconnected parts. This desire for 'the irreducible self' is vividly depicted in such a mental health issue as self-harm:

> "That first time, when I was twelve, was like some kind of miracle, a revelation. The blade slipped easily, painlessly through my skin, like a hot knife through butter. As swift and pure as a stroke of lightning, it wrought an absolute and pristine division between before and after. All the chaos, the sound and fury, the uncertainty and confusion and despair — all of it evaporated in an instant, and I was for that moment grounded, coherent, whole. *Here is the irreducible self.* I drew the line in the sand, marked my body as mine, its flesh and its blood under my command" (Kettlewell, 1999, p.57, emphasis in the original).

In this regard, while identity presents as holistic, relatively stable and consistent over time, it is always open to change through the contradictory and dialectical processes underpinning it, such as belongings, attachments and memberships, which are not fixed but discursively constructed (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008). This fluidity of identity functions as a foundation for a 'coherent' sense of self, able to integrate a variety of multiple meanings and interpretations (Jones & Krzyżanowski, 2008). It can be argued that different aspects of identity cannot be dissected or separated from each other on the premise that a person usually presents herself as a whole entity. Therefore, a distinction between personal and social identity can only be made on the basis of particular manifestations of different aspects of identity articulated in various discursive practices (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999).

Immigrant Identity

A person's sense of self, understood as a continuous and stable unity, develops through life based on the taken-for-granted social and cultural resources (Parker, 1994; Willig, 2001) embedded in sociocultural environments (Much, 1995; Shweder, 1990). When people move from their habitual cultural milieu to another, as in the case of migration, they may experience a sense of disconnection with their past and a sense of discontinuity in their identity (Benish-Weisman, 2009; Colic-Peisker, 2002; Rapoport, Lomsky-Feder & Heider, 2002). Different systems of social and cultural meanings provide different resources for identity construction (Shweder, 1990); therefore,

identities created in one culture, have to be adapted, adjusted, re-constructed and 'translated' in another (Cronin, 2006).

In this vein, identity is conceptualized as a flexible and unstable concept that undergoes continuous deconstruction and reconstruction, also as a part of global processes of redefining political, social, and cultural meanings (Resnik, 2006). A vivid illustration of these processes is international migration. Immigrants learn about how unstable their identities are through personal and direct experiences of moving between cultures and different social systems (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008). The new cultural systems of meaning usually lack the same resources that immigrants used in their homeland as material for identity construction (Maydell-Stevens, Masgoret & Ward, 2007; Rapoport et al., 2002). As a result of leaving their habitual cultural environment, which provided them with the validation for their identity, they lose this sense of self in new lands (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008) and have to reconstruct it or create a new one.

Sampson (1989) argues that the ownership of socio-cultural resources necessary for identity construction lies with the community, which accumulates and continuously reproduces these resources. While the formation of identity occurs within a particular discursive niche, the resources for its composition may be both symbolic and material (Lemke, 2008; Much, 1995). The discourses of national identity, immigration and multiculturalism provide the symbolic basis for the creation of vital political and economic resources (Hanauer, 2008). Such discourses may be deployed, for example, for dividing newcomers into different groups with different legal standing, such as 'political refugees', 'business investors', 'economic migrants', and others (Wodak, 2008).

Every society, community, or a particular group of people, functions as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983) that strives to build the frames for its own symbolic location in time and place, defining itself as different from others. Most nation states facilitate this through the installation of geo-political borders and the implementation of local sets of laws and regulations. At the same time, what provides people who live within these borders with the sense of their unity, as well as uniqueness in comparison to other nations, is the image of their sameness and the sense of belonging supported not only by material boundaries but also by symbolic concepts of nationhood and community (Anderson, 1983). Billig (2004) notes that, "The national community can only be imagined by also imagining communities of

foreigners" (p. 79). In this regard, every nation or community engages in constructing a binary between 'us' and 'them', articulating particular criteria or discursive resources for inclusion versus exclusion (Pickering, 2001; Wodak, 2008).

These symbolic and material resources within any 'imagined community' are taken for granted and employed easily by the host population who are 'born' into it (Much, 1995; Rapoport et al., 2002). In contrast, new arrivals face a difficult task of deciphering various cultural repertoires and distinguishing between the symbolic and material ones, in order to utilize them appropriately. For example, when the announcement of a multiculturalism policy in a country creates for the host population a sense of a fair and accepting 'imagined community' with inclusion of different ethnic groups, for these very groups such a political decision may mean very concrete and practical consequences in terms of extended rights and opportunities (Bennett, 1998). At the same time, symbolically, these groups may still find themselves occupying lower levels of racial and social hierarchy within the society, despite any legislative or political acts (Hanauer, 2008). Consequently, immigrants have to go through the learning process of familiarizing themselves with the local socio-cultural environment (Masgoret & Ward, 2006) in order to be able to construct or re-construct their identities, reclaiming their ownership over the available resources (Rapoport et al., 2002).

The adaptation of immigrants to new societies of settlement and their adjustment to novel cultures is a complicated non-linear process, often taking years and happening differently for different individuals (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). This process and its psychological underpinnings are hard to capture. The construction and re-construction of identity is a never-ending process for all of us, but, in the case of immigrants, these changes are more pronounced as they are forced on them, often painfully, by their new environment (Webber, 1994).

Hence, the process of identity construction, previously unnoticed and taken-for-granted, suddenly becomes salient and 'tangible', manifesting itself through very real life issues and problems immigrants have to deal with (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008). This complex experience of identity, occurring to immigrants as a matter-of-fact, life-changing and unavoidable process, is more easy to explore among such groups because they become aware of the crucial changes to their identity as a result of migration (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008). In this sense, immigrants present a unique research population, because they cannot escape the profound reconstruction

of their identity, not only by themselves but also by others, and due to this awareness, they are able to articulate their feelings and thoughts about this process (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008).

Positioning Theory and Immigrant Identity

In terms of the theoretical and analytical framework for the research into immigrant identity, positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) may be employed as one of the ways of interpretation. According to Harré and Van Langenhove (1999), "positioning theory focuses on understanding how psychological phenomena are produced in discourse" (p. 4). Identity and selfhood, then, are constructed through a multiplicity of events and positions a person experiences throughout her life. These positions, articulated in discursive practices, may be conceptualized under two processes – self-positioning and other-positioning. Positioning theory helps to unveil the ways in which one can position oneself (self-positioning), for example claiming authority or declaring loyalty, or be positioned by others (other-positioning), that is when others support authority of a person or invalidate it. To engage positioning theory means to deconstruct discourses in order to capture the interplay between self- and other-positioning within the process of identity construction.

As a discursive practice, positioning (both self and other) draws on available socio-cultural resources, engaged as the material for identity formation (Harré & Van Langenhove,1999). Positioning theory allows for exploring how immigrants' identity is constructed through self-positioning (how immigrants attempt to articulate their identity) and other-positioning (how they consider themselves positioned by others, that is in most cases, by the host population). In this regard, positioning theory can also be applied as an analytical tool, to be used in the analysis of various positions claimed by individuals or assigned to them by others.

Transnationalism Theory and Transnational Identity

Another theory that is often applied to the research into immigrant identity is transnationalism theory (Dunn, 2008; Glick Schiller, 2003; Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; Patterson, 2006). Transnationalism, or transnational theory, has received a lot of interest across different social sciences as a response to the impact of international migration on national identity and the emergence of multicultural societies (Castles,

2003). Its foundation is a concept of transnational communities and their manifestation in the form of transnational identities that have been grounded in the dual or multiple affiliations in different communities, cultures and countries. As the justification of a threat to national identity and integrity, nation-states across the globe try to control the growing ethno-cultural diversity through a variety of policies, from assimilation to differential exclusion to multiculturalism (Bennett, 1998). Transnational communities, in their fight against exclusionary and discriminatory practices, challenge all these forms of controlling difference, including multiculturalism which essentially entails the concept of belonging to only one nation-state (Castles, 2003).

Guarnizo and Smith (1998) argued for the scholarship of 'transnationalism from below' aimed at identifying new manifestations of transnational agency which would challenge the traditional understanding of globalization as driven by such powerful actors as nation-states and multinational corporations, bringing 'transnationalism from above' (Castles, 2003). Within this theoretical framework, immigrants, or 'transmigrants' (Castles, 2003), are seen as multicultural agents who "construct and nurture social fields that intimately link their respective homelands and their new diasporic locations" (Patterson, 2006, p. 1891). Such an approach allows for a dual or multiple identity which combines aspects of two or more cultural frames of reference, sometimes also termed 'hybrid' or 'hyphenated' (Bhabha, 1988; Dunn, 2008; Glick Schiller, 2003; Guarnizo & Smith, 1998). These identities have been traditionally viewed through the immigrants' ability to acquire new sets of cultural values and meanings and/or to retain the old meanings from their cultures of origin (Berry, 1994). The integration of both cultural sets has been conceptualized as an ideal outcome of migration in terms of combining different assets, despite the pressure of the receptive societies on immigrants to assimilate into the local dominant identity (Dunn, 2008).

Transnational identity, therefore, entails a combination of two or more identities, rooted in different cultures (Glick Schiller, 2003). Thus, a person's sense of self is conceived as constituting these multiple identities, or different cultural parts of one, each of them being re-enacted in different cultural settings. While transnationalism theory projects an overly positive view of multiple cultural identities that should enrich both the host society and its new transnational residents, immigrants do not often have power to choose their own identity (Dunn, 2008; Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; Zevallos, 2008). The image of the threat of 'dangerous others' articulated as the

prevailing metaphor of immigration in Western discourse has given rise to new waves of nationalism and violation of human rights (Chavez, 2001; Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; van Dijk, 1995, 1996). The ideology of national identity therefore plays a major role in the process of construction and re-construction of migrant identities, pushing them into the frames of various cultural, ethnic and racial hierarchies (Zevallos, 2008).

Guarnizo and Smith (1998) suggest that two forces take part in immigrant identity formation – the rearticulation of group identities by multicultural agents 'from below' through recreating multiple senses of belonging within transnational communities, and the hegemonic projects of nation states imposing prescribed identities 'from above'. These two different, though not necessarily always opposing, agendas result in a constant struggle, producing a variety of discursive resources for identity formation. Arguing against the conceptualization of personal identity as fragmented and free-floating, Guarnizo and Smith suggest that, "personal identity formation in transnational social spaces can best be understood as a dialectic of embedding and disembedding which, over time, involves an unavoidable encumbering, dis-encumbering, and re-encumbering of situated selves. Identity is contextual but not radically discontinuous" (p. 21).

Identity formation of immigrants is inseparable from the political and historical contexts of their societies of residence and the complex processes around the globe (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998). The particularities of time and space produce different cultural resources resulting in different identities, reflecting such local components as government policies and programmes on immigration and settlement, history and nature of migration in that region, provisions for citizenship and others (Dunn, 2008). For that reason, in order to tackle the question of identity construction of immigrants in this research, it is necessary to analyse a historical context and identify particular circumstances for this process.

Immigration in New Zealand

Issues of national identity and belonging, as well as those of racism and xenophobia, and inclusion versus exclusion, play a significant role in all societies, but they are especially salient in the countries with active immigration policies, such as Australia, USA, Canada, and some European countries (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003). New Zealand can also be considered as having pro-active international migration, in

the form of accepting relatively large, in proportion to the total population, numbers of migrants and refugees from different places of the world (Pearson, 2001; Spoonley & Bedford, 2003). According to the 2006 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2007), more than one in five New Zealand residents are born overseas (22.9 percent of the total population). Around 50% of new migrants come from Asian countries, making 9.2% of the total population, with India and China being the largest sources for these migrants (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). During the last decade of the 20th century, the net migration from North and South Asia doubled, which is reflected in the discourse of 'Asian Invasion' promoted by New Zealand mass media and some government organizations (Marotta, 2000).

It has been argued for many decades that countries with active immigration policies require such policies due to the increasing need for new labour resources to sustain the successful economic growth (Pearson, 2001; Spoonley & Bedford, 2003; Watts & Trlin, 2000). According to Bedford and Ho (2006), New Zealand has to compete with three other main immigration destinations: the USA, Canada and Australia, in order to attract new workers from other parts of the world. The nature of migration flows in New Zealand is quite different from these other countries, because besides an extensive immigration, there is a substantial emigration from the country to Australia, the UK and other countries (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). Thus, the reliance of the New Zealand economy on foreign workers is even more critical, to the extent that it warrants the metaphor of "immigration industry" in regard to businesses that provide services and assistance with migration and settlement to newcomers (Lovelock & Trlin, 2000).

The emergence and rapid growth of the 'immigration industry' dates back to the mid-1980s, after significant changes in New Zealand immigration policy (Lovelock & Trlin, 2000). Previously, the vast majority of immigrants came from the so-called 'traditional source countries', such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, and some Northern-European countries (Pearson, 2001). In parallel to the 'white Australia' policy, New Zealand had an even more ethnocentric approach towards non-British Europeans, described by Brooking and Rabel (1995) as "the 'whiter than white' policy" (p. 39). Changes to immigration policy – the removal of traditional source countries preference in 1986 and the introduction of points-based selection for immigrants with qualifications and trade skills in 1991 – increasingly allowed migrants from other countries to move and settle in New Zealand (Lovelock & Trlin,

2000). The consequent upsurge in immigration has not always been taken positively by wider New Zealand society (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004).

A big proportion of new arrivals came from Asian countries, including China. This led to the construction of a social threat articulated by New Zealand media through the label 'Asianisation' (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003), and through the term 'Inv-Asian' (derived from the 'Asian Invasion') (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004), analogous to the metaphor of "the Great Flood" utilized by many industrialized countries to restrict immigration which is predicted to "swamp domestic welfare policies" (Moses, 2006, p. 165). Threatening images created by New Zealand media and reproduced in public discourse, such as Asian drivers' bad driving habits, the economic burden of supporting medical and educational needs of immigrants, and others, led to problematization of immigration and generalization of different migrant groups under the same negative labels (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). While people coming from such a variety of locations as China, India, Indonesia and others usually look different and have very different cultural traditions, the practice of grouping all of them under the term 'Asian' by New Zealand government agencies (Statistics New Zealand, 2008) set the example for the conflation of different ethnic and cultural groups. A similar discursive strategy of generalization is applied to the migrants from different Pacific Island nations, who formally and symbolically are constructed as 'Pacific' people, with the same cultural, usually quite negative, labels assigned to different ethnic groups (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004).

As stated by Brooking and Rabel (1995), other migrant groups besides 'Asian' and 'Pacific' did not draw any significant attention from the government and the media due to their small numbers and general lack of interest in their cultures from the host population. This creates a particular kind of 'invisibility' of these immigrants, especially in comparison to continuously reproduced discursively and therefore easily recognisable images of 'Pacifics' and 'Asians'. The rise in social anxiety among industrialized countries of Western orientation brought by spiralling globalization and increasing international migration has reanimated the old discourses of assimilationism and nationalism (Lewis & Neal, 2005). This new assimilationist era signals a retreat from recent developments in the areas of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism, where "Learning the language of the majority and the cultural and social idiom of the receiving country is turning into a legislated duty for the immigrants" (Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006, p. 5). This increases the push for many

migrant groups for assimilation and 'invisibility' as the best strategy against discrimination and exclusion.

New Zealand's past assimilationist policies towards migrants insisted that, "from the majority population's perspective, 'they' are supposed to become like 'us'… Cultural maintenance, if tolerated, is essentially a private matter for minorities expected to conform to majority norms in public" (Pearson, 2001, p. 123). An ideal of such 'acculturation' would be a unified, homogeneous national identity, framed by the boundaries of the imagined community of the nation state. The significant changes in the nature (and numbers) of immigration to New Zealand, though, seem to render the viability of this projected identity rather ephemeral, despite the rise of public interest in nationalist discourses in recent times. The question on the agenda is how the debate about the future of New Zealand nationhood and bi- versus multi-culturalism is going to involve the growing cultural diversity and the increasing pressure (both in numbers, as well as in terms of political, economic and cultural impact) from various ethnic minorities to be included in the process of identity construction in society (Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005).

A Report on Main Population Groups in the Ethnic Sector (Thomson, 1999), prepared for the Department of the Internal Affairs (later, the Report), used the statistical information from the 1996 Census on Population and Dwellings to summarize the main findings in relation to different ethnic communities in New Zealand. The Report stated that over 200 separate ethnic identities were represented in New Zealand society. At the same time, only 28 of these had more than 4,000 members each. This particular figure was used for choosing to represent different ethnic groups either separately (those citing over 4,000 members), or aggregated together (less than 4,000 members), therefore the remaining 172 ethnicities were divided into several large groups, constructed mainly on the basis of the geographical proximity of their cultures of origin.

Despite a substantive body of research into the larger ethnic groups, such as Chinese, Samoan and Indian (e.g., Ho, 2002, 2004; Leong & Ward, 2006; Pernice, Trlin, Henderson & North, 2000; Trlin, Henderson & North, 1999), many ethnic communities have escaped the attention of researchers due to the small number of their members and lack of relevant training and expertise needed for such research. The lack of appropriate detailed data from government and statistical bodies adds to

the other difficulties a researcher faces in investigating ethnic communities in New Zealand.

The issue of national identity in New Zealand is inseparable from the agendas of both biculturalism and multiculturalism (Pearson, 2001), with cultural diversity in the country demanding more and more serious attention due to increasing numbers of immigrants (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003). There is a need for research on various aspects of immigrants' experiences. As Suarez-Orozco (2003) argues, "The one fundamental law of immigration is that it will change everyone involved: the immigrants and those among whom they settle" (p 69). Research among the 'invisible' and often 'voiceless' migrant groups, provides a possibility to give them a 'voice' and creates a necessary body of knowledge for the host population to enrich sketches of national identity with images of cultural uniqueness and diversity.

The construction of an imagined national community in New Zealand since the arrival of European settlers, and especially in the 20th century, was based on the binary between Maori and Pakeha (that is, the British and other European descendants), which eventually has brought New Zealand to the idea of biculturalism recognized formally by endorsing The Treaty of Waitangi (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003). At the brink of the centuries, though, it became clear that the development of global networks leading to significant changes in the nature of migration, presented New Zealand with the necessity to reformulate its national identity, as immigration has become an integral part of nation-building (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003). While it is widely accepted now that the present and future national community cannot be imagined without close participation of various Asian and Pacific minorities, negotiated alongside Maori selfhood (Spoonley & Bedford, 2003), the impact of other, smaller migrant groups still requires more close investigation.

Russian-speaking Immigrants in New Zealand

The Russian-speaking community in New Zealand is a small cultural group, as there have never been any large-scale migrations. In contrast, such countries as the USA, Canada, Australia and some others have become more commonly preferred destinations for Russians and other ethnic groups who lived within the territory of the former Soviet Union (Vinokurov, Birman & Trickett, 2000). Germany and Israel have also accepted large numbers of Soviet/Russian Jews, especially in recent decades (Al-

Haj, 2004; Elias, 2005; Mandel, 2006). The collapse of the Soviet Union and the following period of economic and political instability, together with the opening of borders, have led to mass migrations from Russia and other states used to form the Soviet Union (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Overall, it is estimated that about ten million Russian-speaking immigrants have settled in different countries around the world since the disintegration of the Soviet Union (Elias & Shorer-Zeltzer, 2006).

Immigrants from Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union have not been adequately investigated in New Zealand, although similar populations in other countries have been a topic of thorough research, especially in the USA, Canada, Israel, Germany and other European countries (e.g., Aroian, Norris & Chiang, 2003; Elias, 2005; Kopnina, 2005; Rapoport et al., 2002; Resnik, 2006; Vinokurov et al., 2000). Statistical data in the above countries indicate that the numbers of Russian-speaking immigrants have been quite substantial over the last several decades. For example, by the end of the 20th century the United States alone have resettled more than 500,000 immigrants from Russia and the neighbouring countries (Vinokurov et al., 2000), with the current total estimate for Northern America of about three million Russian speakers (Elias & Shorer-Zeltzer, 2006). In Israel, more than one million of Russian Jews now make up one fifth of the total population (Al-Haj, 2004). In contrast, in New Zealand, the numbers of immigrants from Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union are quite small, in comparison to immigrants from other ethnic groups, and this presents a significant problem in obtaining statistical data on them.

While this research employs a qualitative and broadly ethnographic approach to data collection and analysis, in order to position it within a particular context it is necessary to involve the statistical information about the population that the research participants represent. It is quite common for social scientists to supplement their ethnographic research with census data, to provide the context for the meaning (Foner, 2003). While the census data should always be used with caution due to certain ambiguities in categorizations and classifications employed during their collection and the voluntary nature of data collection, these are the best estimates that can be found, in the absence of any more reliable statistical data.

According to Thomson (1999), in the 1996 Census just over 3,000 people in New Zealand stated their place of birth to be Russia. As this figure failed to reach the cut-off of 4,000 members to be presented as a separate ethnic group, the 1996 Census

data on Russians were accumulated together with other small ethnic groups under the umbrella of 'other Europeans'. Subsequently, there were no reports or working papers produced on the basis of the 1996 Census data which gave any information about Russians or other ethnic groups from the former Soviet Union as separate cultural groups.

Similar to the generalization strategy adopted towards nationals of different countries in Asia and the Pacific which aggregated them under the labels 'Asian' and 'Pacific', immigrants from Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union were presented by the government and statistical bodies within the simplified frames of different 'others', such as 'other Europeans', or, at best, 'other Eastern Europeans'. This symbolically denies various ethnic groups, often quite diverse in their political, economic, geographical and cultural heritage, any claim to uniqueness. For example, the immigration survey published by Statistics New Zealand in 2008 grouped immigrants from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus under the label "Rest of Europe" together with immigrants from 25 other European countries such as Croatia, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and others (Statistics New Zealand, 2008).

During the 1996 Census only around 3,000 New Zealand residents stated Russia as their birth place, but 5,600 people were identified as being able to speak the Russian language, with 9% of them lacking the ability to speak English (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Although not all of them stated their ethnicity as Russian (but rather as Ukrainian, Kazakh, Jewish, and others), their main language would be Russian. This can be explained by the legacy of the Soviet Union, whose policies aggressively promoted forceful Russification of ethnic minorities living within its borders, insisting on the supremacy of the Russian language and Russian culture among its diverse citizens (Kononenko & Holowinsky, 2001). These policies resulted in nearly the whole Soviet population becoming bilingual, with those who spoke more than one language having Russian either as a first or as a second language (De Swaan, 2001).

Despite small numbers of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand, they are considered one of the fastest growing migrant groups, together with Koreans, Arabs, Croatians, Iraqis, and South Africans (Woodd, 2006). The Report on migration trends for the 2005/2006 financial year cited 1,003 Russians and 317 Ukrainians issued with work or student permits, while 302 Russians and 80 Ukrainians were granted permanent residence in New Zealand (Department of Labour, 2006). The

largest Russian-speaking communities are located in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, with very small numbers of Russian speakers residing in Hamilton, Palmerston North and other places across New Zealand.

The 2006 Census reported over 4,800 people who self-identified as Russians (by writing 'Russian' in the box for 'ethnicity'). Ukrainians, Byelorussians or other ethnicities from the former Soviet Union were not included in the same tables, probably because they have not reached the 4,000 limit to be represented in the Census data separately. Also, 4,578 people specified Russia as their birthplace and 1,152 stated they were born in the Ukraine. This is more than a three-fold increase in numbers since the previous decade, according to the 1996 Census (from 1,449 and 408 respectively). In 2006, there were 7,893 people who noted speaking the Russian language, classified into ethnicity categories the following way: 7,269 were in a sub-group 'European'; 259 – in a sub-group 'Asian'; 231 – in a sub-group 'New Zealander'; 159 – in a sub-group 'Middle Eastern/Latin American/African', with smaller numbers in other sub-groups.

The common language, as well as history, cultural traditions and values shared by various ethnic groups living on the territory of the former Soviet Union, can be regarded as a valid justification for grouping all Russian-speaking migrants together for the analysis of their immigration experiences (Elias & Shorer-Zeltzer, 2006; Kopnina, 2005; Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Therefore, one of the assumptions made in this research was that all immigrants from Russia and other countries which used to be parts of the Soviet Union would have much in common in relation to their political and cultural background and immigration experiences, despite differences in terms of ethnic origins.

Investigating the networks created by immigrants after their arrival in the United States, Tilly (1990) suggests that those who did not share a common identity in their culture of origin often constructed a new, broader identity that became a common one for different sets of immigrants. He gives an example of such ethno-geographic identities as Piedmontese, Neapolitans, Sicilian, and Romans who all became 'Italians' in the United States. Similarly, on the basis of Russian as their common language and the shared history of migration, most immigrants from the former Soviet Union acquired a 'tighter' ethnic identification, as in the eyes of the host population it was easier to consider all of them Russians. Pirie (1996) argues that, "People who speak a common language are united by the very fact they do so; they are bonded in a

'speech fellowship', as language expresses the experiences and values of a culture" (p. 1084). He suggests that those Ukrainians who speak Russian are 'pulled' towards a Russian identity by the cultural bonds of language they use. Hence, the choice of a label "Russian-speaking" for the immigrants in New Zealand who came from Russia and the neighbouring countries and for the participants in this study is based on the assumption of their common cultural resources for identity construction (Melvin, 1995; Poppe & Hagendoorn, 2001).

At the same time, this label ("Russian-speaking") is not meant to convey a similar meaning to the recently articulated concept of 'panethnic' identities, such as Hispanic or Asian in the American context (Foner, 2003), or 'pan-Indian' in New Zealand (Friesen, 2008). In no way does it aim to downplay the importance of ethnic identification and cultural diversity of all ethnic groups represented by the participants in this study, for example, Ukrainians, Russian Jews, and others, as well as ethnic Russians (Poppe & Hagendoorn, 2001). It must be noted, though, that the historical impact of a totalitarian ideology of Russian superiority over ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union can be equated to the legacy of colonialism and the cultural damage done by Western society to other nations of the world (Kononenko & Holowinsky, 2001). The peoples of the former Soviet Union have lived within the same political and cultural systems of meanings for more than three generations, and therefore have used similar cultural resources for their identity construction (Melvin, 1995). The ideology of socialism has provided them with the sense of unitary imagined community, in contrast to the rest of the world which was constructed as constituting two other parts, both quite different from theirs – the capitalist, industrialized West and the poor Third World. No longer valid from a political or economic perspective, this ideology nevertheless remains one of the resources for identity construction for the former citizens of the Soviet Union, often as a taken-for-granted and unnoticed frame of reference (Melvin, 1995).

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and further divergence of new nation-states away from Russian dominance and more into their ethnic and national agendas have initiated a process of change in various areas of social and cultural life, including questions of identity (Pirie, 1996). Although slow, the development of new systems of meanings based on new realities includes the dismantlement of the old Soviet slogans and the devaluation of the 'Russianness' as an ultimate cultural ideal (Melvin, 1995). In this regard, another assumption in this research is that immigrants from the same

regions of the former Soviet Union who emigrated in different historical and political periods would have different resources for their identity construction, depending on the political, economic and social circumstances both in their countries of origin and new places of residence (Kopnina, 2005; Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Therefore, Soviet immigrants who came to New Zealand in the 1970s-80s represent a different cultural wave from those Russian-speaking immigrants who arrived in New Zealand in the last decade, the population of interest for this research.

Methodological Issues and Dilemmas

The rationale for conducting research within this particular cultural group (that is, the Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand) is two-fold. From a practical point of view, the first objective of this study is to provide New Zealand society with some background knowledge about a migrant group that has not been researched previously. Such knowledge will contribute to the existing and continuously growing cultural capital emerging out of a variety of empirical studies among ethnic minorities in New Zealand. The more we know about members of different cultures living in New Zealand and contributing to the wider society, the better our understanding of the complexities of life will be, and hopefully, the more tolerant and inclusive our imagined community will become towards its culturally diverse members.

The second objective of this research is to investigate the identity issues among recent immigrants, illustrating the process of identity construction and reconstruction. In this regard, the Russian-speaking minority in New Zealand may be considered a 'convenience sample', based on my own background as a Russian immigrant. This research will contribute to the development of theoretical knowledge about identity formation among minority groups within the constructionist paradigm. It can also provide material for comparative studies in the field, that may undertake the research into more than one cultural group or more than one historical context at a time.

Such a specific research focus (in terms of its place, time and small numbers) allows the researcher to conduct investigation on a very deep level, to collect immensely rich and authentic data, and to gain a detailed understanding of the issues under investigation. Instead of attempting to broaden the participants' group or scope of investigation, which could have compromised the depth and authenticity of the findings, I decided to subscribe to a variety of different qualitative frameworks and

analytical techniques, summoning all of them to tackle the same research question – How does the identity of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand get constructed?

In order to answer this question, I planned my main data collection in the form of in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking immigrants themselves. The rationale for this type of collecting data is to obtain first-hand personal accounts about immigration experiences from people who have gone, or are still going through these. Currently, this approach is widely used in immigration historiography. It aims at recovering 'the inner world' of the immigrants, in order to allow readers to see the world through the eyes of immigrants and be able to relate to their lived experiences (Jacobson, 2002; Rapoport et al., 2002). Foner (2003) argues that up-close, in-depth studies embedded in ethnographic research and involving a small number of people unveil subtle meanings, otherwise subdued by generalizations, and provide insights into the contextual environment of identity formation.

At the same time, the reliance on the information provided by a small group of similar informants poses the question of representation: How representative are the findings from such a small group (Gobo, 2004; Hall, 1997; Thomas, 1991)? A postmodern approach is especially concerned with the problematics of representation, accepting that there exists an ongoing 'crisis of representation' within any type of research (Clarke, 2003; Lincoln & Denzin, 2003). This assumption, however, does not negate the validity and value of qualitative research. The issue of the value of any research with a small number of participants may be addressed through the metaphor of a film tape which consists of single snapshots, each of them containing a slightly different image. To produce a coherent film, depicting the development and movement of subjects or objects in time and space, we need to obtain separate snapshots first and then combine them together. There can be no film without these snapshots.

A single study with a few participants is such a snapshot, and no matter how small it is, the more snapshots we produce in the process of research, the better we can understand the coherent and inclusive general developments in time and space. Jacobson (2002) argues that, "The sum of immigrant thought will never be known, it is true; but we need not ignore the accessible fragments simply because they are fragmentary" (p. 8). Refraining from doing research on minority groups runs into the risk of 'muting' these populations altogether; while even a narrow opportunity of

giving them 'voice' provides the general public with the knowledge inaccessible through other channels.

Therefore, to understand how immigrant identity is constructed, it is valuable to gain personal meanings and understanding from those people whose identity undergoes this process. Still, this type of data may produce knowledge constructed only from one perspective. According to positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999), immigrants can recount how they see their identity being constructed by others, and how they try to construct it themselves. Both accounts are presented from the personal perspective of the participants in the study. Such data are unable to produce the meanings outside of the participants' understanding, that is, the other ways of identity construction articulated by the society around them.

The postmodernist assumption about the importance of individual interpretation incorporates the acceptance of the narrow scope of such interpretations, as they are always time and context bound, and the 'truth' they create is 'fluid' and subject to change with the change of time and context (Grbich, 2007). Accordingly, truth and meaning are constructed from a particular standpoint which reflects a specific social and cultural location of the dataset (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003), providing insights only into this particular cultural perspective (Grbich, 2007). It is difficult, if valid at all, to extrapolate the research findings from one culture to another, or to apply the assumptions made within a particular frame of reference to other contexts.

To this point, Jacobson (2002) suggests that, "Close studies of single ethnic groups in particular locales yield substantial insights into the social processes attending international migration, but the use of the microscopic lens threatens to exclude some important features of the overall picture" (p. 9). Therefore, additional research from another perspective but tackling the same research question may provide an enriched understanding of the issue. For example, the analysis of the discourses in government documents as well as in mainstream and alternative media may provide the necessary cultural and socio-historic background from which the personal meanings of the participants can be better interpreted. While it is theoretically justified to draw conclusions from data from a limited number of informants, the analysis of their immediate environment will expand those limits and allow for broader generalizations (Jacobson, 2002).

Combining several studies grounded in different methodologies may also address the traditional questions of validity, reliability and generalizability in

qualitative research (Gobo, 2004; Willig, 2001), by achieving what some researchers term 'triangulation' (Stake, 2000; Wodak, 2008). This entails a process by which the meanings from different parts of the research converge to produce a coherent representation of the issue under investigation. Wodak (2008) suggests that data triangulation involves the analyses of various data sets and genres tackling the same research question (for example, discourses of difference/discrimination) in order to integrate multiple perspectives, such as an 'insider' perspective of the discriminated and marginalized, and an 'outsider' perspective of public discourses used by the powerful elites responsible for discrimination and marginalization. In ethnography, similar strategies were termed by Geertz (1973) 'thick descriptions'. They are aimed at gaining as much data about a research topic and from as many different angles as possible.

In addition to conducting interviews, I analyzed New Zealand mainstream newspapers in order to investigate how Russian-speaking immigrants are portrayed by the mass media, and what images and identity constructions are offered to the general public. The representations of immigrants in mainstream media construct images and labels, which are often based on gross stereotypes and may be used by the majority of the host population to easily imagine the unknown Other (Lemke, 2008). These representations, continuously reproduced by the media, already exist in the society which immigrants arrive into; they function as ready-made resources for the construction of migrant identity, often symbolizing imagined 'general opinion' and 'common sense'. Immigrants do not arrive into some sort of a cultural vacuum which they can fill with whatever constructions they wish (Hanauer, 2008); they have to deal with negative labelling (Elias, 2005) and unfavourable stereotypes already existing in the host society (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000; Pearson, 2001). Parker (1994) argues that the discourses of mass media and popular culture continuously create and rearticulate commonsense psychology and provide the general public with resources for opinion formation. Thus, a study of media portrayal of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand will provide a relevant frame of reference for understanding the processes of identity construction the participants in this study engage in.

Another important issue to be dealt with is the choice of methodology for data collection and analysis. From the postmodern theoretical perspective, the diversity and plurality of the world is better investigated through a variety of different ways and

multiplicity of interpretations (Merriam, 2002). It may be argued that it is more justified *not* to use a single paradigm for doing research, but instead to subscribe to several methodological and analytical frameworks which, in combination, will provide a more comprehensive and representative interpretation of the issue under investigation (Merriam, 2002; Wodak, 2008). The abundance of different qualitative, interpretative and postmodern analytical frameworks, strategies and techniques, that emerged in social sciences in recent times provides endless possibilities for creating a rich pool of various methods and for combining some of them into a customized version of a research paradigm that will serve the particulars of the study (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004).

Following this argument, the next three chapters present three empirical studies which utilize two different methods of data collection and three different approaches to analysing these data. The first study (Chapter 2) engages data from the public domain – newspaper articles selected form New Zealand mainstream print media. The data are analysed by means of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Wodak, 2004). The other two studies employ the same data collection method – in-depth ethnographic interviews – but use different analytical techniques. The case study (Chapter 3) follows the narrative approach (Merriam, 2002) to analysing the data. The analysis of the interviews with 20 participants (Chapter 4) is guided by the principles of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), applied in a slightly different manner than for the media data and in combination with positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999).

Chapter 2. Media Study

The following chapter presents the analysis of New Zealand mainstream newspapers aimed at answering the research question on the constructions of the identity of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand print media. The data are selected from the public domain, via electronic databases available over the internet. The analytical framework employed for the interpretation of the data is informed by thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Blackledge, 2005; Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Wodak, 2004).

Why study media in the first place? In the area of communication and discourse studies, it has long been established that the media, and specifically newspapers, have the persuasive power to construct and dispense social knowledge (Lynn & Lea, 2003; Matheson, 2005; van Dijk, 1991). One of the extreme examples of the apparent influence of mass media on the wider life of society may be the debate around the link between the media portrayal of youth suicide cases and a subsequent jump in suicide rates following media releases (Barnfield & Moriarty, 2007).

In relation to identity, both from the perspective of individual members of society, as well as on the part of particular groups, media are one of the "resources for the construction of imagined selves and imagined world" (Appadurai, 2000, p. 3). Fairclough (1995) identifies three main issues central to media coverage of various events: representations, identities and relations. To investigate these issues, he suggests that analyses of media texts should examine how the world and people get represented in media sources, what identities get constructed through those representations, and what relationships are set up between those portrayed in media reports.

In the New Zealand context, mainstream media have been implicated in constructing and maintaining discourses of racism, first and foremost, by producing degrading and racialized categorizations of Maori people from the perspective of white New Zealanders (Spoonley & Hirsh, 1990). In their analysis of the impact of media representations on the sense of well-being among different groups in New Zealand society, especially among Maori, Nairn, Pega, McCreanor, Rankine and Barnes (2006) suggest that the discourses of racism, stigmatization and oppression are

implicated in health problems of those under scrutiny. They argue that the dominance of Pakeha, or white descendants of Europeans, has been advanced and supported by the mass media – a feature characteristic of many colonial societies. Hodgetts, Masters and Robertson (2004) illustrate in their analysis of media coverage of ethnic mortality in New Zealand that the dominant media representations of Maori as irresponsible, lazy, and overly dependent serve to transfer the blame onto Maori for their own health problems and short life expectancy. Accordingly, these constructions aim at legitimizing the claim of Pakeha for symbolic power and control over Maori issues.

As mainstream media are commonly considered by policy-makers as a realistic reflection of public opinion on policy issues, it comes down to the question of 'who has access to the media' in regards to influencing the ways social policies are derived (Hodgetts et al., 2004). The expression of symbolic power by dominant groups in society through media sources leads to stigmatization and marginalization of those groups that lack 'voice' in discussion of the issues affecting their lives. Thus, the identity constructions recycled through the mainstream media are the views that represent the majority position toward different minorities (Hodgetts et al., 2004).

The idea of considering the analysis of media portrayals of Russian immigrants in New Zealand came to me when I read a short article in a Wellington community newspaper *The Wellingtonian*. Though not referring to Russian immigrants in particular, but to people who come to New Zealand from many different countries, the article was a vivid illustration of how the host population sees migrants, in general, and how media construct them in relation to some issue, in particular. The article was titled *Help for migrants* and was published on 31 August, 2006, on page 7. The text of the article is presented here in full:

> The Rotary Club of Wellington is offering skilled migrants a chance to let their talents shine by providing assistance to a workplace communication programme taught at Victoria University.
> The programme was developed in response to the 2001 Census which found that 2,200 skilled migrants were either unemployed or under-employed. Many skilled migrants are highly qualified but lack the New Zealand work experience, language and cultural skills vital to employers.
> Programme developer and teacher Nicky Riddiford says the programme has helped such migrants – from maritime judges to stockbrokers – find appropriate work since it started in April last year.

Participants learn New Zealand norms and values by examining real workforce conversations. They spend five weeks learning cultural and linguistic know-how before pending six weeks in work placements in their professional fields. Work placement gives them the foot-in-the-door experience they need.

Wellington Rotarians became involved in the programme last year and now help in both the classroom and the work-place. They provide a range of assistance from work placements to ongoing mentoring.

Rotarian Leigh Johnson, who helps with work placement, says skilled migrants are an untapped resource.

New Zealand is missing out on their talents just because they are a little bit different. The programme gives them a "New Zealand warrant of fitness", she says. However, work placement is often more about marketing them the right way than teaching them communication skills.

Rotarian Carol Stigley role-plays workplace scenarios with the students to help them fit in. Many find small talk particularly hard, she says.

The first question she was asked was "I know what to say when the weather is good, but what do I say when it is bad?"

Finding a way to say "no" is also an issue. In role-play scenarios, many students have difficulty dealing with situations where they have to tell a superior they cannot undertake a particular task.

On the surface, this newspaper piece seemed rather benign and even quite positive as it told, presumably, about 'good things' happening to some people; more precisely, it was about immigrants getting help. The article briefly described "a workplace communication programme" aimed at teaching highly qualified but unemployed migrants "New Zealand norms and values", "cultural and linguistic know-how" and "communication skills", for example small talk or how to say "no". While the migrants were presented as "an untapped resource" for New Zealand society, their problems in finding employment were assigned to their lack of "the New Zealand work experience, language and cultural skills vital to employers", which the programme sought to address.

This short media piece (310 words) may be used as an abundant resource for a variety of discourse analyses from different angles (for example, what exactly are "New Zealand norms and values"?), but the most striking feature of this article, which made me undertake the media analysis, was the use of the metaphor of "a New Zealand warrant of fitness" in relation to the fulfilment of the programme by migrants. The suggestion that migrants are in need of passing a "warrant of fitness" compared them to a vehicle which cannot function properly or (according to regulations) is not deemed possessing a legal status to function. This metaphor appeals to the commonsense knowledge that a car without a warrant of fitness, if driven, is in

violation of the legal system and potentially dangerous (as a traffic hazard), and if not driven, may be seen as a possible waste or wreck. Similarly, those migrants who are accepted into the programme may be seen as still 'unwarranted' and therefore dangerous, not yet certified as 'fit' to function as workforce and requiring a 'professional assessment' of their 'fitness'.

Construction of immigrants as a labour force or resource within the economic cost-benefit model is not new in contemporary society and in global media (Chavez, 2001). The metaphor 'labour as a resource' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1982) serves to de-humanize workers, as well as commodify and objectify them as necessary 'tools' for production (Apostolidis, 2005). This article illustrates that most immigrants to New Zealand, especially those labelled 'highly qualified', are seen by the host population and media first of all as an economic resource necessary for New Zealand industrial and financial growth. Portraying them as unemployed places them into the category of 'costs', or, at best, an "untapped resource", instead of the category of 'benefit'. The metaphor of the "warrant of fitness" completes the process of ultimate commodification of human beings.

Taking into account that the story about the programme which is devised to help migrants to find jobs is overall presented as a 'positive' piece of news, as there are no overtly negative constructions of immigrants in it, the question arises regarding what impact such 'positive' media have on the audience and how 'positive' news structures the way the general public form their opinion in relation to immigrants. Also, if this is a 'positive' piece of information which constructs even highly-qualified professionals as inexperienced, socially inept and potentially dangerous, in need of teaching and fitness assessment, what impact do negative portrayals of immigrants and their problems have on the general public? The article illustrates that it is hard to draw a line between positive and negative identity constructions of various groups in society presented in media sources. What is easier to identify are the power positions and different status claimed by or assigned to various groups of the population articulated in public discourse, with sometimes clear demarcation lines between majority and minority groups. In this regard, the Foucauldian perspective in the analysis of power relations within discourse provides a valuable standpoint in understanding how different identities get constructed (Barker & Galasinski, 2001).

A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective on Media Studies

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) draws on Foucault (1980) and his concept of discourses of power that produce subjects who are required to fit into particular positions within these discourses (Blackledge, 2005). In this regard, CDA aims at deconstructing such discourses in order to reveal the power relationship between different subjects and identify the mechanisms used in production and reproduction of dominant discourses (Fairclough, 1995, 1989). Barker and Galasinski (2001) argue that discourse is always ideological, where "Ideologies are structures of signification which constitute social relations in and through power. If meaning is fluid – a question of difference and deferral – then ideology can be understood as the attempt to fix meaning for specific purposes" (p. 66). As ideologies are discursive practices, they are articulated continuously in specific sites, including for example, media, which become an apparatus of ideological production of social meanings (Hall, 2006).

CDA takes a political stand in relation to the questions of power and identity (Blackledge, 2005). Barker and Galasinski (2001) argue that both identity and cultural representation cannot escape being 'political' because they are embedded in power relationships. Within these power relationships, some identities are prioritized while others are denied to exist or marginalized. The cultural politics of language and identity are inscribed with power to name and re-name various representations of the social world, for example, those linked to gender and ethnicity (Blackledge, 2005).

Wodak (2004) proposes that CDA should aim at analysing not only transparent (or overt) but also some opaque (or covert) meanings produced by the relationships of power, dominance and discrimination. Similarly, van Dijk (1991) argues for closer attention to the analysis of the 'unsaid' which may expose more important meanings than texts present overtly. This guides the critical research agenda into investigating the issues of social inequality for the sake of achieving "enlightenment and emancipation" (Wodak, 2004, p. 199). Therefore, CDA generally uses a problem-oriented approach, analysing the discursive constructions behind such concepts as racism, identity, social change and similar others. Together with the analysis of political discourse represented in speeches of various political actors, CDA is also interested in researching the language of mass media, which often functions as a site of power and social struggle (Wodak, 2004). While media institutions promote their role as a medium of factual information and events occurring in society, critical

discourse analysts, as well as many other researchers within a wider discourse paradigm, have been able to dismantle such claims and illustrate how media contribute to re-producing the dominant discourses of power and discrimination (van Dijk, 2000).

Media Discourses on Immigrant Identities

The power of mass media manifests in their role in providing wide audiences with the particular resources for identity constructions for majority and minority groups in society (Cottle, 2000). Media sources offer the general public ready-made scripts for construction of such binaries as 'us' and 'them', 'insiders' and 'outsiders', 'normal' and 'abnormal/deviant', which are reproduced in cultural politics creating the symbolic 'national identity' and the identity of the Other (Cottle, 2000).

When media present and portray various ethnic groups as different from the majority, they tend to emphasize 'cultural' differences as deviant and abnormal, which may be illustrated on the examples of the ostensible 'headscarf issue', arranged marriages, female genital mutilation and honour killings among Muslim immigrants in European countries (Blackledge, 2005; Lewis & Neal, 2005; Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006). Such media reports contribute to moral panics and national paranoias among the host populations who see immigrants as threatening their social values and cultural norms – concerns which find their way back into the media reinforcing the image of immigrants as 'dangerous Others' (Delanty et al., 2008). As the national majority is implicitly constructed by media as culturally and racially homogeneous, any deviation from the 'national standard' becomes constructed as a 'foreign' and 'outside' threat (Chavez, 2001).

Van Dijk (2000) points to the primarily 'discursive' and 'symbolic' nature of the power of media and demands that media elites be held responsible for the construction of prevailing discourses within mass media, especially in relation to the coverage of ethnic affairs in various media sources. As most minority groups do not have access or are unable to exercise their power regarding their own portrayal in mass media, media discourses are dominated by the majority view who abuse the power of representation (van Dijk, 2000). Thus, cultural representations of various minority groups are aimed at reproducing the constructions of Otherness and the opposition between 'us' and 'them', allowing for an easy direction of any public

concern towards particular 'scapegoats' (McDougall & Fletcher, 2002). In cases where 'their' identity is clearly portrayed as negative from various angles, this allows for a simultaneous implicit construction of 'our' identity as a positive one, even when there is no explicit articulation of the latter one in a media source (Wodak, 2008). The opposition of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is the most typical feature of media discourses about minorities. Van Dijk lists the following most common topics covered in the press about immigrants and ethnic minorities, as those which tend to emphasize 'Their' bad actions and 'Our' good ones:

> "New (illegal) immigrants are arriving.
> Political response to, policies about (new) immigration.
> Reception problems (housing, etc.).
> Social problems (employment, welfare, etc.).
> Response of the population (resentment, etc.).
> Cultural characterization: how are they different?
> Complications and negative characterization: how are they deviant?
> Focus on threats: violence, crime, drugs, prostitution.
> Political response: policies to stop immigration, expulsion, and so on.
> Integration conflicts" (p. 38).

In a survey investigating the representation of ethnicity in domestic news in Dutch and other European Union newspapers, ter Wal, d'Haenens and Koeman (2005) found a disparity in the coverage of minority and migrant issues in comparison to the way other issues were presented. Across different newspapers and different countries in Europe, ethnicity was often associated with such controversial issues as crime, public unrest and religion, reported from a negative and problem-laden perspective; the latter (religion) with a focus on fundamentalism and extremism. Crime was the most prevalent topic in stories with an ethnic dimension, followed by other issues, such as (racial) violence, illegal immigration, integration/segregation, asylum, and immigration policies and control. Across all stories about crime, criminals and deviants were portrayed more negatively when they belonged to minority groups.

Overall, members of minority groups were more negatively portrayed than their majority counterparts, and news about ethnic minorities, including immigrants, were presented in a more negative light than general news. Ter Wal et al. (2005) conclude that the European print media continuously reproduce a stereotypical image of minorities as either criminal or deviant Others or as a few celebrities on the positive end of the scale. A similar strategy of criminalization of cultural difference

through the use of ethnic and religious labels has been identified in Australian media (Collins, 2007).

Santa Anna (1999) investigated the stereotypical framing of Others in American print media texts around the 1994 political debate on immigrants. His analysis identified the dominant metaphor 'Immigrants are animals', with such secondary metaphors as, 'Immigrants are debased people, weeds, commodities', as well as 'burden', 'disease', 'dirt', 'floods', and others. Through the use of such metaphors, especially 'Immigrants as animals', immigrants are assigned a less-than-human standing which separates non-citizens from citizens. This metaphoric mapping, Santa Anna argues, is an element of racist discourse, and his findings are consistent with the research of van Dijk (1991) who similarly notes that racist discourse is replete with animal themes.

Santa Anna (1999) also shows how the anti-immigrant discourse strategy of splitting American society into the in-group, Us, and the out-group, the Other, by using such words as 'they, that, this, them, those, here and there', as well as 'we, us, and our own', reinforces the differences articulated in negative metaphors of 'Immigrants as animals, criminals, burden' and others. He suggests that America's everyday discourse about immigrants is permeated by racism, though the discursive construction of racism via anti-immigrant metaphors is subtle, as blatant racist slurs are no longer tolerated in public and political discourse.

As the studies of discourses of 'New Racism' (Cottle, 2000), or 'new Apartheid' (van Dijk, 1996; Lynn & Lea, 2003), illustrate, the binary logic of 'us' and 'them' (or in-groups and out-groups) reproduces the power of the dominant group of society to articulate their sense of identity in opposition to the sense of who they are not (Matheson, 2005). The majority does not need to define itself clearly, as it undergoes the construction of 'default' attributes, while exercising its power to define others. As Matheson (2005) notes, Maori, Pacific and Asian people (as well as other immigrants) in New Zealand are constructed in terms of their ethnicity, while white New Zealanders can simply identify themselves as 'New Zealanders', "because the white European culture holds the status as the national culture and there is no need to assert it" (p. 142). Moreover, what may be seen as an implicit representation, the national identity discourse articulates the 'whiteness' of a New Zealander as a default attribute of national belonging, automatically denying symbolic rights of full citizenship to other groups of society (Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

Though migrant and ethnic minorities contribute to the social life of host communities in many diverse ways, through their participation in the economy and culture, mass media tend to present them in a negative dimension, for example, constructing immigration in general as a threat, as well as articulating most ethnic relations in terms of problems and deviance (van Dijk, 2000). In his summary of media representations of Britain's black and ethnic minorities over 40 years, Cottle (1991) notes that there is a very limited repertoire of such representations which are marked by "conflict, controversy and deviance" (p. 193).

In another study of media coverage of Tamil asylum-seekers in the Dutch media, van Dijk (1988) illustrates how their identity was constructed in terms of a 'problem' – either having problems (by being associated with crime) or causing problems, for example, to the Dutch welfare system. Thus, the most prevalent constructions of immigrants in mass media are as a problem or a threat (Cottle, 2000). With the increase of immigration into most Western countries at the turn of the centuries, including mass migrations of refugees from the regions of military and racial conflicts, the metaphors of 'flow', 'flooding', 'waves' and 'invasion' have been relentlessly recycled in mass media to enhance the image of a threat, equating the arrival of new migrants to a natural disaster (Pickering, 2001; Ramos, 2004; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004).

The responsibility for problems associated with immigrants, such as crime, drugs, deviance, as well as discrimination and racism, is only partially assigned to immigration control and government agencies (Collins, 2007; Pickering, 2001). Quite often media reports shift the blame onto ethnic minorities for their own situation (Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006). For example, 'bogus asylum seekers' are blamed for 'racist' violence against them because they are constructed as being dishonest in the first place (Lynn & Lea, 2003), which allows the media to construct a commonsense background for discrimination and racist discourse (Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999; Pickering, 2001).

Wodak (2006; 2008) reports on a pervasive practice of conflating two distinct concepts of 'asylum seeker' and '(im)migrant' in debates across the European Union. The conflation of asylum seekers and (illegal) immigrants serves to represent all those who try to escape political and ecological disasters in their homeland as 'bogus' and often as 'merely' economic migrants (Lewis & Neal, 2005). This 'bogusness' becomes a categorical feature and is justified by such constructions of asylum-seekers

as potentially greedy, dishonest, and criminal. Articulation of all who come into the country seeking asylum as potentially suspect or 'would-be-terrorists' (McDougall & Fletcher, 2002) enables an image of "the enemy in our midst" (Lynn & Lea, 2003, p. 440), providing the grounds for a moral panic among host populations.

As two different concepts of 'asylum seekers' and '(im)migrants' are mixed up, resulting, for example, in such labels as 'illegal asylum-seekers', 'illegal refugees', 'illegal immigrants', 'economic immigrants', 'bogus refugees', and so on, this leads to the positioning of anybody who wants to enter Western countries as the same and as 'illegal' (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2000). Such a strategy of homogenization and criminalization of all immigrants reproduces xenophobic discourse and, together with metaphors of 'flooding', helps to legitimize demands for more restrictive policies on immigration and political asylum (McDougall & Fletcher, 2002; Pickering, 2008; Wodak, 2006).

In this regard, van Dijk (1995, 1996) argues that by identifying Others as 'illegal aliens' and associating them with problems and crime, the majority is able to construct discourses of power for the sake of justifying discrimination and exclusion of those who do not fit in with the concept of 'Western' identity – "foreigners, immigrants, refugees, minorities and in general the Rest that the rich, modern and tolerant West does not want" (van Dijk, 1996, p. 291).

The label of 'illegal aliens' is representative of the prevailing position of the host population towards immigrants, articulated through various stereotypes in American (Chavez, 2001) and European (van Dijk, 1995, 1996) mainstream media. According to Leeuwen and Wodak (1999), a variety of ethnic stereotypes have emerged in Austrian media discourse, following the increase of international migration to the European Union since the end of the 20th century. These stereotypes construct immigrants as criminal, deviant, lazy and having a different culture – the attributes which ultimately produce an image of a threat to the social system, and consequently, allow for the implementation of 'tougher' legislation against unwanted Others, resulting, for example, in rejection of family reunion applications of immigrant workers in Austria (Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999).

Portrayal of Immigrants in New Zealand Print Media

While there has been some invaluable research performed on media representations of Maori and the language of racism from a perspective of post-colonialism (Hodgetts et al., 2004; Nairn et al., 2006; Spoonley & Hirsh, 1990; Wetherell & Potter, 1992), only a few studies have investigated the media constructions of different migrant groups in New Zealand. The most comprehensive study in this area involved the analysis of the print media, with particular reference to the *New Zealand Herald*, during the period 1993-2003 (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). The authors identified a new period in New Zealand media representations of immigrants starting with the "Inv-Asian" articles in Auckland community newspapers in 1993 which gave rise to political debates about the nature of immigration in New Zealand and signalled the start of a moral panic fuelled by mass media.

Spoonley and Trlin (2004) argue that as a result of this moral panic the label 'immigrant' has been engulfed by the term 'Asian' with the consequent politicization and problematization of immigration in New Zealand. A strong image of a threat as a primary attribute of (Asian) immigrants has been articulated through their association with criminal activities, unsafe driving, limited English and the overall media portrayal of immigrants as a 'problem', and "as a threat to common New Zealand values and institutions" (p. 28). Another feature that the study unveils in media discourse is the ultimate homogenization of immigrants, with such labels as 'Asian' and 'Pacific Islanders' subsuming different ethnic groups and denying any cultural diversity between these groups. Spoonley and Trlin suggest that "the label 'Asian' overrode significant differences between various immigrant groups and represented a racialized box or label in political and media usage" (p. 32).

As an example of a non-Asian and non-racialized group among immigrants, the study analysed the coverage of South-Africans in New Zealand media. Apart from two cases where media attention was drawn to the issue of potential teaching of Afrikaans to children of South-African immigrants, print media did not pay much attention to this ethnic group. Spoonley and Trlin (2004) conclude that South-Africans, and occasionally Zimbabweans, were only mentioned among other ethnic groups which made them virtually invisible, especially in comparison to the attention paid by media to Asian immigrants.

Another sub-group of immigrants that received substantial media coverage in New Zealand consisted of refugees and asylum seekers. The confusion in media between the two produced the conflation of these terms and association of both groups with the concerns around 'bogus claimants' and 'non-genuine' identity. Apart from the criminalization of these groups, especially in the coverage of 'fraudulent' asylum seekers or 'refugee scams', the cultural differences between some of those groups (for example, Somalian or Ethiopian) and the host community were magnified to the extreme, threatening with a "mutual culture of incomprehension" (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004, p. 32).

As to the main topics discussed by the print media in relation to immigrants the study identified two major themes: the issue of economic growth, employment and welfare, and the association between immigrants and crime. The economic argument of benefit versus burden for New Zealand society seemed to be the main focus of the media covering the issues of unemployed or underemployed skilled immigrants, especially in cases of medical professionals unable to gain registration and consequently any work in the health sphere. At the same time, immigrants were blamed for receiving welfare benefits and for their lack of English language competency. Overall, immigrants were portrayed as either an asset, through their contribution to the economy and potential to stimulate economic growth via geo-political linkages with Asia; or, more often, as a 'waste' or 'loss' due to their unemployment or underemployment (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004).

In terms of criminal associations, New Zealand print media were consistent in their constructions of immigrants with the mass media in other Western countries (Cottle, 2000; van Dijk, 1988). The main focus of criminal reporting in New Zealand newspapers was on 'Asian' crime, inflating the image of a threat by drawing attention to the most serious criminal acts, such as kidnapping, extortion and gang activity (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). Despite the fact that police reports identified only certain Asian communities as involved in such activities but not others, the media coverage did not distinguish between different ethnic groups from Asia and used the label 'Asian' as a generalized construction for all the immigrant groups from this region of the world. This generalization strategy contributed to the criminalization of all immigrants from different Asian countries (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004).

In another study of New Zealand media, Loto, Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Nikora, Karapu and Barnett (2006) investigated the ways Pacific Islanders were portrayed in

print media reports. They analysed 65 paper documents for portrayals of Pacific people in New Zealand published over a three month period between 1 October and 30 December, 2004, in the two major national dailies and the highest circulation weekend newspaper. The authors reported that, despite the fact that Pacific people have been extensively used in New Zealand as cheap labour since the middle of the 20th century, they are still constructed by New Zealand media as unproductive foreigners or inferior Others who do not belong. The most common representations included constructing Pacific Islanders as unmotivated, unhealthy (both physically and mentally), violent and criminogenic, overly dependent on social welfare, and consequently, as a drain on tax payers. Though there were also some positive representations of Pacific Islanders as hardworking, community and family oriented and physically active, these media reports focused on a few individuals, quite often elite sportsmen, who functioned as exceptions to the rule.

As Loto et al. (2006) argue, the overall construction of Pacific people as deviant Others serves the purpose of excluding or 'othering' ethnic minorities from the 'normal' majority. They suggest that the binary between 'us', the 'normal' majority, and 'them', in this case, an 'abnormal' or 'deviant' Pacific minority, is necessary for the construction of national identity for the majority of the population in positive terms, for example, as healthy/active (versus unhealthy Pacific people), independent (versus dependent Pacific Islanders), responsible and so on. Loto et al. conclude that presenting the Pacific minority as inferior and deviant outsiders allows forging positive self-identity for the European majority. They also argue that in a wider colonial sense, constructed boundaries between 'us' (as active, normal and independent) and 'them' (as passive, deviant and dependent) serve the need to justify claims of the majority for power and social control over ethnic minorities. The only way for Pacific people to escape being positioned as 'deviant' Others is offered through assimilating into a more generalized national New Zealand identity, rejecting their cultural heritage and conforming to the norms of the dominant culture.

While the ethnic minorities from different Asian countries and from Pacific Islands can be easily distinguished from the European majority by their visible differences, the construction by media sources of migrant groups as 'dangerous Others' is not limited to visible minorities. As Lawrence, Kearns, Park, Bryder and Worth (2008) report in their study of representation of tuberculosis (TB) in New Zealand newspapers in 2002-2004, recent immigrants to New Zealand were

considered the major source of the 'TB problem'. As TB is often constructed the 'Third World disease', media tend to racialize and stigmatize the sufferers, looking for culprits among the most 'problematic' groups of society, for example, refugees and asylum seekers. Certain 'high-risk' countries are implicated in supplying New Zealand with 'diseased' migrants, thus justifying the demands of some politicians to 'harden the borders' in order to protect the New Zealand population from any exposure to this 'Third World disease'.

The moral panic triggered by media representations of TB as a potentially fatal, deadly or lethal disease, despite the scientific evidence that it is treatable and not highly contagious, is used by media sources to reproduce the discourse of a threat of the dangerous Other, when "TB becomes recast as a disease of 'Other' places and peoples" (Lawrence et al., 2008, p. 737). Again, the construction of a 'TB problem' as a 'foreign' issue to New Zealand, allows for the positive self-image, necessary for the sense of national identity as symbolized by the European majority. As the 'otherness' is constructed through the negative representations of a health threat, as well as economic burden on the economy and medical sphere of New Zealand, the dominant group is given the moral right to exercise power and social control, for example, under the slogan of protecting the New Zealand population and its resources from 'diseased' Others.

Methodological Issues Related to the Analysis of Print Media

As Lynn and Lea (2003) suggest, print media provide convenient and useful material for discourse analysis of a wide spectrum of political and social views and ideas prevailing in society, as well as allowing for some degree of interaction and engagement with readers, for example, via letters to the editor. The fact that, once published, all information and material simultaneously become the part of the public domain, adds to availability and convenience of such a resource for any type of analysis (Lynn & Lea, 2003).

The research question of how the migrant identity gets constructed can be directly investigated using media reports about immigrants and immigration issues, published in national newspapers. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the ways Russian-speaking immigrants are portrayed in New Zealand print media, with a particular emphasis on the most dominant and recurrent identity constructions

articulated in mainstream newspapers. In comparison to a vast body of empirical research on discursive constructions of immigrants and ethnic minorities in European and American media, there are only a few studies of this kind in New Zealand, and no research has considered immigrants from Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union. Therefore, this study aimed at filling this knowledge gap by tracing and analysing all mention of Russian immigrants in New Zealand press that can be located in the public domain.

As the previous discussion of immigrants' representation in New Zealand print media illustrated, mainstream newspapers are prone to focus on sensationalist reports creating moral panics (such as that reflected by the term 'Inv-Asian') and the sense of social anxiety, especially in relation to visibly different migrants (Loto et al., 2006; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). As to non-visible migrant groups, for example, South Africans, Spoonley and Trlin (2004) found that, despite the significant numbers of new arrivals from South Africa since the mid-1990s, there was little media coverage that identified South Africans either in a negative or a positive way. Spoonley and Trlin suggest that this lack of attention on the part of New Zealand media could be due to the fact that, being predominantly white, South African immigrants had not been racialized in the same way Asian and Pacific peoples were and therefore remained invisible, both in terms of media attention and in the eyes of general public. Similarly, it may be suggested that, as the majority of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand have a European appearance, they present a rather invisible cultural group, outside the usual pool of racialized targets of mass media.

Strategies for Data Collection and Rationale for Selection

For the search, the electronic database Newztext Newspapers was used. The following search strategy was employed: both terms – 'migrant(s)' or 'immigrant(s)', and 'Russian' or 'Russia' – had to be present in an article to be selected (to produce a combination of either 'Russian (im)migrant(s)' or '(im)migrant(s) from Russia'). There was no time frame restriction as to how far back the search went, with the top-end cut-off as 31 December 2007. Different New Zealand newspapers started entering their archive material into the database from the mid-1990s, therefore the earliest date produced by the search was 02 January 1995 (The Evening Post).

The database Newztext Newspapers is an archive of the full text of most Fairfax-owned Newspapers, beginning in 1995, and of The New Zealand Herald since November 1998. The newspapers that submit their material to this database are: The Dominion Post (including former The Dominion and The Evening Post), The Press, The Timaru Herald, Evening Standard, The Daily News, Truth, The Southland Times, Taupo Times, Nelson Mail, Whangarei Leader, Waikato Times and The New Zealand Herald.

This search strategy resulted in 527 hits, but the majority of articles (382, or 72%) had no relevance to the research question and were discarded from further analysis (including 16 double entries of the same articles). There were several reasons for excluding these data. The largest number of articles (236) not selected for the analysis did not have any obvious link between what was said about migrants or immigrants, and the context in which 'Russia' or 'Russian' were mentioned. For example, such articles presented discussions or overviews of international events involving Russia (usually in relation to its politics), and some groups of immigrants, whether in New Zealand or other countries of the world.

Other articles involved mentioning 'Russian' in a different (from immigration) context as a qualifier, for example, there were four cases of the idiom 'Russian roulette'. In other cases 'Russian' and '(im)migrants' or 'migrants from Russia' were mentioned together but not in a New Zealand context. Another group dismissed from further analysis described Russian immigrants mentioned in books or movie reviews (for example, in regards to the animation movie 'Anastasia').

The last group of articles was discarded because the events described in them were too distant in the past to be deemed to have significant influence on the current media portrayal of Russian immigrants in New Zealand. For example, 'White Russians' in reference to Russian nobility in the beginning of the 20th century, and those who immigrated during or after World War II, came to New Zealand in different historical circumstances and have been here more than half a century, thus not fitting the criteria of 'recent immigrants'. Other articles described those of 'Russian descent', whose parents were Russian immigrants.

This reduction strategy left 145 articles (28%) which were subjected to detailed analysis. In two cases, when the article only referred readers to the original publication in earlier issues of a newspaper, this reference was followed, with the

articles from the secondary search included into the analysis instead of the first 'referral' hit.

Of course, it may be argued that there would have been more articles about Russian immigrants in New Zealand media if the search included 'Russian' or 'Russia' only, without limiting it to 'migrants' or 'immigrants', on the grounds that other words can be used instead, for example, 'newcomers', 'arrivals', 'settlers', 'origin' and so on. At the same time, this strategy would pull all the articles about Russia or something Russian, most of which have no connection to immigration issues (such a search resulted in 23,153 hits). Apart from the difficulties imposed by such a large number of hits, the other argument against this strategy would be that the term 'immigrant' (or 'migrant') has particular significant implications for identity construction of those who arrive to New Zealand from Russia or other parts of the former Soviet Union. The purpose of the study was to focus on the function of this term and its meaning for the people constructed as such, thus the term '(im)migrant' was deemed a necessary criterion for the data selection.

Analytical Frameworks and the Process of Constructing the Themes

The combination of two analytical frameworks was used for the analysis of the data. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to separate the dataset into several themes. The texts from the newspaper articles assigned to different themes were later analysed using the guidelines of Critical Discourse Analysis (Blackledge, 2005; Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Wodak, 2004).

Braun and Clarke (2006) conceptualize thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail" (p. 79). The advantage of thematic analysis is in its flexibility, both in terms of the variety of data sets it can be applied to, as well as its compatibility with different research paradigms (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis may be efficiently combined with different versions of discourse analysis, such as Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Wodak, 2004), Foucauldian discourse analysis (Grbich, 2007), positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) and others.

The process of separating the whole data set into a number of themes is not a straightforward, unidirectional procedure. It inadvertently starts with the first steps of

initial selection of the data set from the whole data corpus (in this case, all the 527 articles included in the initial search results). In order to make the choice between retaining or discarding any of the articles, I had to read them first, at least briefly, and determine whether or not each of them was relevant to my research question. Consequently, the criteria for exclusion became very clear quite soon in this first stage of the analysis, as most articles fell into the group where words 'Russia(n)' and '(im)migrant(s)' were not referring to Russian immigrants at all. Other reasons for exclusion were also quite easy to identify as the research question demanded only those articles to be retained which in one way or another portrayed Russian immigrants in New Zealand as current or potential members of society.

While in the process of determining which articles to include and which to exclude, I already started separating the retained articles into some groups (themes), marking them according to the topics they were reporting about. Sometimes it was easy because some articles were quite short and described particular events on the basis of police or court reports (right from the onset these formed the core of the theme 'Criminal associations'). After I completed the first (exclusion) stage of the analysis, I continued with a more detailed coding of the retained data set, verifying the initial themes and adding new ones.

In relation to coding for thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) compare two possible ways of identifying themes or patterns within data: a theoretical (deductive) or 'top down' way, driven by the researchers' theoretical assumptions about the data set; and inductive or 'bottom up' way, similar to the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), where the analysis is data-driven. Coming from the constructionist paradigm, I followed the inductive analysis which is "a process of coding the data *without* trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83, emphasis in original).

At the same time, it is impossible to imagine that the literature I had already read in my research area did not make me expect to find in my data set some themes rather than others. As Braun and Clarke (2006) note, "researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitment, and data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum" (p. 84). Therefore, to prevent jumping to ungrounded conclusions on the basis of previous knowledge while not accounting for some small but important ideas, it is necessary to continuously verify the coding,

looking for additional information, while constantly going back and forth between the entire data set during all analytical stages (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The purpose of such an elaborate process is to name the most common themes by identifying the relationships between codes, and later on between the themes, sub-themes and overarching themes, ultimately aiming at developing a thematic map as visual representation of those relationships (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A thematic map may change during the analysis as its main idea is in 'mapping the meaning(s)' – allowing the researcher to understand the meaning behind the themes; how the whole data set broken into separate codes and themes comes together at the end of the analysis with some holistic answers to the research questions.

For example, in the initial stage of coding and searching for themes and patterns in my data set, I straight away identified two large groups which smaller codes or themes fell into – the overall negative portrayal of Russian immigrants (with such themes as 'Criminal associations' and 'Illegal immigrants') and the overall positive portrayal (such as contributions to New Zealand society). Also during the initial coding, many articles were temporarily assigned into the 'Miscellaneous' theme, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), as it was difficult to see the connections between some complex or ambiguous codes straight away.

Advising to view coding as an ongoing organic process, Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend reviewing themes throughout the analysis, while defining and refining them, together with further development and re-development of thematic maps. During this stage, I reanalyzed the theme 'Miscellaneous' because it had too many articles to discard them from the analysis according to meaningful themes. While reviewing the initial coding for the articles in this theme, new themes were identified, for example, 'Cultural diversity' and 'Rich investors'. Going back to already existing themes, I re-organized some of the articles from those themes into the new ones, while also constructing more sub-themes and re-developing my thematic map.

Going back and forth in this manner, I reduced the number of articles in the 'Miscellaneous' theme and achieved a more coherent thematic map. At the same time, there were few sub-themes (or codes), for example, 'Russian brides' and 'Russian prostitutes', which contained only a few articles and therefore did not warrant separate themes on their own. Through continuous 'immersion' and re-reading of the texts of the articles, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), I found similar

features in representations of Russians across such smaller sub-themes as 'Russian brides', 'Russian prostitutes', 'Crime victims' and 'Crime offenders', therefore, I included all of them into the theme 'Criminal associations', which later was reconstructed into a sub-theme within the theme 'Russians as trouble'.

During this stage I also found a few articles which did not fit the criteria for inclusion in the data set if read very close to the text, which I had missed during the exclusion stage. These were removed from further analysis. Later on I performed a detailed discourse analysis on all the articles within the themes which resulted in a massive text with many extracts from the data. For this I read the articles again with even more rigorous 'immersion', sometimes realising that some of them fit better into a different theme from the one I assigned them to earlier. Thus, the final defining and naming of themes had not finished until I completed the discourse analysis of all the data.

As I performed the original data search and the analysis of the themes in December 2006, more than a year before I started writing it up as a chapter for my thesis, I decided to do an additional search for the whole year of 2007, which resulted in 42 additional hits, 10 of which I retained according to the inclusion criteria (these numbers are included in totals mentioned above). The final thematic map was verified and validated by this additional search and the consequent analysis, as I found no new codes or patterns in the articles published throughout 2007.

Several additional searches were performed during the analysis, mainly to establish the frequency of certain features assigned to Russian immigrants in those articles which did not mentioned the word '(im)migrant'. For example, the search was performed on 'Russian brides' to investigate how pervasive this label was in newspapers reports. Such cases were not analysed in detail, only the numbers of hits on those additional searches were noted.

The rationale for not including these search results into a detailed discourse analysis was based, on the one hand, on the necessity to narrow down the search strategy to get manageable numbers of hits, and on the other hand, again, on the significance of the label "immigrant" for Russians who have settled in New Zealand, rather than a simple ethnic label "Russian", which does not fully represent the social status of those who immigrate. Therefore, I was looking for explicit constructions of (im)migrant identity assigned to Russians in New Zealand and was not interested in

Russian brides per se, for example, but only in the ways this label was directly linked to the image of Russian immigrants in New Zealand newspapers.

In terms of cross-sectional analyses, only one type of these was performed additionally to the main analysis of the themes. The category 'Just mentioned' was identified in relation to only mentioning Russian immigrants among other ethnic groups in New Zealand, as it became clear during the analysis that this is an important feature which deserves a separate interpretation.

At the same time, there were no cross-sectional analyses performed in terms of time periods (earlier, older reports versus more current ones), or in terms of difference between the types of newspaper reporting, for example, editorials versus letters to the editor or feature articles versus photo captions. When certain extracts were chosen to illustrate the theme or strengthen the argument, I sometimes mentioned the type of article used for the extract, especially when it was relevant to the way information was presented. The lack of a cross-sectional analysis in this regard was motivated by the fact that throughout the whole history of this database there were only a small number of newspaper stories portraying Russian immigrants, thus, there were not enough data to get similar numbers of different types of news reports to compare them adequately, or to compare any particular time periods. Due to the overall scarcity of media representations of Russian immigrants, all types of articles were retained for the analysis, including editorials, standard news reports, descriptive pieces, features, commentary articles and photograph captions.

I also decided to refrain from any cross-sectional comparison between different newspapers. Though some media research identified the political leanings of various media sources (for example, more right-wing orientation versus more leftist ones) (see Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999; Ramos, 2004), New Zealand mainstream media do not bare such a clear distinction to a level adequate for any substantial analysis. Additionally, the newspapers sourced for building the data set for this study all came from the same database owned by the same media agency (Fairfax), therefore I assumed that it would be very hard to justify any comparison referring to political agendas of different newspapers. The only newspaper that substantially differs from the others is Truth, self-classified as a tabloid aiming mainly at male readership. Due to that, I decided to include the articles published in Truth in totals for each theme/sub-theme but refrain from using any data from Truth to illustrate them.

As a result of the thematic analysis the data set was divided into eight themes, some of which contained sub-themes. The main themes are presented in **Bold**, while the sub-themes – in *Italics*. A sub-theme *Criminal Associations* was subsequently divided into four categories. The figures in brackets represent the number of articles in each theme/sub-theme/category, and sometimes their percentage in the total data set. The word 'Russians' is sometimes omitted from the theme title for brevity.

Analysis of the Themes

There were eight themes constructed on the basis of the data analysis:

I. **Russians as Trouble**, consisting of 61 articles. The sub-themes within this theme included:

1. *Illegal Immigrants* (31 articles);
2. *Criminal Associations* (27 articles), which consisted of further categories:
   a) Criminal offenders (7 articles);
   b) Crime victims (14 articles);
   c) Russian prostitutes (2 articles);
   d) Russian brides (4 articles);
3. *Health Threat* (3 articles).

II. **Russians as Unused Skills** (14 articles). The sub-themes included:

1. *Unemployed* (5 articles);
2. *Underemployed* (4 articles);
3. *Doctors* (4 articles);
4. *Brain-drain* (1 article).

III. **Russians in Teaching Programmes** (15 articles).

The above three themes were identified from the very beginning as portraying Russian immigrants more in a negative context, rather than in positive or neutral ones. The remaining five themes were not portraying Russians in an explicitly negative light; therefore they originally fell into a group of more positive (or neutral) representations of Russian immigrants in media.

The five other themes constructed were:

IV. **Russians as Rich Investors** (3 articles).

V. **Russians as Economic Potential** (12 articles).

VI. **Russians as Contributors to NZ society** (18 articles).

VII.   **Russians in Cultural Diversity** (17 articles).

VIII.   **Miscellaneous** (5 articles).

The order of the themes is not given any particular meaning, except for the grouping of convenience for the analysis in terms of negative versus positive/neutral images. The first code/sub-theme I was able to clearly distinguish from others was *Illegal Immigrants*, but it was justifiable to start analysing it first due to the highest number of articles assigned to this sub-theme (31), within the larger theme **Russians as Trouble** which also ended up, on the level of themes, containing more articles than any other theme (61).

The theme **Miscellaneous** had eventually only five articles left in it which did not fit into any other theme. In these articles the reference to Russian immigrants was either unclear, or ambiguous, thus not allowing for any interpretation of meaning as to how or why this reference had been made. For example, one of the articles reported on an accident of drowning, mentioning that the victim's wife was a Russian immigrant. Another one was featuring a story of two men from Russia travelling the world, and while in Palmerston North they were reported to be staying with a local Russian immigrant. Overall, as there were no particularly representative identity constructions of Russian immigrants, I decided to omit them from the further analysis.

In the following analysis of the themes, the substantial and exemplary extracts from media texts are referenced via indication of a media source and a date, added at the end of such extracts. In cases where smaller phrases and sentences from various articles were incorporated into the text of the analysis, they are presented in quotation marks but without references to particular sources, as in many instances the same words and constructions were recycled or re-quoted in different media reports.

Russians as Trouble

Out of all eight themes, the theme **Russians as Trouble** had the largest number of articles assigned to it (61, or 42% of the total). Three sub-themes were created within this theme: *Illegal Immigrants*, *Criminal Associations*, and *Health Threat*.

The sub-theme *Illegal Immigrants* had 31 articles assigned to it, the largest number among other sub-themes and themes. Even though three single events/cases gained multiple coverage (with 14 articles covering one of the cases; 5 articles – another one; and 2 – yet another one), the fact that there were more media reports

about illegal immigrants of Russian origin than any other type of articles describing Russian immigrants, shows how salient the image of an 'illegal' immigrant is in constructing the identity of those who come to New Zealand from Russia. The effect of this disproportionate attention of media towards 'illegals' cannot be ignored. By continuously repeating and reproducing only these three cases media reports create a more powerful representation of an illegal and deviant Russian identity which may suppress and override all positive constructions attempted in other articles. An image of a threat linked to the label of 'illegals' also serves to draw more attention and excite stronger emotions of anxiety and panic among the general public, than any benign portrayals of 'legal' immigrants (Delanty et al., 2008).

All three cases which attracted the extensive media coverage were about immigrants of Russian origin being deported out of New Zealand. The repeated reporting of the same events by different newspapers, as well as revisiting those cases by the same media sources, is most likely due to the sensationalist nature of the issues linked to deportation and the moral panic surrounding them, typical of mass media in all Western countries (Delanty et al., 2008).

The way these events are presented in New Zealand newspapers is consistent with the constructions of 'illegal immigrants' and asylum seekers in European, American and Australian print media (Pickering, 2001; McDougall & Fletcher, 2002; Ramos, 2004). It has been noted by discourse analysts that 'illegal' immigrants in Western countries are criminalized despite the fact that nearly all of them have never committed any crimes under the definition of criminal laws of these countries (van Dijk, 1995, 1996). Similar to what is happening in Europe, Australia and the USA, where "being an 'illegal' immigrant in itself is already seen as a crime" (van Dijk, 1995, p.148), the representation of 'illegal' immigrants in New Zealand media also entails criminalized images enacted through particular discourses and references to police and the legal system (such as 'custody, court, judges', etc.). Through the features of criminal discourse, media constructions emphasize the dominant image of 'illegal' immigrants as criminals embodying a threat to national security (Pickering, 2001).

As well as criminalization of 'illegal immigrants', there is an increasing tendency of European media towards homogenization and passivization of migrants. In his research of Irish and Spanish newspapers Ramos (2004) identified passivization as the process of presenting immigrants in mainly passive roles, for example being

detained or deported by police and immigration officers. He argues that such passivization puts immigrants into "agentless states" (p. 211), as they are portrayed as experiences, recipients or victims of immigration officials and legal systems.

There is similar evidence of passivization of Russian immigrants in New Zealand newspapers through the engagement of the criminal discourse, where 'illegal Russians' are "arrested", "strip-searched", "handcuffed", "taken into custody", "locked in cells", "led from the court cells into a police van", "sentenced to periodic detention", "refused permanent residence", "escorted out of New Zealand", "finally deported" and so on. Apart from particular words used commonly in relation to suspected or convicted criminal offenders which construct the identity of 'illegal' immigrants as criminal, some media sources identify the 'crime' they are implicated in as "immigration fraud" and/or "passport fraud", as well as linking them to organized crime of smuggling and trafficking people by international crime gangs.

In contrast, the host population, often generalized in terms of national identity simply as 'New Zealand', is presented as 'vulnerable' and being taken advantage of, and consequently in need of better protection. Such constructions manifest in articulated concerns about "potential to expose NZ to a wave of illegal immigrants"; "existing loopholes that continue to be exploited"; as well as demands for "severe penalties [to be put] in place so New Zealand would not be seen as a 'soft target'". Such arguments result in the strategy of demonization of asylum seekers and other migrants that is deployed to legitimize government policies aimed at tightening border security, increasing surveillance control and overall inhumane treatment of refugees and immigrants (McDougall & Fletcher, 2002).

Consistent with international research (Leudar & Nekvapil, 2000; Lewis & Neal, 2005; Lynn & Lea, 2003; Pickering, 2001; Wodak, 2006), as well as with the findings of Spoonley and Trlin (2004) in relation to New Zealand media, there were many cases of conflation of 'illegal immigrants' with 'asylum seekers', as well as with 'refugees'. For example, the most-reported case of a Russian man who sought refugee status in New Zealand was described in 14 articles gained from the original search strategy of combining the words "Russia(n)" and "(im)migrant", referring to him mostly as an 'illegal immigrant'. An additional search performed on his name added 7 more articles that did not name him an '(im)migrant' but a 'refuge-seeker', 'refugee', 'asylum seeker', or simply a 'deported man', clearly illustrating the tendency of mass media to conflate all these terms.

This case produced the most 'rich' identity constructions of an 'illegal alien', possibly due to its complexity and ambiguity and the increased media interest in it. No other immigrant of Russian origin in New Zealand has ever received so much attention from the press. Various government officials, including Ministers, judges, Immigration Service officials, as well as Members of Parliament (MPs), were quoted by media sources reporting on this case. Their comments included blaming the man for being "uncooperative" and "the author of his own misfortune", while his "detention was largely self-induced because he had not co-operated with authorities".

While there was some expression of sympathy towards him in a few reports stating, for example, that "His benefit was cut off while he waited, forcing him to sleep on streets and live on food handouts" and that he was "afraid he will be jailed when he gets home because he spoke out against his country while he was here" (The Evening Post, 14 Dec 1999), the same article, as well as five others, framed him as a 'burden' to New Zealand. They repeatedly referred to the amount of money spent on him, which grew from an initial $25,000 to "more than $35,000" after he was reported as unsuccessfully deported by authorities, only to be sent back to New Zealand. The "taxpayers" were directly identified as those who had suffered from this man who was described as "devious enough to get sent back".

Similar to the strategy of problematization of immigrants in New Zealand identified by Spoonley and Trlin (2004), this man was directly named a 'problem' in the quote attributed to an MP who proposed "a simple way of eliminating the problem of Mr X" (by sending him "where he came from"). This construction also illustrates the process of dehumanization and depersonalization of immigrants through equating them to non-human objects or notions, such as 'problem', 'numbers', 'cases', and 'arrivals' (McDougall & Fletcher, 2002; Ramos, 2004).

There were also many detailed and negative identity constructions in relation to a particular category of Russian immigrants labelled by seven different media reports as 'Russian sailors' or 'Russian seamen' accused of seeking 'illegal' ways to gain residence in New Zealand. One media source suggested that "a new subculture has developed", as explicated in identity ascribed to Russian (and Ukrainian) sailors accused of 'immigration fraud' by arranging 'sham marriages' with New Zealand women. The binary of 'us' and 'them' gets most explicitly articulated through contrasting portrayals of New Zealand women and Russian men, reaching the extreme representation in the opposition of 'good' versus 'evil'.

While New Zealand women are constructed as vulnerable, lonely, "often unsuspecting" and trusting, easy to be "used", "duped", "exploited" and then "dumped", Russian men are presented as "fraudster[s] all the way", with malicious intent of deceiving not only New Zealand women but the whole nation. Such issues as financial, physical and psychological abuse, violence, heavy drinking, "all types of fraudulent activity", as well as lack of certain virtues, are attributed to Russian sailors who are also equated to 'illegal immigrants' when they are labelled as "jumped off the ships" in New Zealand ports.

The binary of moral (on the part of New Zealand women, as well as the whole nation) versus immoral behaviour is continuously articulated through the features of moral discourse, where the host population (in-group) is portrayed as possessing high moral values (for example, "I gave him his freedom and I expected him to behave morally"), while immigrants (out-group) are constructed as lacking genuine intent, possessing "a deliberate intention to deceive", and consequently as being a threat to morality. The features of moral discourse have been used in European political discourse on immigrants as justification for authorities to control or prevent the arrival of new immigrants (Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). The moral argument is also the main rationale of accusing 'bogus asylum seekers' of being simply 'economic immigrants' through contrasting political persecution (as a form of higher moral evaluation) and economic hardship, which 'economic' refugees are blamed to have caused themselves, either through their passivity or inability to work harder (Lynn & Lea, 2003).

Overall, Russian immigrants presented by New Zealand press as 'illegal aliens' were criminalized, problematized, portrayed as deviant, dishonest, immoral, a threat and an economic burden to the whole country, while New Zealanders explicitly (as local wives of Russian sailors) and implicitly were constructed in a positive way, as honest, naïve and excessively trusting, and therefore, vulnerable and easy to be deceived and exploited (also as taxpayers), thus requiring the protection of the authorities from such 'evil'. An additional construction of a 'fraudulent', 'false' or 'fake' identity attributed to those who were implicated in using false passports to enter the country only emphasized the image of a social threat to the whole nation (Chavez, 2001; Ramos, 2004).

The second sub-theme within the theme **Russians as Trouble** was titled *Criminal Associations*. It contained 27 articles, the second largest number after *Illegal*

Immigrants and it was subdivided into four categories: Criminal offenders (7 articles), Crime victims (14 articles), Russian prostitutes (2 articles) and Russian brides (4 articles). The decision to put these 4 categories together was made during the detailed analysis when I found similar representations of Russian immigrants across these groups. The analysis of media reports of criminal acts showed that there was little difference in the way victims of crime or their perpetrators were portrayed when they were identified as Russian immigrants, with similar features ascribed to Russian prostitutes and Russian brides.

Ramos (2004) states that as immigrants are most often associated with reprehensible acts, the dominant constructions of them involves attribution to out-group, therefore implicitly demanding some evidence of that through ethnic identification. He found that both Spanish and Irish media gave "irrelevant specification of nationality in 'negative stories', even in the case of naturalized citizens" (p. 208). Such strategy contributes to the consolidation of difference as a feature of migrant identity, which overrides the dichotomy of victim and perpetrator.

In the case of Russian immigrants, New Zealand media produced the same negative characteristics for both categories of Criminal offenders and Crime victims. Similar to the sub-theme *Illegal Immigrants*, the vast majority of individuals described under these two categories were men. In most cases they were attributed such qualities as being violent, unemployed, or having inadequate employment, drinking heavily (usually vodka), speaking "little or no English" (also, "limited" or "halting" English), as well as having social and psychological problems:

> "A Russian immigrant [ ] unemployed, had already been refused refugee status, the judge said. [ ] …had been so grossly intoxicated that he could not undergo the conventional testing procedures, judge said. [ ] … had been drinking vodka to counter depression…" (The Evening Post, 12 Dec 1996).

All these features paint a bleak picture of a typical representative of low-class, underprivileged groups of society with multiple socio-economic and psychological problems, such as unemployment, alcohol abuse, violent/criminal behaviour and others (Bauman, 1998b; Chavez, 2001). What is added to this stereotypical representation is the image of 'cultural difference' and 'problems' in adjusting to New Zealand life which function as a cultural marker for most immigrant groups:

"Judge [ ] said both men were immigrants to New Zealand and appeared to be having difficulty adjusting. [ ] Defence counsel [ ] said both Russians had difficulties adjusting to a new country and a more responsible lifestyle. He said both men had drunk a stunning amount of alcohol before the incident… [ ] 'In Russia he might not have an alcohol problem but he does here', he said" (The Evening Post, 24 Apr 1998).

Some media reports produced such similar constructions of victims and their perpetrators that it may seem that only chance determined who would get killed and who would go to jail. By constructing the identity of a victim through explicitly negative attributes, media reports shifted the blame for what happened onto victims. For example, a man found drowned in the sea was reported as an alcoholic, depressed for a long time and was quoted having said that he "could not handle New Zealand", coping with that by drinking vodka. Thus, through implicit indication of a 'cultural threat' manifesting in 'adjustment problems' or cultural 'difference' assigned to Russian immigrants, they are constructed as a problem to New Zealand society, both as criminals who have to be 'treated' and as victims who are portrayed as hopeless and unable to defend themselves.

If the majority of characters described in criminal reports are men, the categories Russian prostitutes and Russian brides construct stereotypical representations of Russian women. Though prostitution was legalized in New Zealand in 2003, prostitutes are often criminalized in media discourse; this was also found in two articles about prostitutes from Russia and some other countries. Playing an 'ethnic' card also allowed these media pieces to make a direct link between 'illegal' status and prostitution, by calling them "immigrant cheats". It is necessary to note, though, that both articles appeared in Truth, a self-classified tabloid that aims predominantly at the male readership.

This unfavourable stereotype of women from Russia and neighbouring countries as sex workers has been incessantly recycled by mainstream media in other Western countries, especially in Israel (Elias & Bernstein, 2007; Remennick, 1999). The marginalization of these women is reinforced through their alleged association with sex crimes, illegal sex trade and Russian Mafia, which contribute to the demonization of the whole migrant group (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000; Remennick, 1999).

The constructions behind the label 'Russian brides' are not very different from those of Russian prostitutes, with overlapping characteristics with other categories

within the sub-theme *Criminal Associations*. Despite the fact that foreign brides enter the country legally and on different grounds from other sub-groups of immigrants, New Zealand media reproduce the pervasive image of 'Russian brides' as a problem, similar to criminal offenders or victims of crime. As found in other research on 'mail order brides' (Simons, 1999), these women are constantly suspected of criminal intention in marrying for the sake of gaining a permanent residence. Both stereotypes of Russian prostitutes and Russian brides recycled in New Zealand media allow for generalization of all immigrant women from Russia as amoral outsiders, resonating with images of Russian women in other countries (Elias & Bernstein, 2007; Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000).

While implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) constructing foreign women who marry New Zealand men as prostitutes, media sources also provide detailed representation of them as victims, using similar discourses as for other victims of crime: abuse and violence against them, their fear to report this abuse and maltreatment, and the need for protection by the state. They are assigned passive roles and agentless status through attribution of the same constructions of powerlessness as for the victims of crime, as well as for some criminal offenders:

> "…the women, mostly from Russia and Asia, were vulnerable, often having no money, work permits, rights to benefit or legal aid, and no family support. Many did not want to go home, as they would face community scorn and were often rejected by their families" (Sunday Star Times, 8 May 2005).

Though there was a weak implicit construction of Russian women as an asset for a 'flagging' New Zealand population, the dominant portrayal was negative, with one of the articles announcing in its title the attitude of the New Zealand population towards the "Russian brides factor" in an explicitly exclusionary way: "We need engineers not Russian brides" (The Southland Times, 25 May 2005). In this, New Zealand media followed a common script of constructing single female migrants as 'a mail order bride versus a prostitute', virtually conflating the two stereotypes and ignoring any other gender issues in immigration (Simons, 1999). As there is a monetary aspect in those stereotypes – New Zealand men pay for the services of prostitutes, or for the 'delivery' of their mail order brides – women are also constructed as passive commodities who are expected to fulfil their consumers' demands (Simons, 1999).

Overall, the constructions of Russian immigrants across different categories of the sub-theme *Criminal Association* were very negative, resulting in the general image of a problem which demands the attention and resources of New Zealand society. Russian immigrants were seen as a source of trouble for the host population, ranging from an image of a threat to the stereotype of a burden for the whole country to a general affiliation with low socio-economic and underprivileged groups of society.

Similar to the victimization strategy commonly used by the middle class towards the poor ('they are poor because they are lazy, unmotivated, waste money on alcohol and drugs, and so on'; Bauman, 1998b; Rimstead, 1997), immigrants serve as scapegoats and are blamed for their own problems, including language difficulties, inability to deal with psychological distress, problems with finding work and unhealthy coping strategies, such as alcohol abuse (Wodak, 2008). Consistent with the way Pacific people are constructed in New Zealand media (Loto et al., 2006), Russian immigrants were also portrayed as unmotivated, unhealthy and criminal Others, in need of control and philanthropic provision by the members of the host population. By using similar identity constructions across the four categories, New Zealand media erase the distinction between offenders and victims of crime making the ethnicity label a super-ordinate category that conflates the abused and the abusive and ascribes the same criminal nature to both groups.

Media representations of ethnic minorities as infused with crime result in the criminalization of cultural difference, where "the criminality of individuals becomes the criminality of cultures" (Collins, 2007, p. 73). Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) argue that one of the most common representations of immigrants in domestic press is the 'criminality script' which is created on the basis of emphasized ethnic origin in crime reports, leading to over-generalization strategy transcending to all members of migrant groups, where "immigration means criminality and drugs and foreigners are drug dealers, comparable to the Russian Mafia" (p. 113). Immigrants are constructed as criminals through stereotyping of their crimes as ethnic crimes (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Again, such generalizations serve to enhance positive self-presentation of the host society (Elias & Bernstein, 2007; Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999) through the binary of normality assigned to the locals versus deviancy attributed to immigrants (Loto et al., 2006). The normality of 'us' is secured through the reproduction of deviance and inherent illegality of ethnicity intertwined with

criminality, as dominant features in threatening discourses about 'them' (Pickering, 2001).

The third sub-theme within the theme **Russians as Trouble** was titled *Health Threat* and contained only three articles. All three articles did not focus on Russian immigrants in particular; they only mentioned Russia among a few other countries as the place of origin for immigrants constructed as a potential health threat to the New Zealand population. These articles discussed health problems for which particular immigrant groups were blamed: tuberculosis (TB), HIV, and "Third World practices" of female genital mutilation (FGM) and abortion of female foetuses. Apart from FGM associated with African refugees, the three countries repeated in all three articles as "high-risk", or "high-prevalence" countries for TB, HIV and female abortions were India, China and Russia.

Across these articles, the notion of a (health) threat is constructed through the use of such terms as "warned", "alerted", "concern about possible transmission", and others. The health issues under question are presented as having an external and therefore more dangerous to New Zealand origin, as they are portrayed as 'outside' problems brought into presumably 'healthy' New Zealand society. These constructions are consistent with the previously identified media portrayal of TB as "disease of 'Other' places and peoples" drawn on the notion of "social threat of the migrant 'other'" (Lawrence et al., 2008, p. 737).

As found in Australian research, migrants from the countries identified as sources of potential 'health hazard' to the host population are often constructed "not only as problem, but as deadly problems" (Pickering, 2001, p. 182). The image of the 'diseased deviant Other' as opposed to the presumably clean, healthy and normal host society may be used for justifying the exclusion and stigmatization of particular ethnic groups and migrants in general by presenting them as parasitic, polluting and exploiting the health system, as well as 'barbaric' and corrupting the 'moral fabric' of society (Pickering, 2001), especially in references to the practices of abortion of female foetuses and FGM.

To summarize the theme **Russians as Trouble**, the dominant identity constructions of Russian immigrants produced by New Zealand media were those of a problem and a threat to New Zealand society, in terms of national security and safety of the host population, including the health of the whole country. Even when Russian

immigrants were not explicitly portrayed as trouble-makers, they were still identified as a source of a potential trouble, for example, as a burden on New Zealand taxpayers or in need of protection and care from the state, as in the case of crime victims and sick patients.

Russians as Unused Skills

The second theme was titled **Russians as Unused Skills**. It contains 14 articles (10% of the total) which fall into four sub-themes: *Unemployed* (5 articles), *Underemployed* (4 articles), *Doctors* (4 articles), and *Brain-drain* (1 article). Though there were some minor differences in the ways Russian immigrants were identified in these articles which led to their subdivision into four sub-themes, overall the identity constructions across these sub-themes were so similar that it is justifiable to look at them together. For example, the sub-theme *Doctors* included the articles portraying Russian doctors among other immigrant doctors who were either unemployed or employed outside the scope of their qualifications (underemployed), and discussing similar topics to the first two sub-themes, with additional information applicable to medical professionals.

Overall, out of 14 articles, five of them only mentioned Russian immigrants among other migrant groups having problems with employment according to their qualifications. The rest provided profiles on particular individuals including names, age and other personal details. The emphasis of all the articles in this theme was on the idea that highly-skilled and well-educated immigrants struggle with finding work in line with their qualifications. Consequently, in the descriptions of particular individuals, their professions and qualifications were constructed by media sources as their primary identity feature.

There are common features in the ways different media sources present Russian immigrants and recount their 'stories' under this theme. The description often starts with naming the qualifications and professions of particular individuals featured in the article. Then a reader learns about their story of migrating to New Zealand, including their 'hopes', 'dreams' and 'expectations', which are presented by media sources as too high and ungrounded:

> "Olga and Slava were well qualified university-trained engineers and assumed that, as they met New Zealand Immigration Service criteria enabling them to migrate here, jobs wouldn't be too hard to come by. [ ]

But they were mistakenly confident finding work in their fields would be easy" (New Zealand Herald, 25 Oct 2004).

Next, the story usually tells readers about the 'struggles' immigrants have in finding work or having their qualifications recognized in New Zealand. Again, the blame for this is usually attributed to something inherent to immigrants themselves, rather than to their environment, for example to their incompetence in English or lack of local knowledge necessary to "fit into their new country". The inferior personal qualities of unemployed immigrants are also presented as one of the explanations of difficulties they face in finding work. Government officials are often summoned by media sources to validate the inferiorization of these highly-skilled professionals who "can't expect everything to be offered on a plate; you have to work to better yourself" (New Zealand Herald, 25 Oct 2004).

Thus, contradictory to the image of 'resource' reflected in the detailed descriptions of qualifications and skills of immigrants, they are also articulated through the image of 'lack' leading to 'deficiency' label assigned to them. This image of inferiority and deviance from normality is further strengthened by descriptions of the psychological problems which immigrants experience due to their un(der)employment. Even when presenting a story of a Russian immigrant who eventually found a job, though still below his professional qualifications, his identity construction is dominated by negative attributes, such as lack or deficit of something, rather than positive ones: "no jobs, no friends, no money"; "unable to find a permanent job, and became increasingly lonely and dispirited"; "very sad and desperate"; "[his] family do not speak fluent English" (The Press, 26 Aug 2000).

Though several articles mentioned the issue of Russian (and other) immigrants being victims of 'subtle discrimination', immigrants are overall constructed as being responsible for their problems which contributes to the strategy of victimization, often deployed in relation to refugees or victims of crime and poverty (Hodgetts et al., 2004; Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006). Mentioning the possibility of "subtle discrimination", the same article quotes a few lines further a Russian woman as saying, "Maybe if is my fault because I do not learn enough English and I don't have enough computer skills" (Sunday News, 2 Nov 1997). The construction of self-blame is again based on the image that immigrants are 'lacking' or 'deficient' of some important features in comparison to the native population.

Though this 'deficit' is usually named as something specific, such as lack of 'good English', or an adequate registration of qualifications, sometimes it is identified as 'lack of New Zealand experience' or 'lack of local knowledge'. Such a strategy creates a default position of seeing immigrants as 'different', because being new to the country would always involve something they cannot possibly know before arriving here. Often the mere fact that they have arrived to New Zealand from other places is used against them to justify the construction of difference and the assimilationist demand to "learn to be Kiwi" (New Zealand Herald, 25 Oct 2004).

The last sub-theme in this theme (*Brain-drain*) contains only one article which describes the issue of immigrants leaving for Australia after gaining New Zealand citizenship. Problematizing this issue through the use of large statistical figures, as well as such metaphors as 'people-drain', 'brain-drain', 'influx', 'Transtasman flow', 'sharp upsurge' and 'exodus', the media source constructs the image similar to that of a natural disaster of extreme proportions. Apart from this construction of a threat, immigrants' moral character is debased as their loyalty to New Zealand is challenged through blaming them of "using New Zealand as a back door to Australia" (New Zealand Herald, 6 Apr 2001).

Russian immigrants are implicated in causing losses to New Zealand economy along with other migrant groups: "In the four years up to last June, 10 per cent of New Zealand's Chinese, Taiwanese, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese and former Soviet republic communities had decamped to Australia". The construction of immigrants as 'unused skills' in this case is articulated through the metaphor of 'brain-drain' often recycled by New Zealand media (Pearson, 2001). This media piece articulates it as "the continuous loss of population – especially the well-educated and well-trained" and as a serious problem, for which the blame is mostly placed on immigrants through reference to the issues of threat and morality, despite mentioning among the causes for their leaving "qualifications [ ] not recognised in New Zealand, work [ ] hard to get and businesses difficult to set up".

In conclusion, the word 'problem' was mentioned regularly across the articles of this theme in relation to immigrants who were rendered as having 'problems' with employment and adjustment to New Zealand life, as well as with financial and psychological well-being. Russians immigrants portrayed in the articles in the theme **Russians as Unused Skills** were problematized less than in the theme **Russians as Trouble**, but as many un(der)employed immigrants were constructed as a burden to

society, the dominant identity construction assigned to them across the theme was that of a 'problem' to New Zealand society.

Another dominant identity construction of Russian immigrants in this theme was of an economic resource which was not utilized adequately and therefore was identified as a fiscal loss to the country. This strategy of dehumanization and commodification of immigrants within the paradigm of an economic cost-benefit model (Apostolidis, 2005; Chavez, 2001) is consistent with previous research by Spoonley and Trlin (2004) who found that Asian immigrants were often portrayed in media as a 'waste' or 'loss' in reference to their unemployment or underemployment.

As one of the articles titled "Helping migrants get off the benefit" (The Dominion Post, 14 May 2003) emphasized, when immigrants were not seen as beneficial to the country's economy through utilization of their qualifications and skills, they were constructed as "the stereotypical burden to the state" (Leeuwen & Wodak, p. 113) and as a loss for economy.

Russians in Teaching Programmes

The third theme which also reflected mostly negative portrayals of Russian immigrants was titled **Russians in Teaching Programmes**. It consisted of 15 articles (10% of the total) and contained media reports about a variety of programmes aimed at addressing some 'problems' attributed to immigrants. Only one article in this theme gives a profile of a particular Russian immigrant, while the rest only mention Russians among other migrant groups.

All the articles focus on the English language as one of the main areas of 'deficiency' immigrants are constructed through. The link between their unemployed status and the 'lack of functional English' creates the image of dysfunction (or disability) and dependence of immigrants on the state well-fare. At the same time, the representatives of the state are implicitly constructed as benevolent and charitable through their teaching programmes aimed "to help immigrants become independent" and "live with dignity" (Waikato Times, 21 Jan 1998).

The construction of 'deficiency' through linguistic skills deemed inadequate by the host population is very common in international media reports on immigrants, and on children of immigrants (Johnson, 2005). This 'deficient' immigrant identity is created not only through the lack of competency/fluency in English, but also through demoting immigrants to 'preliterate' or "virtually illiterate" level:

> "Wellington teachers struggling to cope with increasing numbers of virtually illiterate immigrant students want a refugee induction centre set up [ ] …to help refugee students, some with fewer than 50 words of English, arriving from the Middle East, Russia, Somalia and parts of Asia. [ ] to teach basic English skills and prepare students before they move into mainstream schools. [ ] 'They are eating up our resources,' Wellington High teacher [ ] said" (The Evening Post, 25 Mar 1996).

Some of migrant students are also implicated in forging English language tests and in "the fraudulent use of English language test certificates by would-be residents, for residency, and foreign students, for university study" (The Press, 25 Nov 2002).

The fact that many immigrants are portrayed as highly-qualified and skilled, which would require overall high education (and literacy) levels in their countries of origin, is downplayed through the emphasis on the knowledge (that is of English) they do not have, which is sometimes exaggerated to the level of a direct danger to New Zealand society: "If they don't have basic language skills it's hard for us to employ them in a factory, simply because of health and safety. They've got to be able to read the chemical lists and so on" (The Press, 7 Sep 2001). The issues of threat and potential hazard are also articulated through the 'need' in "lessons on the road code" and other areas of 'deficits' to be addressed by teaching programmes for immigrants: "When you cannot speak the language of a country you cannot understand its news, its road signs, you cannot read the labels on tins of food or even work a stove" (The Daily News, 15 Nov 1997).

Another area identified as a 'need' to teach immigrants about is 'New Zealand culture' framed as a prerequisite to finding adequate employment, especially in the case of foreign medical professionals who are portrayed as needing "to handle New Zealand cultural issues related to health in a professional manner" and "to improve their English skills to understand colloquial language, to explain in lay terms, and to react to their patients in culturally appropriate ways" (Sunday Star Times, 13 Aug 2000). Included in the list of 'skills' immigrants lack and therefore have to be taught are also 'job-search skills/job-search culture of New Zealand', which is explained as "cold-calling skills and the right things to say" (The Dominion, 30 Sep 1996), "how to manage in New Zealand society" (The Press, 8 Sep 1997), and "how we do things in New Zealand, and in the West" (The Press, 9 May 2002).

The articulation of 'difference' and 'otherness' across the articles included in this theme is often very explicit, reaching its most salient representation through the construction of uncivilized and uncultured identity with the help of 'preliterate' or 'culturally deficient' labels attributed to immigrants. The stereotype of 'Third World countries', often articulated through 'a non-English speaking background' and constructed as inferior and undeveloped in comparison to 'the West', is often deployed as an excuse for othering those who come from these countries. Their cultural and linguistic differences are not valued as an asset but are converted into a 'lack' or 'deficit' that needs to be 'modified' in order to 'fit in' (that is assimilate) with the dominant culture: "We teach them about New Zealand's society and culture. [ ] We help migrants to be a part of that society. Not to stand out as different, to fit in" (The Timaru Herald, 15 Oct 2005).

The overall construction of immigrants portrayed in the theme **Russians in Teaching Programmes**, including those from Russia, is the representation within the sub-group of 'the needy', which one of the articles identified as "the city's most vulnerable – including the unemployed, homeless, elderly and migrants" (The Dominion Post, 27 Aug 2007). The inferiorization of immigrants is achieved through multiple constructions of their 'deficits', of a potential threat they present to the host population and of a problem/burden they inflict on the whole country. The moral argument is engaged through glorifying the benevolence of the state which is funding various teaching programmes, while blaming immigrants for their own 'problems', for example, as the only media source profiling a Russian immigrant in some detail (in a letter to the editor) presents:

> "…we have a lady from Russia, also with a degree, who we can barely understand. The company has even offered to meet the costs of her taking English classes but she will not do so. The quality of her work is OK but she is unlikely to progress further in the company until she addresses her shortcomings" (The Press, 12 Sep 2001).

This particular example illustrates that the qualifications and quality of work are not considered an important part of immigrant identity. Instead, the 'shortcomings' constructed as deficiency in language fluency, as well as hostility and ungratefulness, are used to create an image of a 'dangerous alien' whom the locals "can barely understand".

Russians as Rich Investors

In comparison to the explicit negative representations of Russian immigrants in the articles grouped under the first three themes (**Russians as Trouble, Russians as Unused Skills** and **Russians in Teaching Programmes**), the other four themes included articles with generally more positive or neutral portrayals of immigrants from Russia. The fourth theme, **Russians as Rich Investors**, contains 3 articles (2% of the total) which mention Russian nationals as investors, along with Asian migrants (Indian, Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese), as well as Germans and the English. Apart from noting the "rapid changes in the market" (New Zealand Herald, 2 Nov 2003), with "much interest [coming] from overseas" (The Press, 25 Aug 2003), there are virtually no constructions of particular identity for any of these migrant groups, including Russians.

The positive feature attributed to these immigrants is their financial wealth which is seen as beneficial to the New Zealand economy, consequently framing the agenda that New Zealand has to welcome and value 'overseas buyers'. For example, the article about the real estate in Christchurch (The Press, 25 Aug 2003) uses the words with the stem "attract" five times. The features of the free market discourse are deployed in constructing the issue of fiscal benefit from such investors: "Demand is obviously higher than the supply". The concept of competition ("You need to play the game, as it were, to attract a buyer") also fits into the free market discourse within which people (as investors) are constructed as commodities with the only manifestation of their identity conveyed by the amount of money they are able to spend in the market, blind to any individual or cultural characteristics (Apostolidis, 2005; Chavez, 2001).

Another article describing the changes in the real estate business in Auckland presents racialized categorization of current investors in comparison to what used to be the default one, referring to 1956 when "Migrants were mostly white and predominantly British" (New Zealand Herald, 2 Nov 2003). This racialized construction of current immigrants as non-white and from non-English speaking backgrounds produces an image of a 'cultural' threat which is strengthened by expressed concerns about other potential problems associated with investors of foreign origins: "Cautious demographers look at trends mindful that something unexpected – the Sars virus, a rapidly rising dollar or a change in immigration laws – can change projections rapidly". The dehumanization of immigrants manifests in such

constructions of them as "trends" or "a cross-section", virtually escaping the characteristics of human beings.

Thus, immigrants as investors (including Russians) are constructed through contradictory images of the benefit they bring to New Zealand in terms of money and impetus for economic development on the one hand, and a potential threat due to their difference from an ideal identity of "mostly white and predominantly British" earlier migrants on the other.

Russians as Economic Potential

The fifth theme, **Russians as Economic Potential**, contains 12 articles (8% of the total), 11 of which only mention Russians among other migrant groups. The main identity construction assigned to immigrants in these articles is built upon their qualifications and professional skills; the very skills which are identified 'in deficit' in the New Zealand economy. There is also an additional construction of a 'fiscal benefit' from the money brought by those coming to New Zealand on a temporary basis, such as tourists and international students, often conflated in media with immigrants who stay long-term.

Eight out of 12 articles used the term "to attract" referring to the strategy New Zealand has to employ in order to bring more professional immigrants into the country. Immigrants are constructed as a potential asset for New Zealand through the notion of 'a need' which can be 'satisfied' by immigrants, whether in a form of money they invest in the economy, or in a form of skilled labour force which can be deployed "to fill in the gaps" in "skill shortage areas", as well as "to plug the brain-drain". These metaphors serve to construct immigrants as an aberration (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008) which is seen as an inevitable but an undesirable and short-term measure to sustain economic growth in the country.

As a result, immigrants are constructed as part of economy and are expected to function the same way as other mechanical or financial parts do, equating them to 'tools' or 'disposable' objects (Apostolidis, 2005). This allows not only for commodification and objectification of people, but also for quantification and complete transference of human beings into numbers. When migrants are entered into the free market discourse, they cease existing as 'people' and become numbers or 'gains'. If they bring 'benefit' to the New Zealand economy, they may be entered into

an economic formula as an 'asset'; if they later form part of a 'brain-drain' by leaving New Zealand to work in other countries, they will be seen as a 'loss'.

Despite being constructed as a potential economic asset on the one hand, the same immigrants are also seen as an undesirable measure to fix the country's economic problems. The image of a threat on the part of immigrants taking over New Zealanders' jobs is articulated through such constructions as "dangerous dependence" of New Zealand on foreign specialists, especially in the medical sphere (The Dominion Post, 4 Aug 2007).

This image of danger created through a 'cultural difference' is used as an excuse for racist and xenophobic attitudes and policies of discrimination and exclusion towards various migrant groups, especially when they are implicated in intentional opposition to New Zealanders: "…concerns raised further north about immigrants living close together and forming their own communities, separate from Kiwi life and culture" (The Southland Times, 21 Dec 2002).

The notion of a threat is also conveyed through the demand for immigration services to 'monitor' the arrivals and through the use of such metaphors as 'resource', 'flow' or 'inflow'. Immigrants are dehumanized as they are constructed as a dangerous 'process', similar to the forces of nature, which has to be "controlled" and "limited"; individuals are translated into numbers, becoming, for example, "target numbers", which are planned to solve "our future needs", and the attention is drawn to the choice of "the sort of people" that should be allowed to migrate to New Zealand (New Zealand Herald, 29 Nov 2002).

The author of another article discusses "who would make good bus-driver material", commenting on the advertisement about recruiting bus drivers. While relegating immigrants to the level of "material" which has to be of "good" quality in order to fulfil its purpose of functioning adequately within the industrial process, the author doubts the adequacy of immigrants as a 'suitable' resource for New Zealand:

> "That unfortunately still leaves the question of who is going to drive the buses. Our answer is to attract useful types from other countries to do the jobs we cannot or will not do ourselves. We are recruiting coal miners from Britain, prison officers and bus drivers from Samoa, and kiwifruit pickers from Russia. Indonesians crew our fishing boats, mechanics from Zimbabwe check our cars for warrants of fitness and Ukrainians milk our cows. [ ] Immigration can only be a short-term solution, however. You also have to wonder whether today's immigrants will give us even the short respite you should expect from a wave of immigration. [ ] The

answer to our predicament must come, therefore, from our own resources. We must somehow find a way of reversing that social mobility, clearly illustrated by the immigrant class, which results in everyone wanting well-paid work in a comfortable office" (The Press, 19 Mar 2005).

The above extract provides extreme cases of debasement, dehumanization and commodification of immigrants, labelling them as "material" and "useful types". The cultures of origin, presented as examples of countries which provide New Zealand mostly with unskilled or low-skilled labour, are framed in a denigrating way, especially when played against the word "our" in relation to objects owned by New Zealanders. Each example of a particular ethnicity ("Ukrainians milk *our* cows") creates an exotic and unsettling image of strangers who handle someone else's property unlawfully. The clear demarcation between 'us' (and 'our' property) and 'them' (who should not be entrusted with 'our' wealth and health) produce racialized and criminalized constructions of migrant groups mentioned in the article. Despite admitting that immigrants perform the work New Zealanders do not want to do, the identity of those employed to do it is infused with threatening images. They are positioned as a separate 'class', with implicit reference to the lower strata of society, or 'underclass' (Bauman, 1998b), as they clearly do not belong to those who have "well-paid work in a comfortable office". Thus, immigrants are suspected of potentially causing political upheaval as a force (or 'class') threatening the whole society, which is strengthened by equating them to a natural disaster through the metaphor of a 'wave'.

In conclusion, despite the seemingly positive portrayal of immigrants as a potential economic asset, many inferior and negative constructions were also present in the articles included in the theme **Russians as Economic Potential**. When entered into an economic model of profit and loss, immigrants become part of the free market discourse, equated to other imported commodities. Apart from the commodification, the most common construction of immigrant identity was that of a threat that immigrants pose to New Zealand society, both in terms of competing with the host population over resources and by being the bearers of Other, and consequently dangerous, cultures.

Most clearly, the othering was articulated through the binary of 'us' versus 'them', as immigrants employed in various spheres of New Zealand economy remained being constructed as a 'foreign' labour force, which presumably would not

have been used in ideal, normative conditions. This conditional, though not a very welcoming, acceptance of migrant workers offsets the image of an asset articulated through potential economic benefit from immigrants in New Zealand.

Russians as Contributors

The sixth theme, named **Russians as Contributors**, contains 18 articles (12% of the total). The common feature across the articles in this theme is the portrayal of Russian immigrants as contributing to New Zealand society through their occupations, skills or knowledge.

All the articles describe particular individuals, providing their names, occupations and sometimes other personal details. Out of 18 articles, seven portray contributors in arts, three in business, and two in chess. Some of them are short news pieces, just noting an ethnic background of a person, for example, when presenting a New Zealand chess champion immigrated from Russia, or a new Russian pastor in the Seventh-day Adventist church in Invercargill (The Southland Times, 16 Mar 2006). Others are full-length feature articles which tell personal stories of Russian immigrants' migration and settlement.

Out of seven feature articles, five follow similar plots while recounting the stories of Russian immigrants who achieved success in New Zealand. Whether describing a young Russian singer, or featuring a restaurant managed by a Russian couple, the articles follow the same script. The beginning usually highlights how unhappy and unfortunate these immigrants were back in Russia, where their dreams (further education, secure future, and others) were impossible to achieve. New Zealand is presented in a completely opposite way – as their destination of choice due to its "attractive" features, such as safe and clean environment, reputation in science, and others.

Then the plot describes their initial period of "struggle" while adjusting to life in New Zealand but eventually there is 'a happy ending' in the form of a good job, or a developing career. Consequently, New Zealand is portrayed as a country of fulfilled dreams and hopes. The "struggle" Russian immigrants have to face is commonly explained through some intrinsic problems of their own, for example, a lack of business skills or local knowledge, or most commonly, a lack of fluent English.

The label of language problems is one of the most common deficits assigned to Russian immigrants. But even when they are rendered able to speak English and

understand the local population, their accent, which is framed as a "typical Russian accent", is constructed as a marker of cultural difference. For example, two articles featuring a Russian immigrant singer Yulia Townsend present her story according to this plot, including references to her English problems in the very beginning:

> "…the highly talented Yulia Townsend who, in only three and a half years, has risen from obscurity to be a singing sensation. [ ] Speaking almost no English on her arrival, she was fluent in the language after only six months" (The Press, 7 Sep 2006).

> "The 18-year-old singer moved to Christchurch from Russia two years ago, barely able to speak English. [ ] Though her accent is unmistakably Russian, she punctuates her speech with "you know" and "like", and giggles after everything she says. She has also picked up that Kiwi habit of making everything sound like a question, and takes it as a great compliment that she is getting a Kiwi twang. [ ] It was also very lonely. Yulia's lack of English made it hard for her to make friends… [ ] "I remember lying on bed crying because I didn't have anyone to talk to…" (The Dominion Post, 24 Sep 2004).

Yulia's immigration experience is an example of a 'success story' as she "has risen from obscurity to be a [ ] sensation". It may also be seen as an illustration of the process of media construction of immigrant identity: from a dysfunctional and deficient one (in Russia – as "obscurity", and early in New Zealand – as laden with social and psychological problems), to a normative or 'proper' one of a Kiwi (as she has "picked up that Kiwi habit") and even to the very successful one ("a sensation"). The process of 'fitting in' with New Zealand life is portrayed as a necessary condition for success and for potential contribution to New Zealand society. Direct quotes from her interview to the newspaper enhance the idea that New Zealand is 'a land of opportunities' for Russians who are unable to develop their talents back in Russia. Thus, the plot is recycled not solely by the reporter or the media source but by a particular immigrant herself providing her life story as an illustration to this:

> "…it was a dream come true. [ ] …New Zealand has given me so many opportunities. In Russia, I never knew where I was going because it was just all about the money, not about the talent you have. [ ] In New Zealand, it's basically all about your talent" (The Dominion Post, 24 Sep 2004).

Most of the articles featuring Russian immigrants as contributors to New Zealand society are structured as 'success stories' which, starting with the descriptions of hardships and unhappiness, move to a 'happy ending' made possible

by New Zealand "opportunities". What is also often emphasized in the stories of successful immigrants from Russia is their allegiance with the country which has provided them with those "opportunities".

In summary, apart from the common feature of following a particular plot with 'a happy ending', the stories about Russian immigrants as contributors to New Zealand society have similar identity constructions to the articles grouped under the theme **Russians as Unused Skills**; for example, in the emphasis on post-arrival hardships and difficulties, including problems in finding work, language difficulties and psychological problems in adjusting to life in New Zealand. Overall, the difference between immigrants presented in the articles in the two themes is that those portrayed as contributors to New Zealand life have made it to 'a happy ending', while others have not.

Russian immigrants described under both themes (**Russians as Contributors** and **Russians as Unused Skills**) are presented through similar stories (apart from a 'happy ending'), with similar problems and similar aspirations, and articulated through similar identities. But those who are portrayed as contributors are ultimately seen as an 'asset' to New Zealand society; while those who are un(der)employed are constructed as a burden or as waste, and consequently as a 'problem' for the New Zealand economy and population.

Russians in Cultural Diversity

The articles put together in the theme **Russians in Cultural Diversity** discuss various topics, but the common idea across them is that of New Zealand being culturally diverse due to the presence of immigrants from different countries.

Out of 17 articles in this theme (12% of the total), only four of them have meagre references to Russian culture while others just mention Russian immigrants among other migrant groups in New Zealand. Two articles describe events happening in Russian Orthodox Church. The third one features "the festivities" of the Russian community in Palmerston North "as a distinct ethnic group in New Zealand" and "one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups" according to the latest census, but the media source gives only brief information about the nature of this action: "The celebrations at the library have been designed as a family event, with piano recitals, songs, traditional costumes, dances, displays of books and even a chance to gather around a samovar and sip Russian tea" (Manawatu Standard, 8 Dec 2007). If a Russian word

for a traditional kettle ("samovar") is removed, the above characteristics can be applied to any ethnic group organising cultural festivals.

The fourth one is a caption under the photograph showing the troupe performing traditional Russian dances. It is titled "Nest of dancing dolls" and it is presented here in full (with the omission of dancers' names):

> "IMITATING traditional Russian Matrioshka or nesting dolls, this troupe thrilled the audience at the Our Dances in a New Land showcase at Te Papa yesterday. [ ] Groups representing the Pacific, African, European, Middle Eastern and Asian cultures also performed traditional dances in the event, part of Wellington City Council's Dance Your Socks Off festival. Programme organiser Jennifer Shennan said the aim was to show the beauty that migrant groups brought to New Zealand" (The Dominion Post, 12 Sep 2005).

The idea of different immigrants bringing some benefit to New Zealand is constructed here through the multiculturalism discourse – the notion of different cultures of the world as enriching and educating (the local population) about various customs and traditions (Pearson, 2001). The use of the term "traditional" emphasizes the idea of difference (in cultures) between the locals and immigrants with diverse backgrounds. This cultural difference is portrayed as "the beauty" which migrant groups have "brought" to New Zealand, thus constructing immigrants' traditions as a cultural asset.

In the articles in the theme **Cultural Diversity** the notion of 'multicultural New Zealand' is used quite often and it is constructed with the help of various features of multicultural discourse. Some articles either provide a particular number of cultures (and/or languages) existing in New Zealand, or simply enumerate the cultures or countries immigrants to New Zealand have come from. For example, the article about the community radio programme informs readers that the programmes on this radio channel are broadcast in 45 different languages and calls this radio station "an appropriate moniker for the voice of multicultural Auckland" (New Zealand Herald, 31 Jul 2000). The author labels the radio station "a truly New Zealand's version of the United Nations" and cites the research conducted by this station, which found that one third of Aucklanders "identify with other than the mainstream culture in language and tradition". The notion of otherness is constructed here through the comparison to the "mainstream" as being different from the majority, that is, the host population. The message here is that "mainstream" is normative by default and apriori and

unquestionably good, while "other than mainstream" performs a secondary and subsidiary role. The binary of 'us' and 'them' becomes quite transparent in this particular case with an underlying meaning of the superiority of the local culture and the inferiority of migrant ones.

As an example, the article features an immigrant from Congo who produces a Saturday show. The author describes him as follows: "He treads a fine line between adjusting to the New Zealand way of living and maintaining the connection with his culture". Similarly to the idea of teaching immigrants "the New Zealand way of living" in the theme **Teaching Programmes**, this article constructs the dilemma immigrants face when they come to New Zealand – either "adjusting to the New Zealand way of living" or "maintaining [their] culture". This dichotomy clearly signals that the first option is the 'right' choice – 'learning New Zealand way of life' – while the other is constructed at best as problematic, if not fully oppositional. The mere possibility of considering such a dilemma bears an implicit notion of danger ("treads a fine line").

The concept of 'the New Zealand way of life' is discussed in another article which is a letter from a reader published by the media source under the title "Asian culture not worse, just different" (The Press, 12 Nov 2002). This media piece enumerates 22 ethnic and cultural labels (including Russian, as well as Eastern European) as proof of New Zealand multiculturalism and reason to celebrate immigrants' contribution to "the New Zealand way of life":

> "New Zealand, as a nation of immigrants, is a great multicultural melting pot where each culture has something to contribute to the greater good of the country and to that intangible entity we call the New Zealand way of life." (The Press, 12 Nov 2002).

In another article, the idea of enrichment through various cultures of immigrants who have come to New Zealand is contrasted to the notion of benefits immigrants gain by having come here: "I'm proud of the Kiwi spirit of generosity, of sharing our resources with others less fortunate." (The Press, 15 Dec 2003). The articulation of the superiority of locals versus the inferiority of immigrants downplays any potential benefit from enrichment and cultural diversity of migrants' contribution. Cultural diversity may be seen as positive and enriching New Zealanders, but only as long as it "contributes to the greater good of the country" and the immigrants who are bringing it here appreciate being able to adjust to "the New Zealand way of living".

As "less fortunate" ones, they should feel grateful for the "generosity" of the locals prepared to "share" their resources with newcomers. In contrast, the host population is virtually excused from the necessity of feeling any gratitude towards immigrants who share their traditions and cultural assets with New Zealanders.

The article titled "Becoming a new Kiwi" (The Evening Post, 7 Aug 1996) describes the citizenship ceremony and mentions the slogan "New Zealand Citizenship: Being a Real Kiwi". The imposition of the dominant identity of "a real Kiwi" is conveyed through the notion of citizenship: by becoming New Zealand citizens, immigrants must endorse 'the New Zealand way of life' as the normative (or the 'right') one and, therefore have to adjust to it. This identity of a "real Kiwi" and the concept of citizenship are enmeshed – without becoming a New Zealand citizen one cannot become "a real Kiwi", but getting a citizenship prescribes being one in the first place.

In conclusion, cultural diversity is constructed as an asset immigrants bring to New Zealand, which on the surface is portrayed in positive terms through the notion of enrichment and sharing of "beauty" and traditions. At the same time, a different cultural identity is seen as beneficial for New Zealand only when immigrants are eager to prioritize "a real Kiwi" identity and embrace 'the New Zealand way of life'. Thus, multiculturalism means allowing for other cultures only as an addition to the 'mainstream' or 'real' one, reproducing the discourses of multiculturalism as a code for assimilation and cultural separatism (Bennett, 1998; Lewis & Neal, 2005). According to Burns (2008), as the modern organization of society promotes the idea of national unity and, consequently, uniformity, any diversity presents a challenge to homogenization which is driven by the collective repertoire of stereotypes. Therefore, the concept of diversity is split into 'good' forms of diversity, positioned as enriching the host culture, and 'bad' or 'evil' diversity which is constructed as a threat to cultural and moral values of local community and, as a result, deviant and dangerous (Burns, 2008). The emphasis on the superior language, education, social rules and cultural traditions of the host population provides the basis for the politics of ethnocentrism which may be used for discrimination and racist attitudes towards migrant 'others' (Flam, 2008).

Conclusions

In the course of the analysis of the main themes (with the exception of the eighth, **Miscellaneous**), the original grouping into two large overarching themes – negative portrayal versus positive portrayal of Russian immigrants – seemed justified, though, it became clear that they are not opposite. As the 'positive' portrayal conveyed implicit negative features, the original labels for the two overarching themes (negative and positive) were changed, as they did not reflect the meaning behind media constructions.

The first three themes (**Russians as Trouble, Russians as Unused Skills** and **Russians in Teaching Programmes**) were grouped under the overarching theme *Russians as a Problem*, as the dominant identity construction across those themes was that of a problem. The total number of articles within this overarching theme was 90, or 62% of the total 145 articles selected for the analysis. Consistent with the previous research on immigrants in New Zealand (Hodgetts et al., 2004; Loto et al., 2006; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004), Russian immigrants were problematized in these articles as deviant and criminal Others who pose a threat to New Zealand society. Features of criminal and moral discourse, as well as the economic model of profit and loss were part of media strategies of politization, problematization, demonization and criminalization of immigrants (Collins, 2001; McDougall & Fletcher, 2002; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). Similar to Australian (Pickering, 2001) and European (Ramos, 2004) media constructions of immigrants as 'danger' equated to natural disasters, the same metaphors of 'flood', 'burden' and others were engaged by New Zealand press to enhance the image of a threat and a problem as part of the Russian immigrants' identity.

The other four themes (**Russians as Rich Investors, Russians as Economic Potential, Russians as Contributors** and **Russians in Cultural Diversity**) were grouped under the overarching theme *Russians as an Asset*, as the most dominant identity construction across these themes was that of an asset or resource for New Zealand, both in terms of money (as investors or international students), as well as skills or labour, or, to a lesser extent, cultural capital. This overarching theme *Russians as an Asset* contained 50 articles, or 34% of the total number used in the analysis.

The dominant strategies utilized by media sources for constructing the meaning of an asset representing Russian (and other) immigrants within this overarching theme were those of commodification (through the notions of 'skills' or 'labour') and homogenization, that is the representation of different immigrant groups within one category of 'different', 'strangers' or 'Other' (Apostolidis, 2005; Pickering, 2001; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). The economic cost-benefit model often deployed in identity constructions served to further dehumanize immigrants in media discourses. Even where the argument clearly identified immigrants as a valuable rather than detrimental aspect of economy, the very idea of New Zealand relying on foreign capital and migrant workers was questioned as potentially threatening to 'New Zealand cultural values and way of life'. There are clear parallels between New Zealand and European (Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006) contexts where immigrants are constructed as a reluctant but unavoidable measure in response to demographic needs for new labour and "as a temporary anomaly rather than as a permanent and positive element of socio-political reality" (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008, p. 96).

Consequently, it was not only the negative portrayal of Russian immigrants as a problem that recycled the binary of 'us' and 'them'. Seemingly more positive or neutral images articulated through the constructions of immigrants as an asset emphasized those features within their identity which were seen as 'different' in comparison to the normative local identity. The overplayed 'problem' side of their experiences in New Zealand, such as inability to find adequate employment, language issues, social and psychological distress, becomes rather a 'false positive' portrayal, still articulated as Other and 'different' within the binary. The way to escape this inferior identity is clearly indicated through assimilation strategies, such as 'bettering' their English, including acquiring the Kiwi accent; learning 'New Zealand way of life'; and 'fitting in' with the host society, which clearly demands 'not standing out' as culturally different. As Pearson (2001) suggests, "From the majority population's perspective, 'they' are supposed to become like 'us', through, for example, language acquisition, occupational and residential mobility, naturalisation and citizenship" (p. 123).

The way the label 'immigrant' is articulated and recycled in New Zealand press is reflective of the larger binary of 'the West' unquestionably presented as superior, and 'the Third World' as inferior, less developed, "less fortunate" and the Other. The differences between the countries implicitly included in the 'West' group

are not emphasized. Thus, people arriving to New Zealand from the countries within this category (for example, the British, Canadians and non-English European natives, such as Germans or French) commonly are not constructed as 'immigrants'; they are unsurprisingly absent in the articles which refer to Russian immigrants among other ethnic groups. At the same time, while some cultural differences between various 'Third World' nationals, though very vaguely articulated, are still present in the data set, it is the distance between these two larger groups, "the West versus the Rest", the phrase coined by Huntington (1993, p. 39), which is made salient and overly exaggerated and therefore allows for a dichotomous construction of 'us' and 'them', 'normative' and 'deviant', and ultimately, 'good' and 'bad'.

For example, one of the articles referring to 1956 migratory trends to New Zealand states that, "Migrants were mostly white and predominantly British" (New Zealand Herald, 2 Nov 2003). This not only constructs a current immigrant identity as non-white and of non-English speaking background but also implicitly removes recent British arrivals from the concept of immigration, as they are no longer seen as 'migrants' but rather co-nationals 'in progress'. This mirrors the concept of 'Pan-European identity' which undermines the differences between the nations within the European Union and exaggerates the differences between the EU and all others outside it, constructed as 'foreign' or 'alien' in relation to superior European values (Billig, 2004; Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006).

Across the themes some articles were identified as presenting Russian immigrants among other ethnic groups in New Zealand without giving any particular details of any (or most) of these groups. I named them 'Just mentioned' group. Overall, this group contained 49 articles, or 34% of the total number. However, some themes did not have 'just mentioned' representation of Russian migrants at all, or had a very small proportion of them. For example, the theme **Contributors** included the articles which only gave profiles of particular people; as well as the sub-themes *Illegal Immigrants* and *Criminal Associations* (only one article on prostitutes just mentioned Russian women among other migrant groups).

At the same time, the sub-theme *Health Threat* had all three articles just mentioning Russia among other countries constructed as a health threat for New Zealand. The theme **Teaching Programmes** had all but one article classified under 'Just mentioned' group, but the theme **Unused Skills** had only five out of 14 articles just mentioning Russian immigrants among others, while the majority of them were

also profiling particular people, similar to the way Russian immigrants were presented within the theme **Contributors**.

The comparison between the overarching themes *Russians as a Problem* and *Russians as an Asset* shows different proportions of 'Just mentioned' portrayal – 26% (23 out of 90) for the former and 52% (26 out of 50) for the latter one. Out of four themes in *Russians as an Asset*, only the theme **Contributors** had no 'Just mentioned' group; this means that the other three themes have an even higher rate of 'just mentionings' if calculated on their own – 81% (26 out of 32).

At the same time, several labels were found to have idiosyncratic meaning in relation to Russians, such as 'Russian brides', 'Russian sailors', and 'Russian mafia'. Together with such attributes as 'unmistakably Russian accent' and 'vodka', which was indisputably constructed by different media sources as a drink of choice for all Russians, all these idiosyncratic labels bear negative connotations, creating the discursive resources for negative stereotyping of Russians in New Zealand society.

The asymmetry of 'just mentioned' versus particular identity constructions across different themes illustrates the general tendency of Western media to construct immigrants negatively through particular representations of ethnic groups (Collins, 2007; Pickering, 2001; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004), while the more favourable portrayals deny any particularity to immigrants, blurring any cultural differences between them and merging them into one, exaggerated 'difference' from the 'norm' (Loto et al., 2006). For example, lumping up to 22 ethnic and cultural labels together is representative of multiculturalism discourse (Pearson, 2001), which pays lip service to the ideas of tolerance and equality, while implicitly rejecting any possibility for exercising cultural plurality (Bennett, 1998). These strategies are crucial for reinforcing the binary of 'us' and 'them' which is used as the main building block in national identity formation (Billig, 1995; Pickering, 2001). In this, New Zealand print media are no different from those in other Western countries. As van Dijk (2000) argues, the positive self-presentation of host populations is dependent on articulating negative representation of Others, while the denial of diversity helps to maintain the binary.

Consistent with the findings of Loto et al. (2006), New Zealand media constructions of Russian (as well as other Russian-speaking) immigrants closely replicate the media image of Pacific people, despite a variety of cultural and socio-historic differences between these two large groups. The same binary oppositions are

employed in relation to both migrant groups. Similarly to Pacific people, Russian immigrants are constructed as deviant from the normality of the host population; as passive, overly dependent and in need of programmes and services provided by active, independent and generous native citizens; as criminal, immoral and unhealthy, hence, requiring surveillance and management by locals who "are defined as benevolent custodians of social resources" (Loto et al., 2006, p. 109).

Through utilizing these both explicit and implicit constructions of deviance and normality, the overall representation of immigrants as a dangerous and deviant Other is essential for framing national identity as a 'gold standard' – an ideal cultural identity for every resident of the country (Pickering, 2001; McDougall & Fletcher, 2002). The role of mainstream media in this process is undeniably crucial (Cottle, 2000). Therefore, the images produced and re-produced by media sources have to be deconstructed and critically evaluated from the perspective of what groups of society have power to regulate these constructions, as well as whose interests such constructions serve. This reflects the political position of Critical Discourse Analysis school of thought (Fairclough, 1997; Lynn & Lea, 2003; van Dijk, 2000) aimed at revealing the reproduction of hegemonic relations and challenging dominant common-sensical, taken-for-granted discourse(s) (Pickering, 2001), in order to provide the basis for counter-discourse(s) (Wodak, 2004).

Siegel and Bovenkerk (2000) note that the negative criminalized constructions of Russian immigrants in Belgium and Netherlands already await them before they arrive in these counties. The power of media reproduction of negative and inferior ethnic stereotypes is such that migrants cannot escape being generalized and 'migrant-typed' by the host populations regardless of their own intentions and efforts in identity construction (Flam, 2008). This chapter has presented the background for identity construction of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand by revealing and deconstructing dominant images mainstream media create and recycle in relation to this cultural group. The next two chapters will investigate the perspective of those people whose identity has served as a location for media work. The following chapter will look in detail at the very process of identity construction through the personal story of migration to New Zealand by a female immigrant from Russia.

Chapter 3. Interviews with Russian-speaking Immigrants in New Zealand, Part 1: Rationale, Methodology and Case Study

The previous chapter contained the analysis of newspaper articles, which provided descriptions of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand. As media are often seen as informational backdrop for the society and its various communities, there are multiple relationships between the images mass media reproduce and members of society who consume those images, as well as those who are directly affected by them. For example, Siegel and Bovenkerk (2000) found that Russian-speaking immigrants in the Netherlands were directly influenced by the negative stereotypes developed by the local media. In interviews with Russian immigrants, the researchers identified particular strategies that their respondents employed while dealing with the inferior images of the criminalized Other recycled by mainstream media in the Netherlands.

The public image of ethnic minorities articulated by mass media has a significant impact on how the members of these minorities see themselves; therefore, their understanding of how their identity gets created is at least partially mediated by the media. As stated earlier, immigrants do not settle into a cultural vacuum (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). In the case of Russian immigrants, it is often impossible to escape a criminal stereotype already awaiting them in those countries they choose to migrate to (Rosner, 1995, cited in Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). In this regard, personal interviews with the representatives of migrant groups give the possibility to investigate the ways in which they see their identity is constructed in mainstream discourses including mass media.

This chapter contains two parts. First, I outline main methodological issues and dilemmas in relation to collecting qualitative data and preparing the data for further analyses. I discuss in detail such important issues as reflexivity and insider/outsider dilemma, recruitment of interview participants, ethnographic context, and transcription and translation dilemmas.

In terms of the analysis of empirical data, this chapter presents a case study of a Russian-speaking Jewish woman in New Zealand, based on the interview conducted with her in the Russian language. The aim of this chapter is to look in more depth at

how identity is constructed and re-constructed and to follow a particular process of meaning-making from personal experiences of one of the interviewees; while the next chapter will be devoted to the analysis of 20 interviews with Russian immigrants in New Zealand, identifying the most common and salient themes across all interviews.

Rationale and Method for Data Collection

One of the techniques for collecting rich data that can provide adequate material for research into identity issues is a semi-structured, in-depth interview. Discourse studies see storytelling during an interview as one of the discourse practices that allows people to construct meanings and make sense of the social relationships they have to engage in on an everyday basis (De Fina, 2000). 'Stories' or 'narratives' produce personal accounts of life events, reflect emotional responses and illustrate the ways in which people negotiate the challenges they have to face (McAdams, 1993). According to Merriam (2002), "The story is a basic communicative and meaning-making device pervasive in human experience" (p. 286), and while interviewees construct meanings through telling their stories (McAdams, 1993), the researcher creates her own story from the interview data rearticulating those meanings and adding new ones (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003).

Personal narratives are always related to the expression of identity (McAdams, 1993), as narrators position themselves and others in certain social roles, which they establish and negotiate through social relationships and systems of values and beliefs (De Fina, 2000). In relation to immigrants, official discourses often articulate negative and inferior identity constructions that are reproduced in mainstream media and result in stereotypical and unfavourable images (Cottle, 2000; van Dijk, 2000). These discourses are constructed mainly by the host majority, not the immigrants themselves. However, even when migrant groups are given a chance to voice their opinions, mainstream discourses interpret these opinions from the ideological platform held by the majority. Johnson-Bailey (2002) argues that all disenfranchised and minority groups are ultimately 'othered' when their stories are rearticulated in mainstream discourses. Accordingly, with mainstream images of immigrants abound, there is little research on the ways immigrants respond to these images, including their own participation in identity formation (De Fina, 2000). While it is often hard to investigate directly how immigrants respond to media constructions of them, mainly

due to their language problems and infrequent exposure to mainstream media, migrants' understanding of their position in society as articulated in mainstream discourses are easier to study.

In her study about undocumented Mexican workers, De Fina (2000) explored the importance of ethnic identification within this migrant group. As identity is constructed in ethnic terms through the discourse practices of mainstream media and various institutions, ethnic labels are used as a resource for stereotyping and for legitimizing particular government policies aimed at ethnic minorities. Hence, there is no surprise that Mexican immigrants in the USA incorporate ethnic identifications for the definition of self and others that reflect the saliency of ethnicity in identity constructions. De Fina concludes that in order to understand the meaning of ethnic identification in the stories of migrants it is necessary to project them onto a wider social framework of ideology of race and ethnicity enacted within American public discourse.

Therefore, the data collected using in-depth interviews not only present personal accounts of immigrants' life; they also indicate the pervasiveness of public discourses around immigration and immigrant identity and provide the possibility to investigate the ways immigrants make sense of those discourses, through negotiating and reconstructing their identity (Rapoport et al., 2002). Combining the two perspectives – mainstream discourses represented in media constructions of immigrant identity, and identity constructions articulated by immigrants themselves in their stories of personal experiences – allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the processes underlying identity issues. Therefore, in the part of my research based on in-depth interviews with Russian immigrants, I was interested in investigating how they saw their identity being constructed by New Zealanders; how they responded to prevailing images and stereotypes of Russian immigrants produced by mainstream discourses; and what strategies they used to negotiate those images and engage in the process of constructing their own identity.

Construction of the Interview Schedule

In-depth interviews are sometimes called 'intensive' interviews and they are usually issue oriented (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). They aim at gaining rich qualitative data that represent 'thick descriptions' of social life recounted by

interviewees (Geertz, 2003), resulting in the production of meanings and interpretations of life events from the participants' view (Rapley, 2004). In order to acquire such data a researcher has to construct an appropriate theme list, or an interview guide/schedule, consisting of questions with additional probes or prompts, which have to address the research question(s) (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Probes function as follow-up questions that may be asked additionally to elicit broader and richer responses from the participants in order to gain more details or clarification (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005).

While a semi-structured in-depth interview has to rely on a particular set of questions aimed at guiding the respondents in certain direction, it should also allow for some freedom regarding how much and what sort of experience they want to talk about (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Accordingly, open-ended questions, usually few and quite broad, are preferable in order to gain rich and extensive accounts. Depending on the purpose and the research question(s), more or less structure in the interview is chosen by the researchers on the basis of how much/little control over the interview they want to impose on their participants (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

Guided by these principles, I constructed an interview schedule which included seven questions with additional prompts/probes within each question (see Appendix A). The examples of the questions were "How do you feel in New Zealand society? How do you position yourself within New Zealand society? Has immigration made a difference to how you see yourself as a person?" The examples of prompts (for a question "How do you position yourself in New Zealand society?") were "What is your status in New Zealand? How is it different from the one you had back home?"

The interview schedule, as well as the information list for participants including a consent form (see Appendix B), were constructed simultaneously in two languages: in English and in Russian. Going back and forth between the two versions, I had to re-work some questions to make them sound appropriate in Russian, with an adequate translation in English. Both versions were verified for congruity by a bilingual research assistant.

The rationale behind conducting interviews in Russian, the native language for my participants, was driven by the goal of allowing for free-flowing, in-depth personal accounts that would represent rich descriptions of life events. I aimed at recruiting recent immigrants – those who had been living in New Zealand for no longer than 10 years. Therefore, those who spent only a couple of years in New

Zealand might still have problems conversing in English. I was also guided by the assumption that even for those who may consider themselves bilingual, their native language would provide them with more rich and extensive resources to tell the stories of personal experiences and emotional reactions to them. Others, for whom English might present a difficulty in articulating their ideas, would be able to draw on the same linguistic resources as the bilinguals through Russian. Using the same language also provides for internal consistency across the data set and more reliable comparison between the accounts of different participants.

After I started conducting my first interviews, the list of questions and the questions themselves inevitably underwent certain changes. Short pilot interviews are often recommended to run the trial list of questions to choose the most useful ones (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). However, it is also advantageous to have a couple of longer and broader interviews in the very beginning, in order to identify which questions are more functional in eliciting the kind of data the researcher is looking for.

After the first couple of interviews, it became clear which questions were less effective in yielding the data relevant to the research question and which questions needed more emphasis. As a result, the first question about the motives of immigrating to New Zealand became redundant. Basing on a narrative perspective, it was originally derived as a 'warm-up' question, so that the participants would be guided into a narration of 'stories' about their experiences but it turned out that it was not needed. Most of the participants produced a narrative without any guidance, most likely because any immigration experience entails a process. Consequently, they adopted a narrative structure of the interview from the very beginning. Having realized this, I stopped asking that question, mainly because it would extend the duration of the interview without providing the relevant data into my research question. At the same time, when the reasons for immigration were important for the participants, they mentioned them anyway while replying to other questions.

The redundancy of the first question necessitated the revision of the list and the order of the questions, and, guided by my first interviews, the addition of other questions/prompts, which expanded on some issues in more detail. An example of such a question was, "How do you introduce yourself when meeting new people, especially, New Zealanders?"

Reflexivity and the Insider/Outsider Dilemma

On the first glance, interviewing may seem easy to separate from other methods of data collection, for example, observation or action research. Depending on the research context, though, this assumption may be misleading. During my initial interactions with the participants, while making a telephone or face-to-face contact to introduce my research, it became very clear to me that in-depth interviewing is entangled with many complex issues, for example ethical dilemmas and reflexivity. In addition, interviewing cannot be taken as a 'pure' technique, standing neatly away from other methods. In most cases, interviewing is embedded in ethnography (Bekerman, 2002).

The issue of reflexivity is one of the most important issues in qualitative research (Adkins, 2002; Rapley, 2004), especially from a postmodern perspective (Clarke, 2003). Delamont (2004) points out that, for qualitative researchers, reflexivity represents the pathway to establish reliability and validity. Reflexivity functions as a pre-requisite and as an evaluative criterion for 'good' research and is recommended as a critical practice for all social research (Adkins, 2002). It entails self-awareness and self-consciousness of the researcher throughout the duration of research in relation to the impact on participants and the role of the author in producing idiosyncratic interpretations of their accounts (Adkins, 2002).

Social constructionism emphasizes the significance of the researcher's involvement in the participants' responses, as the data are considered to be co-created by both the interviewer and the interviewee (Cromby & Nightingale, 1999). In other words, the story is told by both of them together (Denzin, 2002). Sometimes, the participants in the research are identified as co-researchers (Madison, 2006), especially in cases of direct interaction between the person who is conducting such research and the one who agrees to 'help', by taking part in a dialogue rather than in an interview.

For me, though, it was more comfortable to call those Russian immigrants who took part in my research as 'participants', acknowledging a different power position held by me in comparison to them. While the product of interviewing is the collaborative account of both the interviewer and the respondent, aimed at answering the particular research question, the very question is originally offered for discussion by the former (Rapley, 2004). Ultimately, it is the privilege of the researcher(s) to

choose how to interpret the data, especially, when argued from the constructionist position. In the process of interpretation, every researcher is bound to influence the data (Tuffin, 2005), to read and understand them in her own way and thus end up with a different interpretation (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003).

Identifying interviewing as an interaction between the researcher and the participant, Rapley (2004) states that, "we are never interacting in a historico-socio-cultural vacuum, we are always embedded in and selectively and artfully draw on broader institutional and organizational contexts" (p. 26). The most important issue in this regard was the fact that I had similar cultural background with my participants and similar migration history to most of them. Therefore, it was possible for them to relate to me as a person who would be able to understand deep feelings, motivations, and ideas they were ready to share. At the same time, though the participants acknowledged the fact that I could have had similar migratory experience; for them, I also held a higher status within the local systems of knowledge. Due to my post-graduate position, I could not evade the aspect of representing the academic system of New Zealand, especially on the level of research.

This dilemma has been exposed in qualitative research as an 'insider/outsider perspective'. In her critique of the methodological ideology of objectivity, Greenfield (2000) suggests that it is impossible to escape an insider's position (which is sometimes termed in psychology as 'bias'), because any knowledge created as a result of research in social sciences is not culture-free but bears the markers of culture-specific theorizing of the authors of research. She argues that a so-called observer-independent or objective perspective is unattainable, as "When one studies behaviour in one's own culture (as most psychologists do), one has *de facto* an insider's cultural perspective… With reference to his or her own group, the insider understands the meanings and motives behind in-group behaviours" (p. 233, emphasis in original).

At the same time, Greenfield (2000) points out a potential value of an outsider's perspective as an out-group member who can identify interesting and important cultural meanings usually taken for granted or even neglected by insiders. In this sense, the best position is the combination of an insider and an outsider roles – what Greenfield terms "the culturally marginal person; these are people who have had important socializing experiences in more than one culture" (p. 233). Based on that, I could consider myself both an insider and an outsider; an insider – by the virtue of my culture of origin, native language and migration experience; and an outsider – by

doing my research from the perspective of the local systems of knowledge, that is of New Zealand, as well as more generally, of 'Western' origin.

The insider/outsider position I embraced for interviewing Russian-speaking immigrants necessitated deeper engagement with the ethnographic paradigm in qualitative research (Bekerman, 2002). As ethnography is aimed at providing descriptions and interpretations of cultures of different groups (Merriam, 2002), the researcher who comes from an insider perspective has an ethnographic position by default. Such a researcher is able to engage with research participants ethnographically and has intimate knowledge of cultural specifics of the group, which provides for the best opportunity to produce 'thick descriptions' and insightful interpretation of the collected data (Merriam, 2002).

Many ethnographers insist on a biographical dimension in ethnographic research (Coffey, 2002). On the basis of her research among Croatian immigrants in Australia, Colic-Peisker (2004) conceptualized "insider's ethnography", with inclusion of autobiographical content, as sharing the social position and migration circumstances with her research participants made her "autobiographical voice [ ] inevitably mixed with their voices" (p. 91).

In relation to immigrant communities, if the researcher can be associated with the same ethnic group of research participants, it is virtually impossible, as well as unethical, to deny the membership in this group while dealing with its members (Colic-Peisker, 2004). Apart from being a 'linguistic insider' through the same native language, there are always some pre-existing relationships and networks that link the researcher to other immigrants from the same culture of origin. Colic-Peisker notes that an insider, especially, the linguistic one, can give these minorities 'a voice' that would be more authentic than the one produced by a non-native speaker. This may be especially important for those members of migrant groups for whom the host language functions only on the 'survival' level (Colic-Peisker, 2004).

Ethical issues, such as informed consent, confidentiality, respect and appreciation of participants' opinion, are given a lot of attention in social sciences (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Qualitative research is especially concerned with a variety of ethical and moral issues in relation to recruiting participants, as well as collecting and processing the data (Ryen, 2004). For example, ten Have (2004) calls interviews "deeply *moral* events" (p. 57, emphasis in original). Working within any

minority community commonly brings ethical issues to the forefront, and quite often, they become a part of one's research (Colic-Peisker, 2004).

For some migrant communities it is crucial for the researcher to speak the same language fluently and, even better, to belong to the same community (Colic-Peisker, 2004; Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Russian immigrants in particular were found difficult to engage by those researchers who do not speak Russian, as there is a common perception among them that 'foreigners' should not be trusted (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Thus, the relationship between the researcher and the participant becomes an important mechanism of data production (Fielding, 2004).

Establishing a good rapport with participants and gaining their trust is paramount for an insider researcher (Colic-Peisker, 2004; Ryen, 2004). This process does not happen at the instant of participant's signing of the consent form; it starts earlier, through the researcher's self-disclosure and finding common points of convergence with each participant, and does not finish until the end of the relationship which may stretch into the future. Simply having the same language and similar life circumstances does not produce trust among participants, as "the insider status [ ] has to be granted by the community" (Colic-Peisker, 2004, p. 86); for example, through the researcher's acceptance of their rules of conduct and hospitality. Relevant personal disclosure from the insider researcher also allows for reciprocity on the part of participants who provide their personal information and answer the posed questions in response to the researcher's information (Colic-Peisker, 2004).

The balance between participants' freedom in constructing their own meanings and the impact of the researcher's biographical voice on their voices can be achieved (or, at least, attempted) through engaging in the processes of self-awareness and continuous reflexive evaluation (Colic-Peisker, 2004). This is a never-ending process throughout the duration of the research, both at data collection and data interpretation stages, as each participant brings their own implicit rules of structuring a trusting relationship with the researcher. Thus, during my research I had to forge different versions of my own identity co-constructed with the help of my participants. For example, the balance between an insider and outsider parts of my position would shift each time, depending on the understanding each participant had about my involvement in two cultures.

Recruitment of Interview Participants

The rationale behind the choice of recruitment techniques should be driven by the particular research objectives and the knowledge of various population groups and any important differences between them (Merriam, 2002). Since qualitative studies that collect data via in-depth interviews commonly allow for rather small numbers of participants, random sampling in this case makes little sense (Merriam, 2002). The aim of in-depth interviews is to elicit participants' accounts of the meanings and interpretations of particular topic(s) under investigation (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Consequently, a purposeful or convenience sampling become the preferred techniques of recruitment (Merriam, 2002).

To facilitate adequate purposeful sampling, it is necessary to work out the criteria for participation on the basis of research objectives (Merriam, 2002). While there are certain key principles for deriving such criteria, 'real life' frequently does not want to fit any criteria (Rapley, 2004). Therefore, convenience sampling is often seen as an unavoidable measure, rather than a method of choice. Rapley (2004) states that due to a variety of problems during recruitment, sometimes friends or colleagues may provide necessary contacts for initial interviews, while the participants themselves can later on help with recruiting others through their own networks. The latter technique is commonly termed 'snowballing' and is often used in the research on particular communities or social groups, where the very connections between the participants provide for a meaningful criterion for purposeful sampling (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005).

As I already had some contacts in Russian-speaking community in Wellington, my obvious choice was a convenience sample recruited through my friends and acquaintances within the community and further recruitment through 'snowballing'. Colic-Peisker (2004) recommends leaving people who may be well known to the researcher out of the sample in order to avoid the problem of conflating 'pure' research data with the knowledge gained through personal encounters within one's own community. At the same time some, even brief, knowledge of someone's life experiences shared within the community can serve as a marker for potential usefulness of this person for the research. As some sharing of particular immigration aspects is inevitable within any migrant community (for example, a place of origin, the length of stay in New Zealand, family composition, and so on), I found it

acceptable to make use of such bits of information received through my friends and later – through my participants.

The fact that these contacts often approached others on my behalf, and provided them with information about my research and myself, served as a character reference for me and granted me with an insider status which functioned as a warrant of trust for community members. Thus, the negotiation of ethical aspects of relationships with my participants started even before my first encounter with some of them, as my reputation of an ethical researcher had been constructed beforehand by my contacts.

The criteria derived for selecting participants included equal (or close to equal) numbers of men and women; recent arrival to New Zealand (within last 10 years); and an active employment status, which included both having a current job in New Zealand, as well as actively looking for a job or planning to do so in the nearest future while studying for New Zealand qualifications. This inevitably put certain limits on the age-range of my participants, the majority of whom turned out to be within an active employment age from early 30s to late 50s, but I also had a couple of younger participants, either in tertiary study or starting their first job.

The rationale behind the criterion of an active job (seeking) status was an assumption that such immigrants have multifaceted interactions within New Zealand society, for example, with their colleagues or employers. These interactions would provide them with some understanding of how their identity is constructed by others. Active relationships with various members of society also impose the necessity to negotiate and re-construct their identity in communication with others. Linked to this assumption, another criterion was to recruit only 'recent' immigrants – those who had arrived in New Zealand in the past 10 years. This decision was based on extensive literature on adaptation of immigrants around the world (Ward et al., 2001) which suggests that adaptation and acculturation processes are most salient for immigrants within the first years since arrival, with the majority of migrants reaching stable patterns of adaptation around the 10-years mark.

Consequently, my assumption was that after 10 or more years of residence in a new culture, most immigrants have gained enough knowledge about it and formed a particular self-identity, which they again may start taking for granted. In contrast, those who are still in a process of 'culture learning' (Masgoret & Ward, 2006) during their first post-arrival years experience substantial changes to their sense of identity and have to negotiate it on a daily basis. This would make them particularly valuable

for my research, as they may be keen to investigate these processes themselves, for example by engaging in interviews, in order to facilitate the re-construction of their sense of self in a new socio-cultural environment.

Transcription and Translation Issues

In total, I conducted 21 interviews, with the first one becoming the basis for a case study. The duration of the interviews varied. The shortest one took around 25 minutes and the longest lasted for nearly two hours. The information sheet given to the participants stated that any interview would take no longer than two hours, but on average most interviews were around one hour in duration. The majority of the participants preferred to be interviewed at their homes. Only a few people chose to come to the university where a quiet room was organized for digital recording of interviews.

In the end, there were nearly 25 hours of recordings to be transcribed and then translated into English. The issue of transcription was the first one to deal with. It demanded deciding on several questions: Which transcription technique(s) to follow? How detailed should transcripts be? Which features to be included and which to be omitted?

As there are different techniques and instructions for transcribing the recorded data, Miller and Crabtree (2004) recommend answering all the questions arising in relation to transcribing, through the lens of the research objectives. Therefore, the style of transcription and the level of detail should be consistent with the research question and should be functional for the purpose of further analyses.

As I had to translate the interview data into English, there was no rationale behind doing a very detailed transcription as, for example, is required for conversational analysis (Jefferson, 1985). For every decision I made in relation to particular transcription conventions (such as pauses, repetition, additional emphasis, self-correction, and others) I had to evaluate how meaningful each detail and its symbol were for the analysis I would be conducting on these data. To make it more understandable for a reader unacquainted with intricate transcription rules, I chose a simpler version, which can be described as a 'verbatim' (or word-by-word) transcript (Miller & Crabtree, 2004).

The style of transcription may change in the course of transcribing, depending on any shifts in research objectives (Miller & Crabtree, 2004). My style of transcription also underwent slight changes, as I was translating each interview after having transcribed it. I adjusted my transcription technique when I realized which features I did not need after translation.

To protect my participants' confidentiality, I omitted from transcripts all information that was too sensitive or too particular and could potentially identify them within a rather small and very close knit community of Russian speakers in Wellington. Apart from the most obvious omission of personal names and their substitution by pronouns or family relations ('husband/wife' instead of names), I avoided geographical names, placing all the participants who came from big cities into Moscow, while using such substitutions as 'my/our town' instead of the names of smaller places.

The transcription issues, no matter how complex they are, fade in the face of the dilemmas posed by translation of the data into another language. It is never possible to produce the same version of a text in a different language (Cronin, 2006); unavoidably, any translation bears certain unfaithfulness to the original, 'twisting' the meanings and altering constructions. Can we do it, then?

Inevitably, if there is no other way of representing particular groups of population, the translation has to be accepted as a necessary 'evil', or, as Anderson (2006) puts it, "a useful treason" (p. 228). In terms of ethnic minorities, translation becomes a political issue, as the translator has to make otherwise 'silent' voices of the participants be heard by the dominant majority, the process requiring rendering them into the language of that majority. Translation becomes the lesser of two evils – better transformed than not heard at all. In this regard, the role of a linguistic insider who does not need an interpreter to collect the data (Colic-Peisker, 2004), and therefore can also function as a culturally competent translator of the data, may be considered the most beneficial for such kind of research.

At the same time, to be able to render participants' voices into the cultural context consistent with the dominant discourse, the outsider perspective of the translator cannot be underestimated. To make otherwise silent voices heard means to tell their stories in the way they can be understood by different audiences, via engagement of the particular discourses of those audiences. Seeing myself as a culturally 'marginal' researcher (Greenfield, 2000), continuously wrestling with the

insider/outsider dilemma, I decided that doing all the translations of my participants' stories myself would also add another important dimension to the research, especially because, being bilingual, I could do that. The ethnographic nature of my relationships with the participants provided me with additional, 'off-record', or 'behind the curtains', knowledge of their lives, allowing me to locate their stories within their socio-cultural environment and therefore engage in very meaningful translation.

To allow for better translation into local contexts, all my translated texts went through a systematic and painstaking process of verification conducted with the help of a New Zealand born native English speaker, also a holder of a Doctoral degree in English studies. As I verified every transcript word-by-word with Deborah Laurs who worked relentlessly on all ambiguous cases, transforming my often-literal translations into metaphorical constructions matching the rich descriptions of my participants, the translated data gradually became more comprehensible to English speakers, while retaining some cultural intricacies of the participants' talk. We did not aim at producing a fully perfect English version, though, as some awkward constructions are supposed to remind the reader of the authenticity of another language (Bekerman, 2002).

As another way to verify my translations, all English transcripts were subjected to a kind of an inter-rater reliability check (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005) – by being closely read against their Russian versions (and where necessary, changed) by Polina Kobeleva, a bilingual Russian research assistant, also a PhD graduate in linguistics. The whole process of preparing the data set for further analysis, including transcription, translation and double verification, took a considerable amount of time, imposing certain limits to the number of interviews I was able to conduct and analyse for my research.

The issue of translated data poses another tricky question – how to do any analysis on the data that no longer contains the original words of my participants, but my words instead, with the addition of some amendments from two research assistants? While most discourse analysts deconstruct the original texts to reveal the meanings assigned to them by speakers, how could I claim any meanings on the part of my participants if their exact words were replaced by the English equivalents chosen by me? One of the interesting takes on how to analyse participants' data is offered by Rapley (2004) who argues that, "analysis *is always an ongoing process that routinely starts prior to the first interview*" (p. 26, emphasis in original). He

suggests that in order to construct a list of questions and start interviewing people, a researcher has to make specific analytical choices about possible themes to be explored during interviews. Thus, even the original texts produced by participants already bear some influence of the researcher who may refine the themes or ideas for interviewees to think about during interviewing process.

The theoretical position behind the analysis of the translated data may be grounded in the concept of a double interpretation – "The participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world" (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 51). The process of interpretation begins with transcription, where the researcher already has to make subjective decisions on altering the data and transforming the oral data into the transcript format. The translation that follows becomes an essential part of the analysis, as the ideas, concepts and meanings constructed by the participants during interviews have to be re-interpreted within a different linguistic system.

Reflexivity, as a measure of 'quality control' and rigour of any qualitative research (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005), has to result in the demarcation of the author's position on various research issues and in the analysis of the impact this position could have on overall conclusions. As any researcher will see in the data only what she *can* see, from her position, any interpretation of the data, whether in a native language of participants, or in a translated version, will always remain a unique understanding of this researcher and her knowledge of the field.

Narrative Methodology for the Case Study Analysis

Having decided on the theoretical approach to analyzing my own translations of the data, I was still unsure which analytical tools would be most applicable to my data set. Due to that, I decided to attempt a detailed analysis of the first interview I conducted in order to get better understanding of the nature of the data. In fact, my first interview turned out to be so unique and particularly rich that it warranted to be presented as a case study, separately from other interviews.

Merriam (2002) identifies a case study as an in-depth description and analysis of a unit of analysis, such as a single phenomenon or entity (the case), rather than of the whole topic under investigation. A case study can present a case of a single person, or a particular group of people, describing and analysing personal stories of life events

and/or experiences. As case studies simply indicate a particular structural approach to the data, for their analysis researchers often engage different kinds of analytical frameworks, such as ethnography, narrative analysis, grounded theory, and others (Merriam, 2002).

While narrative case studies analyze first-person accounts of experiences as a life story or biography (McAdams, 1993), the ethnographic analysis of the social and cultural context behind the case should serve the purpose of identifying how particular or how representative the case is (De Fina, 2000). A single unit of analysis may be used as a prototype, as we can draw conclusions about the general from the knowledge of the particular (Merriam, 2002). Moreover, a study focusing on a particular case has an advantage of providing the researcher with the most full 'thick descriptions' of a topic of investigation.

The combination of ethnographic analysis and narrative methodology seemed most appropriate for presenting my first interview as a case study of an immigrant woman from Russia. Ethnographic information was essential for grounding the case within particular frames of reference and providing the necessary foundation for unpacking the meanings constructed in this case; while narrative analysis was suitable for interpreting the interview data as a 'life story' recounted by the participant.

The concept of a story told by a participant and re-told by the researcher is central to narrative research (De Fina, 2000). In the foundation of narrative methodology there lies an idea that while interacting with each other, people construct stories about their experiences, producing a coherent account of what happened with its beginning, middle/development and end (McAdams, 1993).

The main difference of the narrative analysis from other analytical tools in qualitative research is that it does not fragment texts to compare and analyse recurrent themes across different units of data; narrative analysis takes a person's interview or life story as a whole (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). However, life stories produced in interviews should not be seen as a single-author creation. Narrative interviews are always a product of interaction between the participant and the researcher, and they also bear the influence of broader social and cultural structures (Gergen & Gergen, 1988). As, by telling stories, people try to make sense of their everyday functioning within particular communities and society in general, a narrative approach allows for incorporating the analysis of society into the analysis of individual narrative identity (De Fina, 2000).

Creation of self-stories, therefore, is unavoidably intertwined with construction of self, or a narrative conception of identity, as "we are storied selves… and [ ] our stories are the cornerstone of our identities" (Andrews, Day Sclater, Squire & Tamboukou, 2004, p. 112). The research on separation and divorce illustrates that by creating a personal narrative of events people attempt to re-construct their disrupted lives through achieving a coherent sense of self (Andrews et al., 2004). Similarly, ruptures in identity experienced through immigration and dislocation of self can be sealed with narrative reconstructions, as immigrants are able to forge a new sense of self by rearticulating in their stories the cultural scripts available in both old and new socio-cultural milieux (De Fina, 2000).

The postmodern approach to narrative research focuses on investigation and deconstruction of identity to provide richer interpretations for nonunitary conceptions of the self (Bloom, 2002). The self, in this regard, should not be seen as "single, unified, construction but a 'being in process'" (Merriam, 2002, p. 287). Therefore, the narrative approach to the analysis of a case study on identity has an advantage of following closely the very process of identity construction through different locations and different life events narrated as a story.

The Context for the Case Study

The participant for the case study was a middle-aged woman who was born in the Soviet Union and lived there for most of her life. She was married twice, with two grown-up children from her first marriage and two more children with her second husband. She was Jewish by the ethnicity of her parents and her second husband was a Russian Jew as well, although she had a very common Russian first name and a Russian surname (by marriage). To present her story, I have given her a pseudonym 'Lara', also quite a common Russian name. To understand the meanings of the interplay between various Jewish and Russian markers in Lara's story, it is first necessary to describe the historical and cultural background of Russian Jews.

The concept of Jewish identity cannot be approached without acknowledging the historic and contemporary associations to such issues as discrimination and prejudice (Webber, 1994). Discrimination of Jews propped by anti-Semitic beliefs goes back for centuries in many countries of the world (Wodak, 2006). Wodak (2006) argues that anti-Semitic stereotypes and prejudicial beliefs are transferred from

generation to generation through metaphors, insinuations and other culturally embedded frames. They are used among general population as models for commonsense knowledge, maintaining anti-Semitic beliefs and allowing for continuous discrimination of Jews. Even when new events occur or different images appear in society, they get distorted and adapted to those models (Wodak, 2006).

The history of Jews in the former Soviet Union, as well as in Tsarist Russia, has been plagued by extreme manifestations of anti-Semitism, pogroms and discriminatory government policies, both overt, especially in 19th and the beginning of 20th centuries, and covert, as during all years of the Soviet regime and after its collapse (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). The grand politics of superiority of Russian language, culture and ethnicity, termed 'Russification', made Russian a compulsory official language across the Tsarist empire (Anderson, 1983). This supremacist politics has extended from the imperialist Russia of the Tsars into the totalitarian regime of the Soviet era. Russian ethnic identity was constructed as the default 'proper' one while all other ethnic minorities were considered as second class and inferior ones, subject to the chauvinistic policies of nearly total assimilation denouncing other cultures as uncivilized or uncultured (Kononenko & Holowinsky, 2001).

Russian Jews have been more discriminated against than other ethnic minorities on the territory of the Soviet Union. The concept of Jews as 'traitors' in Orthodox Church agenda has been carried out into the atheistic propaganda of the Soviet regime, incriminating Jews in the lack of patriotism purely due to their ethnicity (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). They were accused of lacking the sense of belonging while the very possibility of belonging was denied to them. Russian Jews, therefore, have always been classified as 'outsiders' (Krupnik, 1994), racially and culturally different from the Russian people (Chlenov, 1994). Fully assimilated Jews were interrogated about their origins and blamed for hiding their 'true' identity by faking Russian ethnic affiliation. Persky and Birman (2004) state that Jews in Russia were considered racially different from the Russian majority, and to those Jews who looked like ethnic Russians the 'one-drop rule' was commonly applied, the same way it was used to differentiate any descendents of Black Africans in the USA.

Despite the fact that so many Jews had been living across Russia and in ethnic regions of the empire, the majority of them, the Ashkenazi Jews, were not considered possessing the attributes of a 'proper' ethnic minority (Chlenov, 1994): they did not

have their own language (though some of them spoke Yiddish as well as Russian); they were not considered native or indigenous to any part of the former Soviet Union (as their 'historic homeland' was located in Israel); they were also deprived of any recognized cultural attributes of their own, except for their religion which was ostracized by Russian Orthodox church.

When in the 1970s, due to the programme of 'Return' aimed by the Israeli government at resettlement of Russian Jews in Israel, hundreds of thousands of them decided to leave the Soviet Union, the Soviet regime used the ultimate methods of humiliation and debasement of Jews which resulted in escalation of anti-Semitic attitudes among Russians (Chlenov, 1994). Before the Jews were allowed to pass through the Iron Curtain of Soviet borders on their way to Israel, not only were they stripped of nearly all material possessions (they were not allowed to take with them any money or jewellery or other objects of value); they were also stripped of their citizenship and had to surrender their passports, ultimately losing all human rights. This policy led to the international recognition of a refugee status for Russian/Soviet Jews which provided them with the possibility of applying to other countries for residence, including the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and others (Vinokurov et al., 2000). Only after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when a multiple citizenship was officially accepted in Russia, was this policy ceased and a refugee status for Russian Jews was abolished.

Prompted by the Soviet propaganda, many Russians and some members of other ethnic minorities saw emigrating Jews as opportunists, who would eagerly betray the country which had provided them with everything. They were accused of lack of any high moral qualities and of inability to create a sense of belonging to the rest of population (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). The dominant image propagated by Russian newspapers was one of immoral and extremely rich blatant materialists whose wealth was built on fraud and robbery of honest Russian people (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). The strategy of victimization was commonly deployed against Russian Jews, who, on the one hand, were pushed out of Russia (with such slogans as "Go back to your historic homeland!"), and on the other hand, if they did emigrate, were blamed for lack of patriotism and solidarity with Russians (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). The new wave of anti-Semitism which started rising at the end of the 20th century (Webber, 1994) has revived old slogans of anti-Russian Zionist conspiracy deemed responsible

for collapse of the Soviet regime and economy, blaming the Jews for "corrupting blameless Russian people" (Chlenov, 1994, p. 129).

As the Soviet regime wanted to conceal the real figures of Jews who persisted in their desire to emigrate, there are only estimates of this exodus. Israel alone welcomed more than one million Russian Jews who now make one-fifth of the total population of the country (Al-Haj, 2004). The United States also resettled more than 500,000 Russian Jews (Vinokurov et al., 2000), followed by Canada, Australia, and some other countries, while Germany organized its own programme of resettlement of nearly 200,000 Jews from Russia in attempt to rebuild Jewish communities wiped out during the Holocaust (Elias, 2005; Mandel, 2006).

The issues of identity, within this historic and cultural context, have been especially salient for Russian/Soviet Jews (Webber, 1994). Rigid constructions of ethnic identification for all population of Russia and its ethnic subordinates have been executed through the institute of a Soviet passport which has been enforced as a mandatory identification document for all persons over 16 years (Chlenov, 1994). The Soviet state utilized the system of passportization as an ultimate measure of totalitarian control over its citizens. Apart from the usual characteristics featured in a Soviet passport, such as names, date and place of birth, gender and a photo, every Soviet citizen had to have a stamp with his/her residential address and also a 'nationality' ('natsional'nost') (Persky & Birman, 2005). 'Nationality' in Soviet passports had different meaning from the one assigned to it in other countries of the world. It reflected an ethnic origin of a person, rather than an official and/or symbolic affiliation with the state, which, in its turn, was articulated by the term 'citizenship' (Al-Haj, 2004). On the state level, the Soviet regime propagated the national identity of a 'Soviet Man' ('sovjetskij tchelovjek') as an ultimate assimilationist strategy (Galtung, 2001) and the symbolic representation of citizenship.

The 'nationality' was one of the main overt identity constructions forced upon each individual by the official structures of the regime (Chlenov, 1994). Those who had a 'proper' nationality, manifesting in a default Russian ethnicity, used to take it for granted and did not feel any salience of it. Yet those, who had some other ethnicity stated in their passports, deemed to be a second class one, faced the full force of the societal prejudice (Chlenov, 1994). Some 'nationalities' were considered better than others, for example, Ukrainians and Byelorussians were not deemed to be very different from Russians on the premise of historically-similar Slavic origins. They

were still considered inferior to Russians, while their languages were unofficially deemed the 'barbaric' or 'uncultured' versions of the Russian language, to be used only by those who lacked good education (Kononenko & Holowinsky, 2001). At the same time, some Asian and Far North ethnic minorities, whose cultures and languages were quite distant from the Russian one, were labelled as completely 'uncivilized' or 'backward' and were mostly discriminated against.

Jews were at the bottom of this ethnic hierarchy, despite sharing the same cultural and historical experiences with the majority of Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians and other ethnic groups (Rapoport et al., 2002). As the 'nationality' label was assigned by the government structures on the basis of parents' nationalities stated in their passports, every person had a choice of two – either mother's or father's (Chlenov, 1994). Once assigned, this marker stayed with a person for life as there was no possibility to change later from one parent's ethnicity to the other's. As the passport was required everywhere – when applying for a job or for university enrolment – Jewish ethnicity was used as a filter allowing unofficial discrimination (Rapoport et al., 2002). These strategies were so entrenched in the Soviet society that Jews knew precisely which places were closed for them and did not attempt to apply there (Rapoport et al., 2002), despite their desire for high academic achievement as a compensatory strategy against anti-Semitism (Horenczyk & Ben-Shalom, 2001). In contrast, the dominant group with a default Russian ethnicity was mostly oblivious to these covert methods of discrimination and considered Jews extremely rich, dangerously powerful, and able to exercise their full citizen rights (Elias & Bernstein, 2007).

In this regard, inter-ethnic marriage was used by some Jews as the strategy to provide their children with a choice of a 'better' ethnicity for passport identification and subsequently better educational and professional options in future, as well as with a choice of a typical Russian surname, instead of surnames of Polish or German origin, easily identifiable by others as Jewish (Chlenov, 1994). Despite that, subtle facial features typical of Ashkenazi Jews of European origin allowed the Russian majority to easily distinguish Jewish origins in children of inter-ethnic couples (Rapoport et al., 2002). This alleged physical difference from Russians and other Slavic people was the main resource for constructing Jews as a different race (Persky & Birman, 2005). With the Ashkenazim represented 90% of Russian Jews, those who had Ashkenazi

appearance but Russian surnames or Russian ethnicity stated in their passports were ostracized by Russians and accused of hiding their 'true' nature (Chlenov, 1994).

While discrimination of Jews and anti-Semitic attitudes persevered throughout Europe in 20th century, the central process in Jewish European communities has been cultural integration into local environments, often to the extent of total assimilation, which has led to the inevitable loss of Jewish identity (Webber, 1994). A vivid example of this is that the majority of Russian Jews have been brought up within Russian culture of the Soviet era that demanded atheism (Al-Haj, 2004; Persky & Birman, 2005). As practicing Judaism was even more dangerous than going to a Russian church (with more severe repercussions in the first case), most Jews were unable to practice any of their traditions associated with religion, resulting in what is termed by Webber (1994) 'Communist assimilation'. This has completed the process of Russification (Kononenko & Holowinsky, 2001) for the majority of Soviet Jews, for whom the Russian language became a native one, Russian culture and traditions were the only ones they knew, and the inter-ethnic marriage was often seen as an advancement in ethnic hierarchy (Al-Haj, 2004; Krupnik, 1994; Persky & Birman, 2005). As a result, by the end of the 20th century less than 10% of Russian Jews who emigrated to Israel were religious; all of them were native Russian speakers, and the vast majority considered Russian culture as their heritage (Ben-Rafael, 2001).

The secular orientation and Russian cultural heritage of new Israeli subjects arriving from the former Soviet Union have created an ambiguous response from the host population of Israel (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). The programme of 'Return' of the Israeli government has been founded on the idea of spiritual unification of Jews and non-religious Jews are expected to learn the religious traditions and rituals after settling in Israel (Chlenov, 1994). When some Russian Jews refused follow those, they were suspected in 'economic' reasons for migration. These alleged reasons, combined with former international refugee status (Rapoport et al., 2002), have resulted in a unique identity crisis, the blame for which is ascribed to Russian Jews themselves, as their motives for migration are distrusted (Elias & Bernstein, 2007).

The dilemmas around Russian Jewish identity can be illustrated by the case of Russian Jews in Germany. As an attempt to rebuild Jewish communities annihilated during the Holocaust Germany has offered resettlement programmes to nearly 200,000 post-Soviet Jews. For that reason, Jewish identity of immigrants from Russia had become an ideological issue for the German state (Mandel, 2006). It is expected

from them to fit in "with a projected ideal of Jewishness, imagined and desired by German consular officials" (Mandel, 2006, p. 98) who make decisions on accepting the 'perfect' sort of Jews and rejecting the 'fake' ones – those who are alleged to have forged their documents to prove their Jewishness. Despite the recognition that post-Soviet Jewish identities are historically embedded in Russian culture, while any practice of Jewish traditions and religious festivals was virtually impossible for several generations of Jews living in the USSR, those resettled in Germany are demanded to change their existing identity and perform their Jewishness (Elias & Bernstein, 2007).

Consequently, they are "forced to mimic and assume an ascribed identity, in order to conform to a fixed projected stereotype. The Russian Jews are encouraged to resemble past representations in the attempt to achieve an identity desired by their German sponsors" (Mandel, 2006, p. 101). The majority of Russian Jews reject this identity and refuse to conform to the scripts of prescribed behaviour imposed by local Jewish communities. As a result, they are implicated in an instrumental or pragmatic motivation for emigration, rather than trying to escape anti-Semitism, and constructed by receiving society as cunning opportunists and amoral outsiders (Elias & Bernstein, 2007).

In this regard, the concept of 'economic motives' is used to label them as 'fake' or 'false' Jews, denying them of any 'proper' Jewish identity (Elias, 2005). The image of a dangerous and aggressive Other is fortified by ascribing them with such negative attributes as 'Soviet values' and 'Russian mentality' which are presumed as non-democratic and inflexible respectively (Aroian, Khatutsky, Tran & Balsam, 2001; Ostow, 2003). Ironically, these constructions are a complete reversal of the ones assigned to Russian Jews back in Russia, where they are considered 'domestic foreigners' and therefore "hostile to Soviet values and to the 'Russian soul'" (Elias & Bernstein, 2007, p. 18).

In Israel, where 20% of population are the immigrants from the former Soviet Union, additionally to accusations in economic motives for emigration, there is a widely spread speculation about 'fake' identities of Russian Jews (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). This is reflected in official measures to determine formal 'proof' of Jewishness, such as the record of Jewish nationality ('natsional'nost') in the passport of an applicant, as well as of a mother and, sometimes (when these are also doubted), even of a maternal grandmother (Chlenov, 1994). Despite that it is widely known that

many Jews tried to escape discrimination by changing their ethnic records from Jewish to Russian, Israeli consular officials work in tandem with the German ones to identify 'fake' Jews with 'forged' documents (Mandel, 2006).

Lara's Story

Against the backdrop of the complex history of Jews in Russia, Lara's story presents unique and exceptionally rich data. It illustrates the different ways she tries to negotiate her Jewish and Russian identities while recounting her experiences of living in Russia and later immigrating to Israel. I became interested in Lara's story after I was told of the remark made by Lara's husband to a member of Jewish community in Wellington with whom I had contact. He was quoted as articulating the differences between their life in Russia, Israel and New Zealand as follows: "In Russia we were bloody Jews. In Israel we were bloody Russians. In New Zealand, at last, we are simply people". When I met with Lara and asked her to participate in my research, I did not tell her about my knowledge of that remark, because I wanted her to engage in the process of meaning-making without any leads. As I was interested in her telling her life story and creating a narrative, my first question was about the reasons and circumstances that had brought her to New Zealand.

Lara's answer resulted in a story with traditional narrative features the background for which, in spatial sense, was located in Israel and, in temporal frames, bracketed the period immediately preceding migration to New Zealand. It was organized sequentially – what happened before she and her husband decided to move from Israel to New Zealand, how they arrived at this decision, various factors that had influenced it, and their projections into the future at that point of life. Lara started telling her story in the first case using pronouns "I" and "my" but when talking more specifically about the decision to migrate, she glossed over her husband's and her daughter's part in the decision making process, switching to "we" and "our":

> "…The big role in that we had decided to come here, knowing that immigration would be very difficult and not knowing what it would end up with, was played by my husband, because he was more decisive than I… [ ] …after my daughter had explained to me that the odds of being able to stay here are close to zero, according to all our family circumstances, he, being an optimist, decided that even if there is only one thousandth of a chance – we should try and migrate, and in the worst case scenario, if nothing works out, we would spend at least one year in a

normal, safe country, we would be able to recover our nerves, at least to some extent…"

This story of the decision-making process to immigrate to New Zealand clearly illustrates that Lara constructs herself as part of her family, for all members of which the act of migration from Israel to New Zealand is seen as a similar and shared experience. Though she articulates a slight difference in her decision-making abilities from her husband's ("he is more decisive than I"), her recurrent use of "we" and "our" constructs a collective identity which she embraces on the part of her family. This does not diminish her individual constructions of self, as in other parts of the interview her "I" is very prominent and indicates her personal, unique experiences. The construction of collective identity in this case is necessary to emphasize the importance of family in her life and the salience of collective nature of a particular (that is, immigration) experience. It is also shaped by the reasons for immigration articulated through the idea of welfare of other members of her family:

"…They chose New Zealand to live in, and I, as a mother, wanted to be closer to my daughter. That was one of the factors, and I can't even tell now whether it was the main factor, because the second factor was that I was living with two younger kids in Israel, in the country where there was constantly a difficult situation, ongoing terrorism, where everywhere, everyday, in every place you could expect to be blown up, and therefore, I decided to take my boys out of Israel…"

Asked about her reasons for leaving Russia for Israel, Lara constructs another story, this time locating it in Russia and proceeding to the emigration to Israel:

"…We left Russia merely due to economic circumstances. We had very, very little information about Israel, ludicrously little. There was a very harsh economic situation in Russia, it was already THAT time when in shops there was everything, I mean, goods and food of all kinds, but there was nothing to pay for it with. We could not pay for it not because we were lazy or unemployed; we WERE working but we were just not getting paid for that. [ ] So, when kids used to open the fridge, and the fridge was empty, and I had four kids – two bigger ones… well, teenagers, let's say, and two younger ones… that played a role. I already had relatives in Israel, they were sending videotapes showing full fridges, showing what great weather they had, great climate, how many Russians, well, Russian-speakers, there were in the country, so, overall, there were no particular problems there. Back then, it was possible to find a job in Israel, below your qualifications, but still, at least some job… [ ] So, the question was, of course, only how to feed the kids. Only how to quench their hunger. Because we knew how to work, that wasn't a problem…"

Here, again, the interests of her family, specifically, her children, are articulated by Lara as the reason for her decision to emigrate. To strengthen her story about the economic crisis in Russia that led to that decision, Lara tells 'a story inside the story' – constructing an example from her life there. She remembers how at a supermarket her children would not pay attention to any sweets or cakes but instead plead with her for a piece of sausage on a bread roll. Further in the interview Lara creates another 'story inside the story' using an example from her life when she had no money to buy a Christmas tree for her children and how she managed to solve this problem.

These examples serve to justify Lara's family emigration and though they are narrated by her with a smile, as matter-of-fact, as some sort of 'cannot be more ridiculous than this' anecdotes from her life, the extent of despair of the parents unable to provide for their children transpire through the details of these stories. By introducing the reasons for emigration through the notion of 'economic circumstances', which is quite distant from her described life on the edge of poverty, Lara normalizes the process of her family migration, which allows her to present the issue in a socially acceptable way and provides her with a sense of agency and dignity. Such a normalizing strategy is commonly used by the members of oppressed minorities in order to reject the constructions of inferiority created for them by the majority, and to claim their agency in the process of constructing their own identity (Rapoport et al., 2002).

Having articulated her reasons for leaving Russia, Lara continues the story of migration of her family to Israel. Sequentially, this fits well into the narrative structure, as she recounts her experiences after arrival in Israel:

"…We did not know about Israel… But, first of all, at that time Israel was rather quiet. It was the time of calm – 1995. Well, actually, we had little awareness about that – that this calm might end at any moment… and… in general, we knew absolutely nothing about the country, about what we had in stock for us there. Overall, during those eight years we lived there, thank God, there was no war. But in Israel's understanding, a war is an absolutely different concept from what others understand. In Israel, war is… every minute and every day… this terrorism which they actually call a war… The Israeli troops are everywhere constantly ready for anything at any moment. People are all stressed out, and people change terribly in Israel, our people, Russian-speaking, because everyone is on edge, at breaking point. Well, in general, there are, perhaps, two categories of people… Younger ones, those who arrive there at a young age, are more like the Israeli-born in their mentality, and they live on a day-to-day basis.

And they try not to think much about what could happen in a minute or in an hour. They just live now and today. And… they don't buy houses, they live in rental apartments – why buy houses when you don't know what will happen tomorrow. 'Today we'd better go to a restaurant, today we'll buy something expensive, today we'll go on a holiday'. Well, overall, for such people it is easier to live. But it's mainly the youth. Others, who lived most of their lives in the [Soviet] Union, well, let's say, who are over 40, and for whom it is difficult to change in this direction… Local Israelis, they actually say, "Nothing terrible, it was always like that, it will always be, everybody gets used to it, and you will". But I could not get used to it for eight years… [ ] Well… this is the reason…"

While earlier Lara only mentioned the idea "how many Russians [ ] Russian-speakers" live in Israel, here she constructs a collective identity of her in-group of "our people, Russian-speaking" through articulating the different meanings assigned to "war" in Israel by the Russian Jews and native-born Israeli Jews who also include the younger generation of immigrants from Russia. The stark division between these groups is illustrated by the refusal of the Russian Jews to accept the 'normalcy' of war in Israel which has become a taken-for-granted feature of everyday life for locals. This functions as an example of rejection by an immigrant group of the local systems of meanings and values, which in its turn creates a barrier for its inclusion into the host majority.

When asked to compare her experiences in New Zealand to the ones back in Russia and Israel, Lara continues her story about her life in Israel. This shows that she follows a particular narrative structure allowing her to present her life story in a sequentially temporal manner. She restarts from the moment in this story where she stopped earlier, and only after having finished that, she describes her experience of arriving to New Zealand:

"…In comparison to Russia and Israel, here I feel much more free in virtually everything. If comparing Russia with Israel, after Russia, having come to Israel… I don't know. Well, it somehow went very easily, all went very easily in the beginning, because there is a huge number of Russian-speaking people in Israel, and without any knowledge of the language, in general, there were no difficulties. And… to go through that… well, there is no actual immigration service there, all the documents, everything is done BEFORE you arrive in Israel, through the embassy… [ ] Therefore, when you arrive, straight at the airport, you receive your ID and together with it your citizenship, thus, there are no complicated procedures. Well, the rest is at the level of employment, and in general, language courses and everything – all is rather well organized, maybe, because it is a mass migration of people. Everything is totally free of

charge; on the contrary, people are very much encouraged to come [to Israel]. That's why everything is so easy there, and there is no language barrier because in all services there are heaps of Russian-speakers, therefore, in general, you do not feel too much that… at least I did not feel that I… went through… that I had moved to a different country. I did not have such a feeling. Well, maybe, as if to a different [Russian] region, maybe, as if to a different region. Therefore, in general, it was very easy… When I came here [to New Zealand], first of all, of course, there is a language barrier … I don't know how to say … well, I was under such a pressure because I did not understand people. At all. At the same time, long ago, at school, in the previous century, I spoke English very well. I learned Hebrew quite easily in Israel, and I thought that I wouldn't have any problems [here]. Maybe, I won't learn grammar, maybe, I will use the tenses incorrectly, but simple, necessary communication with people – I knew that I just needed to practice that. Well, that's why I enrolled in [English] courses straight away, in the community centre – they had a small course, 2-3 times a week. Then… in Capital Language Academy, they already had monthly courses there, I went through them twice, the same stuff. Well, slowly, the language started building up, and when the language started building up, then… it was already easier…"

The main construction of the sense of inclusion versus exclusion is achieved by Lara through the concept of a shared versus foreign language. While she mentions attending language courses in both countries (Hebrew in Israel and English in New Zealand), it is clear that Hebrew does not present difficulties to her, because it becomes the second language of communication for her in Israel, with Russian still being the main one spoken by the community around her. The collective identity of Russian-speaking Jews in Israel is shared by her not only through the same native language but also through similar migration history and socio-cultural background, as well as through sheer numbers, which create an illusion of moving within the same country ("to a different region"), rather than immigrating into a different one. This is contrasted with the New Zealand experience where "a language barrier" is used by Lara as an explanation of "pressure" to learn English in order to fit in. Lara defines her sense of exclusion through her own lack of knowledge about the locals and her language difficulties:

"…Well, I don't know, I want it very much, I want to feel a part of this society very much but it doesn't happen all the time. First, I don't know New Zealanders very well, I don't know them at all, I can say. One may say that I don't locate myself in this environment. People whom I encounter, I find them as quite nice. I cannot even remember anybody, a New Zealander, whom I met but did not like. People are very smiley, very easy to get in contact with, though from others I know, from what

> OTHERS say, I know that all this is very superficial, and that on the inside, New Zealanders, in general, are closed and they will never do you a favour at the expense of their own interests. But I cannot say anything for myself…"

Lara's previous accounts about her family's complete lack of knowledge about Israel which was not linked to any feeling of exclusion are contrasted here to similar circumstances in New Zealand which produce a strong sense of alienation from the host community. This controversy may be explained by the presence of a large community of Russian speakers in Israel that provided Lara with necessary resources for identity construction as a member of that group (Caspi et al., 2002). New Zealand, in contrast, does not have that number of Russian-speaking immigrants which could present a critical mass for creating substantive resources for the community to offer strong identification to its members. Lara chooses to explain this contradiction by engaging normalizing strategy (Rapoport et al., 2002). She attributes her current sense of exclusion and lack of belonging to New Zealand society to her own fault, by blaming herself for not having adequate information about the country. Further in the interview Lara sets herself particular goals to achieve in order to create the sense of belonging:

> "…I will be living here, most likely, with all my children, with all my grandchildren, present and future ones. That's why I want to become part of this country, I want to learn about it, to get to know its people, its history, and its culture. I want to get close to that as much as possible; first of all, of course, I would want to get to know the people, understand them better, not only what I can see on the surface…"

With the New Zealand part of her identity still in the making, Lara is using the available resources from other cultural frames of reference – Russian and Israeli ones – to construct and maintain her sense of self. When asked how she answers the questions about who she is and where she has come from, Lara starts with defining her identity in very categorical terms:

> "I say that I am a Russian-born Jew: "I was born in Russia but I am Jewish". And I feel as Jewish. Israeli. I don't know why it happened this way. It's not due to any patriotic or religious inclinations as, to my great pity, I am not a religious person. Patriot… I think that one should be a patriot of one's own children. Patriot of your children, of your family… [ ] Therefore, I believe that every mother should be a patriot only of her own kids, and she should only think of where her kids would be all right. That's why I was not a patriot of Russia, though, I love, I loved the Soviet

Union very much and took its disintegration very hard, I felt so sorry for the country… and the people. But a patriot in a sense… well, in the high meaning of this word, I am not a patriot of Russia, neither of Israel. I am a mother… But it happened so, that I feel as an Israeli. Because when I came to Israel, despite all those difficulties they had there, I mean all the political difficulties, I felt at home. It is not possible to explain, I don't know why. This is my people, at this point in time, it's my country, my people. For whom I feel pain and sorrow very much. The country is beautiful, total abundance of everything and… if only there could be peace with the neighbours, then, I think, it would have been the most wonderful country in the world, and I would want to live only there but… it doesn't work like that… [ ] Well, as I had become an Israeli anyway and have left now, I feel somehow [belonging]… I do not feel as if I betrayed Israel. I left for the sake of my children's future… [ ] If not for my boys, I would have gone back to Israel, of course. Because that is mine…"

It is clear from her explanation that the sense of belonging Lara experiences in relation to Israeli society is the main contribution to her identity. She firmly affiliates herself both with the Russian Jews living in Israel, as well as with the wider Israeli population, among whom she feels at home. Her construction "born in Russia *but* [ ] Jewish" signifies the primacy of her Jewish identity over her Russian origin, and she firmly locates her identity in Israel, rejecting her affiliation with Russia by using *but*. At the same time, Lara wrestles with the dilemma of loyalty towards a particular nation-state against her children's welfare. She constructs a strong argument in her defence against an implicit accusation in lack of patriotism, not only in relation to Israel or Russia but also the Soviet Union. This defensive stance becomes more clear when she insists on articulating her primary identity as rooted in her family, transferring the concept of patriotism from public into personal domain. It is hard to contend whether her expressive argument is a response to some factual accusations of lack of patriotism she experienced in Russia or Israel, or whether it is an internal dialogue of a dilemmatic nature (Billig, 1988) she engages in on the basis of social norms prevalent in both societies. A humiliating label assigned to Russian Jews when they were leaving Russia – that of a 'traitor', who lacks moral values and patriotic feelings towards their home country (Kopnina, 2005) – may have been experienced by Lara twice: first, during emigration from Russia, and then, from Israel. The blame imposed by the prescribed social scripts about how to perform a 'proper' Jewish identity is rejected by Lara further on in the interview in response to accusations she faces now from New Zealand Jews:

"…I cannot say that these people are very close to me, New Zealand Jews. Maybe, just a little bit closer than simply New Zealanders, but again, how can I say so if I don't know New Zealanders… I don't see them as Jews for some reason. Because they don't know anything about that. They think some fairy-tale-like stuff about Israel, very fairy-tale, they don't have a real comprehension about Israel. It's like they read about it in the Torah and how they understand it, or something from history, they have more of this, but they don't have a real understanding of life there. If they can ask, "Oh, why did you leave Israel? You had been living in Israel, and how could you leave?!" how can I explain to these people why I have left. You are living here, you are bringing up your kids here. How can I explain to you what it is and why I have left…"

While being judged by New Zealand Jews for not being Jewish enough or patriotic enough towards Israel, Lara expresses a deep feeling of loss in relation to her 'home' country and a moral dilemma between a personal choice and the benefit for the family. This internal conflict is similar to identity dilemmas of Russian Jews who live in Germany but express a strong emotional identification with the country they have never visited (Israel), but still consider their spiritual, as well as mythological homeland (Elias, 2005). Ironically, the host majority of Israeli society accuses Russian Jews in their lack of loyalty or patriotism towards Israel, blaming them for exploiting a relatively easy migration option to Israel as a gateway to the USA and other countries, instead of contributing to Israel's economy (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). The fact that Lara insists on defining the meaning of a 'patriot' identity, negotiating it with her family obligations, illustrates how salient and, possibly, traumatic these negative charges are for her, because she does feel loyal and involved in the destinies of 'her' people. The pain caused by the implicit label of a 'traitor' (Kopnina, 2005) comes through her words when she denies any feeling of having betrayed Israel, while trying to articulate her children's benefit as a legitimate excuse for emigration.

To my question about her feelings towards Russia, Lara produces a different account, expressing a lack of any nostalgic feelings and then switching back to her dilemma of loyalty towards Israel versus her children:

"I don't know why, but nothing connects me to Russia. I have never had any nostalgia for Russia. Maybe, this is because I've got nobody left there. Even without having lived in Israel, without living here, I never missed Russia. I never did. Not at all. Though I had spent 42 years there. There was lots of good stuff, but that good stuff was only in my childhood, when I lived with my parents… [ ] In Russia, I have no one left at all, only several good friends with whom I still talk over the phone. But… no more than that, no more than that. Everybody are, of course, in Israel − my

parents, my eldest son, my sister, cousins, aunts, uncles… very many close friends with whom it would not have been so hard here now. That's why, of course, my soul longs for Israel… but I won't take my kids there even for a visit. No matter how hard it is for their grandparents. Grandparents know about that. I will not take them even for a visit. Maybe, I am too much, too much… frightened by Israel. Maybe, I am just a crazy mother. But for their sake, to bring them here, to get them out of Israel… I have sacrificed so much, that I will not take them there even for a visit."

It may seem that any Russian part of her identity has become redundant but when talking about any lack of nostalgia towards Russia, Lara separates a particular geographical location (where she lived before emigrating) from other cultural resources which she still draws upon in maintaining her sense of self. Her sense of belonging very strongly and overtly is connected to people, mainly family members, rather than a particular nation-state. Also, similarly to Russian Jews in Germany (Elias, 2005), Lara's denial of any nostalgic feelings towards Russia as a country may signal her desire to distance herself from the political regime responsible for anti-Semitic policies, while the Russian culture is retained by Lara as a foundation in her intensive search for self-definition and belonging. This becomes more clear when she defines why Russian Jews in Israel deal only with each other and do not communicate with native-born Jews:

"I think because there are so many of them. I think just because… there are VERY many of them, at present, to my mind, one million five hundred or one million six hundred. First, it's the language; common language, common culture, common traditions, common literature – there is something to talk about. Israelis, they are, actually, not much into education, those local Israelis. It is only now, when there are already many Russians there, when education has been resurrected and raised a little, then their youth also try to study. This is Israel… this is like… it's like a fruit-salad, there is… everything, everything you want, from around the world, from all countries, everyone brings something of their own. Naturally, we all come with our own culture. And if there are one million six hundred people, who have this in common, then with whom would they communicate – with each other, or would they go and tell an Israeli about the Tretyakov Gallery or about the Hermitage? This is the main reason… [ ] …Naturally, you look first of all for somebody similar to yourself."

Lara's identity as a Russian-born Israeli Jew is constructed by her through the cultural resources shared by her as a member of a particular community – of more than a million people with common language and common history. She embraces the collective identity of this group by reverting to using "we" and "our own". By naming

this group "Russians", rather than Russian Jews, she creates an emphasis on the shared cultural meanings of Russianness; consequently, Jewishness temporarily 'disappears', or does not get any role to play within this particular context. This articulation of Russianness also reflects the way this immigrant group is constructed by the rest of the Israeli population. While marginalized by the host society as cultural outsiders, Russian Jews use this identification to their benefit; they embrace their Russian cultural identity in order to emphasize their symbolic cultural capital and maintain a distinct Jewish identity among other Jewish groups in Israel (Rapoport et al., 2002).

Horenczyk and Ben-Shalom (2001) point out that, when the numbers of immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Israel reached the 'critical mass', they created an abundance of cultural resources for meaning-making in the process of identity construction. On the one hand, the official Israeli policies demanded new arrivals to rapidly redefine their identities, by discarding the attributes of various cultures of origin in favour of the national Israeli one. On the other hand, the sheer numbers and the large proportion of Russian Jews in Israeli population allowed for new patterns of cultural identities, supported by fast growing Russian-language media and community-ethnic organizations (Al-Haj, 2004; Caspi et al., 2002). As a result, immigrant Jews from the former Soviet Union have reformulated their identity of origin into a unique minority identity within Israeli identity – 'Russian' – while assigning new meanings to Jewish identification which they also strongly affiliate with (Caspi et al., 2002). They construct Jewishness in a markedly different way, which may be considered non-normative in Israeli sense, for example, completely excluding religious identity which is traditionally seen as one of the main attributes of Jewishness (Horenczyk & Ben-Shalom, 2001).

The construction of Russian Jews as a minority is not based on ethnic grounds, as they are accepted into Israeli citizenship due to their symbolic ethnic sameness to Israeli Jews (Elias & Bernstein, 2007). Their marker of difference is therefore not an ethnic or racial but a cultural one. While articulated as a cultural minority, Russian Jews, nevertheless, present the largest single group in Israel by the country of origin (Al-Haj, 2004), which provides them with their own systems of meanings and cultural resources for identity construction (Caspi et al., 2002).

Similar to another case study of two immigrants from Russia in Israel (Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000), Lara reconstructs her identity – as an Israeli Russian Jew –

based on her strong sense of belonging to the minority group of Russian Jews in Israel announcing her pride in this membership. She redefines both Jewishness and Russianness as grounded in particular cultural resources provided by this group and connects those attributes with the concept of Israeli national identity, also rearticulated from the perspective of her minority group membership. What seems contradictory for the host society – constructing a new sense of national belonging while preserving the former cultural identity – is successfully negotiated by Russian Jews in Israel within a concept of a fully functional hybrid identity (Elias, 2006).

Interested in better understanding what meanings she assigns to her Russian cultural affiliation, I ask Lara whether she has any contact with Russian-speaking community in Wellington, either Russian or Russian Jewish. Her answer provides an extraordinary 'thick description' of her inner sense of self, as well as of her husband's, interpreted by her through the lens of her experiences of living both in Russia and Israel and through the concept of change:

> "Here I communicate with Russian-sp- actually, there is a Russian community here… [ ] For some reason, I don't feel drawn to them. You know why? First of all, because I left Russia quite a while ago, because I had lived in Israel for eight years. I am not the same. Not like when a person gets here from Russia – in comparison to the person who got here after Israel. Moreover, because I started feeling as Jewish in Israel. It's not on the level of religion, it's something deep inside. My husband, then, he is a true Jew but most of his life he lived in Russia. And when he came to Israel, no matter how long he had been living there, he felt Russian all the way. He never felt Jewish. And having come here, he remained Russian too. And he specifically felt as Russian. In any country. But I, for some reason, suddenly in Israel felt as Jewish, and, by the way, here, in New Zealand, having come to a Jewish community, this feeling has strengthened that… that I am indeed a Jew. Well, it's not that horrible, not that horrible ((smiling)) and doesn't change much in life.(I: And in Russia?) In Russia… do you mean anti-Semitism or what, or do you mean how I felt in Russia? There, I felt as a Jew, of course, there they would not simply let me forget about it. There I felt Jewish in a completely different way, it was inside, hidden… and there it was like some sort of guilt… some burden, I don't know why. It was there, but it was all… in secret, in my soul, inside."

There are seemingly contradictory constructions in Lara's story – she started feeling Jewish in Israel, deep inside, as "indeed a Jew", while in Russia she says that she felt Jewish in a completely different way, though, again inside, but "hidden, in secret, in her soul, as guilt and burden". At the same time, the circumstances under

which the Jews have been living in Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union may provide the material for possible interpretation of these complex identity constructions (Rapoport et al., 2002).

In the Soviet Union, the majority of Russian Jews did not have any other resources to construct their Jewishness except for the ethnicity ('nationality') stated in their passports, Jewish-sounding surnames and Ashkenazi appearance. Krupnik (1994) states that the Soviet regime effectively destroyed all visible manifestations of Jewish culture, "with the consequence that Soviet Jewish identity was completely deprived of external supporting elements that could reinforce Jewish self-awareness… [so that] the genealogical or racial criterion was the only component of Jewish identity" (p. 140). While still officially recognized as an ethnic minority, Russian Jews did not speak their own ethnic language, could not practice their own religion, did not have any community organizations or any major cultural markers such as traditional celebrations, education and public events, and were not deeply engaged in passing historic knowledge and collective memory to new generations (Krupnik, 1994). Consequently, nearly all aspects of their cultural identity have been forged on the basis of the history and culture of Russia and its neighbours (Persky & Birman, 2005), reinforced by anti-Semitic policies of the state and demands for assimilation and Russianization (Chlenov, 1994).

Yet, Russian Jews were not considered 'pure' Russians by the rest of population, supported by an ideological agenda of Russian superiority (Kononenko & Holowinsky, 2001). Communist assimilation of Jews was forced but also forcefully restricted: Judaism and any expression of Jewish identity were strictly forbidden but full assimilation into Russian environment was not allowed (Schweid, 1994). It was ideologically useful for the state to preserve Jews as partially Jews, retaining only the negative sense of their identity as a consequence of anti-Semitic policies (Schweid, 1994). The Soviet regime was deciding on identity composition of its citizens by employing the biological, 'primordial' framework of predetermined blood percentage based on genetic theories of racism (Persky & Birman, 2005). Through the strategy of victimization, this ascribed deficient identity was creating a feeling of guilt or burden, without providing any rational explanation for such discrimination (Rapoport et al., 2002). Persky and Birman (2005) note that, "a Soviet Jew did not have an option of not being Jewish. Rather, Jewish nationality/ethnicity was an ethnic/racial marker that could not be shed, and in part, it was discrimination that maintained identity" (p. 569).

The lack of adequate resources back in Russia did not allow Lara to construct a functional Jewish identity, hence, her feeling of confusion in relation to how it felt like: "…some sort of guilt… some burden, I don't know how". Instead, an inferior label, hollow inside, has been created by the dominant majority which would not allow Jews to "forget" that they are not Russians, that is not 'insiders' but 'outsiders'. The mere belonging to a minority that was considered by the authorities as disloyal to the state was responsible for creating "a fear of being Jewish" (Chlenov, 1994, p. 131). This notion of Jewishness as a stigmatized identity was behind the intentions of so many Jews to conceal their Jewish origin and transmit these strategies to their children as an active part of their Jewish identity (Webber, 1994).

Lara felt Jewish the way Russians around her made her feel, preventing her from constructing any positive meanings for this identity. It was in Israel where she found the meanings for her Jewishness. Israel allowed her to develop her Jewish identity by providing her with all necessary resources for its construction. There, she was able to fill in the hollow structure, previously consisting only of a shell of the inferior label, with cultural, historic, religious and many others meanings which she shared with other Israelis, first and foremost with the Russian Jews. The process of constructing her Jewish identity based on Israeli context allowed her to create a sense of belonging there, a feeling of home and the sense of inclusion. Ben-Rafael (2001) noted in relation to Russian Jews in Israel who were eager to embrace the Israeli Hebrew culture that, "These immigrants probably come to feel more Jewish here than they did in their country of origin" (p. 348). Israel has provided Russian Jews with the possibility to shed their inferiority complex and re-create their Jewishness as a valuable and meaningful part of identity (Rapoport et al., 2002).

In his overview of Jewish identity construction in contemporary European societies, Webber (1994) suggests that the word 'community' is employed most often to define the Jewish identity, as it is through their belonging to their local communities that European Jews find meanings for their sense of self. While in many countries of the world members of the Jewish diaspora have been historically organizing themselves through local Jewish communities (Webber, 1994), the Soviet regime since 1930s has effectively destroyed the concept of community in Jewish identity, despite the fact that the numbers of Soviet Jews totalled a few million (Krupnik, 1994). In contrast, when Russian Jews emigrated to Israel, they were able to re-create this concept of community, based on their cultural minority status, and to

develop what may be considered their own east European (or post-Soviet) model of Jewish culture (Schweid, 1994). This remarkable version of a culturally different Jewish community of Russian speakers within Israel provided for the possibility of reconstituting a renewed Jewish identity on a traditional community basis. For Lara, there was no sense of community back in Russia to draw cultural resources from, but in Israel 'her community' was thriving and the resources for identity construction were in abundance.

The feeling of shame of being a Jew forced upon her back in Russia, may still be not fully renegotiated by Lara, as she talks of her husband being "a true Jew", in contrast to herself, presumably, not a 'true' one. At the same time, she also notes that her realization that she is "indeed a Jew" is "not that horrible… and doesn't change much in life", which is consistent with the sense of fear of being a Jew in Russia, with consequent accusations in disloyalty and non-belonging. Interested in changes to her feeling "inside", I ask Lara what happened to it in Israel. Her answer creates an intricate narrative about transformations to her identity upon arrival in Israel:

> "And in Israel we became Russians straight away ((smiling)). When a Jew comes to Israel, he straight away gets into the jargon, not the jargon, I don't know how [to say it]… he becomes a Russian straight away. Because Israelis – they are Israelis, if you have come from Ethiopia – you are an Ethiopian, if you have come from Russia – you are a Russian! You've hardly come out of the airplane – and you straight away turn into a Russian. Well, of course, not in your passport, just simply, in the understanding of others. But you suddenly become a Russian. This is also difficult to understand. There nobody says, "a Russian Jew, a Moroccan Jew, an Ethiopian Jew" – there they say "Russians, Moroccans, Ethiopians". And all the Jews that have come from the former [Soviet] Union, they are all called Russians. They don't call themselves that – they are trying to correct others all the time, and I tried, I would say: "Excuse me, please, I am not a Russian, I am a Jew who has come from Russia". But they would not care! They would not care – well, maybe, not out of malice but simply for the sake of having fewer difficulties with explanations. From Russia – then a Russian."

Refused the 'superior' Russian identity while in Russia, Lara is ascribed it in Israel but in a different way. The metamorphosis is instantaneous – the moment you "come out of the airplane" – but has perpetual consequences. Similar transformation to identity of Russian Jews is not endemic to Israel, as in other countries with white majorities, such as the USA, Canada, Australia and others, Jews from the former Soviet Union are often referred to as 'Russians' (Persky & Birman, 2005). But in

Israel such a label has acquired additional meanings of negative connotation and bitter irony, as in the first place Israel has been created as a homeland for all Jews.

For that reason, Russian Jews resent being named Russians (instead of Russian Jews), as the majority comes to Israel as a result of personal experiences of anti-Semitism (Rapoport et al., 2002), as well as to make *Aliyah* (translated as 'ascent') – a symbolically and spiritually charged return to the historic homeland, the 'promised land' of Israel (Walsh & Horenczyk, 2001). Therefore, their identity has a profound Jewish meaning for them (Chlenov, 1994). At the same time, the proportion of non-Jews among those emigrating from the former Soviet Union has fluctuated between 20 to 40% in different waves, mainly due to non-Jewish spouses of Russian Jews (Al-Haj, 2004). Extremely negative attitudes to those non-Jewish (mostly Russian) partners on the part of the local Israelis extend to all post-Soviet immigrants, including those of Jewish origin, who are labelled 'Russians' by association. The fact that the majority of Russian Jews are also secular and do not support the religious laws governing everyday life in Israel (Al-Haj, 2004), is used to construct their identity as failing to fit in with the 'proper' Jewish Israeli identity. Naming them 'Russians' (instead of 'Russian Jews') presents the most common rhetoric strategy of constructing their otherness and, therefore, legitimizes exclusionary practices (Elias & Bernstein, 2007).

When asked about her response to the controversy of this identity construction, Lara at first attempts to negate and normalize it but then she expresses her resentment and, using the comparison with New Zealanders, explains how the inferior identity of a Russian is constructed by other Israelis:

> "(I: Did that bother you?) No! Not at all! Not at all. Maybe, in the beginning. Maybe, in the beginning. Maybe, on some occasions. Maybe, depending on the situation. If some Moroccan Jew tells you, and tells you as if in reproach, "how are saying this, how are you pronouncing that"… Here, you see, I speak English rather poorly. But never, if I ask somebody in the street about something, or in the shop, nobody will ever reproach me for that. Either they would ask me to repeat, in order to understand, or, would ask me with a smile, "What a nice accent you've got, where do you come from?" But in Israel, if you ask any Israeli about something, you would be straight away laughed at, criticized, then they would say, "Ah! Russians! What can you expect from them?" People there have a completely different mentality, completely different, but I still love Israel. I love Israel very much. That is still mine."

In Russia, the marker for her Jewishness, which was used by the majority to identify her as a Jew and therefore an 'outsider', was an ethnic or racial one manifested in her surname and/or facial features. In Israel, however, the cultural marker of her 'outsider' membership is her accent; hence, it is the linguistic marker that constructs the divide between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Ironically, the very 'insider' attributes for Russians – the Russian language and the knowledge of Russian heritage – were dismissed by the dominant majority back in Russia, who used a symbolic difference of Jewish origins to construct a racialized 'outsider' identity and discriminate on the basis of it. In Israel, the same attributes become the most salient for identity construction and are rearticulated by locals as 'outsider' ones.

Two parts of Lara's identity – Jewish origin and Russian cultural upbringing – seem to be irreconcilable in view of the dominant majorities in both countries. Each time a different one is used for the purpose of exclusion. The statement of Lara's husband, that in Russia they were "bloody Jews" and in Israel they became "bloody Russians", illustrates the power of the majority to dictate the criteria for exclusion of those members who do not fit into a prescribed version of national identity. The fact that the same features are flipped over and played against each other in two different cultures demonstrates that the meaning behind these markers is not important – anything of difference may be used to create stigma and an 'outsider' status.

On the basis of their analysis of mass media in Russia, Israel and Germany, Elias and Bernstein (2007) argue that similar images of Russian Jews as unpatriotic, opportunistic and amoral Others are constructed in different national contexts and with the use of different cultural resources. They suggest that host media are unable to reconcile multiple identities of Russian Jews and therefore present one identity, for example, Russian by culture, as an antithesis to another one, such as Jewish by origin. The emphasis is always on that one which can be deployed as an inferior counter-image to the image of national identity, providing the host majority with adequate scripts of otherness while fulfilling its need for self-definition. The assigned to Russian Jews lack of loyalty or patriotic feelings is used by all three host societies to undermine the status of them as citizens of equal rights (Elias & Bernstein, 2007) – the strategy reminiscent of previously implemented in practice by the Soviet Union a policy of stripping the Jews emigrating to Israel of all citizen rights.

For Lara, the existence of a very large marginalized minority in Israel – the community of Russian Jews – allows for creating the sense of belonging, as well as

provides her with particular cultural resources for identity construction as a member of this group. While having relatives and friends sharing the same historical and cultural heritage, Lara is also shaping her sense of self through the feeling of solidarity with the whole marginalized community. This explains her construction of Israel as her home and the feeling of loss and grief she experiences after having left it. In this, Lara's construction of her identity fits in with the concept of identity as solidarity with other members of her in-group (Gilroy, 1997).

Al-Haj (2004) suggests that Jewish, Israeli and Russian components of identity are combined and re-articulated by Russian Jews in Israel into a particular concept, associated by some writers with a 'cultural enclave', 'sub-culture', 'Russian bubble', or even a 'cultural ghetto'. Similarly, Resnik, Sabar, Shapira and Shoham (2001) argue that children of Russian Jews enact the model of a cultural enclave and construct a positive group self-image through recruiting their culture of origin as a defence mechanism against discriminatory atmosphere in schools. By demanding from the state to accept and legitimize their cultural uniqueness, Russian Jews vow to create their own distinctive identity, shaping novel concepts, previously non-existent in Israel, for example, combining Russianness as a cultural origin with Jewishness as a nationality and with a secular non-Jewish attitude towards religion (Al-Haj, 2004).

Having learned from Lara that her social life and activities back in Israel were rooted in the community of Russian Jews, I ask Lara whom she identifies with here, in New Zealand. While I expect her to name either Russian-speaking community or Wellington Jewish community (both including Russian Jews), she surprises me by choosing the label 'immigrants' for her answer:

> "Well, with the group of immigrants, probably, who else can I identify myself with. Of course, with the group of immigrants. If in this sense, then, still with immigrants. I hope that after having lived here, maybe, for five more years, at least, and not simply having lived but having learned more… about New Zealand, and having got to know New Zealand people, maybe, I would like very much… to feel as a Kiwi. But I don't simply have, due to the way of life, I don't have… the means or… the chance… to communicate… at a certain level, at a certain place, I don't know where, with New Zealanders."

Though there is quite an active community of Russian-speaking immigrants in Wellington, including many Russian Jews who left Russia approximately at the same time as Lara, she does not place herself among them. While she does have contacts

with both Russian-speaking and Jewish communities and often joins members of both for some celebrations and festivals, these memberships do not function as salient for her current sense of self. As she herself provides two versions of identity she can possibly consider for herself in New Zealand environment – the current one (an immigrant identity) and the desired one (a Kiwi identity) – it becomes clear that the insider/outsider binary is constructed differently in New Zealand.

As the majority of New Zealanders do not identify Jews as outsiders and do not recognize any facial features or surnames which can be used as their ethnic markers (Levine, 1993), the very existence of these markers (for example, in Lara's identity) is not supported by any local resources and virtually loses any significant meaning in identity construction. New Zealand Jews have never been racialized (Levine, 1993), and rare cases of anti-Semitism manifest more in a symbolic way (for example, the desecration of Jewish cemeteries), rather than in personal attacks. Therefore, local Jews are not clearly identified or considered different in any way from the white majority. Persky and Birman (2005) state that Soviet Jews who immigrated to the United States suddenly blended into the white majority – the identity claim which would have been unthinkable for them among Russians who constructed them as racially different.

Similarly, the racialized construction of 'visible minorities' as non-white, or non-Caucasian 'by race' institutionalized by Canadian authorities created a left-over category of 'non-visible' ethnic minorities, presumably unidentifiable from the white locals (Karim, 1996). In the same sense, European by appearance, Lara becomes 'invisible' among other white New Zealanders. Her accent, though, straight away identifies her as a non-local. But not many New Zealanders are familiar with different accents, including the Russian one. Thus, her accent together with her appearance can be used by New Zealanders to place her in 'other Europeans' group.

Both of her cultural markers, the constituents of her identity of a Russian Jew, become redundant among New Zealanders who do not have adequate resources to distinguish and therefore validate them. As a result, Lara has no other affiliation to choose from except for a broader identity of immigrants – the group constructed as 'outsiders' in New Zealand society. The marker for this group in Lara's case is her non-local, though unidentifiable, accent, while for some other immigrants it can also be their skin colour or different from Europeans appearance.

Lara's story illustrates how the identity of the same person can be constructed in very different ways in different socio-cultural environments. It signifies that it is the community that holds the ownership of the historic and cultural resources for identity construction of its members. Lara's case presents evidence that identity is articulated by the forces around an individual who has to accept particular social scripts and local systems of meaning which provide resources for possible forged selves. Lara's identity construction encompasses a difficult process of negotiation of her inside sense of self with the social and cultural scripts imposed by the environment.

The feeling of loss that Lara experienced after having left her home country, Israel, is combined with a particular loss of identity – through the loss of resources for validation of her ethnic and cultural markers. Her previous identity of a Russian Jew was constructed differently in both Russia and Israel but still comprised two culturally significant for her parts: Russian and Jewish. These elements of her identity, easily identifiable in Russia and Israel, become 'invisible' in New Zealand and, therefore, virtually 'null and void'. It is apparent that she faces another process of reconstruction of her identity, based on new sets of resources and different systems of meanings available in her new place of residence. She clearly indicates that to achieve this she will need to go through the process of culture learning (Masgoret & Ward, 2006), as, in order to be able to claim any part in ownership of local resources, one at least has to be familiarized with them.

Conclusions

Lara's case presents a clear and vivid example of identity in the making. Her story about her immigration experiences and transformations to her sense of self offers exceptional material for the narrative analysis of identity construction gained through the interview format. It provides the empirical support for the statement by Gerson and Horowitz (2002) that, "Interviews focus attention on individual biographies, which become a lens through which to view social contexts and arrangements. Individual lives are seen to embody larger structural and cultural formations" (p. 216). The influence of various powerful sources employed in identity construction of an individual has been traced through a personal narrative created by Lara. Also, a narrative approach to the interview data has made it possible to follow

the process of changes Lara experiences in life and in her sense of self, and identify the meanings she gives to these experiences.

This continuous process of transformations to the sense of self becomes especially salient as a result of multiple migrations, as each society deploys different cultural resources for identity construction. Lara's story shows how one and the same person is seen from different, sometimes directly opposite, positions hold by the host populations in different societies. What also becomes evident in her story is a personal involvement in the broader social processes of identity construction. On the one hand, she struggles to reconcile the way she feels 'inside' with incongruent constructions and labels forced upon her by the society. On the other hand, through an active engagement with different social and cultural forces around her, Lara achieves a coherent sense of self. She continually seeks to understand herself, her place in society in general and in different cultures in particular, as well as who she is overall.

Despite discriminatory and exclusionary practices Lara and her family were subjected to in Russia and Israel, despite the inferior identity scripts imposed by dominant majorities in both countries, Lara demonstrates the power of an individual in fighting the degrading labels and re-constructing personal identity from a position of value and dignity. In this regard, Andrews et al. (2004) argue that it is human agency that manifests through personal stories or narratives. Through engaging with discriminatory discourses, oppressed minorities seek to reinterpret themselves in story-telling, articulate new meanings in relation to their identity and ultimately resist those discourses. The performative nature of a narrative allows for new possibilities for identities, as it provides a person with an opportunity to construct a personal version of events and assign particular meanings to them (Andrews et al., 2004).

At the same time, Lara's ability to reconcile a variety of conflicting constructions imposed by different societies with her own, inside feeling of self, as well as with new meanings she creates for her identity throughout her life, provides the foundation for interpreting the nature of identity as fluid and holistic, rather than fragmented or constituted of multiple selves. Some researchers argue that in narratives individuals rarely produce consistent and coherent notions of identity but instead tell the stories about many selves (Andrews et al., 2004). In contrast, Lara's story may be seen as an example of a personal endeavour to construct and maintain the whole self, across contradictory contexts and despite the clash of mutually excluding discourses.

Lawler (2002) emphasizes that a personal life story may become "a narrative about self-development, self-actualization and movement, not only through time, but also through space and through social categories" (p. 246). Through story-telling, people construct their own narrativized identity, by reaching a coherent sense of self in the process of organizing different episodes of their life into a plot. Lawler illustrates this process in a case study of a working-class woman who married a middle-class man. Telling her story allows the interviewee to reinterpret the changes in her life, so that she can constitute more or less coherent and meaningful self. Thus, her narrative "leads to her *becoming* what she *is*" (Lawler, 2002, p. 251, emphasis in original), which in the end allows her to create an identity that is stable across time, despite all expressions of change and transformations.

Similar patterns can be seen in Lara's narrative. While the fluid nature of identity may be traced through Lara's ability to adopt changing interpretations of meanings assigned to her ethnic and cultural heritage, she still produces an account of a contingent sense of self across time and space. During the meaning-making process Lara has to rely on particular cultural scripts available in her immediate environment. However, it is up to her how to use these resources when trying to make sense of her life and what meanings to give to identity constructions she uses to articulate her sense of self.

The process of constructing a coherent self requires interpreting the past events of one's life through the lens of the present, in the way a person understands it at the moment of telling the story (Lawler, 2002). Through this, some events in the past, which could not be interpreted coherently or given any meaningful explanation at a time, may be re-interpreted later, in the light of the knowledge a person has gained as a result of new experience (Rapoport et al., 2002). Lara's story shows how she struggled to find any meaningful interpretation for her Jewish identity constructed by the Russian majority as a deficient second class. With transformations to her sense of self as a result of changing societies of residence, she was able to re-interpret her Jewishness and find new meanings for it. Similar to Lawler's (2002) research, through narrating her life Lara was able to articulate her 'becoming what she is now', as a result of social and cultural processes she found herself a part of.

Lara's seemingly contradictory construction of her husband as "a true Jew" who nevertheless has remained being and feeling Russian in any culture, illustrates her understanding of a personal choice over one's own identity. Though she and her

husband experienced the same discriminatory practices in both Russia and Israel, and were constructed as members of the same out-group by the host majorities, this did not lead the two of them to accept the same scripts and produce similar sense of self. Despite using the same cultural resources and negotiating the same inferior labels, Lara and her husband arrive at different identities because they choose to give different meanings to such aspects of their experience as ethnic and cultural heritage. Lara's story brilliantly illustrates that despite the power of societal structures to dictate their rules in what we can and what we cannot be, identity (including ethnicity) is not a pre-given entity, and individuals are able to entertain their freedom of choice and exercise their agency in deciding what resources they use in constructing their sense of self.

In summary, this chapter has presented a case study on the process of identity construction in three societies of settlement, including the country of origin. Using the data from an in-depth interview and analysing it from the perspective of ethnographic and narrative research has allowed to delve into the deep and intricate issues of personal interpretations of the sense of self and its negotiation with the powerful forces within different socio-cultural environments. While investigating identity construction as a process in time and space, this case study also provides for a comprehensive background for the next chapter which will aim at identifying the most common and salient themes within such a process, via the analysis of 20 interviews with Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand.

Chapter 4. Interviews with Russian-speaking Immigrants in New Zealand, Part 2: Interview Study

Apart from discussing the methodological issues of data collection, the previous chapter also presented the analysis of the first interview, taking it as a case study of the migratory experiences of one person, in order to illustrate the process of identity construction and reconstruction through personal meaning-making of the changes in the sense of self. This chapter will analyse the remaining 20 interviews conducted with Russian-speaking immigrants in Wellington, employing different analytical techniques for the interpretation of the data. The first step of the analysis of the interview dataset engages thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), but in a different way from the one used for the analysis of newspaper articles in the media study. The further analysis of the identified themes follows the rationale and the principles of the framework termed positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999).

Analytical Frameworks Applied to the Interview Data

When researchers deal with qualitative data, whether on the basis of interviews, or focus groups, or any type of data available in the public domain, the main difficulty is the vast amount of raw data (in the form of texts or transcripts) that have to be 'processed' in order to be analysed. The richness of any qualitative data is both their advantage and disadvantage (Grbich, 2007), as in the beginning of any analysis it is hard to see how the sheer complexity of personal accounts of life experiences can be narrowed down to some sort of a coherent story or theory.

The first stage of analysing large amounts of raw qualitative data should aim at what may be termed the data reduction process (Grbich, 2007). The main idea behind the process of data reduction in qualitative research is to search for some structure within the data. From such a structure, it should become easier to see the central story or theory, even if, at the end of the analysis, the initial structure has undergone considerable changes.

Thematic analysis is a good example of a data reduction technique useful for various types of qualitative research (Grbich, 2007). As noted in Chapter 2, thematic analysis aims at locating the most common and salient themes within the data, which

are able to represent the whole dataset in the form of a thematic map of some phenomenon or process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There are, of course, many other data reduction techniques within the qualitative paradigm, often fused with analytical strategies, for example, content analysis (Seale, 2002), grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2003), and others. The choice of a particular data reduction technique should be driven by both the nature of the data and the research question(s), and should be based on the epistemological and theoretical position(s) of the researchers.

Among the variety of these methods, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) presents a suitable technique for this study, in its principles and guidelines similar to grounded theory. In contrast to grounded theory, the advantage of thematic analysis is in its flexibility. It allows researchers to choose the level of detail they want to analyse their data from, as it does not demand a particular 'size' of codes for the data to be fragmented into, the way grounded theory does (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Thematic analysis also provides researchers with a frame which is easy to follow and, at the same time, is sufficiently generic that it can be filled in with whatever assumptions and meanings a particular research paradigm entails. Thematic analysis can be used flexibly and productively in both social constructionist and positivist paradigms, as well as by critical realists or cultural relativists. A researcher may construct such a frame and fill it with different interpretations, depending on the meanings assigned to these data in each particular case. Various perspectives may be adopted following the identification or construction of themes after thematic analysis, for example, narrative analysis, phenomenology, discourse analysis, and many others (Grbich, 2007).

The choice of thematic analysis in this study was determined largely by the nature of the data, the main feature of which was that they were translated from Russian (the native language of the participants) into English. For this reason, the analysis had to deal, first and foremost, with the fact that the texts were an English version of the original, already representing the first stage of interpretation of the participants' accounts. In this sense, grounded theory and content analysis were not applicable to the data on the basis that both of them demand quite a thorough fragmentation of the data set into initial codes, sometimes represented by only a few words (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

As any translation cannot be considered adequate enough to reflect the original meaning in full (Cronin, 2006), especially within the smaller units of speech, the analysis of the translated data should always aim at the broader meanings and concepts. Thematic analysis, for that reason, was sufficiently flexible and functional in relation to whole concepts and general meanings which can be interpreted from the participants' larger speech units, such as phrases, sentences or paragraphs. This was the main difference in application of thematic analysis in the interview data in comparison to the media study, where the analysis was not constrained by the linguistic nature of the data. Also, the dataset in the media study was first separated into different themes by topics of the newspaper articles, so that the text of each article was later analysed only within one theme or sub-theme. The interview data required to be taken as a whole single text, with themes and sub-themes identified across it, mixing and matching parts of different interviews under the same themes. To achieve that, it was necessary to simultaneously apply thematic analysis as the data reduction technique together with a deeper level of analysis of the meanings behind the themes.

As the aim of this study was to investigate how Russian-speaking immigrants construct their identity in New Zealand society, further analysis of the themes required methodology located within social constructionist framework, such as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Willig, 2001), Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 1993), and others. Again, the nature of the translated data did not provide adequate justification for any kind of analysis which aimed at the interpretation of particular words the participants were saying. For this study, a technique was needed which would enable locating broader concepts and meanings within the data representative of the participants' ideas. From this perspective, positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) provided adequate rationale and guidelines for the analysis of the themes derived from the interview transcripts.

Positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) may be considered a broad framework, both conceptual and methodological. The detailed conceptual formulation of positioning theory is outlined in Chapter 1. In brief, in its application to identity studies, positioning theory aims at investigating how the selves are constructed in discourse from the perspective on an individual (self-positioning) and wider society (other-positioning). As an analytical tool, positioning theory may be employed for interpreting personal narratives about life events and particular experiences

constructed in in-depth interviews. While telling stories about their lives, interviewees have to claim certain positions for themselves in relation to others and to life events, and negotiate these positions with the way they are positioned by others in society. In view of this, the construction of personal identity is embedded in cultural assumptions of a particular environment (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999).

Following that, Bamberg (2004) suggests that, " 'Being positioned' and 'positioning oneself' are two metaphoric constructs of two very different agent-world relationships: the former with a world-to-agent direction of fit, the latter with an agent-to-world direction of fit" (p. 224). In terms of immigrant identity, the data collected via in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking immigrants may be interpreted through the lens of this dual frame, by investigating how the interviewees manage to integrate both concepts into a coherent sense of self. Therefore, two research questions are employed for the analysis and interpretation of the meaning-making process of the interviewees: how Russian-speaking immigrants construct their identity in personal narratives (or how they position themselves); and how they understand their identity is constructed by others in the society (or how they see themselves positioned by others).

The Context for the Study

The extracts presented in this chapter come from 20 interviews conducted by me over the period of three years (2006-2008). The ethnographic approach to the data collection described in the previous chapter was used for recruiting the interview participants. In outlining the socio-historic background for the study, I partly rely on the ethnographic knowledge I have gained through my personal involvement with Russian-speaking community in Wellington.

Nineteen out of 20 participants in the study reside in Wellington or its suburbs. The remaining one lives in a town not far from Wellington and often comes to Wellington for business or recreational purposes. Using Anderson's (1983) concept of 'imagined communities', it is possible to 'imagine' three levels of self-organization shared by all the participants in the study. Their first possible affiliation may be projected onto the Russian-speaking community in Wellington, with the wider, second level being the population of Wellington, and the third – the whole New Zealand society. Accordingly, the participants may position themselves

simultaneously as members of the Russian-speaking community in Wellington, as well as Wellingtonians and New Zealanders.

Russian-speaking communities across New Zealand fit in well with the notion of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1983), first and foremost due to the fact that accurate statistical data on Russians and other Russian speakers are unavailable. Due to their 'invisibility' among other Europeans, Russian-speaking immigrants themselves can only 'imagine' their possible numbers or the composition of their community. Also, the 'ghetto model' of ethnic communities of Russian immigrants (Al-Haj, 2004) entails settling in the same neighbourhoods and developing local businesses, service infrastructure, cultural and religious centres and language schools in close vicinity to each other. This model has been a common spatial framework used by the immigrants from the former Soviet Union in such big cities as New York, Sydney, Melbourne and others (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). As a New Zealand example, Wellington did not produce such geographical organization, mainly, due to the small numbers of Russian speakers coming to settle in Wellington. It is also possible that the 'ghetto model' has not been deployed in New Zealand cities because Russian-speaking immigrants tended to arrive separately, not as a large 'flow' (Featherstone, 2001), which would have warranted joint efforts in settlement and organization of social networks.

Studies on emigration from the former Soviet Union to different Western countries in the end of the 20th century identify two distinct period or 'waves': the 'Soviet wave' which took place in 1970s and 1980s; and the 'post-Soviet' one which started in 1990s with Gorbachev's reforms allowing free movement for Russian citizens (Kopnina, 2005; Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000). Accordingly, most Russian-speaking communities in Western countries consist of two cohorts: 'older' immigrants who left the totalitarian, though stable, regime of the USSR, and the more recent ones who have experienced the time of big changes and economic and political instability in the former Soviet Union (Rapoport et al., 2002). There are also other differences between these two groups beyond political and economic circumstances (Kopnina, 2005). The first wave nearly fully consisted of Soviet Jews who managed to gain permission to emigrate by applying for settlement in Israel, though many of them, on the basis of their refugee rights, chose to migrate to the United States, Canada, Australia and other countries (Vinokurov et al., 2000). More recent immigrants, while still containing a large proportion of Russian Jews, have a variety of ethnic

backgrounds among them, including those from the zones of active military conflict within the territory of the former Soviet Union (Kopnina, 2005; Krupnik, 1994; Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000).

The difference between the older and the recent waves also manifests through their different settlement and adaptation strategies. Analysing two cohorts of Croatian immigrants in Australia, Colic-Peisker (2006) suggests that the older cohort has created their own 'ethnic bubble' and used traditional diasporic networks to recreate their unique ethnic identity in a new country. The more recent cohort, represented mainly by middle-class immigrants, has deployed the strategy of cultural hybridization aimed at adopting Australian values and bypassing diasporic belonging in favour to the transnational one. This cohort is motivated to gain adequate fluency in English and local work experience which would put them on the same level with the host majority (Colic-Peisker, 2006).

Similarly, the main differences between the older and the recent Russian-speaking immigrants are their English fluency and career plans (Rapoport et al., 2002). As the older wave came with limited knowledge of English and was supported by the refugee model of social welfare introduced for Soviet Jews in Western countries (Morawska, 2004), the majority have developed goals and career paths based on a 'survival' strategy which they had learned during the Soviet times (Aroian et al., 2001). While successful in 'surviving' on minimal resources, this strategy, handicapped by the heritage of the Soviet totalitarian ideology, limited the development of creative abilities and restricted individuals' ambitions for achievements. The humiliating labels of 'Soviet mentality' (Aroian et al., 2001) or 'Soviet mindset' (Ostow, 2003) have been stereotypically assigned to those immigrants who left the Soviet Union during its totalitarian era and were presumed as forever unable to adapt to the ideology of free market and the need to 'sell' yourself creatively in order to succeed in the West.

Similar to the recent cohort of Croatian immigrants in Australia (Colic-Peisker, 2006), those Russian-speaking immigrants, who had to learn how to cope in economically unstable but opportunity-filled 'new' Russia and its neighbouring countries, present a different cohort most of whom speak English quite well and aim at higher goals than the older cohort (Kopnina, 2005; Rapoport et al., 2002). They arrive in the West not to 'survive' but to 'succeed', sometimes with unrealistically high expectations based on their qualifications and work experience. While the

members of the older group are more connected to the spirit of the community and engage in collective events and celebrations (Morawska, 2004), recent immigrants are usually very busy learning, re-qualifying, doing several jobs or looking for work, socializing with New Zealanders for the sake of career advancement, and consequently are not involved with other Russian speakers to a great extent. As I was told by several of the participants, many Russian immigrants are so driven to succeed in New Zealand society that they stop speaking Russian and do not teach Russian to their children, eventually severing all links with the Russian-speaking community. As one man told me, "You would not know how many Russians live here because many of them will never identify themselves as Russian and will avoid any contacts with other Russians. They will hear your accent but pretend they don't recognize it". Such people would identify themselves as 'Europeans' or 'New Zealanders' on census forms and are likely to indicate English as their only language.

This assimilationist strategy adds to the fact that the numbers of Russian-speaking immigrants in Wellington can only present a very inaccurate estimate. There is anecdotal evidence, for example, that there are about 700 families of Russian-speaking immigrants living in Wellington, not counting singles. But even this figure is confusing, as it is impossible to determine an average composition of a Russian family – it may vary from a childless couple to three generations living together.

The Participants' Details

Out of 20 interviewees who participated in the study, nine were women and 11 were men. The age of the participants in the study ranged from early 20s to early 50s, with the majority in their late 30s – early 40s (15 people). Only one female participant was in her early 20s, originally arriving in New Zealand with her parents as a teenager and who is now doing tertiary studies and part-time work. All other participants received their professional qualifications in Russia and arrived in New Zealand between three and 10 years before being engaged in this research. The main criterion for selecting potential participants for the research was based on their vocational situation, such as being currently employed, or actively seeking employment, or re-training for the purpose of future employment. This criterion was derived from the assumption that such people would be actively involved in the social life of wider New Zealand society (in contrast to those who receive unemployment benefit or

pensions) and therefore would have certain ideas about how their identity is constructed by others. This assumption was adopted from the previous research with Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand (Maydell-Stevens et al., 2007) which found that unemployed and beneficiaries commonly experienced difficulties with communicating in English and complained of not understanding what New Zealanders thought of them.

There were no other particular selection criteria for this study but it turned out that all participants (except for the university student) had obtained tertiary degrees and extensive work experience back in Russia, with two women being PhD graduates. Only these two women, though, were in employment according to their qualifications, after having applied for their jobs from abroad and then moving to New Zealand. The rest chose to migrate to New Zealand first and then started looking for jobs. Out of those 17 people, seven received additional New Zealand tertiary qualifications on top of their previous degrees (such as a second major in teaching, various diplomas, or a completely different degree such as a Bachelor or Honours). The large proportion of highly educated and skilled professionals among Russian immigrants is consistent with previous research conducted on the immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the USA, Canada, Israel and Germany, with some studies indicating up to 70-90% of tertiary qualifications in their large samples of participants (Aroian et al., 2003; Jones & Trickett, 2005; Morawska, 2004; Vinokurov et al, 2000).

In terms of gender differences in current employment levels, out of nine women, five worked according to their qualifications (including those two with PhD degrees and a young university student working part-time); three worked in low-qualified jobs below the level of both their Russian qualifications and additional New Zealand degrees, and the last one was planning to start looking for a job when her youngest child started school. Out of 11 male participants, five were employed according to their qualifications but all five had re-qualified in New Zealand; thus, their New Zealand qualifications have gained them entry into their job positions, rather than their Russian ones. The remaining six men had low-qualified jobs incongruent to their Russian qualifications, with one of them having gained New Zealand tertiary diploma in addition to his Russian one but still unable to get adequate employment. Overall, half of the participants (five women and five men) worked in jobs equivalent to their education, and the other half was underemployed despite holding tertiary degrees.

There was no objective to collect any demographic information, on the premise that such data are related to construction of identity and the rationale was to allow the participants to create their identity independently. Therefore, there was no information about their ethnicity, place of birth or other personal details, unless provided by the participants during interviews by their own choice. All 20 participants were Caucasian and migrated to New Zealand from Russia, the Ukraine and a few other countries that were the former Soviet Union.

In terms of family composition, 15 of the participants were married and 11 had children at school or university. Due to the ethnographic manner of selecting and engaging with potential participants for my research, I was often invited to their homes for an initial acquaintance and inescapable Russian 'cup of tea'. When dealing with families, both husband and wife were typically very hospitable and interested in establishing friendly relationship with me. Therefore, it seemed unethical to offer only one of them to take part in interviews, when both of them wanted to help me with my research. Consequently, I had three couples who agreed to be interviewed.

The spouses were interviewed separately and, despite shared migration and settlement circumstances, they produced different narratives of the same life events. The reason for that could have been the fact that with all three couples one of the spouses (two women and one man) was the main driver in making the decision to migrate to New Zealand. This meant that the applications for permanent residence in New Zealand listed them as the primary applicant whose qualifications, work experience and level of English were considered acceptable for residency and led to the appropriate occupational status. This also resulted in all three cases in a severe drop in employment level for their spouses. None of the spouses worked in jobs even close to their professional levels. Therefore, the couples' stories of the same events presented different identity constructions, producing rich and unique data from every interviewee and enriching the overall dataset.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Themes

Though the bulk of the recorded data was in Russian, many participants often used English terms, interweaving them seamlessly into the Russian talk. In such instances, it was possible to employ deconstruction technique (Grbich, 2007) to analyse these small extracts of the data. Words and phrases used by the participants in

English are presented in the following extracts in *italics*. Words presented in CAPITAL letters indicate an additional emphasis placed on them by the speaker. Words added by me for the sake of clarity, as well as those omitted for brevity are marked by square brackets ([ ]), while pauses are presented by ellipses (…). For the purpose of identifying the extracts from the interviews, each participant has been given a number, which is preceded by a *W* for women and an *M* for men. The numbering goes from number 2 to number 21, as the first interview was analysed as a separate case study presented in the previous chapter.

Several themes were identified as most common and salient across the interviews. The continuous mapping and re-mapping of the themes and sub-themes during the analysis yielded the final structure of six major themes, with five of them also containing from three to five different sub-themes. The labels chosen for the themes are presented in **Bold**, while for the sub-themes – in *Italics*.

The six themes constructed on the basis of the data analysis were:

I.   **Identity Loss**, consisting of three sub-themes:
1. *Discontinuity*;
2. *Loss of Professional Identity*;
3. *Un(der)employment.*

II.   **Negative Labels**, consisting of five sub-themes:
1. *Aliens*;
2. *Second-class People*;
3. *Abnormals*;
4. *Stigma of an Accent*;
5. *Stereotypes of Russians.*

III.   **Claim for Agency**, consisting of three sub-themes:
1. *Normalizing Strategy*;
2. *Grounding in Location*;
3. *Invisibility.*

IV.   **Claim for Ownership**, consisting of four sub-themes:
1. *Sense of Belonging*;
2. *New Careers*;
3. *Personal Growth*;
4. *Sense of Becoming.*

V.   **Hybrid Identity**.

VI.   **Cosmopolitan Identity**, consisting of three sub-themes:

1. *Innate Qualities*;

2. *Adventurous Spirit*;

3. *New Breed of People*.

The order of presenting the themes is based on temporal and dialectic principles, so that the themes can illustrate the development of particular stages in identity construction across the majority of the participants. This means that, for example, the theme **Identity Loss** reflected the experiences of the participants typical for the initial stage of their settlement in New Zealand, while the themes **Hybrid Identity** and **Cosmopolitan Identity** presented a higher level of adaptation to New Zealand society, usually after a number of years since arrival.

Identity Loss

One of the most common themes across nearly all interviews was the theme **Identity Loss**. This theme was based on the participants' feelings and perceptions of loss of their previous identity due to the lack of its validation in the new socio-cultural environment. The loss of identity has been identified as one of the most significant consequences of immigration on the sense of self, especially in its extreme manifestation in case of political refugees and asylum seekers (Colic-Peisker, 2005; Colic-Peisker & Walker, 2003). Voluntary migrants are not normally forced into a 'bogus' identity assigned to asylum seekers and refugees who are commonly 'stripped' of their previous identity in order to fit them into rigid categories for bureaucratic 'processing'. In contrast to refugees, immigrants usually hold documents which symbolically represent their identity, including their professional status as stated in their diplomas and degrees, as well as in work records. Unfortunately, in most cases these symbols of prior identity do not protect newcomers from experiencing a profound identity loss, similarly to refugees and asylum seekers. Caldas-Coulthard and Alves' (2008) research demonstrated that 'loss' was a constant theme among Brazilian migrants in Britain, articulated through feelings of discrimination and being 'alien', of not belonging to a social class and being out of place, as well as having lost the ability to communicate properly.

The research on the economic implications of immigration of professionals and their families from the former Soviet Union to the USA identified an absolute loss of human capital for the majority of the sample (Gang & Stuart, 2000). Benish-Weisman (2009) suggests that the narratives of unsuccessful migration among Russian Jews in Israel always contained the elements of fracture reflecting the disconnection between past and present. Milligan (2003) argues that the sense of loss experienced by individuals as a result of displacement, or disruption of place attachment, leads to the discontinuity of identity embedded in the former place of attachment. Through the act of immigration, as cross-cultural movement, immigrants inevitably experience the disruption of continuity of their past, present and future sense of self (Rapoport et al., 2002). Consistent with past research, the participants in this study experienced the disparity between the way they were expecting their identity to be recognized by the New Zealand society and the actual response from most New Zealanders. This notion of disparity and loss due to displacement is illustrated by the following extracts from the interviews which formed a sub-theme *Discontinuity*:

> M2: I was a respected member of the intellectual elite; when I walked along the streets I could not get by without being stopped every now and then by my acquaintances, semi-acquaintances, friends, former friends and so on. I would talk to all of them; they were all artists, poets, translators, journalists and so on; and also others, like doctors, but in any case – the elite. [ ] What's it to them [New Zealanders]? I am, of course, super but… not a Nobel Prize winner, so… Though, here even Nobel Prize winners would get it in the face…

> W21: And he said to me in conversation, by the way, very honestly, "The fact that your CV says that you had been working in some international organization is absolutely not interesting to anyone here. You do not have any local experience, that's why…" And I was so stunned because even in Russia when I was looking for work, others knew that if I come from the World Bank, it's good! But here… it's sort of… nobody is interested in this… "You are of no value for us"… So, I was, of course… in a state of slight shock…

The experience of loss and discontinuity of their identity has been articulated by some participants as a feeling of uselessness and inability to find any application to their skills and talents. The symbolic assets accumulated by them in their place of origin did not materialize in any practical applications, such as a high social status, or respect and appreciation of their talents and experience. As a result, for many of them the sense of a fully-functional self and a valued member of society they experienced

in Russia gave way to the construction of a useless person, worthless and not needed in their new socio-cultural environment:

> W14: I feel all the time like some sort of unclaimed, second-class, right..? and… absolutely not needed by anyone here and, maybe, even uninteresting…

The concepts of identity and professional career were closely intertwined for the majority of the participants in the study. An adequate job position, which would reflect their skills and abilities, was seen by them as a foundation for a functional self. The lack of a job which would entail their professional identity led to the feelings of hopelessness and pessimism. While it has been confirmed by extensive research that unemployment has serious psychological consequences among different groups of immigrants and refugees (Aroian, Spitzer & Bell, 1996; Pernice et al., 2000), for highly skilled immigrants from Russia being in paid workforce has been of central importance (Gang & Stuart, 2000; Vinokurov et al., 2000), which ultimately impacted on their sense of self. As one of the women in the study noted, she did not know who she was anymore, as she expressed that she did not have any place in New Zealand without a job:

> W4: It's not important who you were THERE… (Interviewer: What place do you occupy here, I mean, social status?) Probably, a housewife. I don't actually know. I mean I would WANT to see myself as… I am still at the age when I can… achieve something in life. So, I would want to… But I, so to say… more and more… start realising… that… I won't be able to achieve that. [ ] …To occupy a certain place in New Zealand I still need to find a job. At least, for the sake of… my self-esteem…

As any process of identity construction entails utilizing relevant social and cultural resources, the lack of particular resources in society may result in inability to re-create the identity which was previously constructed in a different socio-cultural environment. Walsh and Horenczyk (2001) in their research on English-speaking immigrants in Israel found that two major aspects of immigrants' experiences contributed to their feeling of identity loss: a loss of the sense of belonging and a loss of self-image as a competent, successful and achieving individual. This second manifestation of identity loss was based on the loss of a feeling of competence and status due to immigration. Most of the participants in the current study arrived in New Zealand with plans and expectations of obtaining a job on the basis of their previous

work experience and professional qualifications, taken for granted by them before as an integral part of their identity. They expected their professional identity to be recognized and confirmed by the new society of settlement. In this regard, Vinokurov et al. (2000) note in their research on Soviet Jewish refugees in the United States that getting a job in a field different from their previous qualifications and work experience had "a strong connotation of a downward shift in professional status" (p. 539) for these migrants.

Unfortunately, for most participants in this study, there was a lack of adequate socio-cultural resources in the host society for the re-construction and validation of their professional identity. European research confirms the prevailing in European countries ethnocentric approach to education, qualifications and work experience received in foreign countries which is reflected in the discriminatory and exclusionary decisions of employers related to migrant applicants (Burns, 2008; Flam, 2008). Likewise, the participants in this study reported that Russian qualifications, including formal proof of degrees and work experience received in Russia, were commonly not accepted as equal to the New Zealand ones. Butcher, Spoonley and Trlin (2006) report similar experiences of other groups of immigrants and refugees in New Zealand who complained about widespread suspicions and reservations of employers regarding overseas qualifications.

Several participants complained that their degrees had undergone inadequate or confusing translation into English which led to downgrading or complete misrepresentation of their qualifications. An extreme example of an invalid translation of Russian qualifications and work record was given to me by one of the participants whose former qualification of an air-traffic controller had been equated to the skills in flying commercial airliners, and he was instructed to produce a record of flight hours in piloting those aircraft to be able to register as a commercial pilot.

But even when the degrees and work records were translated adequately, some participants complained that these were still not valued or accepted by New Zealand employers, resulting in the sense of loss of professional identity. As Colic-Peisker (2002) stated, "Overseas qualifications, even when formally recognized, are useless in Australia unless they are 'translated' into English and adjusted to another cultural context" (p. 154). This statement can be equally applied to the New Zealand context (Butcher et al, 2006). Many participants in the study described the feelings of

inadequacy and loss of social status in relation to their unappreciated experience and unrecognized qualifications, which formed a sub-theme *Loss of Professional Identity*:

> M3: On arriving here, the first thing that was done… say, the reaction of this society; well, probably, of any society… the first thing is to show you that you are a nobody!.. You are a stranger, you are a nobody! Well, that was the first impression, which I felt when I tried to find a job. With all my previous… *university degree*… that became clear straight away that all your… qualifications go into the rubbish bin. That was the first impression that I remember… that, "We sort of know that your qualifications… are all fake"… like that, and so on. If it was not said openly, it was implied.

> W6: And, then, of course, it was hard… looking for a job because… nobody wants to employ you anywhere without New Zealand work experience… You feel… second-class, of course… and also, it's impossible to prove… your qualification, your work experience in Russia; it's like nobody needs all that…

Overall, the issue of qualifications and, consequently, professional identity based on them, was central for most of the participants. Getting a job according to their qualifications and work experience was one of their main goals and one of the expectations upon arrival in New Zealand. As many of the participants were granted permanent or temporary residence in New Zealand on the basis of the criteria for the skilled category of migrants, they did not expect having problems in gaining employment. The significance of an adequate employment for most of the participants was also reflected in their university degrees (rather than trade qualifications) which signified in the first place their high motivation and career aspirations. Failure in fulfilling their goals produced the feelings of inferiority and exclusion:

> W14: I haven't still managed… to adapt here so that I could find a MORE OR LESS… normal job… I mean all I can expect now is only… to work as a *cleaner*… or as a… *kitchen-hand*, right? Something like that, in trades, well, in positions on a low level, of PHYSICAL, hard physical labour… which do NOT… satisfy me psychologically at all, right..? That's why I feel absolutely alien here…

Apart from leading to feelings of satisfaction and self-realization, adequate employment is expected by immigrants to yield certain material benefits representing a way of life they would want to have (Aroian et al., 1996). Unemployment or underemployment, as well as underpayment, would mean significantly lower financial level, straight away putting the families of immigrants into the lowest economic stratum of the society (Colic-Peisker, 2005). The research conducted in eight

countries of the European Union illustrates that besides the institutional discriminatory laws restricting employment of immigrants into public or civil services, stereotyping of certain jobs (that is, hard, low-prestige, low-paying jobs across all economic sectors) has evolved into 'migrant-typing' – reserving the so-called 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous and demanding) for particular ethnic groups in each country (Flam, 2008). It also shows that even when in some countries natives (typically from the lower strata of society) are employed in the same 3D jobs, migrants still fare worse as they are engaged in heavier and lower-paid jobs than locals. This stands for virtually all migrant groups despite an established fact that an average migrant to the European Union who comes from Russia and Eastern Europe holds higher education and qualifications than an average native (Flam, 2008).

The sense of belonging to the lowest class of society adds to the feeling of loss of the previous identity which used to reflect the level of professional success and economic prosperity. For example, the loss of professional identity among well-educated Russian Jews in Israel has been implicated in the process of their marginalization of them in Israeli society and in a significant drop in their socio-economic status due to their unemployment or engagement in menial jobs (Remennick, 1999). Similar experiences articulated by the participants were grouped under a sub-theme *Un(der)employment*:

> M2: …150 – I think I have a separate drawer for that – 150 rejections. During all that time, out of 150 rejections, I was invited for an interview only 3 times… [ ] …And now I say, "I am a taxi-driver, NATURALLY"… Frankly speaking, they have difficulties with understanding the irony, but when I say, "What do you mean who I am? Who else? A taxi-driver, of course! What else?" …They say, "We must have the most highly qualified taxi-drivers in the world". I say, "Yes, that's true."

Inability to make use of their Russian qualifications and claim an adequate position in society pushed many of the participants into studying, aiming at re-qualifying completely or boosting their existing qualifications with additional New Zealand ones. These participants saw further education as the only way to seek validation of their professional identity by locals, even if this still meant a lower status than the one warranted by their original qualifications:

> W8: …the decision regarding my studying – that was MY decision… which… my husband did not appreciate in the beginning… It was a

SHOCK for him when I quit working and went into studies… [ ] When I arrived my first job was a cake decorator in a supermarket… [ ] I explained to him, sat down and said that I would earn more… because I was working *full-time*… but was earning less than some people… who worked *part-time*… Because everybody would tell me that I did not have fluent English. I say, "What's the difference?.. I work *full-time*, whether English or no English but I am still a human being, I am working!" [ ] And one of my… bosses said… He was a manager, he said, "Go and study!.. You've got good qualifications. (I graduated from a polytechnic). That's why you should study. Why are you here?.."

M16: I work faster… more effectively… than New Zealanders… I mean, crudely speaking, I don't work according to my qualifications – I work at the warehouse… ((sighs)) yes… for the sake of… somehow fitting in... with this society and… with the least cost I simply went to the course of a *forklift driver*… And… that has helped me… to find a job. [ ] I work no worse than [locals]… and I just thought that… people… do not apply there… to this company because of small wages… And I just… think that… in my company there is no one else who works for the same money…. And I work no worse than others… [ ] having the degree of an interpreter from the Korean language… [ ] You write a lot of those CVs… send them to different places… Nobody is interested in you… And the only place where you can get employed is unqualified work.

The participants' accounts of underemployment are consistent with the findings of Watts and Trlin (2000) who report that even gaining tertiary-level New Zealand qualifications does not guarantee adequate employment for immigrants. They found that among 52 respondents of Asian ethnicity with New Zealand degrees (with three-quarters on Masters' level and above), more than 20 % (11 people) were unemployed, with several cases of underemployment. The respondents also complained about their valuable skills being unused and unappreciated by employers, on the overall background of discrimination and widespread negative attitudes of New Zealanders towards immigrants (Watts & Trlin, 2000).

Negative Labels

For most participants, their previous identity, though taken for granted while they lived in the country of origin, but still giving them the sense of agency in their process of constructing a functional sense of self, became virtually redundant in New Zealand. This void in immigrants' identity was filled in by various identity constructions of 'difference' articulated by the host population, which manifested in inferior and negative labels reflected upon by the participants, such as 'alien', 'inadequate', 'unequal' and others. These discourses were grouped under the common

theme **Negative Labels**. The concept of 'difference' as the main aspect of immigrant identity was constructed through the implied inferiority of immigrants which reflected the unequal power relationship between immigrants and locals:

> W4: Well, I really feel like an immigrant here… probably, because, for example… in conversation… I cannot position myself as an equal.

> M5: In the very beginning, of course, I felt as if on a minefield… and… I felt, of course… uncomfortable… And my friends, who had invited me here, I also felt uncomfortable with them … Well, on the third day we parted our ways because they had told me that we are… ((laughing)) unfortunately, very different people…

The most common manifestation of difference as a part of the theme **Negative Labels** was the notion of 'alien(s)', or 'alienation' reported by the participants, forming a sub-theme *Aliens*:

> M3: I don't feel that I am part of this society… [ ] This society is quite friendly… even more than friendly in many cases… but still… nevertheless… it's not mine. *I* am alien to it. This seeps through in dealing with many Kiwis… who are quite friendly… are trying to help… nevertheless it pops up… it crops up… that… you do not belong… [ ] Simply… there is a feeling… that you are sort of… not quite of a local brew… [ ] communication usually goes on about… the differences between societies and systems – there and here, then and now… [ ] the discussion focuses on differences… between the two societies, or differences in life experience… well, still… you feel like an alien. This feeling pervades…

Construction of immigrants as 'aliens', especially as 'dangerous aliens' or 'illegal aliens', has been consistently found in the research of media representations of different ethnic groups in Western countries (van Dijk, 1995, 1996). Cultural differences between immigrants and the host society are used to build a symbolic border between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', whose cultural background is presented as alien to the local one (Billig, 2004). Consequently, the label of 'aliens' prescribed to immigrants always involves negative meanings, with a hint of danger and hostility (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008). This makes people positioned as 'aliens' feel feared and unwanted (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008). New Zealand research on immigrants and refugees linked the sense of being an outsider to perceived prejudice and discrimination on the part of the host society (Butcher et al., 2006). Similarly,

some participants in this study linked the feeling of an outsider or an alien to discrimination:

> W6: Well, of course, they will always… treat you as a Russian… as a non-local, and it will be always like that, and even if you lived in another country for many years before that, you still remain Russian, they have their own perceptions… [ ] it's still as if you are on alien territory… you can still feel that, though here it's not as strong as… in America, for example… Here people are well-meaning… they would help you… as a rule… But this inner feeling, the way you feel here… [ ] While they were trying to kick me out of here all the time… you feel like an immigrant, and nobody wants you, and overall… and the attitude is such that… when they don't give you an interview but already reject you…

Another common construction of an inferior identity described by many participants in this study was an image of second-class people who deserve a lower level in social hierarchy merely due to their ethnic or cultural origin. Across the interviews these discourses formed a sub-theme *Second-class People:*

> W8: Some people think that… especially those – well, doctors or somebody like that… office people… of some sort… rich people consider you a second class *anyway*… because you are an immigrant… [ ] Who are we here… Again… some [New Zealanders] think that we are the second class… But others, when they know what we have achieved, they respect us very much. Especially simple people respect us… For example, I saw this in my work… People who… are simply my clients whom I know… [for example, a doctor] at this particular moment she doesn't know what I know, for example, and it happens so that I give her my knowledge… And she takes it and she is grateful for this… But if I meet her somewhere else, then of course I know, a doctor is a doctor, and I should know my place…

Overall, many participants in this study mentioned that the host society saw them as inferior and unequal. Quite often they tried to explain various negative labels assigned to them by the fact of belonging to the group of immigrants. The mere membership in this category was seen by the participants as an inevitably inferior label, as the reason for their exclusion from the wider society and the grounds for prejudice. The participants' understanding of their inferior status was based on the common idea that they expressed of an overall negative attitude towards immigrants as a generalized sub-group of New Zealand society, regardless of ethnicity or culture (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004):

> W7: Well… in what sense – as an immigrant or a local..? Well… Of course, probably we all feel like immigrants here, first of all, due to

language, though… I actually don't have any serious problems with it but… still… it does feel that this is NOT OUR country… [ ] if, for example, I am standing next to a New Zealander, I will never feel as a New Zealander too.

W6: Well, those who have completely different impression about migrants… feel more aggressively… the "Too many of you here!" type… [ ] And there are some people here who… simply, in their cultural… tradition… the local one… It is simply the norm to be polite. And even when they feel abnormal towards immigrants, they hide it very efficiently… But if you deal with people very closely… and for a while… if they have something against… it eventually comes out in any case…

In connection to this, the data from the comparison study on attitudes towards immigrants collected in 2003 and 2006 (Gendall, Spoonley & Trlin, 2007) showed an increase of racist remarks about immigrants within the period of three years and provided some evidence of 'hardening' of attitudes, with the demands that immigrants adopt New Zealand customs and traditions as part of a 'common culture'. The strongest negative position towards immigrants was held by Maori respondents in comparison to non-Maori ones (Gendall et al., 2007). There were no data from the participants in this study on Maori versus non-Maori attitudes towards them, but their accounts were consistent with the previous research on racist and exclusionary attitudes among New Zealanders which formed the basis for discrimination and inequality.

Among the inferior labels assigned to immigrants by the host population, several participants mentioned the image of intellectual inadequacy projected onto them by locals, which was redefined into the sub-theme *Abnormals*. This notion was primarily created on the basis of a foreign accent or implied lack of fluency in communication between the linguistic majority of English-speaking New Zealanders and the linguistic 'aliens' represented by non-English speaking immigrants. 'Abnormal' or 'deviant' constructions of cultural identity of various ethnic groups may be used by the host society to claim power to dominate and discriminate against the 'inferior' groups of population, including immigrants (Cottle, 2000; Loto et al., 2006; Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006).

As voiced by some participants, the mere fact of speaking English with an accent or with mistakes, as well as having difficulty understanding local dialects, is constructed by the host community as equivalent to having an intellectual disability which may present itself through problems with spoken (and written) language. Thus,

the stigma of intellectual or mental handicap, based on the assumption of the inferior abilities of people with such a diagnosis, adds to the stigma of 'difference' assigned to immigrants by the nature of their origin (Verkuyten, 2001). For example, one of the participants noted that she had been sometimes treated as if she had suffered from brain damage:

> W4: But overall it was funny. I mean [local] people… if I don't speak English… [they would treat me]… as mental, as brain damaged… they would take me somewhere by my hand and lead me… [ ] I just want to be treated as equal… I really want to be accepted as equal, not as a mental patient. I want to feel equal.

This image of mental handicap not only emphasizes the position constructed as 'not-normalcy', or 'abnormality' (as a type of deviance from the statistical majority); it creates the legalized position for inferior treatment on the basis of a variation in power status between 'normal' and 'abnormal' members of society (Loto et al., 2006). The counter-positioning of 'abnormals' versus 'normals' allows the normal ones to claim a level of power dominance over the abnormal ones. The research on New Zealand media representations of Pacific people exposed the image of mentally defective and unhealthy individuals among various constructions of deviance attributed to this ethnic group (Loto et al., 2006). Coulthard (2008) suggests that linguistic semi-competence of foreign language speakers is often equated by locals to being simple-minded or having simplistic opinions. This positions linguistic 'aliens' as powerless and dependent, similar to small children or very old people, as illustrated by the examples given by two participants:

> W21: I encountered, I don't remember now the details… when I was explained such things, sort of… what to say and when, how to behave… the way a five-year old would be explained… To such extent they knew nothing about our culture that… sort of, "What if they don't know how to use a knife and a fork?"

> W10: What I also wanted to add is that when I start talking to New Zealanders on the first occasion and they hear my accent, especially those of older age, they suddenly start talking to me very slowly and very loudly as if I have a hearing problem… Though I tell them that I can hear and understand them well…

In comparison to a default 'whole' identity of the host population, the construction of immigrant identity through the notions of a 'lack' or 'deficit' aims at

justifying an inferior position for immigrants. The use of cultural deficit arguments has been employed in many Western countries as grounds for institutional racism and discrimination against ethnic minorities (Twine & Gallagher, 2008). Cultural discrimination based on shared systems of categorization, negative stereotyping and 'us-them' paradigm goes together with practices of stigmatization, inferiorization and exclusion of migrant groups (Burns, 2008). Less than perfect language skills are constructed as a marker of poor cultural and social competence, inability to fit in or the lack of capacity for teamwork (Burns, 2008; Flam, 2008). European research illustrates that a language competence argument is used by native speakers as a gate-keeping device and as an excuse for discriminatory and racist practices (Delanty, Jones & Wodak, 2008; Flam, 2008).

Language fluency was one of the most salient issues voiced by the participants in this study, as important as the issue of employment and job qualifications. Some of their explanations formed a sub-theme *Stigma of an Accent.* The fact that most of them speak with a strong Russian accent, make grammatical and semantic mistakes, often do not understand jokes or local references, leads them to feel disadvantaged as the society around them makes a conclusion about their intellectual inadequacy as equal to partial illiteracy. Thus, their 'alien' accent becomes a 'stigma symbol' (Rapoport et al., 2002), identifying them as outsiders. In this, construction of an immigrant as lacking good language skills is comparable to the stereotype of an individual with lower intellectual abilities, by nature of birth or by character. It serves the positive self-presentation of the majority group to portray ethnic minorities as lazy and uneducated via assigning the blame onto individuals for lacking motivation or desire to learn to the level of the majority (Loto et al., 2006). In this case, it is easy to trace the link from the construction of a linguistically 'disabled' or 'impaired' immigrant to the image of a lazy and dumb person overall (Blackledge, 2005):

W10: And I've heard quite a few comments from New Zealanders themselves how they… divide people by their accents… which, of course, puts immigrants into… ((pause)) an unfavourable position because when you start talking they decide straight away that you are engaged in picking onions in the fields…

M17: When an average Kiwi… hears a person with an accent in English… they automatically consider [that person] practically an idiot… When a person… ((sighs)) who was born and lived… in New Zealand, sees that…

somebody… doesn't speak [English], or speaks with an accent… They automatically identify this person as dim-witted…

Colic-Peisker (2002) states that in such multi-ethnic countries as Australia, there exists a cultural hierarchy of accents, on the basis of which every particular accent functions as a social marker. Some accents which identify speakers as American or French may be considered prestigious, while others become a symbol of otherness, as they "may associate the speaker with places commonly perceived as 'backward' and 'uncivilized'" (p. 153). Hence, even between different migrant groups there can be a symbolic divide into 'cultural insiders' and 'cultural outsiders'. Consistent with the experiences of Croatians in Australia, some participants in this study voiced similar concerns about the stratification of accents by New Zealanders and the negative consequences of speaking an 'alien' accent:

> M9: I must say that New Zealanders very precisely separate all newcomers into the English-speaking and non-English-speaking ones. Here, they distinguish very well that… a native English speaker, be that an Irishman, a Scot, an Englishman or even… say, a person from Jamaica… or from South Africa… It is one thing. So, this separation into English-speaking foreigners and non-English-speaking foreigners can be very clearly traced, I must note… And… undoubtedly, those English-speaking foreigners, no matter how horrible their accent is… there is, of course, a slightly different attitude towards them… a more trusting one. They can find a job easier, they can make a career easier… So, there is no some sort of initial barrier which locals have to overcome when interacting with them…

A strong accent not only identifies the speaker as a linguistic 'alien' but it may also be used as an excuse for exclusion and discrimination of immigrants who feel rejected and victimized for being foreigners (Butcher et al., 2006; Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008). Employers' demand for a local accent, as well as for knowledge of local linguistic idioms, is sometimes reframed under the label of 'communication skills' which is used as a screening tool for migrant job applicants (Flam, 2008). On the basis of their research among African women in Canada, Creese and Kambere (2003) suggest that 'foreign' accents are socially defined and mark immigrants as "Others" who do not belong to the imaginary Canadian nation. Immigrant women from Africa were perceived as having a "heavy" accent which could not be understood by locals and therefore were racialized and marginalized. Despite their tertiary qualifications,

their accent was used as a marker for assumed limited English skills and a rationale for discriminatory actions against them (Creese & Kambere, 2003).

Coulthard (2008) remarks that his regional English accent identified him as a rank outsider and signalled a less-educated identity to his metropolitan students. Similarly, the participants in this study often noted that the level of literacy and competence in their native language had been adequate enough for them to complete tertiary qualifications back home. As one of the participants explains, he has met New Zealanders who cannot imagine what it is like to undertake tertiary studies in a language other than English:

> M17: Several times… here, in New Zealand, I was asked, "Have you received your tertiary education not in the English language?!" I say, "No, in the Russian language…" After that… such round eyes – "How is it [possible]?!" Many people in New Zealand with tertiary education cannot comprehend that it is possible to get tertiary education NOT in the English language…

Not only does a foreign accent construct an image of cultural difference, identifying immigrants as cultural 'aliens' and as a symbolic representation of danger to local systems of values. It is also often used by those locals who hold negative attitudes towards immigrants as an easy excuse to position immigrants as inferior and inadequate. Colic-Peisker (2002) noted that for European-looking Croatian immigrants in Australia, coming from a non-English speaking background "may be a source of discrimination in employment just as skin colour or religion may be for other migrant groups" (p. 162). Consistent with her research, many participants in this study described the incidents of discrimination and marginalization towards them which was based on their accent:

> M16: I had to interact with clients, people turn to you, ask you about something, you… reply. Some of them liked that I was… a foreigner, that they could talk to me… Others, on the contrary, as soon as they heard… my accent, straight away, "Oh! A foreigner." They would straight away turn around and walk away! Even no… no hello, no good bye, I mean… such different people, the attitude was absolutely different… yes. Well, overall… favourable, though… quite often there were such ones who simply… having heard my accent… walked away… without any explanation… turned away…

> M15: I have recently started feeling a negative attitude to me as an immigrant, more than before, possibly, because before I did not understand it… When I started working professionally, in a bank… then I

started getting such things directed at me sort of, "Too many of you here!
[ ] And also, it is our country, that's why you… sit… and overall… shut
up!" [ ] I did not feel this during the first three years here. Maybe, because
I did not understand, maybe, did not hear, did not pay attention, had
different contacts… And now… more and more… Many old English
people… they show a lot of it… I know that a person understands me…
because, well, I work at the *contact centre*. Yes, I do have an accent, I will
never get rid of it but I know that people understand me… But… many
people… for example, a lady would insist… that she cannot understand
me… Only for the sake of emphasizing, "You have an accent! I don't
want to understand you! I don't want to listen to you!" To such an extent:
"Give me somebody who speaks English…"

Sometimes, a foreign accent or assumed insufficient fluency in English on the
part of immigrants is constructed by locals as an insurmountable barrier between the
immigrants and the host society (Creese & Kambere, 2003). Immigrants are
positioned as cultural 'aliens' who cannot understand the locals and cannot be
understood either:

W4: I do have a New Zealand friend… [ ] It's interesting that she thinks…
that in the very beginning when I just arrived here, three years ago… [ ]
She tells me now, "Well, you probably did not understand anything I was
saying then…" ((long pause)) I understood everything. ((laughs)) I
understood EVERYTHING! But it's not in terms of speaking, rather I did
not understand what she was expecting from me… what she wanted from
me…

W4: …For example, a friend of mine… her English was bookish. [ ] She
told me… that in the beginning it was awful… when you call… the same
bank… say a correct sentence… and they refuse to understand you and say,
"Call somebody else, we don't understand you". Well… she said she used
to cry…

A foreign accent can be used by the host society to refuse equal rights to
employment and full participation in society to immigrants. In this regard, "the
'imagined community' is discursively patrolled through accents" (Creese & Kambere,
2003, p. 565), constructing a symbolic 'accent border' which marginalizes those
groups that speak with the 'wrong' accent. Henderson (2003), in his research
involving skilled Chinese immigrants in New Zealand, presented their accounts of the
experiences of discrimination based on their accents rather than the level of fluency in
English. The systematic use of discrimination on the basis of accents reproduces
inequality between locals and immigrants in relation to their employment

opportunities, which was evident in the experiences recounted by the participants in this study:

> W6: Well, for one job they haven't taken me… they said that… there was a choice too… either they employ an Englishman… or me… And though I had already worked in *support*… even on the phone… [ ] they… were worried that English was not my native language… and they said, "Well, it is very noisy here and… lots of time is phone communication"… And that's why they employed the English guy, though his technical level was much lower… He hadn't even passed the test… [ ] He said… he had failed… just plugged it in… ((laughs))… and that's it… But English was his native language…

Many immigrants work hard to improve on their language fluency and accent in order to maximize their employment prospects and achieve their career goals. Despite their efforts they often face a so-called 'accent ceiling' (Colic-Peisker, 2002) which is reflected in the refusal by the dominant group to accept them as equal. Henderson, Trlin and Watts (2006) state that New Zealand employers often demand a completely unrealistic level of language skills from immigrants insisting on the level of fluency and accent typical for native speakers, which in majority of cases is not warranted by the type of jobs sought by immigrants. This discriminatory filtering practice of "screening for suitable accents" (Henderson et al., 2006, p. 47) recycles the stigma attached to a foreign accent. Those who speak with a strong accent are inevitably seen as less competent linguistically than they are and are sometimes "seen to be too arrogant to bother to learn to pronounce more accurately" (Coulthard, 2008, p. 151). Similar to the stigma of illiteracy, the stigma of an accent allows for transferring the blame for it onto the holders of this accent; thus, they are often seen by others as unwilling to improve their 'bad' accent:

> W8: …It so happens that people would hear my accent… I felt straight away that people treated me somehow, well, not as the second class of people but as an immigrant… [ ] And again, our language, our accent… the accent – wherever you go, people [ask], "How long have you been here for?" – "Five years." – "You still have such a *strong* accent!" Excuse me, I will live here for 100 years but my accent will never disappear ((laughs)). How can you not understand? I was born [elsewhere], my tongue… can't turn, can't twist this way… You will never speak my language but I am not surprised… You will speak the same way if you learn any other language – with an accent… [ ] In the beginning… it was slightly… unpleasant, but now I don't care. But I know, as my Russian friends always say to me, "When you hear… people speaking with an accent, you know that… they speak at least two languages"… So… it

should be… a great compliment. [ ] But… for some reason everybody gets it very quickly that I am Russian. I don't know where they know this accent from but they ask me, "Are you *from Russia*?" I say, "Yes, *from Russia*. Why?" They say, "You've got such a specific accent". I ask, "But where do you meet such accents so often that you… recognize mine?"… I am bewildered.

Similar to other Slavic accents, for example the Croatian one (Colic-Peisker, 2002), the Russian accent in English may be considered quite a 'strong' one, as the articulatory bases between English and Slavic languages, and especially Russian, are quite different. As illustrated previously in the media study in Chapter 2, New Zealand journalists construct this accent as "unmistakably Russian" (see the reference to the Russian singer Yulia Townsend). The prevailing stereotype of Russians as members of the Russian Mafia has spread around the world, especially in the USA and Europe (Siegel & Bovenkerk, 2000), enhanced by Hollywood images of sadistic Russian gangsters speaking with a typical 'broken' accent. This association takes the stigma of the Russian accent to the level of a strong negative stereotype.

Several participants in this study suggested that the negative attitude of some New Zealanders towards Russians may be also rooted in anti-Soviet propaganda conveyed by the media during the Cold War era, depicting Russians as dangerous and evil people whom locals should fear and try to avoid. The participants' comments regarding these images were grouped under the sub-theme *Stereotypes of Russians:*

> M17: There is… the generation which… during the Cold War… as New Zealand *media* belongs to the Americans and Australians… and the so-called *brainwash* which was back then… This affected them. So, 40-year olds… probably… were brainwashed, they are afraid [of Russians]… [ ] I mean they watched TV too much and… they got brainwashed slightly… by the propaganda… yes. The same as Americans. I've just dealt with a guy, an American, he was telling me the same things. It's even funny… how much they are *brainwashed*… yes, and… there is some negative attitude, some caution…

Billig (2004) argues that stereotyping is one of the means of 'imagining' foreigners who are used to form the symbolic boundaries of the imagined community of a nation-state. While stereotypes are often constructed on the basis of old cultural myths, they are very actively engaged in distinguishing 'us' from 'them'. This binary is continuously re-produced in mainstream discourses to support the claims for the only 'right' version of national, that is 'our', identity. The binary still holds even though stereotyping is often used to articulate the distinctions between different sorts

of foreigners, some of whom may be identified as more 'desirable', being more like 'us', while others may be demonized on the basis of their 'deviations' from 'us' (Billig, 2004; McDougall & Fletcher, 2002).

Though the participants in this study were not specifically asked any questions regarding the influence of mainstream media on construction of immigrant identity, some of them implicated mass media in reproducing the stereotype of Russians as representatives of a dangerous nation:

> M19: A large number of New Zealanders have a normal attitude, both towards Russians as well as towards immigrants overall. There are of course… people who had negative attitudes because they… have developed such a… *perception*… about Russia that it is… a country… sort of cold and… with angry people, so to say… and you can expect anything from them… But these are rare cases… And… I met people, maybe, two or three of them who simply refused to talk or communicate… But it's still their… I mean, I tried to change their opinion and explain but… they did not even want to listen… [ ] Well, again it depends on an individual, on their… sort of… knowledge about the country, about its people… So, some people simply say… not knowing much about Russia but… judging by what they show on TV, all this… *Western*… sort of… American… kind of pressure, not pressure but… incorrect description of us… and who we are in reality. So, they, naturally, will have a negative attitude…

> M12: We lived… in the Cold War period. We were… on different sides or camps because there was the socialist camp, it was antagonistic to… the capitalist countries… Of course, all propaganda, all brain-washing and everything… were conveying not in a very… objective, and sometimes NOT AT ALL objective, way… the impression… of Russian culture and Russians… Sometimes these situations happen, as they say, not very pleasant ones. For example… I often go to the sauna and also this man goes there often, an old guy… All he knows about Russian culture, and he reads all the time, I think he is quite an educated person… All he [knows] is *Russian vodka*, so, Russians mean vodka – such an understanding… of people, though we… have people who do not drink at all, ever in their life … ((laughs)) and even don't [think about it].

As illustrated in the above extract, one of the most common stereotypical constructions reported by the participants was the image of all Russians, both men and women, as heavy drinkers and especially drinkers of strong spirits, such as vodka. Consistent with the media representation of Russians as heavy drinkers (see Chapter 2), vodka is used both by mainstream media and general population in New Zealand as a tag which links Russian culture and its people to an alcohol problem: "Russians – vodka as a Russian drink – all Russians drink vodka and are heavy drinkers". Out of

several unfavourable stereotypes of Russians, vodka seemed to be the most widespread one and an integral attribute assigned to every person who has arrived from Russia or its neighbouring countries:

> W19: The most wide-spread stereotype is that Russians drink vodka… that they like drinking… and mainly vodka…

> W21: The first reaction which I met with… such people like me are asked straight away, "Oh! From Russia? It means that you drink vodka?".. I wanted to tell them: "Look at me!.. Does it look like I drink vodka?" [ ] I got sick and tired of answering this question… [ ] In the beginning, I was surprised… I was thinking, maybe something is wrong with me? Maybe, I look like that… Then, my husband told me that they have such stereotypes… Then I started getting annoyed… [ ] I was replying, "No, I don't drink vodka"… They were asking, "Ah-ah? What do you drink then?" ((laughs)) I would say that I don't drink normally but when I do, I prefer whisky. They would say, "Well, then you are not Russian!"

Some participants in the study noted that many New Zealanders may construct a different, much more favourable, image of a Russian immigrant, if they had a chance to find out for themselves the positive qualities Russians display which characterize them as good workers. Unfortunately, this positive image does not prevail but is overpowered by other, quite negative stereotypes, as illustrated by the participants' accounts of their interactions with New Zealanders:

> W6: … some would start mentioning communism, the war and so on, or space [exploration], or some other… ((smiling)) or the KGB, most of all… [ ] … during recent times… they have developed… probably, on the basis of experience… a stereotype that Russians are good workers, that they are responsible, they are… intelligent, smart, quick… industrious. This is on the one hand… The second stereotype is [about] these [Russian] sailors… from ships who… for quite a long time are here without any documents… and sort of… doing nothing… Well, and… another stereotype which is applied to everybody is alcohol ((laughs)). That all Russians drink vodka. Yes. And that bears walk in the streets ((laughs)).

> W14: In general, I understand that people, probably, already realize that… in Russia… bears do NOT walk in the streets because nobody asks about the bears, right..? ((smiles)) [ ] Well, for them, Russians… first of all, are associated with mafia, right? or… or vodka… Well, it depends who has what in the first place, some have Russian mafia… others – Russian vodka… yes, so… somehow, only these two things are associated [with Russians]… overall… ((sighs))

Several stereotypes about Russian immigrants described by the participants were directly connected with the images produced by New Zealand media. As the analysis of the main New Zealand newspapers illustrated earlier (see Chapter 2), the overall portrayal of immigrants from Russia and other countries of former Soviet Union has focused on problematization of immigrants. Among particular stereotypes prevalent in New Zealand media were 'Russian sailors' and 'Russian brides'. Several participants described how these stereotypes had been attributed to them personally:

> M18: …well, before, as I worked on a ship, yes, when from the ships – there were more sailors, right?.. So they [locals] all the time [were saying] that, "Oh! Russians drink heavily", and all the rest, everything like that… So, [Russian sailors] were treated somehow… as inferior, yes… But in general, the local residents… well… as they say… "And who is to judge?" I mean, in principle, they are the same… [ ] well, not the same but it means that they were not… saints either. Well, I mean, they also had their own… they also drank and the rest…

> W10: I actually find that it is hard… to be a Russian woman abroad because… there is a huge number of dating agencies over the internet who offer Russian women for a very small amount of money, which… in its turn… produces an unfavourable image… of Russian women overall. And that's why, each time when somebody… asks me, "And where are you actually from?" and I say that I am from Russia, they straight away… suspect that… somebody has acquired me over the internet… Which I think… is sad… I find it sad… and… I explain to people that, "No… Nobody has acquired me"… It is easy to observe how their attitude to you starts changing when you tell them that… But… I have to somehow explain… again and again, and again, and again, which is rather wearying… [ ] I think that their first impression is based on their own stereotypes which are rather… one-sided…

The significance of the impact of media constructions on the attitudes of the host population towards immigrants is reflected in complaints which the Broadcasting Standards Authority receives every year. One such complaint concerned the degrading and offensive portrayal of Russian women in a TV advertisement (Human Rights Commission, 2008). The conflation of notions of 'Russian prostitutes' and 'Russian brides' has contributed to an overall demeaning image of Russian women. In Israel, for example, women with a Russian accent are often seen as sexually promiscuous regardless of their occupation or family status (Remennick, 1999).

A similar stereotype is applied to Brazilian women in Britain (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008) who are seen as sexually loose and easily available. Interestingly, Caldas-Coulthard and Alves (2008) demonstrate that such a negative stereotype can

be constructed also on the basis of some positive traits associated with Brazilians, such as passion, extravagance, energy and ease in communication and touch. Their analysis illustrates that the stereotypical person is always constructed as an 'object', no matter whether the traits used for this construction are of 'positive' or 'negative' value. The result of cultural stereotyping is the creation of 'deviance' and 'abnormality' which serves to dividing people into 'us' and 'them' (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008).

As confirmed in the research on 'mail order brides' in the United States (Simons, 1999), the dominant expectation of female migration is that migrant women follow their husbands in migration choices in order to be loyal wives and mothers. Single female migrants are seen as an aberration in this paradigm; therefore negative labels of either 'a mail order bride' or a prostitute (which are often conflated) are automatically assigned to them. The construction of such an inferior identity, based on particular labels and stereotypes positioning Russians as 'dangerous aliens', produces among immigrants painful feelings of exclusion and discrimination, as reflected by one of the women in the study:

> W6: …what made me very uncomfortable here too was the psychology of kiwi blokes. Because as soon as they find out that you are not a resident… they straight away have this [idea]… that we are… that you want to trap him so that he would marry you later on… that is, for the documents. Well, they are wary of that… they've heard some stuff… and they are very tense… sort of always… careful. Yes… And this is very humiliating and offensive…

Claim for Agency

For many participants in the study, accepting the loss of their previous identity and the negative labels and stereotypes which constructed their inferior identity as immigrants was not the way they would want to negotiate their sense of self. These Russian immigrants refused to remain passive and let the society around them impose the frames for their personal and social understanding of themselves. They used different strategies to challenge inferior and humiliating identity constructions, which were grouped under a theme **Claim for Agency**.

For example, instead of accepting the negative labels and unfavourable identity constructions some participants engaged in a *Normalizing Strategy*, which was identified as one of the sub-themes. Rapoport et al. (2002) see "normalization as

allowing for the representation of an alternative identity that challenges, negates, and even reverses common cultural models" (p. 178). Accordingly, normalization of unfavourable identity constructions entails alternative interpretation of inferior labels as expected and 'normal'. This strategy may be used by immigrants in order to re-claim their sense of identity as they refuse to accept the power of society to dictate the rules of construction (Rapoport et al., 2002). Thus, these immigrants would see negative attitudes on behalf of the local population as 'normal', on the premise that they would be more likely than the opposite (i.e. positive) ones. Rapoport et al. argue that normalization provides immigrants with agency, as it stresses the active role they take in shaping their identity.

For example, one of the participants explains her feeling of alienation as a possible 'normal' state, moving from a passive position of a recipient ("nobody says it to my face") to claiming an active role ("I am", "I do not stress out"):

> W11: Of course, I feel some slight alienation… Well, and sometimes it seems to me, though, of course, nobody says it to my face… but maybe, it's my lack of confidence… Sometimes it seems to me that I am still ALIEN to them… But it is probably normal, I do not stress out due to this…

While immigrants are constructed by the host population as 'different' from the norm and therefore 'abnormal', they try to find acceptable excuses for this by shifting the frames of normality for such constructions. That is, if this happens all the time and virtually to everybody, it must be 'normal', as it appears to represent some kind of a norm. The notions of 'alien' and 'normal' function as markers for the process by which the participants try to make sense of the ways their identity is constructed by their immediate socio-cultural environment in New Zealand society. Immigrants try to negotiate the position of 'aliens' assigned to them by the wider society through re-positioning this alien identity as 'normal' and as expected by others.

Rapoport et al. (2002) suggest that among narrating tactics immigrants may use in normalizing their negative experiences, transferring blame on themselves allows for essentializing stigma of inferior identity. To create 'normality' out of an inferior position assigned to them by New Zealanders, some participants resorted to different constructions of self-blame, most commonly through dissociating the stigma of inadequate linguistic skills from the social and cultural practices in society:

> M20: I still feel as… an outcast!.. in New Zealand society… no doubt… I mean I don't have such a level of English in order to become a person… so that somebody who, for example, lives here… so that I could explain to him… my worldview, so that he could explain to me his worldview… Until I have it, I will feel an outcast here.

> M12: I feel, of course, first of all as a person, a self-sufficient and normal person… [ ] and it is absolutely unimportant what country you are from, how and what. But such… ((sighs)) moments arise when… I feel something like… a person… of the second class. At the same time, it does not depend on New Zealanders who are around, it does not depend on society. It depends personally on myself, on my state. And it is only my own minus, because I feel like this only due to my lack of language.

When immigrants engage in self-blaming through the acceptance of deficits it allows them to interpret discriminatory and exclusionary practices as 'normal'. They may associate their marginal status as strangers or foreigners as the 'natural' explanation for such practices (Ogbu, 1990). According to Rapoport et al. (2002), "Laying blame on themselves and claiming responsibility for their own suffering, the narrators refused to see the role of the perpetrator in causing it" (p. 191). Engaging the normalizing strategy signals the participants' intention to exercise agency in relation to their identity. The claim for agency can be seen in their acceptance of personal responsibility for the negative attitude from the locals:

> W4: …when I arrived here… ((sighs)) Communication would not happen. There wasn't any contact at all, why – because… it probably depends not only on… Well, overall, it depends on my personal traits. I mean… if they don't listen to me or do not want to listen, for me it's very… I simply can't … interact with people.

Another way agency may be claimed by immigrants is illustrated by the sub-theme *Grounding in Location*. This sub-theme was constructed on the basis of the participants' responses in relation to the question often posed to them, "Where do you come from?"

The question asked by the locals "Where are you from?" places immigrants into different positions, depending on which perspective is taken. For most locals this question sounds like a benign reflection of their interest in other people's cultures, which comes from the assumption of a different origin based on a person's different visible features (skin colours, face shape, and so on), as well as auditory ones (for example, accent or mistakes in English). This other-positioning (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) is constructed through the host population assigning others

(immigrants) certain qualities characteristic of a particular position. In this case this is a position of being different, in culture and language, from the majority (that is, a position of ethnic minority). This position is identified by the majority as valid and completely 'natural', as the concept of 'difference' is assumed by them a priori and taken by for granted.

Immigrants, on the contrary, through this forced other-positioning feel that, first and foremost, this question ("Where are you from?") and the underlying assumption of difference, articulates their position as different from 'normal', at the same time introducing the reference frame and the 'rules' of belonging to this society (Zevallos, 2008). Caldas-Coulthard and Alves (2008) call it a 'classifying' question which presumes that the concept of belonging is grounded in the culture and values of the host country. The mere fact of such a question addressed to immigrants entails the construction of a symbolic border – "We are from here, while you are obviously not. So, where are you from?" One of the participants noted that any conversation with a local usually starts with this question:

> W6: Well, they ask for my name, for example… I say my name, they straight away ask, "It looks like you are not from here, and where are you from?" And it all starts… ((laughs)) Well, now I take it… easier… but… And always the typical questions are… "And how long have you been here for? *How do you like it?*" and… "*What part of Russia are you from?*" And… when this question was asked several times per night, I mean, three questions from each person there… We simply decided that we need to make badges… ((laughs)) and write on them… "My name is so and so… I am here for this long… *I like it here!*" (both laugh)) When they ask, "*What part of Russia are you from?*" – I feel like asking, "And how good are you… with maps?" ((laughs)) Or… later already… you say, "You know Moscow?" – "Yes, we do". – "Well, I am not from there." ((laughs)) Because if I start explaining… about my town… or how many kilometres it is from which border… but do they need all that?.. They are just used to asking all this stuff… just mechanically…

Colic-Peisker (2002), in her study on Croatian immigrants in Australia, reflects on a similar response of migrants to this question, "In Australia… I became a person who speaks 'with an accent'… Many migrants to Australia from non-English-speaking countries resent being asked, 'Where do you come from?' They feel that the question defines them as outsiders." (p. 82). People bearing accents or any visible signs of difference are still asked where they have come from, even though they may have lived most of their life in New Zealand. For them, this question positions them

as *outsiders forever*, as it is based on the features which are impossible to change, such as a skin colour, face shape or an accent (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008). They are also predetermined to be positioned as *outsiders a priori*, even before any interaction with locals may occur.

Some participants resent this negative connotation straight away, refusing to provide the expected answer about what country or what culture of origin they have come from. Instead, they provide (with a touch of humour) the details of their current, physical residence, in a form of a Wellington suburb:

> M2: Well, they usually ask… start with… a stupid question, "Where are you from?" To this question I always reply, "From Island Bay". Here, they start thinking, feel lost for a moment and then the most intelligent say, "That's great but I am asking you where your accent comes from." I say, "Well, my accent is from Moscow".

Dissatisfaction of locals with an answer naming a location in their country signifies the rigidity and perseverance of a stereotype of an 'outsider' status associated with 'alien' accents, regardless of the amount of years immigrants may have spent in the host country. As noted by Machin and van Leeuwen (2008), even after having lived in the host country for over 30 years, a person with an accent is immediately asked the question about the origin, and "If he answers 'London', the question is repeated impatiently, 'No, where are you really from?'" (p. 49). The word 'really' in this case serves to undermine any local affiliations immigrants try to claim, alluding that their identity linked to local places is not 'real', but rather 'false' or 'fake'.

Through grounding in local places, the participants declare their sense of belonging and loyalty to the local community, and emphasize the importance of their membership within New Zealand society and culture, demonstrating that their current New Zealand residence/citizenship overrides their previous belonging to the culture of birth. They take this opportunity to re-construct their identity from the expected migrant 'alien' one, into the more favourable local and loyal identity, sometimes through a joke. One of the participants tries to ridicule the whole idea of investigating cultural origins through constructing his own English label in response to the question of origin. His answer rejects the idea of identification through cultural origin and positions his identity firmly within the geographical location which omits any ethnic or cultural markers:

M3: Well, a question comes… "Where do you come from? *Where are you from?*" Well… I have prepared a standard answer, "*I am from Miramar. I am a Miramartian*".

The irony assigned to the label 'Miramartian' may be deconstructed as an attempt to signal the fallacy of an exotic 'alien' identity assigned to immigrants. It constructs an extreme case of an 'alien' identity (as a 'true extraterrestrial' from Mars), through exaggeration of inappropriate affiliation with an alien culture. The connection to a local place aims at defying the construction of immigrants as exotic "others" (Colic-Peisker, 2004).

By rejecting this 'alien' identity through grounding their current position within New Zealand geographical space, the participants seek to re-position themselves as insiders, loyal to their new place of residence, demanding the inclusion and acceptance by the locals on an equal basis. Therefore, their grounding in New Zealand geographical locations emphasizes their claim for agency and co-ownership of the same socio-cultural resources with the host population. In this way, the immigrants construct their identity not one of a foreigner but of a New Zealander and demand equal rights to live and work among locals:

W10: Sometimes… it is over the top when, for example… when was it?… On Sunday I was in downtown Wellington and walked into a café to buy a cup of coffee… and the waiter… giving me a receipt… suddenly started asking me about my accent… And he asked me, "And where have you come from, to us, to Wellington?" I say, "From Wairarapa". He said, "No-no-no, I am not asking you about that. I am asking you about your accent, where does such an accent come from?" ((laughs)) And it was quite unpleasant for me because… all I needed was a cup of coffee, and nothing else… [ ] Usually in different hotels when you register… they ask you to fill in the details. Well, you fill in, of course, your New Zealand address, and they… have such a surprised expression when seeing this… And then they ask where you are actually from… originally… [ ] I think that… solely on the basis of the accent… Because they can't tell by appearance… where you are from… And also… it seems to me that as… people from Russia have more or less a European appearance… Until they speak, they have such an appearance that you virtually can't tell where they are from… And that's why the person you start talking to… is MORE shocked… by your accent than… if for example, you had a foreign look from the beginning, then they would sort of expect that… If they don't expect that and… start talking to you as if you are… [ ] a local! And then, "*Oops!*" – not a local! ((laughs))

Colic-Peisker (2005) notes in relation to Bosnian immigrants in Australia that, "In everyday encounters, being white means being 'invisible' and thus less likely to experience one's own otherness through being exposed to prejudicial gazes in shops, public transport and on the street" (p. 621). But as soon as immigrants with the European appearance, including Russians, open their mouth, their 'invisibility' gives way to a pronounced difference marked by their accents (Colic-Peisker, 2005). This suddenly revealed difference is often hard to accept by locals who may feel annoyed with European-looking immigrants 'faking' a local identity. The participants' accounts about their own and their children's 'invisible' European identity were grouped under a sub-theme *Invisibility*:

> W14: Most often people… well, sometimes it happens that people turn to me… simply in the street… seeing a European appearance, right? They get tricked and think that I am a New Zealander, right..? something like that… Then, when I… either let them know that I don't understand, or… I say something in reply… they realize that I am a foreigner… and the first question… "Where are you from?"… by all means… "From Russia". – "Oh-oh! From Russia – it is so far away! And how do you like New Zealand?" this is the second question, of course… The third question, of course, is, "How long have you been in New Zealand?"… ((laughs)) By this stage I probably start expressing some… ((laughs)) impatience that I already… these three questions ((laughs)) they have been following me for the last three years… constantly… Probably, it somehow shows on my face, I mean, people… well… thank me, and then we go our separate ways…

Caldas-Coulthard and Alves (2008) state that around 100,000 Brazilians in Britain, half of whom reside in London, represent an 'invisible' community, as the British system largely neglect them as a distinct linguistic and ethnic group. Most British people do not even know that so many immigrants from Brazil live among them. This 'invisibility' in terms of their European appearance drives many of them into perfecting their English and distancing themselves from Brazilian heritage in order to pass as a local. Caldas-Coulthard and Alves see this paradoxical construction as a 'quasi-transgression' which may be rooted in immigrants' resentment of locals' stereotyping and positioning them as outsiders. None of the participants in this study produced any accounts about themselves that would be suggestive of such assimilationist strategies but a few of them referred to other Russian-speaking immigrants whom they knew as fully assimilated on the basis of their ethnic 'invisibility':

> W7: …She has changed her surname into an English one, she invented it HERSELF, just made it up, and when she is asked where she is from, she says, "No, I am a New Zealander"… Well, she doesn't have an accent or anything, she has such a fair complexion…

Claim for Ownership

The possibility to exercise their agency in constructing a new sense of self, grounded in the local socio-cultural environment, can be realized by immigrants through active engagement with the discursive processes within this environment. In order to successfully negotiate their identity, immigrants need to challenge the power of the host majority who holds the ownership of their identity (Sampson, 1989). Consequently, to be able to claim their part in ownership of discursive resources for identity construction, immigrants face the process of learning about and adapting to the local systems of meanings. The theme **Claim for Ownership** illustrates the participants' accounts about different ways in which they try to achieve these goals.

The notion of 'culture learning' (Masgoret & Ward, 2006), or gaining an insider knowledge of a new cultural environment, was emphasized by many participants as a necessary condition for reconstructing their identity as full members of New Zealand society. Gaining cultural and social knowledge about their new place of settlement was often reflected in achieving a new sense of belonging rooted in the local environment to which the participants had to adapt. This process is illustrated by the sub-theme *Sense of Belonging*:

> M3: [New Zealand is] …a second Motherland. So to speak, I can't already imagine any other life. Except this. Meaning, I don't feel myself as a Kiwi but the previous state is already [gone]… I feel that returning is impossible. So, I feel this as my second life… in a new quality. The circumstances have changed – so have I.

Walsh and Horenczyk (2001) in their research on English-speaking immigrants in Israel found two main patterns of successful reconstruction of migrant identity: through creating a sense of belonging in the new socio-cultural environment and through achieving a sense of competency based on professional and social status. In terms of the first process, they suggest that the feeling of belonging was an essential condition for maintaining the continuity of identity between the old and the new meanings and for achieving the sense of connectedness with the local community. Consistent with their findings, the participants in this study demand that their claim

for ownership be accepted by the locals. They do so through constructing New Zealand as their own country and a legitimate home:

> W7: Sometimes, for example, I am even told, "Oh, it's our country. It's not your country". – "Yeah, right! This is my country too!" Always like that… well, as a joke and we always argue. I say, "This is ALSO my country!" [ ] "Do you feel here at home?" I say, "Yes! Of course! This is my second home…"

The claim for belonging to the new place of residence most clearly manifests through the metaphors of 'Motherland/fatherland' and 'home' which provide immigrants with both physical and symbolic attachment to the local community (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008). For people who grew up in the rigid system of totalitarian control over citizens, the category of citizenship holds a very significant and tangible meaning. Therefore, an official recognition of their national status in the form of New Zealand citizenship also allows the participants to validate their sense of belonging by labelling themselves 'Kiwi' or 'New Zealanders' and calling New Zealand 'my' country.

Another way the participants engaged in claiming the ownership of local resources for identity construction was by gaining local qualifications and/or adequate employment. Their accounts about their professional achievements were grouped under a sub-theme *New Careers*:

> W8: Now, after five years, when… I finished my studies… it was so hard, and English – I've learned English, I got qualifications, and also a job, I started working – so, at present, of course, this is sky versus earth in comparison to what [it was before]… And so much better… I feel so much better than in Russia. I mean I feel here… well, in principle, a normal fully-functional person…

This sub-theme is consistent with Walsh and Horenczyk's (2001) conclusions about the second major process of immigrant identity construction formulated as the re-creation of a feeling of competence, mainly through professional and financial success. Many participants in this study emphasized the importance of gaining an adequate job for creating a sense of a functional self and for achieving a feeling of satisfaction with life:

> W11: For me… my evaluation of self, say, up to 50 %... is related to my professional activity… I mean… if I do nothing, or cannot do… I am… a nobody, right? If I do what I like and if I like my job… somewhere up to

50% I am already an individual. Of course, the second half is a personal relations… No doubt, I have started feeling better… in personal sense… As they say, *I met my expectations…*

As a result of successful re-claiming of the ownership over their identity and the ability to reconstruct the desired sense of self, many participants reported the feeling of personal growth. The change in their inner sense of self was reflected in a sub-theme *Personal Growth*, which was constructed mainly on the basis of the participants' answers to the question, "Has immigration made a difference to how you see yourself as a person?" One of the most common concepts attributed by the participants to this change was an increased sense of confidence they had acquired as a result of adapting to their new place of residence:

> W7: …first of all… you are changing yourself. [ ] I have changed so much in my principles… I look at myself [ ] and I realize that I have matured a lot… [ ] I sort of feel more free, more independent and more confident, my confidence got better in this sense… You are not living in the same… box all the time… Here it's like… the fact that you have come here and you have already… [travelled] the world, got a feel of it a little – in this sense you have become more confident and… you feel… slightly different… simply more mature. There is more responsibility. [ ] …Here, first of all, it was necessary to survive… It was necessary simply… to get stronger in spirit, so to say, not to break down and cry at home, "I can't do this…" It was necessary not as much to change but to adapt to the way of life, to people around.

> M19: I sort of… look at things… slightly differently than I used to before. Well… maybe, it's due to age, due to experience… Again… having lived in New Zealand… I sort of opened up, I opened up to communicating with other ethnic groups. I mean I have never thought before that I… could communicate with somebody… in the same language… though we have come from completely different places… on Earth… [ ] I think, once you've done it… once you take this path at least once… from the initial arrival, searching for a job, getting immigration documents, and so on… in a country… not among, for example, the former socialist republics which was easier because they all resemble Russia… but for example, in New Zealand or Australia… So, it seems to me that it gives confidence… and knowledge… where to turn to, whom to talk to, what to do…

The concept of an 'independent achiever' was formulated by Walsh and Horenczyk's (2001) on the basis of the efforts of English-speaking immigrants in Israel to deal with the loss of their sense of self-worth and the consequent feelings of inadequacy and incompetence. Similarly, the sense of a personal achievement, despite the adversities of financial hardship and discrimination, was identified by the

participants in this study as the source for their regained feeling of self-worth and pride for what they have accomplished in New Zealand:

> W6: So, it's like that: you have already proven yourself, you have achieved something, and you already think of yourself, "Ah! I can do this"…So, you sort of start to realize what you are worth, and what not… and how you can overall handle all these… difficult situations in life, and quite hard ones…

> W8: I respect myself for what I've managed to achieve… [ ] I started feeling much more confident… Well, to come… to a different country… learn English in five years, pass [exams], get qualified and start working… I think, this is… well, it's a lot… I am not a second class person anymore… [ ] I've done all that for the sake of… so to say, my family, for the sake of my child… Well, also to prove to myself… I wanted to make my family's life better, to provide for my child's future, to set an example, as well as in terms of money… [ ] When now I meet with people… I am not ashamed… And even my [ID] card, the one I wear… I am proud of it…

In this vein, Caldas-Coulthard and Alves (2008) note that while for some Brazilians in Britain their experiences of immigration manifested through the theme of 'loss', others identified the concept of 'gain' as representative of their feeling of achievement through strategies of empowerment and self-enhancement. Similarly, many participants in this study articulated their understanding of personal growth and social achievements through such psychological concepts as 'self-worth', 'self-appraisal', 'self-esteem', 'self-respect' and similar others:

> W4: I think that my self-appraisal has improved… it hasn't gone down, it has gone up… I have started seeing myself… somehow… I have grown. [ ] Because… Well, I realized that I can do something… [ ] It has simply become more interesting for me to live. I mean, it has become more interesting to reflect on myself… Yes, I became much more free, so to say, than before… [ ] And even the language… it turns out that here I can study… I can learn something…

> M17: My self-appraisal went up dramatically… No doubt… Self-appraisal goes up. [ ] At 30 years of age… to learn a [foreign] language from scratch! … Completely from scratch! … I studied French at school… From complete scratch, to learn the language… to master a profession, two of them… and… so to say, to climb the social ladder to a certain level… in a completely different society! To totally re-organize my whole life and my whole mindset… I think it is an achievement. [ ] Even the fact that you buy a house… a car… means that you have gained respect, and when you are sent somewhere to a conference…

One of the possible illustrations of the participants' successful culture learning and their ability to employ local socio-cultural resources in re-constructing their identity may be seen in their use of English terms (such as 'self-esteem'), as discursive constructions of self, in parallel to Russian linguistic devices:

> M3: My *self-esteem* has risen dramatically… [ ] and if I managed to survive more or less in that society… then, in this society… I am still worth something… [ ] whether they like me or not… if they employ me, are ready to pay and… have even rejected some local applicants in order to employ just me… it means, in general… That was some sort of grounds for *self-esteem*… in terms of professional criteria, so to say, self-evaluation, right?

As a result of personal growth and changes to the sense of self some participants in the study articulated a re-invented identity reflected in a sub-theme *Sense of Becoming*. This sub-theme illustrates the process of the reconstruction of previous identity and the creation of new meanings on the basis of it:

> W8: We had kids, education, careers – everything was ticking [back home]… And here… it was a huge *challenge*… [ ] And it seems to me, nobody will ever understand this feeling, who I have become…

Krzyżanowski and Wodak (2008) argue that the process of constructing migrant identities always implies instability and constant change which is better captured by the concept of becoming someone, rather than being someone. They suggest that through their transient and fluid nature, identity constructions of migrants reflect the ongoing conflict between old and new attachments, constant search for contacts or better future, and continuous struggle to become and/or belong (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008).

Several participants in this study used the metaphors of material construction and creative artistic process in articulating the changes they had experienced to their sense of self. In this process, some of them admit the power of the immediate environment around them in shaping their identity, while others stress their own agency. The sense of becoming, as being constructed, takes on a more tangible and particular meaning through the use of these metaphors:

> W4: It's interesting to look at oneself as if from outside… how all these sharp edges are smoothing… with time. It's like being sculpted…

M3: I started moulding myself into this society. Precisely, I meant gaining this… local tertiary education… And after I got it… ultimately… what many local young people cannot achieve; after I got, eventually, this job… which again many locals cannot get either… then I realized that I am ultimately… not a complete fool.

M17: ... our brains are constructed in a completely different way from theirs… Overall, to understand how stuff turns here – it is so [hard]… Then, moreover… I am not fifteen… At fifteen, I would have perceived everything [easier]… but it is necessary to redo yourself… and switch your head completely into the local mode… this is… quite… a process of breaking...

Different approaches and strategies were employed by the participants in the study for re-constructing their previous identity and gaining new qualities that allowed them to claim agency and co-ownership of socio-cultural resources in the society. As a result of these processes, new meanings were created by some of them which constructed novel frameworks for articulating immigrant identity. These constructions were reflected by the themes **Hybrid Identity** and **Cosmopolitan Identity**.

Hybrid Identity

The youngest of the participants, who came to New Zealand with her parents when she was still a teenager, articulated a new sense of self constructed through combining two different systems of values, the New Zealand one and the heritage one. I gave her a pseudonym Nata. The data from her interview were used to construct a theme **Hybrid Identity**. In constructing her new sense of self, Nata talked about the importance of personal choice of which old values to retain and which new ones to adopt:

Nata: …they [New Zealanders] do have many pluses, for example, I like their service here. I like, for example, the way they… If we, for example, are standing in a queue in a shop… we will stress out completely… What takes so long?! What's happening? New Zealanders are standing… well, so relaxed, so content, they are smiling nicely. [ ] I like that in them, I mean in this sense, I want to be like them, I am trying, for example… to think, "Yes. Don't be stressed, don't stress out, be calm." They are sort of well-meaning in that, they are nice, I like them for that. But, for example, when… I went to school… Well, they sit… They can… in the teacher's presence… well… I don't know, belch… or do something like that. This is for me, of course, uncivilized… well, and they are like that, "*Oh, pardon me,*" and that's it! For me, it was simply barbaric, I was thinking, "How is

it possible?!" or during lunch, they sit and eat with their fingers, food is on the ground… This stuff, I don't want to adopt this. Or the style of clothes – I don't want to adopt it… Then… how they spend their weekends when they drink to excess … COMPLETELY… lying on the ground… Girls… sit together with those bums… smoke the same cigarette with them. I don't want to adopt this… No! I look around, and I simply feel yucky, you know, as soon as I see this. No, I don't want to be like that. In this sense, no.

Hybrid identities are articulated by Bhabha (1998) as functioning 'in between' several cultures. The process of cultural hybridization entails the deployment of partial culture, or the re-negotiation of 'culture's in between', which creates minority subjects with transnational identity, on the borderline between their country of origin and the host society (Bhabha, 1998). Immigrants may engage in a binary process, through rejecting or adopting particular aspects of each culture and through constructing a novel, hybrid, system of values on the basis of the two old ones (Zevallos, 2008). This hybrid identity is contrasted by Nata to the two other options Russian immigrants can choose in reconstructing their sense of self – either a complete switch to the New Zealand identity, or maintaining their old Russian one:

> Nata: [A Russian friend of mine] gives the impression that he was born here. He BEHAVES like a New Zealander because he has fully adopted this. And I don't want to. It's not that I can't, I simply… I stick to my own interests, for example. [ ] I don't like… for example, the behaviour of New Zealand girls sometimes. I don't want to behave like that only to be like THEM, in this sense. I want to remain the way I am. With them, I may also squeak blah-blah-blah or something like that. But what I don't like, I still won't do, even if I REALLY would want to be one of them. I simply don't want this. I am fine with what I've got. But my friend, he has simply blended in and he… has completely switched. Well, first of all, he was younger. Here, many of those… who came… at that age… till… I don't know, till 15 years old, probably, many have switched in that sense. But many haven't, on the other hand. I have friends who came long ago and still, the way they think… they think COMPLETELY as Russians… have not moved a bit… AT ALL. I think it still depends on the person.

Nata also talks about her feeling of pride about her cultural roots and unique mixed heritage, as contrasted to those Russian-speaking immigrants who do not want to affiliate themselves with their culture of origin anymore:

> Nata: …on the contrary, I feel even certain pride… Well, here, they overall… when they ask… and when you see that they are interested in that… many, when they ask, you can see that they are interested, "Ah! Interesting! Where from and how?" Well, I like to explain … I am not, for

example, like some friends of mine… She is actually my closest friend but she can't speak Russian properly anymore. [ ] She says, "No, I am a New Zealander". And she doesn't tell anybody. Well, some prefer it like this. But I… I say, "Yes, I am from Uzbekistan, I am this and that"… I like to tell people about that. I am, for example, proud that I am from Uzbekistan. Even when they say, "Ah! You are from Russia!" I say, "Well, not from Russia but from Uzbekistan, these are different things". I always, on the contrary… emphasize that I am PRECISELY from Uzbekistan and not from Russia, so that they know.

Zevallos (2008), in her research on hybrid identities among young Turkish and Latin American women in Australia, identified a symbolic hierarchy between the two parts of these identities. She notes that, "the women moved between a broader continuum of multiple identities. In some instances, they spoke as if they were *more* or *less* inclined towards one identity over another" (Zevallos, 2008, p. 28, emphasis in original). The process of shifting between the two parts of hybrid identity reflects the fluidity of identity construction, always depending on the system of social constraints placed by the immediate environment (Zevallos, 2008).

Nata gives an example of such switching, talking about her friends' and her own behaviour in two different cultural settings – the local New Zealand one and the one of other Russian-speaking immigrants:

Nata: I have a New Zealand boyfriend. With my New Zealand boyfriend I behave like a New Zealander, when I talk to him. With Russians I behave like a Russian. Well… it depends, a person switches automatically. All my friends… with New Zealanders they… like with a click of the fingers… [become] COMPLETELY New Zealanders. They make New Zealand jokes, their BEHAVIOUR is a New Zealand one. They would think in Russian but behave like New Zealanders… And… in Russian, just switch them into a Russian gathering – they are completely different, you won't recognize them at all. A person changes just instantly, it happens automatically, I don't know…

Across other interviews, there was only one more comment from another young woman representative of a possible hybrid identity, though still not clearly articulated anywhere else in the rest of her interview:

W8: …our culture, you would remember, we were always closed, we were taught and hammered … So… we also have to change our culture, that is to open… Our world view has grown so much, because, we absorb and absorb and absorb, and change ourselves. Of course, the fact that we are here, this has also changed our culture. I mean, if… it so happens in life that we went back to Russia, I think, we would not be able to live there

ever again. We would always have some sort of problems… And again, coming back here, there are also some… We are already slightly not Russian, nor Kiwis, so we are… ((smiling)) mixed…

Zevallos (2008) suggests that hybrid ideas are commonly articulated within second-generation identities. She also notes that the variation of expressed identities is likely to be limited by the nature of the research, as those immigrants who identify, whether wholly or partially, with their culture of origin, would be more likely to participate in it, in comparison to those who strive for complete assimilation. This may explain why all the participants in this study do not report any assimilationist strategies, but instead emphasize the high value of their cultural heritage, along with adopting some local values in place of the old ones. Consistent with Zevallos' research, the only participant in this study clearly articulating a hybrid identity can be considered a second-generation immigrant, as she was brought to New Zealand by her parents when she was young. Other participants who arrived in New Zealand at an older age and as a result of a personal choice to migrate did not follow the pattern of hybridization process. Their experiences of changes to the sense of self have shaped different ideas about how their identity may be reinscribed and reactivated in novel ways, some of which were represented in the theme **Cosmopolitan Identity**.

Cosmopolitan Identity

While undergoing the process of re-construction and creation of new identity, some participants attempt to find different explanations for these considerable transformations to their sense of self. They search for meanings behind these processes and try to make sense of their relationship with others and the wider society. The issue of belonging to a particular group of society, be that a community of Russian-speaking immigrants, or the wider group of immigrants to New Zealand, or the whole New Zealand society, is investigated by the participants from different angles. The accounts of 11 participants are represented through an overarching theme **Cosmopolitan Identity** which illustrates their attempts to make sense of their identity as different from the rest of society, both the New Zealand and the Russian ones.

Madison's (2006) study of experiences of voluntary migrants formulates a concept of existential migration – the type of migration people engage in when they see it as a necessary condition for their life, or as the mere nature of their existence. He argues that among different types of migrants there are some "…voluntary

migrants [who] are seeking greater possibilities for self-actualising, exploring foreign cultures in order to assess their own identity, and ultimately grappling with issues of home and belonging in the world generally" (p. 238). This concept is echoed in the accounts of the participants in this study for whom the act of immigration signified more than a necessary adaptation and integration into a new socio-cultural environment.

Several participants in this study suggest that immigrants are completely different from both the host population, and the majority of the population in their country of origin. The theme **Cosmopolitan Identity** is based on their accounts about the nature of their immigration experiences and the need to find some explanations for their move to another country**.** These participants construct themselves and other similar immigrants, first of all, as different in terms of the personal qualities they possessed even before immigrating. These qualities are seen by them as an utter necessity for survival and future success in new environments. Such traits of character manifest in being more motivated, ambitious, and goal-driven. A sub-theme *Innate Qualities* presents the participants' constructions of particular personal characteristics as existing a priori, consistent with Madison's (2006) concept of existential migration. For example, some participants talk about stronger motivation and ambition common to the families of migrants in contrast to others:

> W14: And quite often immigrants are more ambitious… And the children of immigrants brought up in families… who are… struggling with… life circumstances… Really, the first two-three years… after immigrants arrive here… it is virtually a BATTLE and… children are taught by their families… to fall and stand up again..! and go further… and they are also taught to achieve. So, the motivation in immigrant families… is much higher than… in *native families*…

> M16: I noticed that many people here don't have ambitions. [ ] And we, those who are on the brink of eras… we have a desire… to strive somewhere, we have ambitions to achieve something, some self-actualization… yes. To be the boss of oneself… [ ] for many people it doesn't matter. For them, life is great. I have some… sort of a bug inside which doesn't leave me in peace and keeps bugging my brain, that life… is not great. That I must… somehow self-actualize, I must create something of my own! I mean, I must… earn this myself, rather with my brains than… when my boss decides for me what I have to do, and so on… But it is my personal stuff. Because there are many people who… are used to this, even in Russia… Not me.

Another participant emphasizes the idea that immigrants are above average in their abilities, and are more active in comparison to the rest of the population in any country constructed as 'sitting still':

> M17: I am not average. The fact that I managed to get here... and ANY immigrant is not an average person… And a person who breaks away… is not average anymore. In Russia, I am not average. I am above average, and by the way, much above average. And here I am much above average because I am that person who wants to take off somewhere… If you are average, you sit still and don't stick out… Any immigrant is more active… *by default*. Those people who move [away] from their place, as a rule, are more active, more mobile. A person who is running is more active than the one who is sitting…

On the basis of such personal qualities, already existing prior to immigration, some participants constructed a symbolic representation of an individual who differs from the rest of society: a challenger, an adventurer, a conqueror, an explorer. These constructions were grouped under a sub-theme *Adventurous Spirit*. This sub-theme reflected a heightened need for self-actualization, as re-inscribed through more individualistic goals in comparison to other groups of population (Colic-Peisker, 2006; Madison, 2006). For example, the notion of possessing an adventurous spirit is articulated by one of the participants as an impossibility of staying in one place:

> W6: …my friends were telling me, back in Russia, "Well, you probably will adapt anywhere and make friends even in Antarctica… We even wouldn't go anywhere… what for? … to leave everything and move to God knows where, so to say…" And… there are just some people who… can't sit still in one place… who seek adventures…

She further articulates the image of an adventurer using the metaphor of 'conquering' as an antithesis to 'sitting still'. The concept of migration is framed by her as a desire to conquer other countries, where new challenges make life 'interesting', while a conquered challenge becomes 'boring' and unfulfilling:

> W6: I simply came here to have a look… Well, now it's already boring for me. I mean there is lots of stuff here you can do but… [ ] My last year back in Russia was overall… there was some longing and depression… though I had three jobs there… I did not want anything… everything sort of stopped… so, it was already necessary… to make some movements… Here now too… it's time to move somewhere else already… to conquer Australia, for example, or somewhere else… [ ] It's interesting to go THERE… even just to have a look.

The need for continuous intellectual stimulation is presented as the main reason for immigration into New Zealand, as well as for potential future migrations to other countries, by several participants when they were asked about their plans for future:

W11: Of course, sometimes… ((long pause)) I get this panicky feeling that I will get bored. Because in comparison to Russia, well… we are the people… of a very big country, very vast spaces, right?.. [ ] Sometimes… this slight panic engulfs us, and what if… this interest here… ((pause)) ends, because for now, there is still something to see… somewhere to go but… What if at some stage… there is nothing left and we get bored… Then you start convincing yourself, "Ah, well..! Then we'll go… somewhere else…" [ ] When we came here… all this endless immersion, learning a new way of life… [ ] All that was so… new. On the one hand, it was a huge workout for the brain… [ ] it was some sort of a very interesting education… And then I thought, "Yes! And now it's possible to switch to some Asian culture", well, so that… the brain somehow gets always exercised… I mean, I am scared that here the brain will start growing fat on it…

These participants explain their decision to migrate and plans for future migrations by their interest in learning about different cultures of the world and openness to other systems of meanings:

M18: Well, I don't know yet where we are going to live because we have [not] yet… how to say… we may still move to another country somewhere… yes… Maybe, New Zealand is not the last country… I don't know whether we will be living in Australia, maybe not but… maybe, we'll go… somewhere in Asia… or Europe, I don't even know… [ ] I like travelling, that's why for me this is… If just to travel for a while, for a month, for a week or two – I don't like it, I like it when… you immerse yourself in… culture… (stay longer) and learn it, well, simply, maybe, like that… But if you go, of course, simply as a tourist, then it is not interesting… [ ] Now I am learning Chinese… well, I am learning… of course… it is very hard but at least [at the level] of communicating… yes. I like learning languages, therefore… it is very interesting to me and, on the whole, the culture [of China], I have been there once already… So, I think, it is very… very… interesting!..

M19: So, now, knowing… what to ask… how… to behave in one situation or another, I think, it provides confidence… and it will be much easier to adapt… in Canada, in England, in Australia… Again, my contacts, I mean they are… people from around the world… So, New Zealand… has given me an opportunity to make friends with people who lived in New Zealand and then moved… [ ] I am sort of glad that I have come here… and I do not regret this and I don't think that… I would ever regret this because it has given me opportunities and experience, and work, and interaction and… sort of developed in me… many abilities, skills, some *skills*… how

to communicate and work with ease… and I still get many questions from my friends who I went to school with, through this [Russian] website ( )…when they see that I have gone somewhere and so long ago, they ask questions, "How on earth have you decided to leave? Why did you move there?"… But now I don't even think about that – I just decided and I moved…[ ] It's always interesting for me… in what ways one or another ethnicity… is interesting, and… the specifics of their traditions and culture… in various aspects… from cuisine to… some sort of… traditional… festivities…

Two participants point out that the phenomenon of taking on challenges is not restricted only to Russian immigrants. In presenting this as some kind of a superordinate immigrant identity, they give examples of New Zealanders who are guided by similar motives to migrate as Russian immigrants:

M17: I know a Kiwi who… works in Norway, having learned to speak Norwegian… He is active. Here you have the example of an immigrant too. He went there, learned Norwegian. And now he works for some big company… Here, you would think, such a *challenge!* I mean, he also immigrated, the same stuff… But he feels great, he is active, it's interesting for him, he is learning something new.

W8: There are [local] girls who have come from *overseas* – it is interesting to listen about [their] *experience*, where they've been, what they've seen… I even slightly envy that they are… how to say, strong, well, in the sense that they can travel, you know, move without fear. It's a big *decision*, so to say – to jump up, pack up and move to a different country… [ ] Even my Kiwi friend, she said to me… She started respecting herself, especially after she had been… to Asia. She spent a year there, she was working as a teacher of English there… And after that she decided to start studying, so, she was already close to 30, when she started studying. She says… "Just after that I started respecting myself and I started studying." So, it turns out that… BEFORE that she sort of did not respect herself… but after she had had this *experience*… Well, excuse me!.. Then what should we think about ourselves here ((smiling)), how should we respect ourselves too?.. So, for her, that was… It was difficult to survive, language and culture, everything… And after that she opened up like that… And she says, "I feel so great! I want a new *challenge* now, another one". [ ] But what makes us similar, the fact that people who achieve something here, when you start telling about these *experiences*… This… probably… holds us together a lot, when we can talk about that… But when… there was everything – mum and dad, at home, everything was there, you learn the language – and no stress, you go and study and start working, what else is needed, in principle? But like that… to break down … your whole life, turn it by 360 degrees… lose everything, come here, start from scratch…

Together with emphasizing the necessary qualities which put these immigrants into a group of people different from the rest of society, and constructing the symbolic representation for this new category of immigrants, many participants try to find explanations for this difference and the underlying processes behind this new identity. These explanations were grouped under a sub-theme *New Breed of People*.

For example, one of the participants articulates ambivalence, in terms of lacking a strong sense of belonging to any of the societies he had been living in. For him, the ties which most people find strong enough to hold them to a particular place or culture, or generate some nostalgia when they have to leave, are not as important and would not stop him from going to other places:

> M3: …maybe, after having got all [this]… it is worth going to work in another country… No specific… *sentimental values*… have emerged that would hold me to this country. What distinguishes migrants from non-migrants is that they have a weaker link… to *sentimental values*… A part of me… is left back home. The same thing is possible here… there is already some Kiwi part in me, which ALSO exists and which probably later on I will miss too. Nevertheless, none of these parts… is strong enough… to stop me from striving for something better…

The weaker link with a place of residence entails a relative de-territorialization, when neither the heritage culture, nor the new socio-cultural environment are able to provide the sense of community or the feeling of belonging (Colic-Peisker, 2006). Krzyżanowski and Wodak (2008) identify this identity construction as 'neither-nor'. They find it "supported through the self-reference as 'stranger' (to whatever groups, in whatever locations)" (p. 109) and through ambivalent attachment to either the country of origin or the target country. What stems out of these weaker ties is the reduced significance of any cultural frames of reference for identity constructions. For example, another participant emphasized that her choice of interactions with others goes beyond particular ethnicities or cultural origins. She positions herself as devoid of any particular ethnic or cultural identity in relation to the rest of society:

> W10: I find that it is more pleasant for me to socialize with people whom I like… regardless of whether they are Russians or not… and… I don't know, sometimes people somehow, they come somewhere and straight away they start searching for compatriots and… socialize… with compatriots but… if there are no pleasant or interesting people among the compatriots, then… why do that, in general? [ ] I don't have Russian contacts in the town where I live… And I have not sought any acquaintances on purpose, because it seems slightly strange to me… to

seek acquaintance with a person… I don't know whether they have some sort of organization or a club or how all that is organized but it seems strange to me… to pop up and say, "Hello… I am going to socialize with you because… we are from the same country"…

The formulation of a sub-group of immigrants was presented by some participants as a different breed of people who have more in common between themselves, rather than with their own co-nationals or the nationals of the country they live in. The concept of this new superordinate identity entailed the rejection of such rigid categories as ethnicity or culture of origin, aiming for a higher order of positioning members of different groups under the same overarching qualities:

M18: I do have, of course, a couple of [local] friends but… The best friends are probably… from everywhere but… not the locals. [Interviewer: And why?] Well, I don't know… it just happens, I don't know, maybe, simply a different mentality… It happened so, I don't know… Well, we, my wife [and I], we both wonder why we have it like that. Well, we do have [local friends] but not… not so that there would be, as they say, close relationships. Maybe, because of simply different… different views on life, they haven't… they haven't migrated… they existed here but we have moved here… yes. That's why, maybe, we have simply more… more in common… with other immigrants or simply foreigners…

In explanation of this new identity, two participants used a biological discourse. One of them, in his attempt to make sense of the difference this type of immigrants presents in comparison to others, employs a genetic framework, as well as a metaphor of mathematical dissimilarity:

M17: It is a type of a person, it must be some sort of a genetic make-up, probably… let's say… You cannot compare me with an average Kiwi because… we are like different orders, mathematically. I am more… onto it… more bold… more trying to… infiltrate everywhere… find out everything… But he doesn't need this, what for? … He was told what to do and that's it…

The nature of such a difference is assigned by another participant to some condition from birth, which makes him feel an outsider in any society in the world, including his place of origin. He interlaces the English words *outsider* and *identity* into Russian while articulating his difference from others. By this, he uses the resources of both socio-cultural milieux in constructing his identity, while at the same time claiming no strong membership with either of them:

M3: I felt as a foreign observer even in that society which I have arrived from. I did not identify myself with that society… The same way, I do not identify myself with this society either. So, in some sense, I feel like an *outsider*. Which doesn't prevent me, in general, from adjusting to this society… Many immigrants cannot adapt to the full. In my case, it's also part of me, myself, my *identity*… that I am not likely to identify myself with anything. (Interviewer: Is this feeling of an *outsider* present constantly in your life?) Well, it's a part of me, frankly speaking… Or, so to say, I was born like that.

Again, a priori qualities, articulated here as a condition from birth, are used as a construction of a category which can be re-framed as the concept of *New Breed of People*. The inevitability of an outsider status for an immigrant is constructed as an unchangeable biological feature, which also may function as a legitimate excuse for the exclusion of immigrants by other members of society. This sub-theme illustrates that these participants resort to a biological/genetic explanation, constructing themselves (as similar others) as some kind of 'species', or group, biologically and inherently different from other people.

Conclusions

The analysis of the interview data illustrates different patterns in identity construction by the participants in this study. Through coming to terms with the feeling of loss of their previous identity and the inferior labels constructed for them by others, some participants aimed at re-constructing their identity by either placing it within the community of other immigrants, normalized by them as a valid part of New Zealand society, or by grounding it locally and claiming the agency and membership among New Zealanders.

The six themes presented in this chapter reflect both temporal development (from the first theme, which indicates for most participants the initial stage of identity production after arrival in New Zealand, to the last one), as well as dialectic or progressive development in the process of identity construction among Russian immigrants in New Zealand. Though not all the participants went through the same changes of their sense of self, the most common trends in their identity construction are reflected in the two, sometimes opposing, patterns.

The first pattern (illustrated by the themes **Identity Loss** and **Negative Labels**) is characteristic of an overall negative outcome and rather pessimistic outlook,

manifesting in the participants' acceptance of other-positioning of them by the host population as unequal, different, 'alien', and sometimes even intellectually handicapped. This acceptance of an inferior position also provides grounds for a profound sense of identity loss, when nothing of value in terms of personal and social identity is constructed in place of the lost meanings which reflected previous social status, professional qualifications, work and life experience.

The second pattern (illustrated by the themes **Claim for Agency** and **Claim for Ownership**) reflects an attempt of counter-positioning, in the form of self-positioning by immigrants, in contrast to the other-positioning of them by the host society. Though, according to positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999), these two strategies of positioning do not always need to be contradictory, in the case of Russian-speaking immigrants they are illustrative of opposing mechanisms salient in identity construction. While the host society tries to position newcomers as 'alien' and powerless, immigrants themselves may decide to reject this inferior status and attempt to re-position their place in society, by demanding power and agency in re-constructing their own identity.

These dynamics in self- versus other-positioning were insightfully captured by one of the participants who theorized about her identity from the stance consistent with the position of social constructionism on identity formation:

> W21: First of all, because immigration itself is a very tough process: it is hard to decide for it, and then [also]… you came out of it toughened ( ) In this sense, my perception of self has changed, so that I've got more confidence in myself… And also it has changed in the sense that you start looking at yourself from others' perspective as a representative of your own culture… When you are cooking within the same culture, in the same country, with the same people as you, you don't see yourself from outside… When you arrive and you see how locals react to Russians, what questions they ask, what they expect from you and what they do not expect, then you start looking at yourself more from outside too, at least I do: And how do they see me?.. And you start thinking that the way you move, the way you talk… what you talk about, represents you as a person. [ ] This becomes noticeable in a different culture… I've never thought of that before… People see me in a different way from how I see myself… ( ) because they do not know anything about Russians… ( ) Russians would understand me… But these people don't… So, I do not feel understood, that I carry inside me some culture, some customs and traditions, which are not needed or understood here… I, myself, I am sort of much more than the way others see me… Because they can't appreciate this anyway… well, not all of them… but the majority can't…

This account illustrates the idea that immigrants face crucial changes not only in their sense of self, dependent on the environmental changes due to migration, but also in the very understanding of the nature of identity. What is commonly taken for granted and goes unnoticed within the culture of origin, becomes salient and tangible beyond habitual frames of reference. The issue of identity comes to the forefront of immigrants' experiences, posing serious philosophical questions about meanings of life and the place of an individual in the world.

In search for answers to these questions, the participants in this study offered different models of reconstructing their identity, two of which were reflected in the themes **Hybrid Identity** and **Cosmopolitan Identity**. Only one participant clearly articulated the features of hybrid (or hybridized) identity, as a mixture of two cultural models based on available discursive resources. Nata's case virtually fits in with the rationale of a case study, as her experiences in identity construction were uniquely different from other participants. However, the type of identity she has arrived at is quite common among other young immigrants of second generation, as found in international research on this sub-group (Zevallos, 2008). For example, former Soviet immigrants in the USA showed different cultural patterns of acculturation along generational lines, with different generations within same families reporting "growing apart" from each other and the younger generation being blamed for "becoming Americanized" (Aroian et al., 1996, pp. 663-664).

On the other hand, according to Nata, the second generation of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand may choose another option in reconstructing their identity – a fully assimilated local one. Some participants in this study also mentioned other Russian-speaking immigrants who strive for total assimilation as a measure of successful adaptation to the host society. Such a version of identity reconstruction has also been found quite common among Russian-speaking immigrants in other countries (Morawska, 2004; Poppe & Hagendoorn, 2001) but it may be expected that these people would be less likely to volunteer for the research on immigrants (Zevallos, 2008), possibly due to their desire to shed their immigrant identity.

At the same time, there were participants who constructed themselves differently (as illustrated by the theme **Cosmopolitan Identity**), as those destined to become migrants, due to their personal qualities or some other factors in their life. The participants who felt different from both the host population and those whom

they had left behind in their place of origin created a new concept of immigrants, active and adventurous in their exploration of the world, unable to sit in one place, bored without constant challenges, and 'pushed' to migrate by their desire to experience and 'conquer' new places. Caldas-Coulthard and Alves (2008) suggest that such immigrants construct a 'third space' by using the strategy of multi-positioning which highlights both differences, as well as accommodation and fusion of different cultures, reflecting the dilemma in some immigrants' attitudes towards migration. The result of this construction process is a 'mongrel' or re-invented identity, which represents the celebration of migration as an inevitable stage in the development of humankind (Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008).

As opposed to 'mongrel' or hybrid identities, placed by Bhabha (1998) 'in between' several cultures, cosmopolitan identity was not presented by the participants in this study as a version of multiple, that is many, identities (Zevallos, 2008). Instead, it was articulated as holistic and unified, which was not grounded in any culture in particular, but was situated 'above' these cultures, or, in other words, 'beyond' them (Colic-Peisker, 2006), as some kind of a pan-cultural identity, constructed on the basis of similar qualities across different migrant groups.

Madison's (2006) concept of existential migration resonated with these participants' feelings and experiences, as they tried to make sense of their difference through the biological (or genetic) explanation for this type or sub-group of immigrants, re-framed by a metaphor of a *New Breed of People*. The notion of an immigrant positioned as 'an outsider' or 'an alien' by the majority of population was seen by these participants to be equally valid for immigrants from different cultural backgrounds. Thus, they saw more common features with immigrants from other countries than with people from their culture of origin or the host population.

The patterns of identity construction articulated by the participants in this study are in part similar to those identified by Madison (2006) in his research on existential migrant identity with 20 interviewees from more than 15 countries. At the same time, different circumstances and locations may produce a variety of socio-economic resources allowing for different patterns in constructing immigrant identities, which may also be specific to each cultural and ethnic group in society. The cosmopolitan identity articulated by the participants in this study has to be understood within the cultural models of their two societies of residence.

So, is it valid to talk here about a new breed of people? The term 'breed' should be seen as a metaphor for the process of construction, borrowed from the biological framework of evolution. The concept of the new breed of people can be developed upon subscribing to the idea that the current global processes create new agents who, in their turn, take part in co-creation of these processes by pushing globalization even further.

Suarez-Orozco (2003) sees globalization as an essential backdrop in our attempts to understand the nature of contemporary immigration. He suggests that, "large-scale immigration is both the cause and consequence of important cultural transformation" (p. 70). These transformations entail not only the processes immigrant identities are subjected to, but also the changes that occur in those socio-cultural environments which are receiving these new agents of identity construction.

This notion of a different type of people, not rooted in any particular culture or community but eager to embrace many of them simultaneously and equally, may be grounded in a concept of cosmopolitan thinking, dating back to Diogenes' notion of 'a citizen of the world' (Cronin, 2006; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006; Hayden, 2009). Cosmopolitanism may be seen as a kind of a world-view and as a socio-cultural condition. It entails the notion of a complex polyidentity, based on the idea of multiple subjects having "a plurality of different loyalties, a multiplicity of different ways in which they can be described or defined" (Cronin, 2006, p. 9).

In contrast to a single, or hybrid identity, rooted within two or more particular geographic and cultural spaces, cosmopolitan identity may be seen as constituted within the notion of global space, inclusive of multiple identities of equal value. While communitarianism, often promoted in the form of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism, prioritizes some primary identity rooted in a particular community of belonging, cosmopolitan identity is based on multiple affiliation, with an emphasis on "the ability to make one's way into other cultures and to actively engage with those living in or through different cultures, languages or milieux" (Cronin, 2006, p. 10).

This very ability, constructed by some participants in this study as an indispensable quality either possessed, or not possessed by individuals, is characteristic of these new actors in global space, the agents of cosmopolitan thinking. The new, global, ways of thinking about the world and interactions between cultures are constructed by these new agents, who by doing this, at the same time increase the availability of the necessary resources for their own identity construction.

In view of the projections for the future, current trends indicate that the processes of both globalization and mass migration will only intensify, with increasing speed and scale. In the conjunction with these processes, new ways of identity construction can also be projected as becoming more complex, diverse and encompassing, and producing novel identities, thus, bringing all of us even more closer to the common identity of 'a citizen of the world'.

Chapter 5. General Discussion

While the first chapter of this thesis laid down the theoretical and epistemological background for this research, the argument I was developing on that foundation has been unfolding through the analysis and interpretation of the empirical data. In the following chapter I will attempt to summarize my understanding of the data and how efficiently I used them to answer the research question: "How does the identity of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand get constructed?"

One of the most difficult dilemmas I experienced during this research was the choice of adequate methodologies for the analysis of the data. In fact, for the whole duration of my journey through this research I have been dealing simultaneously with two objectives: how to understand and interpret the meanings within the data, and how to approach the very act of analysis/interpretation from the most efficient and adequate methodological position. The first objective would have been unattainable without having achieved the second. Hence, the quest for the method had to precede the quest for the meaning.

I will first discuss the solutions for the methodological issues I encountered while analyzing the data. This will be followed by the summary of the main findings and discussion of their relevance to the theoretical foundation for this research. Then I will outline how this study contributes to the field of social sciences as well as possible avenues for future research.

The Quest for the Method

The previous three chapters presented the analyses of the data illustrating the processes of identity construction of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand. While all three studies were qualitative, different methodologies were employed for both collection and analyses of the data. The retrospective evaluation of how different techniques and methods addressed the same research question is necessary to understand what sort of interpretations of identity constructions these studies offer.

The first study involved analysis of the data within the public domain, namely newspaper sourced from the electronic database of Fairfax, the largest New Zealand media agency. The use of such a resource allowed for generating an overall backdrop

for further research, on the premise that media provide the general public with discursive resources to construct particular meanings around the issue of research. While there is a never-ending debate on the extent of the impact of mainstream media on aspects of social life, it is accepted that regardless of the origin of particular discourses, media are still responsible for rearticulating and reproducing them and consequently making them available to the whole society (Lynn & Lea, 2003; Matheson, 2005; van Dijk, 1991). A large part of discursive resources people draw on in their everyday life is continuously recycled by media. Willingly or unwillingly, we are bound to use the same constructions and operate with the same meanings that are offered by different types of media, especially in industrialized societies (Appadurai, 2000).

In this regard, the use of articles from the mainstream print media portraying Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand made it possible to identify the discourses which are used to construct the identity of this migrant group not only by media but also, hypothetically, by the general public. The impact of media constructions may be considered even more significant in this particular case, as there are not many Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand and they do not stand out as a group clearly recognizable from other ethnic minorities. Immigrants from Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union make up less than one hundredth of the total population of New Zealand. What adds to their 'invisibility' among the general population is their European appearance, similar to the majority of New Zealanders who are of predominantly British descendants.

Consequently, for most New Zealanders, Russians and other Russian speakers are an 'unknown' ethnic group, as the chances of close interaction with any of them are quite small. If there is no personal experience of contact with any representative of a minority, people may base their understanding about this minority on the information they receive from media sources. Therefore, media constructions of Russian-speaking immigrants may provide the largest, or sometimes the only, resource for locals to 'imagine' this ethnic group.

To leave the detailed discussion of the main findings for later, the first study has achieved its aim of building a frame of reference for identity constructions among those immigrants who migrate to New Zealand from Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union. After fulfilling this goal, the main data collection involved the audio recordings of in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking immigrants who had

arrived in New Zealand less than 10 years ago. The interviews provided rich data in the form of personal accounts of the participants' experiences and understanding of how their identity is constructed in New Zealand. The recruitment of participants and the interviewing process have been deeply embedded in the ethnographic framework of social enquiry (Bekerman, 2002; Merriam, 2002). The first interview, though, was especially grounded in an ethnographic paradigm, with additional information collected by me through observation, my personal knowledge of the network and interactions within the community, as well as provided by the participant, a Russian Jewish woman whom I gave a pseudonym Lara.

Lara's story was so unique and valuable in terms of the particular circumstances of her migration experiences that I analysed it as a case study separate from other interviews. The data collected in this case study allowed me to present the whole process of construction and continuous reconstruction of identity, from both temporal and geographical perspectives. The value of using Lara's story as a case study was in the possibility of illustrating the changes to the sense of self she experienced in different socio-cultural environments and the power of the social sources influencing these changes. She personally acknowledged the impact of the dominant cultural models in three different cultures – Russia, Israel and New Zealand – on her sense of self and on her construction of identity.

Overall, the choice of collecting data in a form of in-depth interviews was driven by the research objectives of investigating how this particular ethnic minority makes sense of the process of identity construction. While the media study constructed the framework of the dominant discourses already existing within wider society, the participants' accounts provided the content for this frame, with their own interpretations of identity constructions grounded in these discourses. They added particular meanings to the general structure, thus building a comprehensive representation of the issue from another perspective. The combination of the data from both public and 'private' domains answering the same research question allowed capturing the meanings unavailable if sought only through one type of source. For example, the data accessible through mainstream media may yield a one-sided account of the issue, based on the dominant models within the majority, with the 'voice' of minority silenced. The interview data, while rich and deep, may lack breadth and leave out a wider socio-cultural perspective. I hope that this research has

avoided such problems by engaging both public and private domains in data collection.

In relation to the analysis of the data, I also tried to combine different methodological frameworks and techniques in an attempt to capture variety and complexity of interpretations and meanings in answering the research questions. While all methods and theories employed for the data analyses can be placed within the broad discourse paradigm, they differ in important aspects and in their approaches to the interpretation of the data.

To analyse the media data, I employed the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective (Blackledge, 2005; Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Wodak, 2004). CDA is a well-developed research paradigm, with an excellent record of empirical studies in the field of media constructions of minorities and a solid theoretical work on relevant aspects (Blackledge, 2005; Cottle, 2000; van Dijk, 2000). Discourse analysis of any kind can hardly be considered a uniform or consistent research methodology, and CDA does not present a single theory or method either, allowing for plurality and dynamism of related positions (Blackledge, 2005). At the same time, a fundamentally political orientation of CDA provides clear and straightforward guidelines on the basic principles of interpretation of mainstream discourses (Blackledge, 2005), following Foucault's ideas on power relations in society (Foucault, 1972).

To apply CDA guidelines to the analysis of the media data, I decided to first use thematic analysis as a 'data reduction' technique (Grbich, 2007). By identifying the most common and salient themes across the data, thematic analysis constructs a 'thematic map' illustrating the interconnections between the different chunks of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The use of thematic analysis prior to discourse analysis was further warranted by the nature of the data which consisted of 145 newspaper articles. The classification of these articles into seven main themes (with the eighth being 'Miscellaneous') allowed a straightforward comparison of frequencies of different themes in media constructions. While CDA was used to analyse the content of the articles, thematic analysis helped to create a structure for the content. Together, thematic analysis and CDA achieved the goal of identifying and interpreting the most common and salient identity constructions of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand mainstream newspapers.

Thematic analysis was also employed for the analysis of the interview data. As well as being used as a reduction strategy, its application differed from the media

analysis. In the media study, each newspaper article was assigned only to one theme or sub-theme, on the premise that a reader would usually be exposed to one of them at a time. Meanwhile, the interview data consisted of 20 interviews, and extracts from different interviews were combined under the same or different themes, without applying any rigid classification as in the media study but rather in a 'mix-and-match' manner. This illustrates how the use of the same analytical tool may vary depending on the nature of the data or the different objectives for the analysis, without compromising data characteristics or violating the core principles of the analysis.

While it was possible to adapt thematic analysis as a reduction technique for two different types of data, CDA was valuable specifically for the analysis of the media data. As for the interview data, however, CDA presented several problems. First, the fact that the interview data were the translations and not the original words of the participants made the traditional discourse analyses, with their focus on original texts, hardly warranted. Also, CDA adopts a critical approach to discourse, that is, the focus is on deconstructing the dominant discourses and revealing the nature of power inequality in society represented in these discourses (Blackledge, 2005). Van Dijk (2001) calls CDA "discourse analysis with an attitude" and argues that, "CDA is biased – and proud of it" (p. 96). In this sense, CDA can hardly be considered relativistic, as it a priori locates the power with the dominant groups or the ruling structures in the society, which it aims to critique. Hence, CDA takes the perspective of minorities or of any groups in society who are oppressed or discriminated (Blackledge, 2005).

Apart from the translated nature of the interview data, the framework I needed for the analysis had to be relativistic for another reason. Although all participants in the study belonged to the same 'imagined' community of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand, there was variation in the way they interpreted similar experiences of immigration and settlement in New Zealand. Their views on some aspects of immigrants' identity and position in New Zealand society often contradicted each other. Contradictions are one of the typical features of naturally occurring discourses, including interview data (Andrews et al., 2004; Rapoport et al., 2002). In order to group these diverse interpretations under the same themes and sub-themes, I needed a relativistic approach to each piece of data, not only in relation to every interview transcript but sometimes also to different parts of the same interview.

A theoretical framework that allows such a relativistic approach to the data can be found in cultural relativism. Cultural relativism denies the validity of holding to the 'moral universals' commonly adopted by Western researchers in their investigation of different cultural phenomena (Shweder, 2000). Instead, every culture or sub-culture is accepted from a pluralist perspective, on the basis that there is a different set of meanings within each culture which has developed idiosyncratically due to particular historical, environmental and cultural conditions. Thus, knowledge constructed within a culture may be meaningful only within this culture, relative of its systems of meanings, values and traditions.

A relativistic approach allows the analysis to go as narrowly as the smallest sub-culture or group of people with similar views that can be imagined. It is therefore applicable as a theoretical background for analysing the data from different interviews in this research. Cultural relativism is also concordant with different kinds of discourse analyses which have stemmed out of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Grbich, 2007). Out of the vast variety of different techniques and methods within the broader discursive paradigm, I have chosen positioning theory (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999) as a guiding methodological framework for the analysis of the interview data.

Positioning theory allowed me to treat the interview data as the representation of different subjects' positions articulated discursively by the participants in the course of the interview. This provided the possibility of analysing different aspects of identity construction – through participants' self-positioning, or understanding of how they participate in their own identity formation; and through other-positioning, or how they made sense of their identity as constructed by the host society. This premise of positioning theory also fits well with the constructionist concept of identity – as constructed through the interactions between individuals and social processes around them (Burr, 1995). Functioning as both a theoretical foundation and an analytical framework applicable to certain types of data, positioning theory presents a valuable method of analysis within the qualitative paradigm, but especially in the field of identity studies.

Similarly, for the case study, presented in between the media study and the analysis of the interview data, I also adopted a relativistic approach but the choice of analytical tools was different again from those used for the analysis of the interview data. As the case study was interesting to consider as a process, thematic analysis, by

breaking the dataset into chunks represented by themes, could have limited the richness and uniqueness of the data which required a more holistic understanding. For this reason, the choice of a narrative framework as the main analytical tool was more warranted. Narrative analysis (De Fina, 2000; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005; Merriam, 2002) provided the option of seeing the 'flow' of processes underlying the construction of identity. It made possible to follow Lara's story and her journey through time and space and to appreciate the changes and the development to her sense of self across different cultures and periods of time. The combination of an ethnographic approach and a narrative framework led to the rich and in-depth understanding of the data and illustrated the ways identity construction happens as a process, temporally and socio-culturally.

Reflections on Conducting Interviews

"Conducting a good in-depth interview is an art that cannot be achieved by following rules or particular methods" (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005, p. 60). While this may sound rather disconcerting, this statement actually suggests that, given a flexible approach to interviewing, every interview becomes a unique co-creation of both the participant and the researcher, and any rules should be seen as fluid guidelines. Therefore, I gave my participants as much freedom as they wanted in deciding what format or structure their interviews could proceed in.

My usual procedure of dealing with potential participants included an initial conversation, by telephone or in person, during which I introduced myself, stated the scope and objectives of my research and invited them to participate. In the case of a phone call, I normally suggested an initial meeting as a way to get to know each other and for me to pass the information sheet and the consent form. Quite early in my interviews at one of such meetings the participant asked for a list of questions in order to have a chance to look at them in advance, so I subsequently included the questionnaire in my 'information pack'.

Gerson and Horowitz (2002) note that, "The best interviews become a conversation between two engaged people, both of whom are searching to unravel the mysteries and meanings of life" (p. 210). They also suggest that interviews may vary greatly in terms of their own rhythm, as well as in the volume and nature of the data resulting from them. Similar to Gerson and Horowitz's observations, I also found that some interviews provided me with very idiosyncratic data, representing excellent

examples of 'thick descriptions' on my topic, while others did not. Some of my participants' stories were unique and contained many individual details, while others followed several general trends easy to observe across the interviews.

Ultimately, every interview was different. Although it was possible to identify several patterns of immigration experience, no two interviews developed in a similar way. Every person is unique; therefore, every in-depth interview goes into a different 'depth', specific for every person, and requires a different approach. In this regard, Miller and Crabtree (2004) argue that, "There is no one way of doing depth interviews. It is a craft" (p. 199). Based on my experience in this research, an honest interest in participants' experiences, as well as an empathic and non-judgemental approach, together with a desire to negotiate the issues of disclosure and trust, are the best guidelines to follow in order to gain valuable information from interviewees. "In-depth interviewing is a skill and craft and as such, one gets better with experience" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 128); accordingly, the process of interviewing and close engagement with my participants and their stories has been an incredibly enriching and enlightening experience for me.

Reflexivity and the Insider/Outsider Dilemma

The theoretical position of cultural relativism (Shweder, 2000) became very useful in my continuous engagement with the issues of reflexivity and the insider/outsider dilemma (Greenfield, 2000). My status of a 'marginal' person between two cultures (Greenfield, 2000) demanded constant negotiating of insider and outsider perspectives throughout the duration of my research. Adopting a relativistic approach made it possible to embrace the participants' positions without compromising my integrity as a researcher. As these often contradictory streams were very hard to navigate, my whole scholarship has been a never-ending search across competing paradigms, relentless re-evaluation of my methods and techniques and endless questioning of my own position towards my research.

Overall, my quest for the methodology applicable to this research has resulted in combining several different frameworks and techniques of data collection and analysis: in-depth interviews, electronic database search of texts within the public domain; ethnography, narrative analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, positioning theory, and thematic analysis, with the latter applied differently to the different data sets. All of the above, though, are theoretically situated within the broader discourse

framework, either by their origin and development (CDA, positioning theory), or by the way I adapted them for this research. Hence, the advantage of most of these methods lies in their flexibility which manifested in potential applicability to the particularities of the research, as well as in the possibility of combining some of them.

My journey in search of an adequate qualitative methodology has been hard but enlightening. It has taught me that it is impossible to seek one, 'ideal' method that can suit particular research; that to gain a deep understanding of the issue or phenomena under investigation a researcher has to try different methods and techniques and sometimes has to combine several of them; or be enlightened and guided by many of them in order to develop my own method of 'reading' the data.

The Quest for the Meaning

The validity of the engagement of all the above methods for the collection and analysis of the empirical data can be checked by returning to the original research question. In order to evaluate the relevance of different methodological and analytical frameworks in their ability to yield answers to the research question, it is necessary to look more deeply into the meanings produced with the help of these different methods.

Consistent with past research on other migrant groups in New Zealand (Butcher et al, 2006; Loto et al., 2006; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004), the common construction of identity of Russian-speaking immigrants was that of an 'outsider'. All three studies showed that this migrant group has not received any particular or distinctive constructions of their identity linked to their cultural heritage but rather has been generalized under the overarching category of immigrants in New Zealand. Due to their small numbers and European appearance, the outsider status of otherwise 'invisible' Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand was based on their linguistic markers, such as language fluency and an accent. Three studies in this research provided diverse evidence for these findings.

Consistent with the previous research on media portrayal of immigrants in New Zealand (Lawrence et al., 2008; Loto et al., 2006; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004), the media analysis showed an overall poor and deficient representation of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand mainstream newspapers. More than one third of the articles in the dataset did not produce any particular cultural constructions of immigrants from Russia and neighbouring countries, resulting in 'just mentioned'

representations of this ethnic group. In these representations, a generic, over-generalized image of an immigrant prevailed, combining a variety of ethnic groups of different origins, religions and cultures. Russia was mentioned together with other countries of origin of 'problematic' migrants (for example, when related to images of language deficiency and a health threat to New Zealanders). This strategy of generalization and homogenization (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004) functions as a mechanism of re-cycling an old and internationally wide-spread label of a 'dangerous alien', painting a picture of a faceless Immigrant, devoid of any personal or cultural characteristics, who poses a social threat and danger to the host population (Chavez, 2001; Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999; Lewis & Neal, 2005; Lynn & Lea, 2003; Ramos, 2004; van Dijk, 1988, 1995, 1996, 2000).

Among more specific constructions of Russian-immigrants in New Zealand negative representations dominated, with two thirds of the total dataset portraying them as a problem to New Zealand society and only one third – as a possible asset. Again, this is quite consistent with both international and New Zealand research on media constructions of immigrants, showing a slant towards negative, inferior labels and stereotypes (Loto et al., 2006; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004; Wodak, 2008). The most dominant identity construction was of a criminalized and dangerous 'alien', in need of education or 'enlightenment', and the generosity of the host society, and therefore a drain on local resources. In those representations, Russian-speaking immigrants were firmly located within the binary of 'us' versus 'them', or "West versus the rest" (van Dijk, 1996, p. 291), where 'they' are considered a social threat to the Western world and elicit fear through their diversity of cultures and religions.

When portrayed as an asset (for example, as contributors to the New Zealand economy), Russian-speaking immigrants, similarly to other migrant groups, were constructed as a commodity, which together with capital and other goods can be 'brought' to New Zealand, entered into the production cycle and evaluated as either profit or loss. When personal features were included while profiling particular people, they emphasized the characteristics presented as inferior or sub-standard to New Zealand norms. Among those most commonly mentioned were lack of fluency in English, strong and difficult to understand accent, or lack of the ideal Western set of tools considered a prerequisite for a 'civilized' person – a driver's licence, knowledge on how to do business, communication skills and others. New Zealand society, in contrast, was portrayed as a saviour, with a moralistic pride of providing these

'unfortunate people' with the opportunity to rise to an ideal Western way of life, superior to that in other cultures.

Overall, the media study achieved the goal of creating the background for the further research. The inferior labels and stereotypes found in New Zealand media, such as 'Russian brides/prostitutes', 'Russian/Ukrainian seamen', or Russians portrayed as heavy drinkers, violent and uneducated people, created particular discursive resources available to locals for identity constructions for this migrant group. These resources are among the ones immigrants from Russia and neighbouring countries have to draw from when they arrive in New Zealand.

The theory that identity construction is not solely a right and ability of an individual but rather depends on broader social forces (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1991) was explored in the second study. Lara's story, analysed from a narrative perspective, illustrated the complex process of continuous reconstruction of her sense of self within different socio-cultural milieux. The role of existing cultural resources in each of three countries she resided in was shown to be crucial for identity construction. The fluidity of such taken-for-granted categories as ethnicity and race (Jews in Europe and Russia were considered racially different from Europeans) became vividly clear in virtually opposite positioning of the same people in Russia and Israel. Whether demonized as 'bloody Jews' in Russia and the former Soviet Union, or as 'bloody Russians' in Israel, this ethnic group was excluded from both societies and constructed as inferior and second class. This exclusion manifested through the same wide-spread strategies and stereotypes, such as a criminalized and dangerous Other, lacking local language and accent (in Israel), and presenting a threat to the dominant culture.

By following Lara's story through the two migrations and the three societies of residence, the narrative analysis demonstrated the validity of the social constructionist position regarding identity: identities are constructed through and by social interactions. Also, individuals do not hold ownership of their identities but rather the society dictates the rules and constructs the resources for them (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1991; Sampson, 1989). At the same time, individuals can still strive to gain power over construction of their identity and can fight against negative labels assigned to them. Lara's story presented an incredibly rich and tantalizing account of the struggle against all odds and injustices in her life, resulting in personal development of a valued and meaningful sense of self.

The main part of this research, involving interviews with 20 participants, capitalized on the findings from the two previous studies. While the participants were not asked directly to reflect on representations of Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand media, there were similarities between the findings of these two studies. For example, one of the sub-themes of *Russians as Trouble* in the media analysis was titled *Unused Skills* as it included the articles portraying Russians as un- or underemployed, including doctors and other highly qualified professionals. Consistent with that, the interview data contained stories about the loss of professional identity and consequent un(der)employment which resulted in the construction of the theme *Identity Loss*. The closest connections between the two studies were found in relation to negative labels and stereotypes. Such stereotypes as 'Russian brides' and 'Russian sailors' were mentioned by several participants, with one woman openly stating that the label of a Russian bride was often a priori assigned to her on the premise that she had arrived in New Zealand without a Russian husband.

Another humiliating stereotype identified in the media analysis and criticized by the participants in the interview study was the inference that all Russians drink vodka and are heavy drinkers. While many participants expressed their surprise with the assumption of locals that Russians cannot be imagined without vodka, the findings from the media analysis provided an explanation for this, through re-cycling vodka and heavy drinking as one of the most common features assigned to Russian identity. The label 'aliens' was also a common construction among the participants, consistent with previous research on media portrayal of immigrants in other countries (van Dijk, 1995, 1996). There was congruence between the way the interviewees felt 'alien' in New Zealand society and media representation of immigrants as culturally 'alien', although the term 'alien' has not been used in New Zealand newspapers as extensively as in the European and American media (Chavez, 2001; Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006).

The most significant thread that ran through all three studies was the role of a foreign accent in the construction of identity of Russian-speaking immigrants. Overall, immigrants from Russia and the neighbouring countries were constructed in New Zealand media as lacking adequate knowledge of English and 'basic' communication skills. Some participants in the interview study accepted this construction and often engaged in self-blame, normalising the discrimination by language they had to face from the locals. Others resisted this construction, demanding from the locals the

appreciation of their knowledge of more than two languages. Still, the stigma of an 'alien' accent, linked to such concepts as 'accent ceiling' and 'hierarchy of accents', prevailed. An "unmistakable" (or "typical") Russian accent, as it was presented in one of the newspaper articles, was a marker of discrimination, humiliation, and shame for the interview participants.

This linguistic marker in a form of an 'alien' accent was an important building block in the identity construction of Russian-speaking immigrants. The stereotypical Russian accent, whether in English among New Zealanders, or in Hebrew among native Israelis, contributed to the second-class identity of an immigrant from Russia or the former Soviet Union. The accent identified them as *a priori* and *forever* alien to the host society, as well as 'uncivilized' and 'uneducated'. While for other ethnic minorities race may become the most significant part of the inferior identity constructed for them by the dominant group, for Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand it is not their ethnicity, which becomes largely 'invisible' due to their European origin, but their accent that constructs them as Others.

The process of accepting and negotiating the labels and identity constructions articulated by the host majority was a common feature in both the case study and the interview study. This was most clearly identified through the theme *Negative Labels* in the interview study. The findings from both studies illustrated that it is impossible to escape the prevailing discourses in host societies based on the local systems of meanings. The participants in this research, including Lara, had to accept that the construction of their identity was dictated by host majorities. Despite that, Lara's story, as well as some interviews from the main study, also described the process of personal growth and the development of the sense of belonging and the sense of becoming, in the strife to claim the ownership over resources for identity construction. This provides grounds for the argument about the role of agency in identity construction. Although the findings from all three studies clearly illustrated the power of the social forces in identity formation of an individual, Lara and other participants in this research claim their participation in this process by exercising their agency in reconstructing their sense of self. Two themes in the interview study – *Claim for Agency* and *Claim for Ownership* – reflected this process among the interviewees.

Cosmopolitan Identity

The most significant and remarkable finding across different patterns identified in the interview study was the construction of a new order of identity – the cosmopolitan identity. It is necessary to say that not all participants articulated the meanings which can be associated with this theme. Out of 20 participants in the interviews, 11 gave the descriptions of certain qualities which became the foundation for the theme *Cosmopolitan Identity*.

None of the participants actually used the term 'cosmopolitan' in relation to their sense of self; this was the label I derived for the theme, which was originally titled 'New Breed of People', close to the words of one of the participants. While the term 'cosmopolitan' exists in the Russian language ('космополит'), its original meaning similar to the one in English and other European languages has moved into the background when the communist propaganda constructed a humiliating label for Russian Jews labelling them 'rootless cosmopolitans' (Appiah, 2006). This label was meant to emphasize the prevailing belief that Jews were incapable of building any sense of belonging in Russia or anywhere in Europe, as historically, they originated in Palestine. Consequently, they were implicated in the lack of patriotism and constructed as potential traitors and deserters (Elias & Bernstein, 2007; Kopnina, 2005). Beck (2006) notes that both the Nazis and the Stalinist regime deployed the label 'cosmopolitan' as a pejorative concept used to justify mass murder: "The Nazis said 'Jew' and meant 'cosmopolitan'; the Stalinists said 'cosmopolitan' and meant 'Jew'" (p. 3). Thus, the term 'cosmopolitan' has acquired a very negative connotation in Russia and commonly would not be used in any other context by most people, apart from philosophers and other social scientists.

Despite this historically negative connotation, the term 'cosmopolitan identity' has been used in recent research in relation to Russian-speaking minorities. Pirie (1996) compiled an overview of different studies which had investigated the process of self-identification in Southern and Eastern Ukraine. He cited four basic categories for identity formation: identification with only one ethnicity; identification with two ethnic groups, that is bi-cultural or bi-ethnic; 'pan-ethnic' identification encompassing several ethnic groups; and marginal, or cosmopolitan identity. Pirie equated the cosmopolitan identity to some form of 'ethnic nihilism' which he articulated as a total rejection of any ethnicity and consequently as marginal identification.

It is necessary to note, though, that Pirie's (1996) review involved not immigrants but the population who could identify themselves as Russian, or Ukrainian, or both, or even Soviet nationals, while residing on the territory of the Ukraine. Pirie developed the category of 'cosmopolitan/marginal identity' on the basis of some answers to the survey question about nationality/ethnicity in which the participants expressed their indifference to this type of identification, or ticked 'I don't know' as an option. While Pirie points out that the previous ideology of imposed Russification could have eroded the strength of Ukrainian identity and led to what he terms ethnic marginality or ethnic indifference, he also offers another explanation. Not only did the communist propaganda promote the Russian identification as superior among other ethnic groups on the territory of the Soviet Union. The major goal was to create a higher order identity – the Soviet one – devoid of ethnic characteristics but providing uniform grounds for national identity in a form of a political, rather than ethnic or cultural identification. The impact of this ideology was reflected in the fact that the majority of respondents in one of the studies cited by Pirie (1996) expressed what he termed 'ethnic indifference', for example, offering the following: "I think that people of different nationalities are all the same" (p. 1086).

Another survey cited by Pirie (1996) in his review claimed that 6% of the Ukrainian population prefer to identify themselves as the citizens of the world or of Europe, instead of the Ukraine, Russia or any other ethnic or geographical denomination. He suggested that the sense of cosmopolitan identity could have been promoted by the whole transitional stage as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the development of new forms of identification within its former parts. According to Pirie, different forms of transitional and borderline identities, including marginal or cosmopolitan ones, are inevitably produced in the epoch of cardinal political and cultural changes.

A study with similar goals (Poppe & Hagendoorn, 2001) was conducted among Russians living in the former Soviet republics and now independent states (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Kazakhstan). The authors identified 13% of respondents as 'marginals' or 'cosmopolitans', on the basis of their expressed wish to live outside of the former Soviet Union, instead of assimilating or integrating in their republic of residence, or migrating to Russia. This category was created by the researchers to allow classification of the respondents who refused to identify themselves with any of the four offered options: a Russian, a Soviet citizen, a titular

national, and a citizen of the republic. It is possible to imagine that, had the options originally included the possibility of a cosmopolitan or European identity, the proportion of such identification could have been even higher. For example, the proportion of those wishing to emigrate from the former Soviet Union across all five categories was 24%. It has to be noted too, that the total number of respondents was quite substantial – overall, 3150 randomly chosen ethnic Russians were interviewed for the study (Poppe & Hagendoorn, 2001).

Therefore, the concept of cosmopolitan identity is not entirely novel for Russian-speaking people, both immigrants and those living in their country of birth. At the same time, the conceptualization of this type of identity by the above authors as 'marginal' or borderline invites a rather negative connotation, as if located outside of a 'proper' or the 'right' one. Marginality, by its sheer meaning, can hardly be positioned as a positive feature. Similarly to a borderline, marginal identity would always indicate certain inadequacy and malfunctioning, or, at best, temporality and transition from one type of 'proper/full' identity to another one, therefore 'less than full/whole' identity overall. In contrast, cosmopolitan identity can be seen as 'more than one', singular identity, and through this simple mathematical metaphor would gain rather than lose in quality. I argue that those 13% of respondents in Poppe and Hagendoorn's (2001) survey who refused to fit the rigid boxes of prescribed unsatisfactory identities exercised their agency in doing so, which indicates their strong sense of self incompatible with the notion of marginalization.

Quite often cosmopolitan identity is associated with another negative connotation of the rejection of loyalty towards any particular nation, state or ethnicity (Glick Schiller, 2003). I would argue that rather than rejection of any one unit of ethnic, cultural or political identification, cosmopolitan identity encompasses more than one, and often more than two or three and so on, of such units, each of them achieving similar value without prioritising any one of them. This invites the metaphor of mathematic addition (more than one or two and so on), rather than subtraction (less than one), such as in case of 'rejection'.

This notion of addition or accumulation of many cultures was found characteristic of the recent cohort of Croatian immigrants in Australia (Colic-Peisker, 2006). While the older cohort of immigrants from Croatia who had moved to Australia in the 1950-70s expressed rather diasporic identification, those who arrived in the 1980-2000s underwent a process of hybridization of their cultural identity.

Their hybrid identity included a 'Western' or 'global', rather than specifically Australian, notion, which allowed Colic-Peisker (2006) to label it 'cosmopolitan transnationalism', in contrast to 'ethnic transnationalism' of the earlier cohort with their diasporic sense of belonging.

Again, the findings of the current research invite a slightly different conceptualization of a cosmopolitan identity. The notion of hybrid identity was succinctly articulated by the youngest participant in the interview study who may be considered a member of second generation of immigrants, Nata, whose immigration history was different from other participants. Her account of post-migration experience painted a picture of accommodating two different systems of values – from her country of origin and that of New Zealand. It is possible to trace through her story how some meanings from New Zealand cultural practices have replaced the ones from the place of origin, while other old ones prevailed. What is also very characteristic of hybrid identities is the ability to switch easily between two frames of reference, from one system of meanings to the other, depending on the context. This switch from one cultural representation to the other illustrates the concept of a double or hyphenated identity (Bhabha, 1998; Zevallos, 2008).

In contrast, cosmopolitan identity was articulated by the participants in this research as something different; not two distinct parts (Russian and New Zealand ones), but as an indivisible whole, as well as going beyond the particularities of Russian and/or New Zealand frames of reference. On these grounds, I see cosmopolitan identity as different from hybrid, or hyphenated, identities, in the form articulated by Bhabha (1998). This clear differentiation between cosmopolitan and hybrid identities may be specific to Russian-speaking immigrants, for example in comparison to Croatian immigrants in Australia. The earlier socialization of the participants in this research into the Soviet frame of reference in terms of pan-ethnic, or more precisely, 'above-ethnic', identity could have provided them with adequate resources to construct their new identity in cosmopolitan terms even before the act of migration. As several participants noted, they felt different from the majority of their co-nationals even before moving to New Zealand.

I would also argue against locating cosmopolitan identity as part of the broader transnational identity. The concept of transnational identity would not fit with the participants in this research, as they do not generally position themselves as moving between nations and spaces (therefore, seeing themselves as trans-nationals), or

belonging to different ethnicities, nations or spaces. They expressed the notion of unity with immigrants from other countries, allowing for speculation about the 'imagined community' of cosmopolitan immigrants, regardless of the culture they come from or move into. As argued by Colic-Peisker (2006), trans-nationals may be motivated to migrate by pragmatic goals – *ubi lucrum, ibi patria* ("Where there is money, there is homeland"; p. 221). The morality of this approach has been criticized under the label of a global corporate elite, or transnational elite, who are blamed for gaining profit at the sake of others, less fortunate and unable to migrate into better conditions of living (Bauman, 1998; el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006).

While there exists a similar motivation in Russian culture – "Where there's work, there's homeland" – the participants in this research did not provide explanations which would fit in with the concept of a business elite. They expressed their flexibility in terms of professional identity, emphasising their 'innate' ability to adapt to new environments and embrace new requirements for further success. While the sense of professional identity, validated and appreciated by others, was found as the most crucial resource for successful reconstruction of identity, the particularities of this feature did not matter. Many participants found jobs in different areas from their original professional milieux, while others re-qualified into completely different occupations.

This flexibility was reflected in the general notion of fluidity of their new identity, encompassing not only professional features but also cultural and supra-national ones. For these people, community or a single nation-state, whether Russia or New Zealand, or any potential future country of residence, seem too small to draw the resources for identity construction. Instead, they reach for global resources, positioning themselves beyond and above particular cultures or nations. Therefore, the result of the process of identity construction is of a cosmopolitan nature.

While transnational identities are often created in virtual space, through ethnic media and electronic communications, they still entail a sense of symbolic ethnic belonging articulated by these virtual media (Elias & Shorer-Zeltser, 2006). In this sense, transnational identity is maintained by transnational diaspora and is ethnically and/or culturally bound, because diasporic community, whether geographic or virtual, is still located within the symbolic meaning of a particular culture. Cosmopolitan identity is ultimately ethnically and/or culturally free, as it is not grounded in any particular ethnicities or cultures. The culture implicated in providing discursive

resources for cosmopolitan community is the global one, sustained by the global imagined community.

This new form of community rises out of present-day needs to imagine not only separate nations or cultures but the entire world as an integral whole (Billig, 2004). This requires a cosmopolitan, rather than a trans-national, frame of reference. Any national or transnational discourse can constrain the production of a cosmopolitan identity. Billig (2004) locates this new type of identity within the postmodern psyche, which rejects any symbolic attachment to rigid cultural boundaries and engages in "a free play of identities" (p. 135). For Gergen (1991), the postmodern identity is reflected in the concept of the saturated self, continuously re-articulated through multiple interactions, both existing in the material world and in virtual space. Thus, the self does not exist apart from the numerous relationships which saturate identity with multiplicity of meanings.

Billig (2004) summarizes the critique of the postmodern psyche and suggests that two opposing options for formation of identity are offered to be chosen from: a fragmented and homeless self, "a nomad of the mind" (p. 136), who fails to secure her own identity against the powerful forces of the globalized world; and a cosmopolitan self, able to embrace the fluid conditions of the postmodern world and harness them for identity construction. While the concept of transnationalism has been criticized (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998) for deterritorialization and boundless free floating 'in-between' the spaces, in an imaginary 'third space' (Bhabha, 1990); cosmopolitanism can be counter-articulated as grounded in any particular space, as long as this space is positioned as a part of the global. In this sense, the cosmopolitan does not need to be absolutely opposed to the local (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998). Instead, the cosmopolitan can easily embrace the local, together with other locals and the global.

For Bauman (1992), "Postmodern nomads [ ] wander between *unconnected* places" (p. 693, emphasis in original). In contrast, cosmopolitan identity, as it is conceived in this research, is built upon the very connections between different places and the conglomeration of these places into one interconnected and multicultural space. While it is possible to agree with Bauman that postmodern identity may be seen as a reflexively monitored task and product of a DIY assembling process, his conceptualization of a nomadic identity on the basis of the rupture of the time/place locale cannot be applied to cosmopolitan framework.

Bauman (1998) further developed the concept of the nomadic self by contrasting two migrant identities – that of a tourist and a vagabond. His concept of a postmodern tourist follows the critique of transnational business elite – members of a corporate world who travel freely under the slogan of higher profits and possess the means to maintain the universal sense of self regardless of cultural contexts. These transnationals acquire different cultural meanings only as long as they fit in with their frame of reference based on their elite way of life and sense of superiority over others. The latter are often represented by vagabonds, those who are unable to choose where to live and are forced to participate in global movements despite their desires (Bauman, 1998). Millions of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as so-called 'economic migrants', are among those with no rights to choose their place of living.

While both types may be considered nomads, in view of their endless movement between places and their symbolic (though quite different) homelessness, neither would articulate a cosmopolitan sense of self. As illustrated in this research, cosmopolitan identity does not seek to create the same sense of belonging in different places and regardless of cultural contexts. Instead, the sense of belonging to any and every culture in the world is already there, and the cosmopolitan self seeks to embrace them, or at least those which are available to be embraced at the point of time. As one of the participants in this research noted, "If just to travel for a while, for a week or two – I don't like it. I like it when… you immerse yourself in culture and learn it… But if you go as a tourist, it is not interesting…"

Hannerz (1996) argues that "genuine cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It entails an intellectual and aesthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity" (p. 103). Hannerz articulates this openness as a vocation, a feature which transcends an individual's life and work in the first place. Similarly, D'Andrea (2007) conceptualizes cosmopolitanism as "a holistic disposition" (p. 16). In this regard, the personal qualities that the cosmopolitans bear, such as openness and a holistic representation, are consistent with the notion of existential migration of Madison (2006), when migration is seen as a necessity and the underlying nature of people engaging in it.

Arguing against the articulation of cosmopolitan identity through the images of sophisticated intellectuals or skilful migrants, D'Andrea (2007) suggests that the globalized world urges identities to seek the universal frame of reference. One of the

cultural fears of globalization is the prospect that all cultures become the same, in an applied sense – Americanized – therefore the global is demonized and local cultures try to fight it with whatever means they can find. The cosmopolitan should not be equated to the universal; vice versa, the cosmopolitan may be understood as a continuous accommodation and addition of new cultural meanings, the process of learning and acquiring new cultural knowledge and relaxation of rigid ethnic boundaries for the sake of more blurry and more inclusive criteria. The cosmopolitan identity may be seen as an organically relativistic one, with allowances for the incorporation of seemingly contradictory views. In this, it would be different from a dual or hybrid identity which usually chooses one cultural meaning over the other.

Overall, the concept of cosmopolitan identity may be seen through the prism of human diversity, where various categories and labels are fluid and change depending on context (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). Based on the relativistic and constructionist nature of such notions as race, ethnicity, nationality and others, cosmopolitan identity is a proactive choice of freedom in defiance of the policies of marginalization, discrimination and exclusion. Cosmopolitan actors express their agency not only through a cosmopolitan way of thinking but also by being and acting from a perspective of global consciousness (Cronin, 2006). The nature of cosmopolitan identity is rooted in the demand for equal human rights for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or cultural and national origins (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). These new global actors make it easier to imagine a new vision of a 'world without borders':

> "the vision of an increasingly cosmopolitan orientation amongst world citizenry, where everyone is connected instantly with everyone else, a global village of mutual understanding and constructive interchange, where people can pick and choose from the wealth of humanity's diverse, rich cultures" (Hayden & el-Ojeili, 2009, pp. 6-7).

While an argument for the cosmopolitan vision may be considered highly imaginative, it belongs to the social science scholarship committed to the issues of emancipation and social change (Hayden & el-Ojeili, 2009). For example, on the topic of so-called 'economic migrants' Derrida (2001) criticized the official bodies of the European Union for applying different criteria to the notion of human rights for the purpose of discrimination and deportation of refugees and asylum seekers who come from countries deemed 'alien' by culture and/or religion to the European Union.

He objected to the absurdity of the demand towards political refugee claims to prove having no interest in economic benefit upon immigration. Derrida then argued that these criteria are in violation of universal human rights and that the requirement of distinguishing the political from the economic is "truly hypocritical and perverse; [and] it makes it virtually impossible ever to grant political asylum" (p 12). As a possible solution for those injustices, Derrida demanded the development of cosmopolitanism as a new ethic, and as moral politics allowing for the inclusion of all 'aliens': "Whether it be the foreigner in general, the immigrant, the exiled, the deported, the stateless or the displaced person" (p. 4).

Concluding Remarks

The nature of this thesis has become increasingly interdisciplinary throughout my engagement with the topic of the research. In the process of the analysis of the data and especially during the final write-up of the findings I have been reading more and more widely, drawing upon many different theories and contemporary thinkers in various fields of social sciences. Foner (2003) suggests that immigration studies have become an interdisciplinary field and that a transnational approach to migration is gaining popularity among many social scientists. She argues that a particular discipline-bound approach is too narrow from a contemporary point of view, and the future lies with interdisciplinary collaboration between social sciences in both research and theory building. Based on this idea, I have tried to bridge different disciplines and multiple areas of research, aiming at those authors who were guided by a similar epistemological approach. In my defence, I would like to cite Foner's words in this regard: "When reading the work of a social scientist in the immigration field, it is sometimes difficult to determine – from the methods used to the literature cited – his or her specific discipline. This is a healthy development" (p. 23).

Still, the constraints of this project, both in time and space, have imposed boundaries on my end-product. Throughout my research I faced difficult choices of what to include into the project and what to forgo. For example, an important issue such as gender discourse in immigration studies had to be completely omitted, though originally I aimed at recruiting similar numbers of male and female participants in order to investigate any differences in their experiences. In the end, I decided not to explore this aspect of my research, for the sake on focusing on the most common and

important issues for my participants. This choice was also based on the conclusion that there were more similarities in my research between men's and women's identity formation, than there were differences. Except for *Hybrid Identity*, all other themes and nearly all the sub-themes were represented by the quotes from both female and male participants.

Therefore, I decided not to include previous research and theory on gender constructions among immigrants, even in the two cases where the stories were told in a female voice: in the case study of a Russian-Jewish woman who migrated to New Zealand from Israel; and in the theme *Hybrid Identity* constructed on the basis of the interview with a young woman who moved to Wellington with her parents during her school years. The concept of hybrid identity itself is worth further investigation, which may be accomplished in future research on the process of identity construction among second- and third-generation Russian-speaking immigrants in New Zealand.

This example shows that the main findings of this research have to be acknowledged within the frames of the particular demographic and sociocultural characteristics of the participants. Any other group of immigrants, even from the Russian-speaking community in Wellington, might have produced different results. For example, the older generation who usually move to New Zealand in order to take care of their grandchildren and, by this, help their adult children to make progress in their careers, construct their identity from a different perspective and sometimes using different discourses (Maydell-Stevens et al., 2007). Their migration experiences are consistent with previous research on how family systems influence the sense of self for those immigrants who come from cultures based on strong family values (Aroian et al., 1996; Suarez-Orozco, 2003). Similar to gender issues, the impact of family values on identity construction among Russian-speaking immigrants was not investigated in this research and presents a potential topic for future research.

Other topics I had to make a tough decision on leaving out were the areas of 'new' racism (Cottle, 2000), or 'xeno-racism' (Delanty et al., 2008), whiteness studies (Jacobson, 1999; Twine & Gallagher, 2008), as well as a more global issue of human rights and citizenship (Delanty et al., 2008). Some of the participants in this research shared their perception of the racial hierarchy in New Zealand society in which they found their particular place constructed by the host population. Their experiences provided evidence to support the research by Twine and Gallagher (2008) who argue that white immigrant workers in the USA were forced to embrace the racial identity of

the dominant group in order to be able to join, or at least to queue themselves into, the privileges available for the white majority. At the same time, this topic is too significant and flammable to simply mention it in passing. It deserves a serious and comprehensive approach requiring a critical analysis of contemporary scholarship on the issue, with adequate coverage of main theoretical and empirical achievements. It is also connected to the ongoing research on Maori issues in postcolonial New Zealand and presents another interesting area for future research on immigrants.

Instead, some of the data originally intended by me for this topic/theme were presented under other themes, with the concept of racial hierarchy among various migrant groups partially reflected as the accent hierarchy within the sub-theme *Stigma of an Accent*. The rest of the data were grouped under the sub-theme *Invisibility*, while most of the extracts did not make it into the final manuscript as they required a comprehensive interpretation grounded in past research. For example, many participants expressed their sympathy towards more 'visible' migrant groups in New Zealand, such as Indian, Chinese and others. The decision not to include these accounts under a separate theme, though, was based on the comparison between different discourses and their significance for the participants. Other discourses took precedence and warranted the construction of separate themes, such as *Identity Loss* and *Negative Labels*, as being represented in a more developed, coherent and meaningful for the participants way.

One further area of potential critique to this research, the topic which fell short of inclusion into the main argument about identities in the postmodern world, concerns the particular location of this work within the contemporary field of social sciences. The nature and context of this scholarship predetermined it be written in the English language and within what can be considered a 'Western academia'. Due to that, I have to accept the critique often addressed to Western researchers that they utilize the very language that functions as a tool for current cultural oppression on a global scale. Though not the entire West is Anglo-Saxon (or as framed by some authors 'Americanized'), the dominance of the English language on the international arena propped by the American economic, political and cultural imperialism cannot be ignored (el-Ojeili & Hayden, 2006). To quote Colic-Peisker (2002), "Ironically, the postmodern narrative of globalization and cosmopolitanism is told in English and firmly embedded in Anglo-dominated cultural discourses" (p. 152). This is where the issue of reflexivity comes to the forefront of any social research.

Stråth (2008) points out that American theorists have dominated in the production and development of social sciences in the second half of the twentieth century. He argues that, "The twenty-first century requires a new conceptual topography, less Eurocentric and narcissistic, and more global – although in another sense the globalization rhetoric is nothing but a narrative of Americanization, and only repeats the old European version of a 'white man's burden' and civilization mission" (p. 33).

In this regard, even the critical theory aimed at emancipation and deconstruction of the power inequality between the West and the Rest (van Dijk, 1996) still originates in the West and is produced mainly in English or translated into it by bilingual European authors. While it is impossible for such authors to escape an accusation of bias, any critical scholarship should be first of all weighed in terms of its benefit, especially from the perspective that any critique from the inside indicates a healthy development towards the change for the better. It is only through the critique of the 'Western values' and systems of meanings that we can retain the hope that new global forces will emerge that can fight for social justice of underprivileged: the poor and the displaced, the marginalized and the discriminated, the muted and the invisible.

In conclusion, the scholars of contemporary international migration draw attention to the undeniable interconnections between increasing transnational immigration and global processes of economic, political and cultural transformation (Suarez-Orozco, 2003). The emergence of new, cosmopolitan systems of meanings produces new actors who construct their identities from a global perspective, employing discursive resources from different cultural spaces. The primary feature of these new identities is their incredible ability for change, according to contexts, and the capacity to embrace new meanings, creating on the way an even greater potential for flexible adjustment. Whether this fluidity of the sense of self is a dialectical response to the concept of a fragmented identity (Wodak, 2004) forged by the powerful forces of social transformations of postmodern era (Gergen, 1991), or whether it is only a temporary step on the way to the next order of the formation of Self in our unstable times, is hard to tell now. This question is for future scholarship in the areas of identity studies, migration studies and discourse theory, and for the broader research in social sciences on issues of globalization, transnationalism and new forms of consciousness in our postmodern society.

Postscript

After four years of my research, which included extensive and multidisciplinary reading and rather eclectic writing tormented by continuous dilemmas of inclusion versus exclusion over the multiplicity of methodological and contextual issues, it is hard to put a final full stop. There are so many more ideas, concepts and theories which I could have continued exploring through the research question I chose in the beginning of this journey that 'finishing off', 'wrapping up', or simply stopping writing seems an unfair and unjustified demand. The story I have produced cannot be considered a 'full' or 'representative' interpretation of the research; it should be seen as a subjective experience of my functioning within the particular frames of time, space and other circumstances that have circumscribed my project. It is in a certain way a 'snapshot' of those complex and multiple interconnections and interrelations that made this project happen the way it did.

The metaphors of 'journey' and 'story' are therefore appealing to me even more than in the beginning of this research project. My journey through those four years has not been particularly straightforward but reflecting back on my seemingly chaotic engagement with various methods and topics I can trace the logic of those explorations and dilemmas, as now they seem as rather coherent steps towards achieving the end product of this journey – producing this story. There was a productive value in all the methodological and conceptual crises I experienced on the way as they helped me to crystallize on particular nodal points of my research and find the connections between the 'unconnectable' ideas. An unexpected personal experience of discrimination on the premise of my non-native English and a foreign accent during my research has made me even more painfully aware of my participants' anguish and hardship resulting from such discrimination. At this point in time, my tug of war with the issues of subjectivity and reflexivity has reached the ultimate point, making me reanalyse my original assumptions and decisions.

Through this first-hand experience I realized with precise clarity what other writers in qualitative research meant by insisting on an inevitable 'biographic dimension' in ethnographic work (Colic-Peisker, 2004; Silverman, 2006). If "weaving the self into the ethnography is a journey" (Coffey, 2002, p. 324), I have taken the same road with my participants, continuously trying their identity constructions on

myself. As they engaged in the process of meaning-making, I tried hard to be their psychological twin and observation became intertwined with introspection. At some stage, I suddenly saw myself as a case of 'missing data', as my own identity dilemmas did not materialize in any 'data' which could be analysed and included into the manuscript along with others'. It was only at the end of this journey and through engaging closely with the whole story that I realized that my participants have helped me to articulate my own place in the world and understand who I am and what is my role here, ultimately, as a 'citizen of the world', in an endless search for the meaning of life.

In the end, the Story has become saturated, using Gergen's (2001) term, with my countless engagements with my participants, my supervisors, the authors of the books and articles I read, my friends and foes, my family members and other numerous people I dealt with during those four years, as well as with myself, through continuous self-exploration of the concepts of identity and the sense of self, both as separate notions and the overlapping ones. The Story is finished, for better or worse, but the journey has to continue, and I hope that the contribution I have made with my story in the field of human relations (that is, social sciences) will affect my further journey in productive and beneficial ways.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

1. Could you please describe how you came to New Zealand?

   Prompt: What were the reasons for your immigration? What factors in particular have influenced your decision to migrate to New Zealand?

2. What do you think is the New Zealand way of life?

   Prompt: How do you find it different from Russian? How do you adapt to it? (issue of gains and losses) How has your lifestyle changed as a result of immigration?

3. Describe your social life in New Zealand. How do you feel in New Zealand society?

   Prompt: How involved are you in New Zealand society? Do you have regular contacts with New Zealanders? What (ethnic) groups do your friends/contacts come from?

4. How do you position yourself within New Zealand society?

   Prompt: What is your status in New Zealand? How is it different from the one you had back home?

5. Has immigration made a difference to how you see yourself as a person?

   Prompt: If so, how do you see yourself now as different from before you came to New Zealand? How would you say you have changed?

6. What about the way other people see you?

   Prompt: Members of your family (has it changed)? Friends? Community? Society?

7. What are your plans for future?

   Prompt: Where do you see yourself in New Zealand society in future? What would you want to achieve? What would you like to be doing?

Appendix B

Information Sheet for Participants

What is the purpose of this research?
- This research is to investigate the construction of the concepts of identity and selfhood among the immigrants from the former Soviet Union to New Zealand.

Who is conducting the research?
- Elena Stevens, a PhD student in School of Psychology. The supervisors of the research are Dr James Liu and Dr Ann Weatherall, School of Psychology, Victoria University of Wellington. This research has been approved by the University ethics committee.

What is involved if you agree to participate?
- If you agree to participate in this study you will be interviewed by the researcher at the location convenient to you. The questions will be about your experience and feelings about migration to New Zealand. With your permission the interview will be audio recorded.
- The interview will be strictly confidential. Only the researcher and the supervisors will have access to the recordings and written transcripts of the interviews.
- The audio-recorded interviews will be transcribed. In the transcription you will be called by another name or will be assigned a number. Any identifying information and any other personal names (e.g., of you relatives, etc.) will be changed.
- It is estimated that your participation in the interview will take no more than a couple of hours.
- During the research you are free to withdraw at any point before your data have been collected. You can do that by e-mailing or calling the researcher or the supervisors.
- As a token of our appreciation, we will give you $20 grocery voucher for your time and effort, at the end of the interview.

Privacy and Confidentiality
- Every effort will be made to keep your data confidential. This will be ensured by the following measures:
- Only the researcher and the supervisors will have access to the recordings of the interviews and the transcription of them.
- Your identity will always remain anonymous to everybody except for the researcher and the supervisors. Transcripts of your interviews will have all identifying information removed.
- Any extracts from the interviews used in reports or publications of this research will be anonymous. All real names will be replaced by made up names and any other identifying information will be changed.
- Your consent forms, interview recordings and transcripts are required to be kept for at least five years after publication.
- In accordance with the requirements of some scientific journals and organisations, your anonymous data may be shared with other competent researchers or used in other, related studies.
- The original data and anonymous data will remain in a locked cabinet in the custody of Dr James Liu, School of Psychology.

What happens to the information that you provide?
- The data you provide may be used for one or more of the following purposes:
  - The overall findings may be submitted for publication in a scientific journal, or presented at scientific conferences.
  - The overall findings will form part of a PhD thesis that will be submitted for assessment.

If you would like to know the results of this study, they will be available approximately from March 2009 in the form of a summary, both in written and electronic versions. Please, supply your e-mail address for this purpose.

If you have any further questions regarding this study please contact any one of us above.