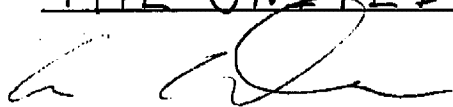



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
NEW YORK SCHOOL

FINAL THESIS APPROVAL FORM

AUTHOR: GONEN ARAD

TITLE: THE IDENTITY OF
CHILDREN BORN TO ISRAELI
FAMILIES LIVING IN
THE UNITED STATES

 3/8/7
SIGNATURE OF ADVISOR(S) Date

 3/18/07
SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR Date

ALL SIGNATURES MUST BE OBTAINED BEFORE YOUR THESIS WILL BE
CONSIDERED ACCEPTED

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION ON THIS FORM.

THE IDENTITY OF CHILDREN BORN TO ISRAELI FAMILIES LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

GONEN ARAD

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
Master of Arts in Religious Education Degree

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
School of Education
New York, New York

Type Date: 3/8/2007
Advisor: Rabbi Andrew Davids

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Rabbi and Professor Andrew Davids from the bottom of my heart for being a great Thesis advisor; for helping me with critical thinking and for guiding me with material and ideas.

I would like also to thank Rabbi Davids for his willingness to meet with me when ever I needed, and for his great kindness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
1. Immigrants and Acculturation - General Background.....	4
1.1 Immigrants and Identity.....	5
1.2 Acculturation.....	7
1.2.3 Acculturation Stress.....	9
1.3 Familism.....	10
1.4 Immigrant Youth and the Education System.....	11
1.4.1 Parents' Attitudes.....	12
1.4.2 Economy.....	12
1.5 Language and Identity.....	13
1.6 Media and Identity.....	15
2. Israeli Diaspora.....	16
2.1 Yerida.....	17
2.2 Israeli emigrants and Diaspora Jews.....	18
2.3 The Identity of Israeli Emigrants.....	19
2.4 Second Generation Emigrants' Identity.....	20
2.5 Education of Second Generation Israeli Emigrants.....	21
2.6 The Israeli Scouts.....	21
3. Qualitative Research.....	23
3.1 Findings and Assumptions.....	33
4. Educational Unit – Background and Goals.....	36
4.1 Three Lesson Plans' Topics.....	40
4.2 A Full Lesson plan (Second Lesson Plan).....	44
Summary.....	47
Bibliography.....	49

Introduction

The focus of this thesis is the identity of children born to Israeli families living in the United States. How do immigrant children define themselves? Do immigrant children struggle to choose between their Jewish, Israeli and American identities? And in what way can education help these young people negotiate between these different aspects of identity?

Children born to Israeli families who live in the United States face a complex reality. Immigrant children or children of immigrants struggle to reconcile two cultural and national identities: Israeli and American. In addition, these children are wrestling with American and/or Israeli understandings of Jewish identity. Most often, immigrant children observe Israeli culture at home, but have to adapt to American culture outside their home in order to integrate better with the American society.

Living in two different cultural environments and with a feeling of abandoning Israel, may cause these children to struggle with their self identity and as a result of that to be exposed to acculturation stress.

This Thesis has three main components:

Theoretical part – This part provides a general background of immigrants' experiences and characteristics in the United States; including: models of immigrants' acculturation, immigrants' stress, immigrants' identities, familism, the meaning of language and more. This part also provides background on Israeli families who live in the United States and their characteristics.

Qualitative part – This part focuses on children's personal stories.

It examines: children's identities and the main factors that contributed to their identities. In particular, it examines children's connection to Israel and to Israeli culture. The aim of this part is to provide a better understanding of the target population in order to create an educational unit which will fulfill the targeted children's needs.

Educational unit (Curriculum) – This part presents an educational unit which aims to strengthen children's Jewish and Israeli identities. The educational unit is based on the findings and the assumptions from the first and second part of this thesis.

1. Immigrants and Acculturation – General Background

In many cases immigrants are people who left their homeland in pursuit of a new country where they would be able to fulfill their beliefs, live according to their preferred values, improve their economical situation and live in a different and more positive atmosphere (Joseph E. Trimbel, in Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

Immigration involves change in immigrants' life styles; moving from one place to another inevitably requires some amount of adjusting to the new culture. In many cases, immigrants are being forced to make certain difficult decisions in order to be able to create a stable and secure life, i.e. in order to be able to have housing, Medicare, education etc.

For the most part, immigrants take to one of two main approaches when they begin their lives in a new culture. There are immigrants who feel that new opportunities are to be found in the new location; this approach is taken mostly a short time after moving to the new place and is referred to as the "honeymoon phase." A different attitude is the one that may be found among immigrants who feel that they are losing their identity. The new reality causes them to feel depression and frustration; this increases their aggression which may rise to a high level while they face communication problems (Coreen Sears, 1998).

Korazim argues that "[t]he process of migration, which involves dealing with the circumstances of a new life, inevitably causes stress, no matter how resourceful immigrants are in coping with problems. There are hard choices to make and delays to tolerate" (Yosef korazim, in Meir Gottesmann, 1988, pg' 169). In fact, immigrants' stress levels are much higher compared to stress levels experienced by non immigrants. This is partly due to the fact that immigrants find themselves struggling with life's most basic issues such as society's attitudes, clothing habits, communication etc. (Stan M. Dornic, in Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986).

1.1 Immigrants and Identity

Immigrants exhibit a need to find and define their ethnic identity, as an expression of the need to locate themselves within modern society (John D. Buenker and Lorman A. Ratner, 1992). Those immigrants that are considered ethnic minorities in their new locations are exposed to a complex reality regarding their social relationships and their own new identities (Tajfel 1974, in Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986).

An immigrant's identity is always a combination of social and personal components (Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986). Erikson claimed that "individuals tend to form partial, rather than total, identifications with others, which they attempt to resynthesize to form their own unique identities" (Erikson, 1959, 1968, in Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986, pg' 230). Immigrants, then, strive to redefine their personal identity in a way that will be correlated with positive social values in relation to their host society. (Tajfel 1974, in John D. Buenker and Lorman A. Ratner, 1992).

The process of redefinition of immigrants' identity depends on the level to which their culture and traditions are accepted among the host society; rejection of immigrants' culture and tradition will most probably increase the conflicts within their redefinition of self (John D. Buenker and Lorman A. Ratner, 1992).

When it comes to immigrants' children, i.e. second generation immigrants who are still in their youth, the case is even more complicated; their identity is still undergoing a consolidation process as part of normal human development, and therefore, these adolescents' identities may lack structure and stability compared to those of their parents (Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986). According to several researchers, adolescence is the time period when children are at the final stages of their identity formation (Erikson 1986 and Waterman 1984, in Blake Te'Neil Lloyd, 2000).

A study on immigrants' identity conducted in Sweden, discovered that children of immigrants have serious identity disturbances (Laurin 1973, Reinans 1973, in Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986)

Marcus Hansen, an American historian, describes the differences in identity between different generations of immigrants in the following way: "first

generation immigrants [hold on to] an old identity, second generation immigrants [reject] their origins and [accept] an American one, and third generation immigrants [seek] to rediscover their roots... [this is] really a process in which the first generation held to a culture defined by factors other than nationality, the second generation identified with the culture of the host country, and the third generation developed a new "hyphenated" identity comprised of elements of both the old country and the new" (John D. Buenker and Lorman A. Ratner, 1992, pg' 4).

It is clear that immigrants' children develop a different identity in comparison to their parents. These children's identity is impacted by their own immigrant community and family, and obviously by the environment which they live in, i.e. school, media, neighbors etc.

It is common that immigrants' children experience confusion in regard to their various identity components. They often struggle with values which may contradict their parents' values, identities and life styles such as gender roles or marriage settlement (Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986).

First generation immigrants identify themselves by the country of origin (i.e., Israelis, Chinese, Bucharrians) and they keep this type of identification for the rest of their lives. Some of them label themselves also as Americans (i.e., Israeli Americans). Conversely, second generation immigrants label themselves first of all as American (Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

The process of immigration and identity redefinition has several effects on the immigrants. As stated before, in many cases immigrants have to face a completely new reality and deal with challenges that may put a lot of pressure on them. Mordechai Nisan quotes Clausen (Clausen 1968) which discussed this issue in a very clear way:

A major factor in adapting to a new culture is the abandonment of former norms and values and the adoption of the norms and values of the new culture. This aspect of cultural adaptation is generally considered a problematic one. First because of the difficulty in abandoning norms internalized in the individual's

formative years, which effectively guided his behavior up to the cultural change; and second because the internalization of new norms and values is believed to be a long and complex learning process (Meir Gottesmann, 1988, pg' 180).

1.2 Acculturation

Acculturation is a phenomenon that occurs when one culture group is changed as a result of a progressive and close interaction with a different culture group (Uicho Kim and J.W. Berry, in Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986).

Acculturation includes three components: contact, conflict and adaptation. *Contact* – immigrants come into contact with the host society in many ways such as: work, schools, religious events etc. Acculturation cannot happen without contact between two different cultures. *Conflict* – conflict may occur when immigrants do not want to give up on their own culture and identity. *Adaptation* – adaptation to the host society's culture is used by immigrants in order to reduce their conflict with the local culture (Amando M. Padilla, 1980).

Acculturation occurs then, when at least two different culture groups come into contact with one another, and at least one of these groups is influenced by the other. Change occurs in each one of these culture groups, although, in most cases, the host culture group has a much bigger impact on the immigrant group (Amando M. Padilla, 1980).

Berry (1979) pointed out four different situations regarding acculturation:

- When immigrants are interested in maintaining their ethnic rituals and traditions as well as in assimilating with the dominant society, their redefinition of identity is called **integration** (Christopher Bagley and Gajendra K. Verma, 1983). Integration will work out only if the host society is willing to accept the immigrants and certain aspects of their culture (Berry 1991, in Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin 2002).
- When immigrants are not interested in associating with the new culture, and are preserving their native traditions, rituals and culture, their strategy of redefinition is referred to as **separation**.

- When immigrants have no interest in preserving their unique cultural rituals and traditions or behaviors, and are more interested in associating themselves with the dominant society's rituals and habits, their strategy of redefinition is called **assimilation**.
- And when immigrants have no interest in preserving their native tradition as well as no interest in assimilation, their strategy is referred to as **marginalization** (Christopher Bagley and Gajendra K. Verma, 1983).

A different approach toward acculturation is presented by Dohrenwend and Smith (1962); there are four different strategies that immigrants may take:

- **Alienation** – immigrants change their culture significantly but do not adopt that of the host culture.
- **Reorientation** – immigrants adopt the culture of the host society and give up on their own traditional culture.
- **Nativism** – immigrants preserve their traditional culture, and
- **Reconstitution** – immigrants create completely new cultural patterns (Amando M. Padilla, 1980).

There is a strong correlation between immigrants' choice of acculturation strategy and their ethnic and cultural identity. Immigrants, who are strongly connected to their original ethnicity and culture, may prefer separation. Immigrants who identify with the national identity of the host country, may choose assimilation. Immigrants who combine some of the characteristics of separation and assimilation would probably choose Integration, and immigrants who do not have an interest in issues of identity may choose in marginalization (Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

Berry (1992) refers to the topic above, but uses different terms. He argues that the process of acculturation is comprised of three components: culture shedding, culture learning and culture conflict. According to this approach, an individual who experiences a positive acculturation would experience a much more smoothly flowing life style. This person would fall under the "adjustment" definition. As opposed to adjustment, when a person experiences a negative and difficult acculturation, he may experience an identity conflict and that may

increase his stress level dramatically (Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

1.2.3 Acculturation Stress

Researchers have found a strong correlation between acculturation and immigrants' stress and have repeatedly shown "acculturating individuals [to be] suffering from psychological distress and dysfunctions", (Odegaard 1932; Ruesch, Jacobson and Martin 1948, in Lars H. Ekstrand, 1986, pg' 160). High levels of stress, which in many cases are the result of the first contact with the host society, may lead to psychological and mental health problems among immigrants (Yeung and Schwartz, 1986; Zheng and Berry, 1991, in Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002). Conversely, factors such as accepting immigrants by the host society and the existence of similarities between the immigrants' culture and the host society's culture, may decrease the level of stress among immigrants (Berry, 1997, in Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

Murphy suggested that immigrants experience a higher level of stress in unicultural societies as compared to multicultural societies. In unicultural societies, immigrants must adapt themselves to the local culture, which might, in extreme cases, lead them into breakdown situations. In multicultural societies, immigrants have much more freedom and flexibility regarding their culture and their life style, which makes adjusting easier and far less stressful (Murphy, 1965, 1975 ,in Amando M. Padilla, 1980).

It is clear that a successful integration is the least stressful for immigrants while marginalization is the most stressful situation. Assimilation and separation also involve acculturation stress but it is not clear which one of these two phenomena is more stressful for immigrants (Berry and Kim, 1988; Schmitz, 1992 ,in Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

1.3 Familism

Familism is described as: "a cultural value that is related to a strong identification and attachment with nuclear and extended families as well as feelings of loyalty, reciprocity, and solidarity" (Triandis, Marin, Betancourt, Lisansky, and Chang, 1982, in Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002, pg' 86).

Inherent to Familism is the assumption that values and behaviors which resonate with immigrants' families' core culture are much more difficult to change than immigrants' national rituals or national culture (i.e., holidays and myths).

Two theories can be assumed from the relationship between acculturation and Familism. The first theory argues that acculturation weakens the extended family in a variety of aspects and the second theory supports the opposite argument (Amando M. Padilla, 1980). Moreover, according to several researches in this respect, it is impossible to come up with one clear conclusion regarding the impact of acculturation on family aspects and structure. There is a diverse range within the concepts of Familism and acculturation which makes it difficult to come up with objective results (such as socioeconomic situation, age, gender status, ethnic loyalty etc.) regarding their effects on the immigrant family.

For example: an argument made by Marin (Marin 1991) suggests that Hispanic Americans are more loyal to their families and are ready to make sacrifices for their families and communities more so than white Americans (i.e. – non-immigrants), but it is unclear if this is a result of conflict between acculturation and Familism, or many other contributing factors.

Despite the inconclusive results regarding Familism and acculturation, it is clear that a stable family which "survives" the acculturation process would be able to protect, guide and support its members in a much better way (Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin, 2002).

1.4 Immigrant Youth and the Education System

As a result of their background culture, immigrant youth (whether 1st or 2nd generation) bring with them different approaches, beliefs and values to the education system. It takes time for these young immigrants to adjust themselves to a new school and educational system (Coreen Sears, 1998). due, in part, to the fact that Many developed countries do not succeed in integrating immigrant students with the host society through education (Finfacts team, 2006). Assimilation, in which students are more interested in the dominant society's rituals and habits than in their unique cultural rituals, can be considered successful integration into the host society, although according to recent research, immigrant students should not give up completely on their background culture because that may lead them to a greater risk of dangerous behaviors, (Teresa M. Mcdevitt, Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, 2004).

Many of these children have to create a "new language" with their teachers. In many cases, these children did not have a close relationship with their homeland teachers as they are expected to have in the US. Their communication with their teachers was mostly authoritative and top down (Coreen Sears, 1998). Therefore, these students find it difficult to adjust to a student-teacher relationship in which students are allowed to openly ask questions and challenge their teachers.

Immigrant students face a variety of challenges. Some of these challenges include having to deal with different cultural backgrounds, different social skills, manners etc (Teresa M. Mcdevitt, Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, 2004), learning a new language, getting used to the way students sit in class, rules of communication between students and even to receiving criticism and/or feedback from their teachers (Coreen Sears, 1998).

Despite these many challenges that immigrant children have to face, it was proven on average that immigrant children's achievements in school are equal to those of native born children's academic performances (Teresa M. Mcdevitt, Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, 2004). According to a research done in Canada and Australia, concerning the educational achievement of children of immigrants,

"those who had at least one foreign born parent attained higher levels of education, than those with native born parents" (Therese Brown, 1997).

This is not the case in all subjects. A different research of immigrant students which examined children in Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway and the United states, found that more than a third of second generation immigrant students achieved lower results in mathematics compared to native born children. However, these second generation immigrant students showed at least an equal *motivation* towards studying, compared to native born students (Finfacts team, 2006).

Regardless, another research done in California, found that second and third generation immigrant students consistently achieve higher educational results than their parents do (Public Policy Institute of California, 2005).

1.4.1 Parents' Attitudes

Immigrant children's parents' attitude toward school is key for the children's performance at school. It is therefore very important that immigrant parents will be highly involved in their children's school life including communicating with children's teachers.

However, immigrant parents who come from a different cultural background may have different approaches towards education; sometimes there is no correlation between what school expects from its students and what parents expect of these same children. Therefore it is important that schools strive to minimize miscommunication by informing parents about school goals, culture and values (Kathryn M. Borman, 1998).

1.4.2 Economy

It is a fact that acquiring a higher education leads to better economic opportunities (Public Policy Institute of California, 2005). In addition, according to

a research made by Berry Chiswick and Paul Miller on second generation Canadian immigrants, which is also relevant to American society, it is clear that second generation immigrants earn more money compared to native born people. This is despite the fact that, as Miller notes, second generation immigrants may be discriminated against by the host society while they try to access the job market (Therese Brown, 1997).

1.5 Language and Identity

Language is strongly linked to identity, both that of individuals, and that of peoples. Language reflects the history of nations; it is revealed in literature, religious works, in unique daily communication etc. (Winston A. Van Horne, 1987). Language not only reflects but also maintains group identity (John Edwards, 1985). In other words, language is a tool to transmit culture and tradition; therefore, it is one of the core components in forming a national identity (Winston A. Van Horne, 1987). A research made on South Asian immigrants living in Britain, pointed out that immigrant communities believe that "language is a vehicle for cultural and value maintenance" (William B. Gudykunst, 1988, pg' 74). And in addition, "organizes and expresses a whole range of cultural information and interpretations of concepts and ways of life that have got their specific form as part of the development of the specific community of language users" (Torben Vestergaard, 1999, pg' 85).

Language is therefore very meaningful in terms of the development of one's social identity (an individual's relation with his/her social group and its characteristics) (Eastman, 1985 in John Edwards, 1985) and ethnic identity as well (Giles and Johnson, 1981 in John Edwards, 1985). On the one hand, language influences peoples' social skills within their social environment, i.e. their ability to communicate effectively in a given language of a culture is directly connected to their sense of security (Winston A. Van Horne, 1987). and on the other hand social identity impacts language use as stated by McNamara: "[s]ocial

identity influences language attitudes, as well as language maintenance and shift of the immigrant group" (William B. Gudykunst, 1988, pg' 4). Regardless, a group's identity can survive even if its original language was lost and is not in use any more.

In many cases, language provides individuals and members of out-group (a cultural minority) a tool to define themselves and to differ themselves from the main society and its culture (William B. Gudykunst, 1988). Jews, for example, feel a strong correlation between their ethnic identity and the Hebrew language. Many Jews believe that studying Hebrew would help them to preserve their ancestors' culture, religion and tradition (R. B. Le Page and Andree Tabouret-Keller, 1985).

In addition, it is the case, for the most part, that the relationship between language and identity is stronger when individuals from out-groups are facing social obstacles when coming into contact with the host society (John Edwards, 1985).

Giles and Johnson claimed that individuals from out-groups would try to maintain their linguistic distinctiveness from the host society when:

1. Language plays a major role in their ethnic group identity.
2. They are worried they might lose their group status (i.e. economically, religiously).
3. They believe that their group is significant and essential for the entire society.
4. They perceive their group's culture as one that is very different from the host society's culture (John Edwards, 1985).

According to a different perception regarding the relationship between language and identity, it would be misleading to point to a correlation between language and identity since it is impossible to come up with findings at individual levels on this topic: "Questions of language and identity are extremely complex. The essence of the terms themselves is open to discussion and, consequently, consideration of their relationship is fraught with difficulties" (John Edwards, 1985, pg' 1).

In a different research conducted on immigrant parents in North America, it was discovered that parents perceived language as an essential part of their children's identity. Most of these parents were interested in their children preserving their background identity (in terms of culture and tradition). Most of them were also interested in their children learning and speaking their home language at school. Furthermore, two different researches demonstrated similar findings; according to one, maintaining of the home language at home, contributed to children's linguistic and cognitive development (Second language students), while the other pointed out that children who are bilingual (speak English and their home language) have, in many cases, a higher intelligence than that of immigrant children who speak only one language, and may have a better chance than them in finding a good job in the future (Winston A. Van Horne, 1987).

1.6 Media and Identity

Media (such as music and videos) has a profound influence on adolescence's identity in terms of self-concepts, perceptions of gender and social behaviors. The media emphasis different subjects (such as fashion, decision making, language, relationships and etc.) which are part of our day to day life, therefore it has a big impact on our social relationships and identity. Bloom (1990) claimed that: "the influence (of modern mass media) is cognitive as well as affective: its meanings are social as well as personal" (Blake Te'Neil Lloyd, 2000).

2. Israeli Diaspora

Israeli immigration to western countries is a fairly massive phenomenon; it is estimated that there are more than 500,000 Israelis who left Israel and settled overseas (William B. Gudykunst, 1988). This phenomenon has existed for quite some time; consequently, some of the characteristics of the Israeli immigrant have changed over the years in terms of occupations, identity, social communities etc.

According to research, Israelis emigrate from Israel to other countries because they are:

- Searching for economic opportunities
- Searching for educational opportunities
- Searching for a higher standard of living
- Escaping a tense reality including serving in the military
- Searching for a higher level of privacy
- Experiencing cultural difficulties
- Pursuing family unification

(Meir Gottesmann 1988, Steven J. Gold, 2002).

There are several characteristics which resonate with Israeli emigrants:

1. As opposed to many other immigrant groups, Israeli emigrants are not refugees, and in most of the cases the decision to emigrate was made freely (Goldscheider, 1996). Despite leaving of their own free will, according to Korazim, many emigrants claim that they are not sure if they will stay or go back to Israel. In the case of North America, only a small percent of Israeli emigrants showed an intention to stay long term. Those who believed they will end their life in Israel, claimed that they do not want to be affiliated with the "Yordim" (Israeli emigrants) and that they prefer to raise their children in Israel (Meir Gottesmann 1988).
2. It has been found that Israeli emigrants are more educated than the average population in Israel and the population of the host society. Moreover, Israeli emigrants are considered to be high quality labor force

and are involved in occupations that are in high-demand such as: high-tech and finance (Steven J. Gold, 2002).

3. In many cases, Israeli emigrants create strong economic relationships with Diaspora Jews; this interaction is a result of a stronger sense of trust and respect towards these Jews (then other populations) who share common things with the Israeli Jews. This element of economic cooperation between the two groups provides a solid infrastructure and comfortable environment for Israeli immigrants in which to succeed; "[s]tatistics tell us that in comparison to other migrant populations Israeli emigrants are economically successful, earning sizable incomes, running businesses and working as professionals in many points of settlements." (Steven J. Gold, 2002, pg' 91).

2.1 Yerida

The Hebrew word for emigration is: "Yerida" and it is the opposite of "Aliya" which means *immigration* with the ideological twist added by the meaning of the word "Aliya", literally meaning "ascension."

For many years, Israeli emigrants were viewed in an extremely negative light in the eyes of Israeli society.

Israelis who decided to leave Israel and to settle overseas were perceived as traitors and cowards by Israeli society and in particular by Israeli governments. For example: In 1976, the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called Israeli emigrants: "the leftovers of weaklings" (a few years later he changed his mind on the subject).

The negative attitude toward Israeli emigrants, However, began to change in 1989 when Yitzhak Peretz who was the Absorption Minister at the time, claimed that efforts should be made to enhance the connection of Israeli Diaspora with local Jewish communities in order to preserve the Jewish identity of those emigrant's children.

In recent years, the state of Israel tries to encourage Yordim to come back to Israel. Israelis who return to Israel receive economical benefits from the government. A future plan which focuses on the children of Israelis who live in the Diaspora, is to provide them free academic studies in Israeli universities, before they join the military. A major officer in the Israeli Army said: "even if this future plan will not increase the number of Israeli soldiers, the fact that children of Israeli emigrants will live in Israel, may help to bring these kids back home" (www.ynet.co.il).

As a result of negative opinion towards Yordim (both in Israel and among Diaspora Jews), many Israeli emigrants refused to define themselves as "Yordim" and in many cases claimed that they intend to move back to Israel in the future. Moreover, Israeli emigrants did not establish community organizations in the new areas in which they settled (educational or cultural), in order to avoid the host society (in particular American Jews) from identifying that situation as permanent, and thus name Israeli emigrants "yordim" (Moshe Shokeid, 1988, Goldscheider, 1996, Steven J. Gold, 2002). The Israeli emigrants in Australia even went further: they almost completely abandoned the Hebrew language, and use English only in order to distance themselves from their Israeli identity and thus avoid Jewish society relating to them as Yordim.

It is important to note, however, that even though in the past, Israeli Yordim felt much less comfortable in their new environment which caused them to have mixed emotions and feel guilt for leaving, in the recent years, they feel much more connected to their status (emigrants) and do not feel uncomfortable to express their ethnicity and religious outlooks (Steven J. Gold, 2002).

2.2 Israeli Emigrants and Diaspora Jews

Israeli emigrants and Diaspora Jews do have a valuable connection in many cases, even though they are two groups that have many differences.

As mentioned previously, Israeli emigrants strive to interact with American Jews in the financial aspect, but there are factors that create boundaries between

them and Diaspora Jews, i.e. differences in culture, norms, language, political outlooks, tradition, religious observation etc. (Liebman Charles S. and Steven M. Cohen, 1990).

Diaspora Jews perceive Israelis as idealistic and brave, as people with a healthy dose of chutzpah, and at the same time as over-aggressive, arrogant, shameless, and indifferent about the Jewish community.

Israeli emigrants perceive Diaspora Jews as shallow, strict, and less friendly than Israelis are, but also as polite and cool (Steven J. Gold, 2002).

In some cases, Israelis reported that Diaspora Jews demonstrated negative attitudes towards them especially when Diaspora Jews perceived them as Yordim. Common questions towards Israelis (such as: why are you here and not in Israel? Who will protect the Jewish country if not you?) were asked by Jewish Diaspora.

In general, Israeli emigrants and American Jews have sympathy toward each other, and each of the groups wishes to embody some of the other group's characteristics: the Israelis wish to achieve the economical status of American Jews, and American Jews wish to be closer emotionally and physically to the Jewish state (Moshe Shokeid, 1988, William B. Gudykunst, 1988).

2.3 The Identity of Israeli Emigrants

The Israeli identity of first generation Israeli emigrants is unshakable. According to Shokeid, most Israelis who were interviewed in this topic claimed that they have a strong Israeli identity and that they will some day return to their home land (Israel) (Moshe Shokeid, 1988). Israelis connect their identity with the following components, all based on life experiences: serving in the military, their family's immigration to Israel (in the past), the history of Israel, Israeli food, the Hebrew language, Israeli culture and norms, life style, and the "Israeli way" of communication.

In many cases, Israelis expressed a much deeper connection to their Israeli identity than to their Jewish identity: "For many Israelis, ethnic identity is

secular and nationalistic. While they appreciate Jewish holidays and speak Hebrew, they often connect these behaviors to Israeliness rather than Jewishness" (Steven J. Gold, 2002, pg' 183).

Often, Israelis refused to perceive themselves as part of the host society and in particular as part of the Jewish community. One of the most influential event which causes Israelis to feel different and excluded, is Yom Hazikaron; this day is dedicated to all the Israeli soldiers who sacrificed their life for the Jewish state (Steven J. Gold, 2002)., And as such is not a part of the Jewish American Experience.

In terms of religion, many Israelis pointed out that they became more religious in the Diaspora than they were in Israel. The main cause of this is to keep theirs, and their children's Jewish identity (William B. Gudykunst, 1988 and Steven J. Gold, 2002).

2.4 Second Generation Emigrants' Identity

In general, Israeli parents strive to maintain their children's Israeli identity and as mentioned before, many of them even believe that raising children in Israel is the right thing to do. According to Korazim: "Most of the parents opposed their (their children) integration into American society. Rather they preferred the children to maintain an Israeli national identity, not only as a source of pride in one's national or ethnic origin, but as an option for an easier return to Israel" (Meir Gottesmann 1988, pg' 174).

Second generation Israeli emigrants may be affiliated with one of three groups:

1. They may feel connected to the mainstream of the host society.
2. They may feel connected to the Jewish community.
3. They may feel connected to their roots, i.e. keep on their Israeli identity.

According to research, second generation Israeli emigrants have mixed feelings about their identity, and there is no one clear conclusion regarding what comprises it exactly. A research made in Queens, New York showed that a very

low percentage of these children identified as Israelis rather than Americans. On the other hand, a research made in Chicago found that the majority of second generation Israeli emigrants identified themselves as Israelis rather than Americans or Jews (Steven J. Gold, 2002).

2.5 Education of Second Generation Israeli Emigrants

The research made on this topic is limited and not up to date. Therefore it is almost impossible to come up with relevant conclusions regarding the educational settings that these kids attend. One research, from about twenty years ago, found that proximally 77% of Israeli children in New York City attend Jewish Pre Schools and Elementary Schools, but only 30% of Israeli children in New York City attend Jewish Junior and High Schools (Meir Gottesmann 1988). The findings of this research probably do not reflect the situation in other areas of North America.

In the recent years, Israeli emigrants have many more possibilities that allow them to maintain their Israeli identity, culture and tradition. This is due to technological advancement and globalization. In North America for example, it is possible to purchase Israeli newspapers and books, to eat Israeli food, to listen to Israeli radio channels online and even to watch Israeli T.V. through satellite. In addition to that, many famous Israeli singers and actors perform in North America. In terms of Israeli education, there are some informal frames; one of these frames is the Israeli scouts. This organization is very successful in terms of youth activities, and in particular its "Gar'in Tzabar".

2.6 The Israeli Scouts

The Israeli Scouts in North America go by the name: "Friends of Israeli Scouts". This is an informal youth organization which is not affiliated with any political or religious party. This organization was incorporated in 1995 and has a strong relationship with the scouts in Israel.

Among its goals are: supporting the scouts organization in Israel, strengthening the relationship between Israeli scouts and its American youth, and creating a positive attitude towards Israel.

Friends of Israeli Scouts provide a special program which focuses on Israel named "Garin Tzabar". Most of the American Youth who join this program are children of Israeli families who live in North America. The main goal of Garin Tzabar is to prepare these children to serve in the Israeli military and to help them socially adapt to the Israeli society (www.chetz-vkeshet.org.il).

3. Qualitative Research

This part of the thesis contains a qualitative research which aims to clarify how Israeli children who live in North America acculturate themselves. This information is necessary in order to develop an educational unit that would serve and support children of the same status. The interview was built upon a variety of personal questions that were meant to enable the interviewers the possibility to tell their own stories and experiences, thus providing me with a wider perspective of this phenomenon (Israeli children who live in North America).

All the interview's questions were based on findings and assumptions from the theoretical work of this thesis; most questions focus on relevant issues and difficulties that immigrant children face (such as their acculturation strategy and culture barriers) and in particular on children's identity's issues.

The interviews were conducted in an informal setting in order to make participants feel more comfortable during their interviews, which further enabled them to be more open and truthful in their answers.

All questions were asked in English, but each of the interviewers could respond in either English or Hebrew. However, the educational material developed out of this research will be presented in Hebrew as the findings from both the literature and this interview process reaffirmed the centrality of language as a core aspect of identity.

I interviewed fifteen Israeli children, ages sixteen and seventeen, from different educational backgrounds in order to get a more objective picture to some core questions. Seven children were members in the "Israeli scouts" which provide an Israeli inspired education and which conducts its programs in Hebrew. Four children received Jewish education in Jewish day schools or religious schools. Four children did not receive any Jewish or Israeli education in an informal or formal educational organization. Some of the differences between interviewers were in the number of years they have lived in America; some of them have been in North America for many or a few years, and some were American- born.

All participants were really interested in this study and cooperated very well. Interviewers were also promised that their privacy will be kept and respected.

The average time of each interview was forty-five minutes.

The interview concentrated on the following topics:

- The way interviewers defined their identity (Jewish/Israeli/American).
- The environment which most influences the interviewers' identity (home, school, friends)
- Interviewer's conceptions towards the Israeli and the American cultures.
- Interviewers' conceptions towards preserving the Hebrew language and speaking it here in America.
- Interviewers' connection to the state of Israel and to the United States.
- Interviewer's future plans in terms of place to live and life style.

Hebrew Language

The Hebrew language is one of the core components in the interviewers' identity. Most of the interviewers believed that knowing Hebrew is a big advantage; mainly, it helps them to connect better to the Israeli culture and to their extended families in Israel.

Maya represented most of the interviewers' opinion towards the Hebrew language:

"It is definitely an advantage for me to be able to speak/understand Hebrew here in America, since it gives me a better chance to connect to Israeli children my age and it will probably help me during college, but more than that, I believe it is important for us to preserve the Hebrew language since it is our parents and homeland language, I also believe this to be an advantage because it allows me to learn more about my culture".

(Maya, four years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Karin (who is exceptional in her opinion among interviewers) on the other hand does not think that Hebrew is that important:

"I live here eight years already and I barely use the Hebrew language, I even use English at home, most of my friends are Americans and at school I am the only Israeli I know. I do not listen to Israeli music or watch movies in Hebrew" (Karin, eight years in America, did not participate in any Jewish or Israeli educational frame).

Identity

In many cases, first and second generation immigrant children struggle with their identity; some tend to identify themselves with the host society, some identify themselves with their parents' home land society and some have more than just one identity. But most of the interviewers seemed to hold three identities: Israeli, American and Jewish.

Yaron explains what may influence one's identity:

"Being Jewish is resonating to me with religion while being an Israeli is more about culture. My parents for example, live here many years already and live a completely secular life and they defiantly behave differently than American Jews in terms of manners and lifestyle. I know that many American Jews love Israel and they show it by visiting Israel or donating money to Israel but I still think that they do not connect to Israel as my family and they do not define themselves as Israelis, regardless, I believe that there is a strong connection between Jewish identity and the state of Israel".

(Yaron, nine years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Yael who claims to hold two main identities emphasizes the impact that her parents have on her identity:

"The reason I define myself as an Israeli is first and for most because of my parents; since I was very young, they always told me that I am an Israeli because I was born in Israel and because I will live in Israel in the future. At the same time, I definitely consider myself Jewish and I am proud of it, I even wear a star of David necklace, although, I do not lead a religious life"

(Yael, eleven years in America, went to Jewish school).

There are many things that may impact one's identity; Orit, for example, believes that growing up in Israel has had the most influence in shaping her identity:

"Although my parents were not born in Israel (I was), I feel much more connected to my "Israeliness" than to my "Jewishness", it is hard for me to point out the exact reasons for that (except the fact that I lived in Israel most of my life), but I believe it is a result of Israeli values and culture which are a big part of my personality. The only time, since I have moved here with my family, that I connected to my Jewish identity was when we celebrated the Jewish holidays".

(Orit, one and a half years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Identity is not a stagnant thing, it develops over time. Maya describes what has shaped her Jewish identity since she left Israel and moved to the U.S.:

"I do not doubt my Israeli identity; I feel it in every part of my body. But at the same time my family and I got closer to Judaism in comparison to our lifestyle in Israel. I guess the distance from Israel is a main reason for that, in Israel, Judaism involves our life if we want or if we do not want, for example: we celebrated every holiday and we mostly ate kosher food (since most of the food products in Israel are kosher). Here (in the U.S.A) we have to do more in order to live a Jewish life, my parents are members in a synagogue and we try to eat kosher food at home. I connect to my Jewish identity mostly on Yom Kippur when my family and I seat at home and fast while most of the people in our neighborhood do not do the same".

(Maya, four years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Identity and Environment

Adolescence is a time when peoples' identities are most critically shaped. In many cases, children of immigrants have mix feelings towards their identity as a result of exposure to different environment settings such as home, school and friends. It is very common for immigrant children to change their self identification in different settings. Noam, however, does not think that different environments have an impact on his Israeli identity:

"I do not identify myself differently in different environments since my Israeli identity is very strong, but I do try to adapt myself into different settings in terms of culture and language, for example: I will not use English at home since my parents will not appreciate it so much, on the other hand when I go out with my American friends, I always try low my Israeli profile in terms of Israeli manners in order to have a better integration and to avoid my friends seeing me as aggressive or brutal".

(Noam, five years in America, did not participate in any Jewish or Israeli educational frame).

Michal on the other hand has a different approach towards her identity:

"I tend to identify myself differently when I am at school and when I am with my friends in my youth group, USY (United Synagogue Youth). Because my friends from USY and I both share the same faith and religion and many of the same views its easier to speak my mind.

(Michal, seventeen years in America, went to Religious school).

Orit who lives in America for a year and a half believes that changing a living environment had a direct impact on her identity:

"I have a strong Israeli identity and I take it with me everywhere I go, but at the same time I feel that my American identity is developing, my parents and I feel much more connected to the American reality than before and it is probably a result of the environment we live in. My Israeli identity is very strong at home and a little bit less at school. I am aware of the changes in my identity, for example: I am interested in the American news such as the war in Iraq or I am trying to adapt American manners such as being more polite or talking less loudly. Once I was talking to my father at the train station, after a while he stopped me and asked me: why are you shouting, every body here can hear you, in Israel he probably would not care".

(Orit, one and a half years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Maoz brings a different dimension into the relation between identity and environment:

"In the eyes of my American friends, I am always an Israeli immigrant, since I speak and write in Hebrew and listen to Israeli music and because of when my American friends come to my home, they are always surprised from my family's openness which is not that common in the American culture. On the other hand, when I visit to Israel (at list once a year) my old Israeli friends consider me as an American who abandoned Israel and who lost his interest in the Israeli reality and culture".

(Maoz, four years in America, did not participate in any Jewish or Israeli educational frame).

Israeli Culture

It is obvious that different countries have different cultures. Many immigrants and their children feel very comfortable and safe with their original culture and at the same time they may be aware of the cultural gaps. Some immigrants, such as Nadav, believe that culture defines identity:

"I defiantly feel comfortable with the Israeli manners; I believe that being an Israeli is first and foremost about our significant manners and behaviors, although, sometimes our style of behaviors may be embarrassing; I feel it especially when I meet with my American friends who are not used to our Israeli manners. For example, if I hear people speak Hebrew at the supermarket, there is a good chance that I will start talking to them and they will be Friendly, Americans, in a similar case, will probably get offended".

(Nadav, three years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Cultural gaps may cause immigrant children to give up on some of their original culture characteristics. Regardless, Gal perceives having an Israeli culture as a big advantage:

"I like the Israeli culture, Israelis in my opinion are much more open and warm people compared to others, Israelis have always an opinion for everything and they do not give up quickly, my friends in school always tell me that they appreciate my honesty. Since I've lived here for seven years, I believe that I do not represent precisely the Israeli culture but I definitely observe Israeli manners at home".

(Gal, seven years in America, went to Jewish school).

Immigrant children may try to adapt themselves into the host society's culture in order to have a better integration. The Israeli culture is not always a part of Karin's life:

"I am comfortable with the Israeli mannerism, although, the only place I am really exposed to it is at home. Obviously, I am much more open at home and I let myself do things that I will not do out of home, I am not sure if my "freedom" at home connects with the fact that my parents are Israelis, since most of my friends, who are Americans, behave differently at home and out of it".

(Karin, eight years in America, did not participate in any Jewish or Israeli educational frame).

Change in Identity

As was mentioned before, identity is not stagnant; it changes according to people's physical and mental growth and as a result of environmental impacts. Yael, who thinks she knows a lot more about Jewish history and Judaism than she did before, said:

"I believe that my identity has changed since my family moved here. My Israeli identity was always strong but in the recent years I feel more connected to my Jewish identity than before. I believe it a result of my acknowledgment for the significant of the Jewish people and their ongoing struggle with anti-Semitism. I believe that my Jewish identity and my American identity developed over time". (Yael, eleven years in America, went to Jewish school).

Michal, who is a member of the USY and who became more religious in recent years, commented on the impact which religious frames may have upon people's identity:

"My identity has changed in the last year. I have recently become more religious. This year I have started keeping kosher, going to synagogue every Shabbat, and I have been much more involved in my Jewish youth group". (Michal, seventeen years in America, went to Religious school).

It is common that children of immigrants struggle with identity change processes, which in many cases may lead them to have behavioral problems. Yaron explains why struggling with identity may be a challenge:

"I live here nine years and my family and I still have a solid Israeli Identity, we care about Israel so much and I hope we'll move back to Israel one day. My Identity has changed in recent years as a result of a different culture and lifestyle. Every year when I visit Israel, I realize that there are cultural gaps between Israel and the U.S.A. Many times, these cultural gaps make me struggle with my self identity. I try to preserve my Israeli identity and at the same time to avoid myself becoming a hundred percent American in terms of self identification".
(Yaron, nine years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

People's identity may change while they gain new skills:

"As I have become older, I feel more Israeli. I have a more solid understanding of the language in terms of reading and writing, and I am much more immersed in the culture because I can read books and magazines, and I listen to a lot more music now".
(Gal, seven years in America, went to Jewish school).

Visit to Israel

It has been proven that children of immigrants, who visit their parents' homeland, increase their connection to their original culture. Regardless, by asking interviewers about their last visit to Israel I could get a sense of their feelings and enthusiasm towards Israel. It is very clear how much important Israel is for Shani:
"I visited Israel last summer and I had a great time. Sometimes people in Israel ask me where do I live and whenever I tell them that I live in New York they get excited and tell me that they would love to live in New York too. I do not feel this way because for me, living in Israel is the best, my best time of the year is when

go to Israel and stay with my family".

(Shani, 5 years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Visiting Israel by Israeli immigrant children may help them to shape and strengthen their Israeli identity and at the same time to make some future plans:

"I go to Israel at list once a year, I feel much more connected and at home in Israel compared to my life here in the U.S. I am sure that my future life is going to be in Israel and not anywhere else".

(Amit, 3 years in America, member of the Israeli scouts).

Gal who visited Israel last summer, during the war with Lebanon, perceives Israel as a good place to live regardless all the tough problems that Israel is facing:

"my last visit to Israel was during the last summer when there was a war with Lebanon, I had a great time in Israel and I remember that three hours before my flight back to America, I called my best friend in New York and I cried hardly, I told her that I cannot came back to the U.S and that I want to stay in Israel, my friend was really worried about the situation in Israel and I remember telling her how beautiful and safe Israel is".

(Gal, seven years in America, went to Jewish school).

According to most interviewers, their integration within the American society is smooth and positive. Some of them even develop an American identity and feel here at home as Yaniv describes:

"I was in Israel last summer and it was magnificent, I tried to utilize every second of this visit, I hang out a lot with my old friends who are my best friends. At the end of my trip to Israel I started to miss my home in New York, especially my comfortable bed and my friends from school, I also new that I will be back in Israel next summer so going back to New York was not that difficult for me".

(Yaniv, four years in America, did not participate in any Jewish or Israeli educational frame).

3.1 Findings and Assumptions

Most of the interviewers live in New York City; therefore they do not necessarily represent all children of Israeli immigrants who live in the U.S.

Identity: Interviewers are coming from different Jewish backgrounds, some are completely secular, some are traditional and some are affiliated with the conservative movement.

Kevin M. Chun (2002) claims that first generation immigrants identify themselves by the country of origin. In accord with Chun's theory, all of the interviewers who were born in Israel and moved to the U.S. declared to have a strong Israeli and Jewish identity, yet children of Israeli immigrants who were born in the U.S. declared having a strong Israeli and Jewish identity and a moderately American identity.

Some of the interviewers developed their Jewish identity only in recent years, and became more religious; they claimed that their parents' will and the distance from Israel are the causes for getting them closer to Judaism. It seems to me (based on the interviews) that parents are the most influential factor on interviewers' identity (more than school, friends and the general host society).

All interviewers connected Jewish identity with the Jewish religion and an Israeli identity with the Israeli culture. In other words, the interviewers did not believe that an American Jew can hold an Israeli identity.

All interviewers defined their families as Israeli, no matter how many years their families have lived in the U.S.

Family: It seems to me that the majority (if not all) of the interviewers are children who come from supportive families which do not suffer from economical difficulties. Most of the children visit Israel at least once a year, go to good schools and participate in afternoon classes (hobbies) such as sports or music.

All interviewers have an extended family in Israel. The interviewers believed that it is valuable and important to have a close relationship with their families in Israel in order to maintain their own Israeli identity.

Israeli culture: most of the interviewers appreciate the Israeli culture and mannerism more than they appreciate the American ones. All interviewers feel

comfortable with their Israeli characteristics but on the same time, interviewers admit that they adapt themselves to their social environment in terms of behaviors and manners. Most interviewers have the same view as Gold (2002) (especially those who were born in Israel and moved to the U.S.), in that they perceive Israelis as more open, warm and honest than Americans but also more shameless and aggressive.

Hebrew language: Edwards (1985) claims that language not only reflects but also maintains group identity. Most of the interviewers agreed with Edwards, in particular those who were members of the Israeli scouts. Most interviewers believed that the use of the Hebrew language helps them to preserve their Israeli identity and the Israeli culture and also maintain their connection to Israel.

Relation to Israel: All interviewers were really excited to talk about Israel in general and about their personal visit to Israel in particular. All interviewers held an extremely positive approach towards Israel and most of them believe that they will live in Israel in the future, although, they do not reject the possibility of living in the U.S. in the future. Few interviewers assumed that they will live in the U.S in the future for economical and security reasons.

All interviewers claimed that a visit to Israel enhances their connection and love to Israel. All interviewers care more about Israel than they care about the U.S.A.

Acculturation: Berry (1991) argues that integration of immigrants will work out only if the host society is willing to accept the immigrants and certain aspects of their culture. In regards to Berry, none of the interviewers claimed that the host society (the American society) rejects him/her in any way. The reasons for that may be connected to a couple of facts; first, Israel is not so much different from the U.S in terms of human rights and culture, second, many Israelis live in the U.S. and therefore the people in the U.S. may be familiar with the Israelis and their culture.

It seems to me that most of the interviewers' acculturation status is between integration and assimilation. All interviewers are interested in preserving

their origin ethnic rituals and traditions but at the same time, most to them adapted smoothly within the American culture and society.

4. Educational Unit – Background and Goals

"[T]he world view of young adolescents broadens well beyond family and peer group. A sense of power and idealism flickers and adolescents feel entitled to challenge the existing order. They often become critical of social organizations, wondering why schools, neighborhoods, governments and the earth's ecosystem cannot be improved overnight."¹ Adolescence is a time when many young people struggle with issues of independence, trust, freedom, and responsibility. It is a time when life centers around peer groups and mutual relationships.

Adolescence is a time of major developmental transitions. Adolescent children become more aware of their moral development (they understand what is right and what is wrong) and their cognitive growth helps them to express their ideas more freely. Adolescents are able to think about the choices they have as individuals within a society and the consequences of decision-making.

The case of adolescent immigrants or children of immigrants is even more complex. Immigrant children face a variety of challenges; including: language, cultural differences, and social norms.

The following curriculum is based on a correlation between the theoretical finds and the qualitative findings.

The main goal of this curriculum is to strengthen and clarify children's identity. The identity of second generation immigrants' children, who are still in their youth, is still undergoing a consolidation process as part of normal human development. Therefore, these adolescents' identities may lack structure and stability compared to those of their parents, although, most of the interviewers claimed to have a solid identity. It is evident that their identities are in the middle of development process and there are cultural gaps which cause them to feel even more different in society. It has been mentioned in the theoretical part that identity confusion may lead to high stress and cultural gaps may be an obstacle for good integration.

¹ Child Development, Teresa M. McDevitt, pg' 21.

This curriculum focuses on three main topics which according to the theoretical and the qualitative parts are essential for structuring a solid identity and integration with the host society among children of immigrants.

This curriculum designs from three constructive lesson plans which involve learning and fun in order to make it relevant and approachable for participants. Participants would be adolescents, who born to Israeli families which live in the U.S.A.

All activities will be conducted in Hebrew (with verbal and written English translation) since I tend to agree with many researches that language is very meaningful in terms of the development of one's social identity. As it mentioned in the theoretical part, in many cases, language provides individuals and members of out-group (a cultural minority) a tool to define themselves, to preserve some of their origin culture and to differ themselves from the main society and its culture.

I believe also that children of Israeli families should speak and understand Hebrew in order to preserve and to enhance their connection to Judaism.

The curriculum challenges adolescents (born to Israeli parents and living in the U.S.) to define their own identity (Israeli, Jewish, American) and to understand their relationship to society as a whole. It aims to encourage children to think critically about their identity in order to help solve some major questions and difficulties that they face regularly. The curriculum also aims to enhance children's connection to Judaism and knowledge about Jewish history in the United States, it aims to provide them with some background on different Jewish movement in North America and that is in order to strengthen their Jewish identity, which is abandoned by Israeli emigrants in many cases.

The curriculum aims to provide the children with some background on different Jewish movement in North America and that is in order to:

1. Strengthen their Jewish identity, which is abandoned by Israeli emigrants in many cases;
2. Provide children with information that may lead them to be members in one the Jewish movements which most fit their needs and ideal.

The curriculum may help children to make a connection between their origin culture and their present lives by facilitating discussions about real issues.

In this educational unit, I will present three lesson plan topics and one full lesson plan.

The Essential Questions, which underline the curriculum, are:

- What factors shape someone's identity?
- What are the difficulties and advantages an immigrant may face?
- What identity should be strengthened by Israeli emigrants? (Jewish, Israeli or American identity).

The Goals and Objectives that I have chosen for participants are:

Goals:

- Teach about Israeli "immigrants" in the Talmudic period: How did they live? How did Jews born in Israel treat Diaspora Jews?
- Provide participants with background on different Jewish religious movements in the U.S.
- Encourage participants to be member in one of the Jewish religious movement in the U.S.
- Encourage students to think critically and deeply about factors that shaped their own identity.

Objectives:

- Participants will understand that Israeli immigration is not a new phenomenon; participants will be familiar with historical facts about immigrants in the Talmudic period.
- Participants will think critically of what may structure someone's identity.
- Participants will be able to define their own identity.
- Participants will understand the advantages and disadvantages of integration within the American society.
- Participants will realize how important is to preserve their Jewish identity.

- Participants will be familiar with different Jewish religious movement in the U.S.

Instructional approaches:

The instructional approach, which I intend to use in this curriculum, will be based on constructive pedagogy. The curriculum will seek to: (1) pose problems of emerging relevance to participants; (2) structure learning around primary concepts; (3) seek and value participants' points of view; (4) use curriculum that aims to address participants' suppositions; and (5) assess participants' learning in the context of teaching.

All lesson plans will be conducted in Hebrew, in an informal setting and will include discussions and questions as well as diverse activities that involve readings, art and videos.

4.1 Three Lesson Plant's Topics

Lesson one:

In this meeting, the instructor will present the main subject of the following three lesson plans: "Our Identity and its Impact on Us".

Providing children of immigrant families with knowledge about recent Jewish immigration and its characteristics in different time periods may provide these children with psychological support during their own time of transition.

Jews who emigrated from Israel to other countries during the Diaspora always preserved some of their background, tradition and culture. The preservation of their traditions and culture has helped Jews succeed, flourish and even integrate with host societies. It has been said in the theoretical part that immigrant students should not give up completely on their background culture because that may cause them difficulties

It is also very helpful for children of Israeli immigrants to study the relationship between Jews who lived in Israel and the Jews of the Diaspora in different time periods. This type of knowledge will lead children to examine the advantages while preserving relationship with Jews in Israel and at the same time enhancing their relationship with American Jews. For example, Jews in the Talmudic period who lived in the Diaspora were influenced by the Jews who lived in Israel in subjects such as religion and language. In our time, many Israelis who live in the United States interact with American Jews in the financial arena.

In addition, by learning about Diaspora Jews from the Talmudic period, children will realize that the negative attitude toward Israeli emigrants was not always prevalent in society and therefore these children should not feel guilty for living in the Diaspora.

The goal of this lesson is to encourage participants to think critically about the Israeli immigrants' phenomenon in the past and in the present and how this phenomenon impacted Jews identity.

This lesson plan will focus on Israeli Jews and Diaspora Jews in two main periods: the Talmudic period and our time. Participants will examine Jews' life style, culture, social status and economic status from the Talmudic period and

from our time. Participants will examine the relationship (in different aspects, such as religious authority and economical support) between the "immigrant" Jews and the Jews in Israel in these two periods.

Reading materials:

- A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People, Babylon a Capital of the Jewish World, pg 64-65.
- A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People, Daily Life in Palestine in the Talmudic Period, pg 66-67.
- www.ujc.org/content_display.html?ArticleID=83868, "Connections with Israel".
- http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1282/is_n9_v49/ai_19421992, "Can Jews Survive".

Lesson two:

It has been mentioned in the theoretical part that immigrants exhibit a need to find and define their identity as an expression of the need to locate themselves within modern society. An immigrant's identity is always a combination of social and personal components. In these regards, it is clear from the theoretical part that people who hold a strong identity and who belong to a social group, have less of a chance to suffer from stress. Therefore, it is critical for children of immigrants to increase their interaction with the social group that they belong to or are affiliated with.

It is common that children of immigrants experience confusion in regard to the various components of their identity. They often struggle with values that may contradict their parents' values, identities and life styles.

These children's identities are impacted by their own immigrant community and family, their identities are also influenced by the environment in which they live, i.e. school, media, neighbors etc.

I believe that children of immigrants should think critically about factors which may shape their identity; in other words, it would be better for these

children to consider what type of identity they would like to develop and how they can possibly achieve this goal.

Lesson plan's goals: participants will examine their different social groups and communities. They will recognize the different components which shape their own identity and they will examine how this identity impacts on their life.

Materials: "Nobody's Business" – a film by Alan Berliner about the meanings of self identity and personal stories.

Lesson three:

There are several good reasons why it is important to increase the Jewish identity of Israelis who live in the United States. This is very important because many Israelis who live in North America abandon the Jewish faith, traditions and culture and even get married to non-Jewish people, to many Israelis, their Israeli identity rather than their Jewish identity is more important.

It has been mentioned in the theoretical part that an Israeli absorption Minister (in 1989) claimed that efforts should be made to enhance the connection of Israeli Diaspora with local Jewish communities in order to preserve the Jewish identity of those emigrant's children.

It is also very important reason to expose Israelis who live in the United States to different Jewish religious movements. Exposure to different Jewish movements provides immigrant children multiple options for Jewish involvement and support the idea that identity is complex and individuated. These movements could also fit their spiritual needs and religious perceptions, since it was proven that spirituality reduce people's stress. Israelis who establish a close relationship with religious organizations (such as synagogues or Jewish day schools) have a better sense of community and social lives. This sense of belonging may increase their self esteem and reduce their levels of stress.

In this lesson, participants will be exposed to characteristics of three main Jewish movements in North America. (Reform, Conservative and Orthodox). The goals of this lesson are first to teach that there are diverse ways to observe Judaism. Second, the lesson encourages participants to be members of a

Jewish community, in order to preserve and to develop both their Jewish and Israeli identities. Finally, participants will understand that they are capable of contributing to Israeli and to Jewish communities in the United States.

Reading materials:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reform_Judaism, Reform Judaism.
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservative_Judaism, Conservative Judaism.
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthodox_Judaism, Orthodox Judaism.

4.2 Second lesson plan – “My own identity”

Explanation: In this lesson plan, the participants will examine the different social groups and communities to which they belong. They will recognize the different components which shape their own identity and they will examine how this identity impacts their life.

Core Concept

Examine self identity and its impact upon my personal life.

Approach

This is a one hour activity and it is designed for children of Israeli parents who live in the U.S.

Objectives

1. Participants will recognize the social groups to which they belong.
2. Participants will recognize the components which shape their own identity.
3. Participants will think critically about their self identity and how it influences their life.

Supplies

Pencils, papers with a numeral scale (1 to 5), papers with questions for personal identity certificate, “Nobody’s Business” – a film by Alan Berliner about the meanings of self identity and personal stories.

Activities

Part one

Instructor will review the previous lesson plan with participants.

Participants will watch the first ten minutes of the film: Nobody’s Business and will be asked to think about the following questions:

- a. Do you know the history of your parents and grandparents?
- b. Should we care about our family's past?
- c. Do our family's history impact our identity?

Part two

The instructor will hand out pencils and papers.

1. Participants will be asked to rank their different identities (Jewish, Israeli, American, Zionist, world citizen, etc.) on the scale (1 is low and 5 is high).
2. Participants will be asked to choose their two strongest identities and to write on the paper what the identities mean to them (for example: what does being a Jew mean to me?).
3. Participants will share with the group their two chosen identities. Participants will explain why they selected the two identities and what the identities mean to them.

Part three

Participants will be told that they are going to explore their self identity by filling out a personal identity certificate.

Instructor will arrange papers with different questions in several stations in the room.

Participant will be asked to attend each station and to fill out the different questions. Participants will keep their papers which will be stapled together at the end of this activity.

The stations are:

- a. My name and its meaning, my family name, my first language.
- b. My family came from...
- c. Rituals and traditions that my family has are...
- d. Values that important to me are... I acquired these values because...
- e. Historical events which influenced my identity are...
- f. Special dates and holidays which are meaningful to me are...
- g. One symbol that resonates with my identity is... because...

H. One figure that impacted my identity is... because...

Part four

Group's discussion and wrap up:

Instructor will crate a group discussion based on the following questions:

- a. What questions and thoughts occurred to you while filling out your personal identity certificate?
- b. Would you change how you ranked your identities on the identity scale (first activity)?
- c. What are the most common identities that this group holds? What does it say about the group?
- d. Are you interested in participating in or contributing to a group or community that has the same identity as yours?
- e. Would your identity change if you will move to a different place? Why or why not?

Instructor will ask participants: What have you learn today and do you have any additional comments?

Summary

There are many Israeli immigrants and children of Israeli immigrants in the United States, but there is very little research that examines the life experiences and struggles of these children. In particular, there is little examination of the factors that impact Israeli children's identities and how their identities impact their life. Moreover, some of the research is contradictory making it even harder to come up with solid conclusions or statements.

In general, children born to Israeli parents who live in the United States are very different in terms of characteristics and background compared to non-Israeli children who born to immigrant parents; most of these Israeli children are coming from solid families that have the abilities to support these children in variety of aspects and in particular in terms of adaptation and integration within the American society and culture.

As it mentions in the theoretical part, it seems that Israeli parents who live in the United States have a tremendous influence upon their children's identity. Most parents are very interested in preserving their children's Israeli identity and they do it mostly by speaking Hebrew at home, observing Israeli manners at home and encouraging their children to visit Israel at list every few years. On the other hand, Israeli parents do not try to deter their children from developing strong American identities and integrating into American society.

A strong or weak personal identity may have a great impact upon peoples' lives; it is clear from the readings and the interviews that a child of immigrant parents who holds a strong identity is less likely to suffer from acculturation stress. Israeli children I interviewed, declared a strong Israeli and Jewish identity and a moderate American identity, although, research in this topic presents different findings. It seems that most of the Israeli children that were interviewed do not suffer from acculturation stress and other negative ramifications. Based on my findings, Israeli children, who live in the United States for more than just few years, developed a strong American identity too.

Many Israeli children who live in the United States do not belong to any Israeli or Jewish organization. The children tend to integrate very easily into American culture and society. My main concern is that Israeli children living in the United States may develop an identity separate from an Israeli (Jewish Israeli) or Jewish identity. In regard, the former Israeli Absorption Minister, Yitzhak Peretz said that great efforts should be made to connect Israeli Diaspora (such as Israeli children who live in the United States) to Jewish communities in order to preserve their Jewish identity. I support Peretz's position.

A strong personal identity is a result of understanding one's roots and preserving ancestral traditions and culture. A strong identity brings meaning into our life; therefore, I believe it is our obligation to engage Israeli children who live in the United States and help them connect to Jewish communities. Based on my theoretical findings, there is a risk that Israeli children, who integrate so well within the American society, will abandon their roots, culture and even their religion.

Bibliography

- Amando M. Padilla. (1980). Theory, Models and Some New Findings. *Acculturation Theory*, 9-113.
- Blake TeNeil Lloyd. (2000). Media Influence on Identity Formation and Social Competence, 4, 32-34.
- Christopher Bagley and Gajendra K. Verma. (1983). *Multicultural Childhood*, Pg' X.
- Coreen Sears. (1998). *A Handobook for Teachers in International Schools. Second Language Students in Mainstream Classrooms*, 12-31.
- Goldscheider Calvin. (1996). *Israeli's Changing Society, Population, Ethnicity and Development*, 57.
- John D. Buenker and Lorman A. Ratner. (1992). *A comparative Guide to Acculturation and Ethnicity. Multiculturalism in the United States*, 1-4.
- John Edwards. (1985). *Language, Society and Identity*, 1, 47-159.
- Kathryn M. Borman. (1998). *In communities and Schools. Ethnic Diversity*, 42.
- Kevin M. Chun, Pamela Balls Organista, and Gerardo Marin. (2002). *Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research. Acculturation*, 3, 24-140.
- Lars H. Ekstrand. (1986). *Ethinc Minorities and Immigrants in A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, 149-231.
- Liebman Charles S. and Steven M. Cohen. (1990). *The Israeli and American Experiences. Two Worlds of Judaism*, 83-88.
- Meir Gottesmann. (1988). *The Case of Immigrant Youth. Cultural Transition*, 168-180.
- R. B. Le Page and Andree Tabouret-Keller. (1985). *Acts of Identity*, 237.
- Shokeid Moshe. (1988). *Israeli Immigrants in New York, Children of Circumstances*, 6-70.
- Steven J. Gold. (2002). *The Israeli Diaspora*, 60-212.

Teresa M. Mcdevitt, Jeanne Ellis Ormrod. (2004). Educating and Working with Children and Adolescents. *Child Development*, 21, 600-602.

Torben Vestergaard. (1999). *Language, Culture and Identity*, 83-85.

William B. Gudykunst. (1988). *Language and Ethnic Identity*, 1-74.

Winston A. Van Horne. (1987). *Ethnicity and Language*, 40-72.

Internet

Finfacts team. International, 15/06, www.oecd.org.

Immigrant Education, Public Policy Institute of California, 2005, www.info@ppic.org.

Therese Brown. The Expert Witness Newsletter, The Children of Immigrants – How Do They Fare, Vol. 2, No.2, 1997, [www. Economica,ca](http://www.Economica.ca).

www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3319023,00.html.